

SYDNEY, Sept. 20, 2013 /PRNewswire/ -- THERE is a balance between beauty and safety.

"Fencing is required in most gardens, not just to keep people out but to keep children and animals in," Matt Cantwell, of Secret Gardens of Sydney, says.

"Many fences we inherit and they are often not that appealing and simply don't go high enough when required to provide privacy. This is where plants come in, so many wonderful shapes, sizes and colours to choose from."

Cantwell uses landscaping to soften a fence, improving the outlook from the garden within.

However, he says always be mindful of anything children can climb, especially on a pool fence.

"Why look at a fence when you can look at a lovely leafy green outlook that may even flower?" he asks. "Climbers are great when space is limited and it is hard to go past Chinese star jasmine as it can tolerate full sun or semi shade."

HEDGES

"If you have a bit more with then planting a hedge or row of shrubs is a good way to get some additional height as it is not limited or attached to a fence like a climber," he says.

"Lilly pillies are popular and tend to want to grow more up than out so not too much space in your garden is lost unnecessarily."

TREES

A row of trees is a gift for the next generation. "Plant a row of trees, like magnolia little gem, that way you can still under plant and even under light, which maintains a feeling of width and space."

SECURE ATTITUDE

A security alarm works as a deterrent to would be thieves. According to [NRMA Insurance](#) , a house is 50 per cent more likely to be burgled if there is no alarm system, but less than half of NSW homes have alarms installed.

The organisation's Pure Profile attitudinal research survey of 561 NSW residents further found if a [home alarm](#) is heard, 60 per cent of people will take action by calling their neighbour or the police.

Lights on is another way to discourage would-be thieves from picking your property, says Mariana Cicade, of NRMA Insurance.

Install sensor or timer lights to keep the house well lit, particularly if you go away on holidays. Keep garden well maintained so the property looks lived in, and clear the mailbox regularly. External windows and doors should have security grilles or locks, and internal connecting doors, like the garage, should also be kept locked.

SOURCE NRMA

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