



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 do not have control over 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.

Safety during a violent incident. Women cannot always avoid violent incidents. In order to increase safety, women may use a variety of strategies. I can use some or all of the following strategies:

A. If I decide to leave, I will _____. (Practice how to get out safely. What doors, windows, elevators, stairwells, or fire escapes would I use?)

B. I can keep my purse and car keys ready and put them _____ (place) in order to leave quickly.

C. I can tell _____ about the violence and request they call the police if they hear suspicious noises coming from my house.

D. I can teach my children how to use the telephone to contact the police and the fire department. (Be careful about placing responsibility on children.)

E. I will use _____ as my code word with my children or my friends so they can call for help.

F. If I have to leave my home, I will go _____. (Decide this even if I do not think there will be a next time.) If I cannot go to the location above, then I can go to _____ or _____.

G. When I expect we are going to have an argument, I will try to move to a space that has fewer risks, such as _____. (Try to avoid arguments in the bathroom, garage, kitchens, near weapons, or in rooms without access to an outside door.)

H. I will use my judgment and intuition. If the situation is very serious, I can give my partner what he/she wants to calm him/her down. I have to protect myself until I/we are out of danger.

Safety when preparing to leave. Risk of harm and violence often escalates when a woman decides to leave an abusive relationship. I can use some or all of the following strategies:

A. I will leave money and an extra set of keys with _____ so I can leave quickly.

B. I will keep copies of important documents or keys at _____.

C. To increase my independence, I will open an individual savings account by _____ (date), or I will find a safe place to hide cash.

D. Other things I can do to increase my independence include:

E. Battered Women's Support Services number is 604-687-1867. I can seek a transition house by calling Victim Link 1-800-563-0808. I will call ahead of time to find out the procedure for admission to the transition house.

F. I will check with _____ and _____ to see who would be able to let me stay with them or lend me some money.

G. I can leave extra clothes with _____.

H. I will sit down and review my safety plan every _____ (no more than six weeks) in order to plan the safest way to leave the residence.
_____ (an advocate or friend) has agreed to help me review this plan.

I. I will rehearse my escape plan and, as appropriate, practice it with my children.

J. If and/when I leave I will take all my children with me.

Safety in my own residence. There are many things that a woman can do to increase her safety; these measures can be added step by step. Safety measures I can use include:

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 security systems including additional locks, window bars (not generally recommended due to fire escape hazards), poles to wedge against doors, an electronic system, etc.

D. I can purchase rope ladders ("fire ladders" are available from hardware and discount stores) to be used for escape from second floor windows.

E. I can install smoke detectors and purchase fire extinguishers for each floor in my house/apartment.

F. I can install an outside lighting system that lights up when a person is coming close to my house (motion detectors).

G. I will teach my children how to use the telephone to make a collect call to me and to _____ (friend/family/other) in the event that my partner takes the children.

H. I will tell people who take care of my children which people have permission to pick up my children and that my partner is not permitted to do so. Some will require a court order. The people I will inform about pick -up include:
_____ (school), _____ (day care staff), _____ (babysitter), _____ (teacher), and _____ (others such as neighbors).

Safety with a Protective Order. I recognize that I may need to ask the police and the courts to enforce my Protective Order. The following are some steps that I can take to help the enforcement of my Protective Order:

A. I will keep my Protective Order (and/or probation orders or other such legal documents) _____ (location). (Always keep it on or near my person. If I change purses that is the first thing that should go in it.)

B. The telephone number for the Crown Counsel and local law enforcement agency is _____.

C. I can call Battered Women's Support Services if I am not sure about protection orders, or if I have some problems with my Protective Order. The number to call is 604-687-1867.

D. I will inform my employer, my closest friend, and _____ (other) that I have a Protective Order in effect. (I may give them copies, too.)

E. If my partner violates the Protective Order, I can call the police and report a violation, contact the Crown Counsel, and/or call my advocate. (Make sure it gets documented!!!)
If the police do not help, I can contact my advocate or Watch Commander at the Police Department to file a complaint. My advocate's name is _____ and phone number is _____. The Crown Counsel's name is _____ and phone number is _____.

Safety on the job and in public. Each woman must decide if and when she will tell others that her partner has battered her and that she may be at continued risk. Friends, family, and coworkers can help to protect women. Each woman should consider carefully which people to invite to help secure her safety. I might do any or all of the following:

A. I can inform my boss, the security supervisor, and _____
(other) at work of my situation.

B. I can ask _____ to help screen my telephone calls at work.

C. When leaving work, I can _____.

D. When driving home, if problems occur, I
can _____.

E. If I use public transit, I can _____.

F. I can use different grocery stores and shopping malls to conduct my business and shop at hours that are different from those hours in which I shopped when I resided with my battering partner.

G. I will always remember to be careful and watchful of my surroundings.

Safety and drug or alcohol use. The use of any alcohol or other drugs can reduce a woman's awareness and ability to act quickly to protect herself. Furthermore, the use of alcohol or other drugs by the batterer may give him/her an excuse to use violence. Therefore, in the context of drug or alcohol use, a woman needs to make specific safety plans. If drug or alcohol use has occurred in my relationship, I can enhance my safety by doing some or all of the following:

A. If I am going to use, I can do so in a safe place and with people who understand the risk of violence and are committed to my safety.

B. I can also _____.

C. If my partner is using, I can _____.

D. To safeguard my children, I might _____ and
_____.

Safety and my emotional health. The experience of violence is usually exhausting and emotionally draining. The process of building a new life for myself takes MUCH COURAGE AND INCREDIBLE ENERGY. To conserve my emotional energy and resources and to avoid hard emotional times, I can do some of the following:

A. If I feel down and ready to return to a potentially abusive situation, I can
_____ and
_____.

B. When I have to communicate with my partner in person or by telephone, I can
_____ and
_____.

C. I can try to use "I can ..." statements with myself and to be assertive with others.

D. I can tell myself "_____ " whenever I feel others are trying to control me.

E. I can read _____ to help me feel stronger.

F. I can call _____,
_____, and _____ as other resources to be of support to me.

G. Other things I can do to help myself feel stronger are
_____ and
_____.

H. I can take care of myself by
_____.

I. I can attend workshops and support groups at Battered Women's Support Services or
_____, or
_____ to gain support and strengthen my relationships with other people.

Items to take when leaving. When I leave, I should take:

Identification for myself such as birth certificate, immigration documentation, passport
Children's birth certificates, passports
Social Insurance cards, medical records (all family members)
School and vaccination records, insurance papers
Driver's license and vehicle registration
Money Marriage/divorce certificates
Cheque book, ATM card, address book
Credit cards, picture IDs
Keys: House, car, office
Medications
Children's favorite toys and/or blankets, items of special sentimental value