

Safety Planning

If you are a victim of domestic violence, picking up this book is a big step. This may be the first time you have admitted to yourself you are in an abusive relationship or the first time you have looked for support and information. Don't let fear and shame keep you silent.

Trying to keep peace in your home and your relationship is exhausting. If your focus is always on not upsetting your abuser, you may find yourself living moment to moment and unable to think about the future. This safety plan will help you to move forward and to be prepared in an emergency.

At the end of this booklet you will find agencies and resources that you can contact to help you make informed decisions concerning your future.

Abusers can be dangerous and unpredictable. This plan cannot guarantee your safety but it can help you to be prepared and offer you some options in case of a violent situation.

THINGS YOU SHOULD KNOW:

1. You do not deserve to be verbally, emotionally, physically or sexually abused.
2. No matter what your partner may say; you are not too dumb, too fat, too crazy, too much this or not enough of that—to believe in yourself.
3. You are a survivor.

In case of violence

1. **Call 911** if you or your children are in danger. In emergency situations it can be difficult to stay calm enough to think and speak clearly so that someone can understand what you are saying. *Think about what you will say if you have to call for help.*

911: *What is your emergency?*

You: This is _____ (your name),

I need (an officer, ambulance) at _____ (your address).

My _____ (partner/ husband/boyfriend) has _____ (describe the situation as simply and clearly as possible. You can give more details later).

He/she is _____ (give the location of your abuser—he/she is inside the home/outside/has left the home, etc.)

(If your abuser is armed, be prepared to describe any weapon he/she may have and where it may be found.)

His/her name is _____.

You may be asked the following information about your partner.

1. Age & birth date: _____

2. Height: _____

3. Weight: _____

4. Hair color: _____

5. Eye color: _____

6. Other: _____ (clothing he/she is wearing, scars, birthmarks or any features that could help police identify your partner)

7. Vehicle description & license #: _____.

Teach your children how to call 911

When my partner becomes violent:

- If I need to leave my home, I can use these exits. (*which doors, rooms or windows can you use to leave quickly.*)

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

- I will keep money and keys in _____

- I will tell these people about the violence and ask them to call for help if they see or hear anything suspicious at my home.

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

- I will use this code word _____
so my children, friends, etc. will know I need them to call for help. I will tell this code word to:

- 1.
- 2.

- If I have to leave my home I can go to (*list names, addresses and phone numbers*):

- 1.
- 2.

- If I cannot leave, I will try to move to a safe place in my home. I will try to stay out of rooms or places where there aren't any exits or there may be potential weapons such as kitchen, garage, bathrooms, basement. (*List the safest places in your home*)

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

Safety When You Leave

Leaving your partner can be very dangerous. Having a plan in place can increase your safety.

- I will try open a checking or savings account in my name only at a bank my partner doesn't use. I will ask the bank to send mail or contact me at: _____ (Use a post office box or ask a friend or relative for help). **I will do this by** _____.
- I will leave an extra set of clothes, keys, important documents and some money with: _____ or _____. If that isn't possible, I will find a place to hide them where I can get to them quickly. **I will do this by** _____.
- If I don't have my own transportation I can call _____ for a ride. If I need emergency transportation to a domestic violence shelter, I can call the police for help.
- If I need a place to stay I can go to _____ or _____. If it is not safe to stay with a friend or relative I will go to a domestic violence shelter.
- I will try to get information on resources I may need to be independent. I may need help with employment, housing, child care, financial assistance, housing, legal assistance.
- I will teach my children how to call 911. I will teach them this safety plan if I believe it is appropriate.

Home Security

These are suggestions only. It may not be possible to make all of these changes. If you need information or assistance call your local domestic violence agency or call your local police dept. to assess your home security.

Things I can do to make my home safer are:

- Change the locks on my doors.
- Add deadbolts to my doors.
- Check all windows and replace locks if needed.
- Install smoke detectors.

- Replace wooden doors with metal.
- Add or improve outside lighting. Use flood lights with motion detectors.
- Install a security system.
- Other _____.

Safety in Public

When I am away from home I can:

1. Carry a cell phone with me at all times.
2. Change my daily routine.
 - Take a different route to work, school, etc.
 - Vary the times when I go to/from work, school, etc.
 - Change the stores and businesses I usually shop at or visit.
 - Other _____.
3. I will let a trusted friend or relative know where I am going and when I expect to return.
4. I will park in busy, well lit areas and use busy, well lit entrances when I am out in public.
5. Other _____.

Safety For My Children

To keep my children safe I will:

1. Teach them how to call 911 in an emergency.
2. I will teach them what to do during the violence.
 - How to leave the home safely.
 - If they can't leave the home, I will teach them places in the home where they will be safest.
 - I will teach them my code word so they will know to call for help.
 - I will teach them the phone number of a trusted friend or relative who they can call.
3. I will teach my children my full name, phone number and address in case my partner leaves with the children.
4. I will teach my children the full name, phone number and address of a trusted friend or relative they can also call if my partner leaves with my children.

Name: _____.

Address: _____

Phone: _____

5. I will also inform those people who care for my children about who may pick them up.

School:

Day Care:

Babysitter:

Teachers:

Church:

Coach:

Other:

Other:

Taking Care of Yourself

It is important that you take care of your physical and emotional health. You will need this strength to cope.

My health care plan:

1. I will make an appointment for a physical with my doctor by _____.
2. I will make an appointment with a therapist/counselor by _____ and I will always keep my appointments.
3. I will call my local domestic violence agency at _____ and talk with an advocate.
4. I will attend a domestic violence support group at _____ they meet on _____ at _____ am/pm.
5. I will also try to get enough sleep, eat healthy foods, and find things to do that help me relax.
6. These are things I will do each day to help me relax: _____
7. These are things I can do each week/month: _____
8. These are things I can do with my children: _____

Independence

Many people stay in an abusive relationship because they do not see any way out. What is holding you back? Use this list to decide what you would need to be independent, number them in order of importance.

- Education/Job skills training
- Money/Financial assistance
- Legal advice for divorce/child custody
- Transportation
- Therapy/Counseling
- Safety from Abuser
- Medical Care/Insurance
- Child care
- Other

Checklist

I will keep these things in a safe location where I can get to them if I have to leave my home quickly.

- Birth Certificates, Identification
- Social Security Cards
- School and vaccination records
- Money, Checkbook, ATM card, credit cards
- Keys—car, house, office
- Medications & medical records
- Vehicle registration
- TANFF cards, food stamp card
- Passport, green card, work permits
- Legal documents (divorce decree, custody papers, lease, mortgage, bank book, insurance papers)
- Photos, personal items, jewelry
- Children's favorite toys & blankets—CAR SEATS
- Items with sentimental value
- Pets; make sure that you have proof of ownership. Contact your local domestic violence agency if you need a safe place to take your pets.