
Safety Plan for Adult Victims of Abuse

Safety during a violent incident:

- A. If I need to leave my home, I will go _____.
- B. I can tell _____ (neighbors) about the violence and request they call the police if they hear suspicious noises coming from my house.
- C. During an argument, I will go to a room or area that has access to an exit and not in a bathroom (near hard surfaces), a kitchen (knives), or anywhere near weapons.
- D. I can teach my children how to use the telephone to contact the police.
- E. I will use my code word and share it with people I trust so that someone can call for help if I need it.
- F. I can keep my purse/car keys ready at _____ (place), in order to leave quickly.
- G. I will use my judgment and intuition. If the situation is very serious, I may choose to give my partner what he/she wants for the time to calm him/her down. I have to protect myself until I/we are out of danger.

Safety when preparing to leave:

- A. I will keep copies of important documents, keys, clothes and money at _____ (location).
- B. I will open an independent savings account by _____ (date), to increase my independence.
- C. Other things I can do to increase my independence include:
 - D. I can keep change for phone calls on me at all times. I understand that if I use my telephone credit card, the telephone bill will show my partner those numbers that I called after I leave.
 - E. I will check with _____ to see who would be able to let me stay with them or lend me some money.
 - F. If I plan to leave, I won't tell my abuser in advance face-to-face, but I will call or leave a note from a safe place.

Safety in my own residence:

- A. I can change the locks on my doors and windows as soon as possible.
- B. I can replace wooden doors with steel/metal doors.
- C. I can install additional locks, window bars, poles to wedge against doors, as well as electronic systems and other devices.
- D. I can install motion lights outside.
- E. I will teach my children how to make a collect call if my partner takes the children.
- F. I will tell people who take care of my children that my partner is not permitted to pick up my children.
- G. I can inform _____ (neighbor) that my partner no longer resides with me and they should call the police if he is observed near my residence.

Safety with a protection order:

- A. If I have a protection (restraining) order, I will always carry a certified copy with me and keep a photocopy.
- B. I will give my protection order to police departments in the community where I work and live.
- C. I can get my protection order to specify and describe all guns my partner may own and authorize a search for removal.

If you are currently being abused:

Is someone hitting or threatening you—a spouse, boyfriend, lover, relative, or someone you know? Have you been sexually abused by someone you know? As you read this, you may be feeling confused, frightened, sad, angry or ashamed.

You are not alone!

Unfortunately, what happened to you is very common. Domestic violence does not go away on its own. It tends to get worse and more frequent with time. There are people who can help you. If you want to begin talking about the problem, need a safe place to stay, or want legal advice, call one of the agencies listed on the back of this instruction sheet today.

While still at the clinic:

- Think about whether it is safe to return home. If not, call one of the resources listed on the back of this instruction sheet or stay with a friend or relative.
- You have received instructions on caring for your injuries and taking medications prescribed for you. Remember, if you have received tranquilizers they may help you rest, but they won't solve the problem of battering.
- Battering is a crime and you have the right to legal intervention. You should consider calling the police for assistance (see information on back of this sheet). You may also obtain a court order prohibiting your partner from contacting you in any way (including in person or by phone). Contact a local DV program or an attorney for more information.
- Ask the doctor or nurse to take photos of your injuries to become part of your medical record.

When you get home:

- Develop an "exit plan" in advance for you and your children. Know exactly where you could go even in the middle of the night—and how to get there.
- Pack an "overnight bag" in case you have to leave home in a hurry. Either hide it yourself or give it to a friend to keep for you.
- Pack toilet articles, medications, an extra set of keys to the house and car, an extra set of clothing for you and your children, and a toy for each child.
- Have extra cash, loose change for phone calls, checkbook, or savings account book hidden or with a friend.
- Pack important papers and financial records (the originals or copies), such as social security cards, birth certificates, green cards, passports, work authorization and any other immigration documents, voter registration cards, medical cards and records, drivers license, rent receipts, title to the car and proof of insurance, etc.
- Notify your neighbors if you think it is safe.

Adapted from *Identifying and Responding to Domestic Violence: Consensus Recommendations for Child and Adolescent Health* Available at:
<http://www.endabuse.org/programs/healthcare/files/Pediatric.pdf>