

Safety Plan:

Often, writing out your plan helps you regain security and control of your life. Remember, this plan should be used as a guide and a reminder of ways you and your family can increase your safety. This plan should be hidden in a safe place where the abuser is unlikely to find it. It should also be reviewed and updated on a regular basis if the situation or living environment changes.

To begin creating your safety plan, print (*if safe to do so*) and fill out the form(s) below as appropriate to your situation. Keep it in a safe place that the abuser is unlikely to find and refer to it frequently to bring strength when you need it most.

Safety While In an Abusive Relationship:

If violence occurs, or if I am afraid that the violence will be a recurring issue, I can enhance my safety by doing some or all of the following:

When I have to communicate with my partner/abuser in person or by telephone and he (or she) becomes abusive, I can do or say the following:

If my partner becomes violent or abusive, I will try to move to a space that has access to an exit and is nowhere near weapons. Places I can go are:

Try to stay out of areas such as the bathroom, kitchen, and closets.

I will practice how to get out of my home safely. The following doors, windows or exits can be used in an emergency:

I can tell the following people about the past violence and request they call the police if they hear suspicious noises coming from my home:

Name: _____

Phone Number: _____

Name: _____

Phone Number: _____

Name: _____

Phone Number: _____

I will use the following **CODE WORD** or **PHRASE** with my children/family/friends so they can call for help:

If I have to flee right away, this is where I can go and who I can call:

Where I can go: _____

Who I can call: _____

Other things I can do to increase my safety are:

- ⌚ Keep change with me at all times.
(Remember that a monthly bill from a calling card can tell your abuser where you are calling from. Try to use change, a prepaid calling card, or a friend's phone or calling card.)
- ⌚ Keep my cell phone charged.
(Remember that not all cell phone calls can be traced by 911. Be aware of where you are so you can provide your location to police if needed.)

Use your own instinct and judgment. If the situation is very dangerous, consider giving your abuser what he (or she) wants in order to remain safe.

Safety When Preparing to Leave

One of the most dangerous times in a domestic violence relationship is when a victim decides to leave her (his) abuser. Often times, the abuser feels he (or she) has lost control over you and may be willing to do anything to stop you from leaving.

Thus, leaving home must be done with a careful plan in order to increase safety. ***If violence occurs, or if I am afraid that the violence will be a recurring issue, I can enhance my safety by doing some or all of the following:***

If I have to flee right away, this is where I can go and who I can call:

Where I can go: _____

Who I can call: _____

I will use the following **CODE WORD** with my children/family/friends so they can call for help:

I will leave copies of important documents, an extra set of car and/or house keys, money, and extra clothes with:

Name: _____

Phone Number: _____

Name: _____

Phone Number: _____

I will have important phone numbers accessible to my children and myself. The phone nearest to my home is located at:

Other important people and phone numbers I need are:

SafeSpace 24-hour hotline number: **(800) 244-5968**

Name: _____

Number: _____

Name: _____

Number: _____

When I leave I will need to take:

- | | |
|-------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------|
| _____ Identification for myself (driver's license or other) | _____ Social security cards for all family |
| _____ Birth certificates for all family members | _____ School, vaccination, medical records |
| _____ Medications for all family members | _____ Divorce/custody papers |
| _____ Work permits/green card/passports | _____ Money/check book/credit cards |
| _____ Children's favorite toys/blankets | _____ Items of special sentimental value |
| _____ Lease, mortgage documents, deed | _____ House and/or car keys |

While preparing to leave I will remember to:

- Determine the safest place to be if an argument is unavoidable. Choose a room or an area that has access to an exit and NOT in a bathroom, kitchen or anywhere near weapons.
- Practice my escape. Identify the safest accesses available.
- Keep my bag packed. Find a hidden, but accessible, place to keep a bag for a quick exit.
- Know my neighbors. Identify a neighbor who can call the police if they hear a disturbance coming from my home.
- Create an emergency signal. Develop and share a code word that can be used to warn my children, family, friends, and neighbors when I need the police.
- Rely on my instincts. I know better than anyone what my abuser is capable of – I will trust myself.
- Open a bank account in my name with a separate mailing address. This will establish and increase my independence. *(Think of other ways you can increase your independence.)*
- Leave money, extra sets of keys, copies of important documents, and extra clothes with someone I trust. *(While it's likely you'll be able to return home with a police officer to collect your belongings, this strategy will help you quickly escape danger.)*
- Make prior arrangements for my pets and their safety, if possible.
- Remove any necessary documents and/or items from the computer and store them securely on another computer or flash drive.
- Locate the nearest domestic violence center or determine whom I could stay with and/or borrow money from until I am settled.
- Keep the SafeSpace hotline number with me at all times, along with change for the pay phone, a calling card, and/or a cell phone.
- Review my safety plan and revise it often.

Safety after the relationship has ended and/or the abuser is no longer in the home

If my abuser is no longer living in my home, there are several steps I can take to secure myself and family. I can:

- Change the locks, alarm codes, and garage opener codes on my doors as soon as possible. Purchase new or additional locks and safety devices and have them installed to secure the windows.
- Rearrange the furniture in my home.
- If I have moved, I will try to keep my address and phone number confidential.
- Inform my friends and neighbors that I am no longer involved with my abuser and ask them to call the police if they see him (or her) near my house. *(Remind them to keep your address confidential except for the police.)*
- Avoid places my abuser and I frequented.
- Keep a copy of my injunction with me at all times and call the police if he (or she) violates that injunction in any way.
- Discuss our safety plan with my children.
- Inform my children's school, day care, etc., about who has permission to pick them up or inquire about their policies.

Safety at Work and in Public

It's up to you to decide if and when you tell others about your abusive partner. Don't discount the importance of having a system of friends, family, and co-workers available not only for emotional support, but safety and protection as well.

The following are steps I can take to secure myself and family in public and at work:

I can inform the following people at work and ask them to help screen my calls during work hours:

Name: _____ Number: _____

Name: _____ Number: _____

When driving home, if problems occur, I can: _____

If I use public transit, I can: _____

Other routes I can take to get home are: _____

Before I leave my house, I will remember to:

_____ Make sure my cell phone is fully charged

_____ Make sure I have change with me to make phone calls.

_____ Make sure I have a copy of my injunction for protection.

_____ Make sure someone I trust knows where I am and when I will return.

Safety and Emotional Health

Abuse of any kind is exhausting to your entire being and can affect not only your physical health, but your emotional state of mind as well. That's why it's important to surround yourself with people and activities that bring you energy and courage so you can begin the process of building your new life. *I can do some of the following to increase my self-confidence, gain support, and strengthen my relationships with other people.*

Whenever I feel others are trying to control or abuse me, I can tell myself:

To gain support, I can attend workshops and support groups at:

Call SafeSpace at (800) 244-5968 for a listing of support groups near you.

If I feel discouraged and ready to return to a potentially abusive situation, I can:

Other things I can do to help me feel stronger are:
