

Personalized Safety Plan

The following steps represent my plan for increasing my safety and preparing in advance for the possibility for further violence. Although I am not responsible for my partner's violence, I do have a choice about how to respond to him/her and how to best get myself and my children to safety.

STEP1: SAFETY WHEN RETURNING HOME WITH OR WITHOUT PARTNER WHEN MOVING INTO A NEW PLACE AND DURING A VIOLENT INCIDENT.

I can use some or all of the following strategies:

- a) If I need to get out of a dangerous situation, I will _____
(Think about and plan how to get out, i.e.: doors, windows stairwells etc.)
- b) I could park my car facing an exit so I can leave quickly, such as _____ or _____
- c) I can use _____ bus route or _____ as a different route for transportation.
- d) I can keep my purse and car keys ready and keep them _____ so I can leave quickly.
- e) I can trust _____ and _____ to tell about the abuse in case I need help.
- f) I will use _____ as my code word with these people so they can call for help or know that I need help if I answer a call and use that word.
- g) I will use _____ as my code word with my children.
- h) If/When I leave my home I can go _____ or _____ (friends/shelter)
- i) Sometimes arguments end in violence and it is important to stay as safe as possible during that time. There are places in my home that are less safe than others. If I am in and unsafe place during an argument, such as my kitchen and bathroom I can move to a safer place such as _____. I can also go to _____ where there is a phone and lock the door.
- j) When I sense a violent incident is about to happen, I notice the following in my partner's behaviour and words _____ and _____.
- k) I notice in myself _____ and _____. This can trigger me to knowing a violent incident is about to occur. I can leave before violence occurs.
- l) I will practice emergency exiting with my children on _____ (days) to make sure we are well prepared. I will tell my children we practice this in case of emergency such as fire.

STEP 2: Safety When Preparing to Leave:

Women planning to leave an abusive situation must keep their safety in mind. Leaving the relationship is the most dangerous time for an abused woman. Individuals who are abusive often become more abusive and controlling when they sense their partner is about to leave.

- a) I will photocopy all important documents by _____ date.
 - Identification for myself and children
 - School records for the children
 - Money
 - Bank cards, bank book, credit cards, financial documents
 - Prescriptions
 - Lease/rental agreements, separation/divorce documents
 - Immigration/citizenship documents
 - Address book

- b) I will have an extra set of keys cut by _____ (date) and will keep originals at _____ (name) house.
 - House
 - Car
 - Mailbox
 - Safety deposit box
 - Garage

- c) I will open an individual bank account by _____ (date) at _____ (bank). I will keep money in a safe place _____ (place)
- d) I will check with _____ (name) and _____ (name) to see if I can stay with them temporarily in case all the shelters are full.
 - Family
 - Relatives
 - Friends
 - Neighbors

- e) I will gather clothing and extra essential items for myself and the children and pack them in a suitcase and leave it with _____ (name)
 - Special items for the children such as photos, toys, books
 - Extra medication, formula or items for an infant.
 - Medication
 - Other

- f) I will keep the name of (support people) _____ and _____ confidential in case the children tell my partner our plans to leave or he tries to find us once we have left.

- g) I will review my safety plan regularly _____ (weekly/monthly) in order to plan the safest way to leave my home.

ADDITIONAL SAFETY MEASURES WHEN PREPARING TO LEAVE:

- a) If I have been injured, I will go to the doctor or an emergency room and report what happened and ask that they document the visit.
- b) I will have pictures taken of the injuries at the time and 2 or 3 days later, and keep them in a safe place. If I go to the doctor I will ask that they take the pictures and keep them on file.
- c) I will memorize or keep in a safe place the telephone number for at least one shelter.
- d) After calling a shelter or my safe alternative, I will immediately call another number such as 4` or a friend to remove any possibility to trace the call or push redial to see where I have called.
- e) I will keep a journal of violent incidents and visits with the doctor with dates and times or hospital with dates and times.
- f) Record any violent incidents you partner has had with others, dates and times.

STEP 3: SAFETY ONCE I HAVE LEFT THE RELATIONSHIP:

- a) I will change the locks on my doors and windows as soon as possible. I will look under 'Locksmiths' in the phone book by _____ (date) and ask for information on cost and installation.
- b) I will talk to _____ (counselor) about:
 - Having a security system installed for my safety or
 - Wearing a body alarm or
 - A cellular phone connected to 911
- c) I will inform my landlord and/or _____ that my partner no longer lives with us and they should call the police if he/she is seen near my place.
- d) I will teach my children how to use the telephone to make a call to me and to _____ in the event that my partner takes them.
- e) I will tell people who take care of my children which people have permission to pick up my children and whether or not my partner is permitted to. Those I will inform will include:
 - School
 - Daycare staff
 - Babysitter
 - Teacher
 - Others
- f) I can screen my calls using an answering machine, or have my partner's number blocked.
- g) If necessary I will change my phone number. Telus phone number is 310-3100

STEP 4: SAFETY ON THE JOB AND IN PUBLIC:

- a) I will inform my boss (if safe to do so) by _____ (date) and _____ at work of my situation.

- b) When leaving work/school I will call _____ and let them know I am leaving. I will walk out with _____.
- c) If I use public transit I can use it at the busy time of the day. I can also change the times and or route of travel to _____ if I suspect my partner will be watching me.
- d) If I drive my own car I will park in well lit areas and I will back into parking spots for easy escape. When returning to the car I will check the back seat.
- e) I will carry a personal alarm with me when I leave the house or my office or school
- f) I will use different grocery stores, malls and banks to vary my routine.

STEP 5: SAFETY WITH A RESTRAINING ORDER OR NO CONTACT ORDER

- a) I will keep a copy of the Restraining order/No contact order with _____(relative, friend, safety deposit box)
- b) I will call the police if my partner attempts to contact me.
- c) I will let _____ and _____ know that I have the order and they should contact the police if he contacts them to find me.
- d) I will call the police if my partner attempts to contact me.
- e) I will carry a copy of the order at all times.

STEP 6: SAFETY AND MY EMOTIONAL HEALTH

- a) Whether or not I choose to return to my partner, I will remind myself my feelings are important and I always deserve to be treated with respect and dignity.
- b) When I have to talk with my partner in person or by phone I will _____ and _____ to protect myself emotionally.
- c) I will end the conversation in _____ occurs.
- d) I can remind myself “_____” when I think others are trying to control or abuse me. (I have a right to make my own choices; I can control my own actions.)
- e) I can do _____ and _____ to help me feel emotionally stronger anytime.
- f) I can call _____ and/or _____ to talk to when I need support.
- g) I can use my journal to write about an event or feelings.

OTHER THINGS TO CONSIDER

- a) If necessary, to protect yourself consider giving the abusive person what he/she wants during an incident to calm him/her down until you can get to safety.
- b) Have several different reasons why you need to leave the house at different times of the day and night.
- c) Trust your instincts and judgments when feeling unsafe.
- d) If you have children, tell them that violence is never right, even when someone they love is being violent. Explain to them it is not your fault or their fault that the abuse happening. Develop a safety plan with each of your children.
- e) Decide what to do if your children find out you are planning to leave and they tell your partner.

- f) Avoid wearing scarves or necklaces that could be used to choke you.
- g) If possible, stay away from rooms where weapons are kept.
- h) Consider getting new job skills such as upgrading, computer, trades, others.
- i) Pay attention to your surroundings. Know where the exits are and where there is a phone.
- j) If you need to buy an answering machine, check second hand stores.
- k) By participating in community activities you may decrease any sense of isolation and meet new people.
- l) If you need to serve your partner with legal papers, ask someone you trust to do it or look under the yellow pages for "process servers."