

Safety Plan



**Victim Services Contact Numbers
519-376-9852 or Toll Free: 1-866-376-9852**



Our Mission Statement:

“In partnership with emergency services, community agencies and the people we serve, we provide assistance to victims of crime and tragic circumstance, develop partnerships designed to enhance support to victims, and educate & promote awareness regarding victimization.”

Safety Plan

In order to increase safety, having a list of safety strategies can be helpful. Actually working through the safety plan may also be beneficial. This outline contains tips to heighten your awareness, and if followed, may assist in reducing risks to you, your family, and home.

Clean up the neighborhood!

Involve everyone.

***Let criminals know that you do care
about where you live!***

Introduction

It is important to know that although you do not have control over your (ex) partner's violence, it is possible to increase your own, as well as your children's, safety when being subjected to this abuse. Creating a safety plan involves identifying action steps to increase your safety, and to prepare in advance for the possibility of further violence. This information package offers many suggestions and ideas that we hope you will find useful. However, don't try to do everything right away. Take it a step at a time, and start with the ideas that seem most doable for you.

An assessment tool is available at www.mosaicmethod.com. The MOSAIC Threat Assessment Systems can organize details and help you assess your situation, identify your risk and identify a safety plan. It is a computer-assisted assessment method that organizes and expresses research and expert opinion and applies it to individual assessments. The system is designed to enhance the safety and well-being of victims. It is a free service that takes approximately one hour to complete.

It is important to become familiar with and to review and/or revise your safety plan regularly. Abusive situations and risk factors can change quickly.

I will keep this document in a safe place and out of the reach of my abusive partner.

I will review my Safety Plan on

(date): _____

Updated: _____

Updated: _____

If you need help in filling out this Plan you may ask the local shelter staff, Victim Services, or a close and trusted friend.

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An Emergency Escape Plan

The Emergency Escape Plan focuses on the things you can do in advance to be better prepared in case you have to leave an abusive situation very quickly.

- Contact your local police service, Victim Services (1-866-376-9852). Let the staff know that you intend to leave an abusive situation and ask for support in safety planning. When talking to police, ask for an officer who specializes in abuse cases (information shared with the police may result in charges being laid against the abuser).
- Request a police escort or ask a friend, neighbor or family member to accompany you when you leave.
- Do not tell your partner you are leaving. Leave quickly.
- If you are injured, go to a doctor, emergency room or a clinic and report what happened to you. Ask them to document your visit.
- Have a back-up plan if your partner finds out where you are going.
- Consult a lawyer. Keep any evidence of physical abuse, such as photos. Keep a journal of all violent incidents, noting dates, events, threats and any witnesses.
- Arrange for someone to care for your pets temporarily, until you get settled. A shelter may help with this.
- Remember to clear your phone of the last number you called to avoid the abuser utilizing redial.

List of Items

The following is a list of items you should try to set aside and hide in a safe place (i.e. at a friend's or family member's home, with your lawyer, in a safety deposit box).

An Emergency Escape Plan

Take a photocopy of the following items and store in a safe place, away from the originals. Hide the originals someplace else, if you can.

- Passports, birth certificates, immigration papers, for all family members
- School and vaccination records
- Driver's license and registration
- Medications, prescriptions, medical records for all family members
- Social Services identification
- Work permits
- Divorce papers, custody documentation, court orders, restraining orders, marriage certificate
- Lease/rent agreement, house deed, mortgage payment book
- Bank books
- Insurance papers
- Address/telephone book
- Picture of spouse/partner
- Health cards for yourself and family members
- All cards you normally use i.e. credit cards, bank cards, phone, social insurance

Try to keep all the cards you normally use in your wallet:

- Social insurance cards
- Charge cards
- Phone cards
- Banking cards
- Health cards

Try to keep your wallet/purse handy, and containing the following:

- Car/house/office keys
- Cheque book, bank books/statements
- Driver's license, registration, insurance
- Address/telephone book
- Picture of spouse/partner
- Emergency money (in cash) hidden away

Keep the following items handy, so you can grab them quickly:

- Emergency suitcase with immediate needs
- Special toys, comforts for children
- Jewelry
- Small saleable objects
- Items of special sentimental value
- A list of other items you would like to take if you get a chance to come back to your home later

Things you can do:

- Open a bank account in your own name and arrange that no bank statements or other calls be made to you. Or, arrange that mail be sent to a friend or family member.
- Changing address with Canada Post – make arrangements for notice NOT to come to your present address
- Save and set aside as much money as you can – out of groceries if necessary
- Set aside, in a place you can get to quickly, \$10 to \$15 for cab fare, and change for telephone calls
- Plan your emergency exits. Think about safe areas of the

An Emergency Escape Plan

house where there are no weapons and where there are at least two ways to escape.

- Plan and rehearse the steps you will take if you have to leave quickly, and learn them well
- Decide and plan for where you will go if you have to leave home even if you don't think you will need to
- If the situation is very dangerous, use your own instinct and judgement to keep yourself safe. Call the police as soon as it is safe to do so.
- Hide extra clothing, house keys, car keys, money, etc. at a friend's house
- Keep an emergency suitcase packed or handy/ready to pack quickly
- Consider getting a safety deposit box at a bank that your partner does not go to

In some circumstances arrangements can be made to have the police bring you back to the home later, to remove additional personal belongings, if it is arranged through the local division. Take the items listed above as well as anything else that is important to you or your children.

When you leave, take the children if you can. If you try to get them later, the police cannot help you remove them from their other parent unless you have a valid court order signed and directed by a judge.

Always remember:

You have the right not to be abused in your relationship, either physically, emotionally or sexually!

*"Courage is like a muscle.
We strengthen it with use."*

Ruth Gordon

My Personal Safety Plan

My Personal Safety Plan

Name: _____

Date: _____

1. If I decide to leave, I will

(Practice how to get out safely. What doors, windows, elevators, stairwells or fire escapes would you use?)

2. I can keep my wallet/purse and car keys ready and put them
(place) _____

3. I can tell _____ (friend, family member, neighbor) about the violence and ask them to call the police if they hear loud noises, yelling or screaming, slamming of doors, gun shots, squealing tires, breaking glass, coming from my house or if they can't locate me.

I can also tell _____
about the violence and request they call the police if they hear suspicious noises coming from my house or if they can't locate me.

My Personal Safety Plan

4. I can teach my children how to use the telephone to contact the police and the fire department. I will use _____ as my code with my children or my friends so they can call for help.
5. If I have to leave my home, I will go _____

(Make a plan even if you don't think there will be a next time.)
If I cannot go to the location above, then I can go to _____

-
6. I can also teach some of these plans or ideas to some/all of my children.
7. When my partner is becoming upset, when I feel unsafe or expect we are going to have an argument, I will try to move to a space that is safer for me, such as _____

Try to avoid arguments in the bathroom, garage, kitchen, near weapons or in rooms without access to an outside door.

8. I will use my judgement and intuition. I have to protect myself until I/we are out of danger.
9. If I am being forced to have sex, I may need to fight back. I can help protect myself - I yell; I say "No" or "don't"; choose not to fight; ask him to use a condom.

10. If I have been sexually assaulted I should do the following if I want to report the assault to the police. If I choose not to call police, I should still go to the hospital or doctor for a medical check.

I can take _____
with me for support.

- Do not take a shower or bath**
- Keep all of the clothing that I was wearing at the time that I was assaulted**
- Do not clean up the house or apartment.**
- Go to the hospital:**
- Call the police – if I want to.**

Safety When Preparing To Leave

Safety When Preparing To Leave

1. I will leave money and an extra set of house or car keys
_____ so I can leave quickly.
2. I will keep copies of important papers (see List of Items to Take on page 1).
3. I will open a bank account at a bank that my partner does not use by _____ (date) to increase my independence.
4. Other things I can do to help myself:
 - Look for a job
 - Think about moving to another town
 - Talk to a lawyer about my rights
 - Hide money
 - Keep change
 - Purchase/keep a cell phone or Quick Change card (an anonymous phone card) with me at all times to make private emergency phone calls. I will check with the phone service to make sure that the last number I have called cannot be accessed by my partner._____

- I can keep change for telephone calls on me at all times or buy a pre-paid telephone card. I understand that if I use my telephone credit card, the following month the telephone bill will tell my abusive partner those numbers that I called after I

left. To keep my telephone calls private, I must either use coins or I might get a friend to permit me to use their telephone credit card for a limited time when I first leave.

5. Telephone numbers I need to know

Parents _____

Friend _____

Lawyer _____

Supervisor _____

Minister _____

Other _____

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

7. I can leave extra clothes with _____

8. I will sit down and review my safety plan every _____ (days/weeks/months) in order to plan the safest way to leave the home.

(Victim Services/Shelter worker or friend) has agreed to help me review this plan.

9. I will practice my escape plan and, if necessary, practice it with my children.

Safety in My Own Home

Safety in My Own Home

1. I will teach my children how to use the telephone to make a collect call to me or to _____ (friend/minister/other) in the event that my abusive partner takes the children. I will teach my children how to dial 9-1-1.
2. I will tell people who take care of my children which people have permission to pick up my children and that my abusive partner is not permitted to do so. I can set up a code word to be used by the people who have permission to pick up my children. Only these people and my caregiver will have this code. The people I will inform about pick-up permission include:

School _____
Dare Care _____
Staff _____

Babysitter _____
Sunday _____
School Teacher _____
Coach/ _____
Instructor _____

Teacher _____

Others _____
I can tell various people (neighbor, pastor)

_____ or _____
that my abusive partner no longer lives with me and they should call the police if he/she is seen near my home.

3. I can buy a dog.

Security - At Home

There are many things you can do to increase your safety. It may not be possible to do everything at once. But safety measures can be added step by step. Here are a few suggestions:

At Home:

(a) If you ARE living with your abusive partner/spouse:

- Tell someone you trust about the abuse
- Tell your children that it is never right, even when someone they love is being abusive. Tell them the abuse isn't your fault or their fault; they did not cause it, and neither did you. Teach them it is important to keep safe when there is abuse.
- Get your Emergency Escape Plan in order and review it with a counsellor in order to plan the safest way to leave your abuser
- Make sure all weapons and ammunition are locked safely away, according to the Firearms Act, or are removed from your home
- Create a telephone list with numbers of local police, Victim Services, nearest shelter, assaulted women's help line, crisis help line, family members, counsellors, children's friends
- Make arrangements with friends or family so that you can stay with them if necessary
- Try to predict the next likely violent episode and make plans for the children to be sent to friends, family, etc. Think about your partner's use and level of force. This will help you predict what type of danger you and your children are facing and when to leave.
- Don't wear scarves or long jewelry as they could be used to assist in strangulation

Security - At Home

- Teach the children to let you know when someone is at the door, before answering the door
- Teach your children how to use the telephone (and your cellular phone, if you have one) to contact the police and the fire department
- Create a code word with your children and/or friends so they know to call for help
- Teach your children how to make a collect call to you and to a special friend if your partner takes the children
- Plan your emergency exits, teach your children and know them well
- Don't run to a place where the children are as your partner may hurt them as well
- Teach your children their own Safety Plan
- Identify a neighbor you can tell about the violence and ask that they call the police if they hear a disturbance coming from your home

"The most common way people give up their power is by thinking they don't have any."

Alice Walker

(b) If you ARE NOT living with your abusive partner/spouse:

- If you are comfortable doing so, contact the police and ask them to assist you in staying safe by accompanying you when you return to the home to collect your personal belongings. If you are not comfortable involving the police, request that someone else accompany you.
- Attempt to find housing (even if temporary) that has adequate security: in a location that cannot be easily

accessed from the street, with doors with locks, locked front entranceway, etc.

- Consider living with someone else or in a shelter for a short time.
- If you are staying in your home, change the locks on doors.
- Install security measures such as additional locks, window bars, poles to wedge against doors, etc. Security can be increased by blocking sliding windows and placing barriers under door handles.
- If your partner follows you, go to a place where there are people.
- If you live in the same neighbourhood as your ex, or hang out with the same group of people, tell the people who you trust that you have left the relationship due to safety concerns. Tell them what you want them to do if they see your ex approach you. Don't be ashamed to ask for help or support. Your ex may be less likely to intimidate, threaten or abuse you in the presence of others. Refuse to be alone with your ex.
- Change your schedule. Don't travel the same route each day. Change your appointment times, stay at a different shelter, or request that your services be transferred to another office.
- Inform any service providers that you have left a violent relationship and provide a description of your ex.
- Teach your children how to call 9-1-1 and how to make a collect call to you and to a trusted family member or friend, in the event of any emergency.
- Tell people who take care of your children (including their school), which people have permission to pick up the children. If you have a protection order, give a copy of it to

Security - At Home

the people who care for your children, especially if it has conditions regarding the safety of your children.

- Inform your neighbours that your ex-partner no longer lives with you and ask them to call the police if they see him or her.
- Keep a copy of any protection orders with you at all times. If you call the police to enforce it, they will ask to see a copy.
- Inform necessary people that you have a protection order, i.e. friends, children's schools, childcare.

Your House

- Lock patio doors and windows
- Ensure all doors have a secure lock
- Install a security system
- Trim bushes and hedges for a clear view of any suspicious activity
- Close and lock garage doors-use an electric garage door lock
- High fences are good for privacy for burglars too
- Have a good lighting system-lights triggered by motion work well-lights on a timer develop a pattern
- Post your 911 number clearly on your house or at the end of the lane
- Post the fire department number or 911 number at each telephone
- Provide clear, concise directions to your property at each telephone for a caller to refer to in an emergency situation
- Make all areas and buildings accessible to emergency vehicles to avoid delays once they arrive

Security - In the Neighbourhood

- Keep laneways clear of snow in the winter
- Have battery lanterns available and accessible
- Keep important papers and documents in a safe place and ensure someone, other than yourself, is aware of this safe place
- Maintain all-purpose fire extinguishers in the residence and in the garage. Install a smoke detector system
- Keep lawns and gardens maintained in summer

In the Neighbourhood

- Tell your neighbours that you would like them to call the police if they hear a fight or screaming in your home
- Tell people who take care of your children which people have permission to pick up your children
- Tell people in your neighbourhood that your partner no longer lives with you, and they should call the police if he/she is seen near your home. You may wish to give them a photo and description of him/her and of the vehicle they drive.
- Ask your neighbours to look after your children in an emergency
- Hide clothing and your Emergency Escape Plan items at a neighbour's house

Security - In the Neighbourhood

- Use different grocery stores and shopping malls, and shop at hours that are different from when you were living with your abusive partner
- Use Internet banking or use a different bank or branch, and take care of your banking at hours different from those you used with your abusive partner
- Change your doctor, dentist and other professional services you would normally use
- Do not put your name in your apartment building directory

Your Neighbourhood

- Inform a trusted neighbor of any departure and return dates (do not broadcast the fact that you will be away)
- If possible, cancel deliveries or arrange for papers and mail to be picked up
- Arrange for someone to check your home on a regular basis (there is no insurance coverage if you do not have someone check your premises if left vacant more than 72 hours)
- Have a neighbor park a vehicle in your driveway when away
- Arrange to have your lawn cut or walkways/laneways cleared of snow
- Crooks can find a spare key hidden in an obvious spot. Give a spare key to a trusted friend/neighbor.

Security - Your Family & You

Your Family & You

- If you return home and suspect someone is in your home, do not enter. Call the police immediately.
- If you notice a suspicious loiterer, play it safe and call the police
- Know or have access to local telephone numbers i.e. 911, police, crisis center, poison control centre
- If possible, carry a cell phone for emergencies
- Teach children to call the police
- Practice and review safety plans regularly with children:

Fire Safety:

- * Smoke alarms should be checked often to ensure they're working
- * Review and practice an escape plan
- * Set up a designated meeting area
- * Leave the house right away and do NOT go back in
- * Get out first, THEN call the fire department from a nearby house or building

Keeping Your Children Safe:

- * Inform school of pick-up permission for children if necessary
 - * Practice with children how to phone for emergency help and what they will say
 - * Ensure they know their full name, phone number and address
- Be alert for any suspicious persons
 - A family dog is one of the least expensive but most effective alarm systems

Security - Your Family & You

- Join your local Neighborhood Watch, or if there isn't one in your area, start your own
- Positively identify callers before opening doors
- Any written or telephone threat should be treated as legitimate, and must be checked out
- Be alert for any unusual packages, boxes, or devices found on the premises. Do not disturb such objects, instead call the authorities.
- Prepare a Last Will & Testament and Power of Attorney; advise your Executor (person you have appointed to represent you on your behalf) of the whereabouts of your legal papers
- Identify and maintain a log of your valuables
- Know the whereabouts of all family members at all times
- Children should be accompanied to school or bus stops
- Routes taken and time spent walking should be varied
- Require identification of all repairmen and salesmen prior to permitting them entry into the residence

NOTES

Security - At Work

At Work

- You must decide for yourself if, and/or when you will tell others that your partner is abusive and that you may be at risk. Friends, family and co-workers may be able to help protect you. Employers are obligated under Bill 168 to protect the safety of victims when they know domestic violence has entered the workplace. However, you should consider carefully which people to ask for help. If you are comfortable, you may choose to do any or all of the following:
 - Tell your boss, the security supervisor, and other key people or friends at work about your situation.
 - Ask to have your calls screened at work. It would also help to have these calls documented.
 - Discuss the possibility of having your employer call the police if you are in danger from your (ex) partner

When arriving or leaving work:

- Let someone know when you'll be home
- Carry your keys in your hands
- Get a remote or keyless entry car door opener
- Walk with someone to your car
- Scan the parking lot
- Walk around your car, look under the hood and check if anything has been tampered with and check brakes.
- Remember to keep your car seats forward, so you know if someone is hiding in the car.
- If your partner is following you, drive to a police or fire station. Sound the horn to attract attention.

Security - At Work

- If you have underground parking, consider parking across the street.
- Keep a sign in your car saying "CALL POLICE"
- If you are walking, take a route that is populated
- Change the patterns of when you arrive and leave work and the routes you take home
- If you see your partner on the street, try to get to a public place, i.e. a store
- If you see your partner on the street, call attention to yourself and request help

*"What everyone wants from life
is continuous and genuine happiness."*

Baruch Spinoza

- Establish key and lock control. If keys possessed by terminated employees are not retrieved, change the locks.
- Park in secured and well lit area if available
- Park close to the entrance of your building, and talk with security, the police, or a manager if you fear an assault at work
- Be aware of anyone possibly following you to or from work
- Ask security or other employees to escort you to and from your car or public transportation
- Central reception should handle visitors and packages. Do not accept any package unless you personally ordered the item.
- Inform employer, security, supervisor or a person of your choice of any suspicious people, parcels, and packages that do not belong in the area

- Save any threatening emails or voicemail messages
- Have your calls screened, transfer harassing calls to security, or remove your name and number from automated phone directories
- Identify an emergency contact person if the employer is unable to contact you
- Make sure your employer is aware of court orders such as custody orders, peace bonds or restraining orders that forbid a harasser from being near or contacting you at your workplace
- Accept other supports (friends, neighbors, family members) who can help support you when stress/depression/anxiety levels are high

Security - Your Vehicle

Vehicle Security

- Park vehicles in well-lit areas. Do not patronize parking lots where car doors must be left unlocked and keys surrendered, otherwise surrender only the ignition key. All items to be placed in, or removed from your vehicle only in your presence
- Equip the gas tank with a locking gas cap
- Visually check the front and rear passenger compartments before entering the vehicle
- Select a reliable service station for vehicle service
- Keep doors locked while vehicle is in use
- Be alert for vehicles that appear to be following you
- When travelling by vehicle, plan ahead. Know the locations of police, fire stations and hospitals
- Use a different schedule and route of travel each day. If followed, drive to a police or fire station. Sound the horn to attract attention.
- Do not stop to assist a stranded motorist, instead call for help on their behalf.
- Never leave your house keys with parking attendants
- In case of vehicle trouble, lock yourself in, turn on the 4-way flashers, display a "Call Police" sign, or if you have a cell phone, call for assistance, and wait for help.
- Ensure that your vehicle is well maintained, mechanically fit, and roadworthy.

*A professional can steal your vehicle in just 30 seconds –
without the key.*

PREVENT THE OCCURRENCE OF CRIMES
BY REDUCING OPPORTUNITIES

Safety Planning in Rural Areas

Safety Planning in Rural Areas

While escaping violence in larger communities or cities you may have access to a variety of services and programs, in small towns there may be limited resources available.

If you are from a rural community, take a few minutes to answer the questions below to add to your safety plan:

Is there a safe haven in town – a local business or agency where you could go to make calls?

Where is the nearest community that has a Crisis Shelter or First Nations Shelter?

Is there someone who can give you a ride to the community (remember that hitchhiking can increase your risk for other forms of violence)?

Who can you call for help?

(Victim Services of Bruce Grey Perth 1-866-376-9852)

Is there a safe place in the nearest town that you could make a call from if you couldn't call from home?

Safety Planning in Rural Areas

- Is it possible for you to stay safe from your abuser and still live in your home community? Remember that in remote or rural areas, vehicles are easily recognized, and your activities can be reported to the abuser.
-
-

Safe transportation is often hard to find in rural and remote areas where you may have to travel long distances to access services and safety. You may be forced to hitchhike.

If you are planning to hitchhike, prepare a travel card and give it to family or friends before you leave your community. The travel card should include your full name, date of birth, hair/eye colour, height, weight, description of tattoos/birthmarks/scars, description of your clothing or any items you are wearing (purse, etc.), destination, estimated date/time of departure and arrival, contact person from your community and your destination and a message with instructions of what to do if you do not arrive at your destination.

If you have to leave your community to access medical services, contact the office where you have an appointment and ask if transportation, accommodations or travel vouchers are available to you.

Safety with a Restraining Order

Safety with a Restraining Order

- Keep your restraining order with you at all times. Leave extra copies at work, with a friend, in your car, etc.
- Call the police if your partner breaks the court order.
- Think of alternative ways to keep safe if the police do not respond right away.
- Inform family, friends and neighbours that you have a restraining order in effect.
- Try to avoid places in the community your abuser may frequent.

If You are a Teen in a Violent Dating Relationship

- If things in your relationship don't feel right to you, talk about it with someone you trust.
- Decide which friend, teacher or relative you can go to in an emergency.
- Contact the police or Victim Services to learn how to obtain a restraining order and make a safety plan.

Always remember:

*You should never feel afraid in your relationship.
NO MEANS NO!*

*"You move totally away from reality
when you believe
that there is a legitimate reason to suffer."*

Byron Katie

Safety with a Court Order

Safety With a Court Order

(Peace Bond, Release/Bail Conditions, Recognizance with Conditions, Conditions of Probation Order or Family Court Restraining Order)

1. I will get a copy of my partner's court order from the court office located at _____ or I can call the Victim/Witness Assistance Program to help me get a copy.
2. I will keep copies of all court orders with me at all times and I will keep additional copies at _____

If I change my purse/wallet the court order is the first thing that should go in.

3. If my partner destroys my copy of his/her court order, I can get another certified copy from the court located at _____

(court that issued the order). There will be a cost for obtaining certified copies of the court order(s).

4. If I move to another city/town; if I work in a city/town other than where I reside or if I frequently visit family or friends in another city/town I will notify the Police Service/OPP Detachment in that city/town of my new address/work location, etc. of my partner's violent behavior and the details of his/her court order.

5. I can ask that my restraining order be registered in the Canadian Police Information Computer (CPIC). I can check to make sure that my order is registered and renewed as required.
6. I will inform my employer

my closest friend _____
my advocate at the local shelter

that a court order has been issued against my partner, including all of the conditions that affect my children and myself.

7. If I have questions about any court order and its conditions, I can call the local shelter or the Victim/Witness Assistance Program for assistance.

Safety During a Violent Incident

Safety During a Violent Incident

You cannot always avoid violent incidents. However, in order to increase your safety, here are some things you can do.

- Remind yourself that you have an Emergency Escape Plan, and go over it in your mind
- Start to position yourself to get out quickly or near a phone so you can call 9-1-1, if necessary
- Try to move to a space where the risk is the lowest. Try to avoid arguments in the bathroom, garage, kitchen, near weapons, or in rooms without access to an outside door.
- Use your code word with your children so they can call for help
- Use your judgement and intuition – try and de-escalate the situation – you may even agree with your partner or give him/her what he/she wants until you are out of danger.
- When, or after, you have been assaulted, call the police at 9-1-1 if you can. Tell them you have been assaulted by a man/woman and leave the phone off the hook after your call.
- Make as much noise as possible – set off the fire alarm, break things, turn up the stereo or TV – to alert others who may call for help on your behalf

*We need 4 hugs a day for survival.
We need 8 hugs a day for maintenance.
We need 12 hugs a day for growth.*
Virginia Satir

Safety Plan When Using Substances

Safety Plan When Using Substances

If drug or alcohol use occurs alongside violence in my relationship with my partner, I can enhance my safety by doing some or all of the following. I will try to remember that:

- It is easier to keep safe when I am not using substances.
- Alcohol and drug use impairs my judgement and makes it harder for me to choose safe options and access services.
- It can be hard for me to ask for help when I am using or drinking. I can call

for support when I feel like drinking or using to cope.

- The following people/places/things can be unsafe for me:

- My warning signs that I am getting stressed and craving substances are:

- This is what I will do in these situations to try to keep myself from over drinking/using and try to keep myself safe:

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

Safety Plan When Using Substances

I can also:

If my partner is using/drinking I can:

If my partner is forcing me to use/drink I can:

If I am dealing in order to access my drug of choice, I can do the following to increase my physical safety:

I might also:

If my partner is dealing, I can do the following to increase my physical safety:

I might also:

To safeguard my children I

Safety Plan With Mental Health Issues

Safety Planning When Coping with Mental Health Issues

The stress of violence or threats of violence is very hard on anyone, especially people who have mental health issues. You might stop being able to trust your judgement or sense of reality. Very often abusers tell their partners that they are crazy, or tell others that their partners are crazy. It can help to get some time alone or with a trusted individual to sort out what you're experiencing.

- Where can I go to get a break from my relationship and find my sense of reality again?

- Who can I trust to help me? I will remind myself that violence affects my stress levels and impairs my mental health so when I am in violent situations I need to be more watchful of my stress and mental health needs and remember to ask for help from:

- The following events almost always increase my stress and have a negative effect on my mental wellbeing.

- The warning signs that I am getting stressed and moving into crisis are:

Safety Plan With Mental Health Issues

- This is what I will do in these situations to try to keep myself well/balanced and try to keep myself safe:

- If I feel myself moving into a crisis state, I can

- I can also:

- I can call

for support when I feel emotionally distressed.

- The following people/places/things can be unsafe for me:

- To safeguard my children I might

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

If there are additional supports you require for your mental health or substance use issues such as:

- Phone numbers of supportive professionals
- Names and phone numbers of advocates
- List of medications

....then make sure these are stored with other important documents and items that you can take with you in crisis situations when you need to leave your home quickly.

Think about:

- Medications and prescriptions
- Information about services
- Names and phone numbers for case workers or other service providers who can help to coordinate services for you
- Health/life insurance papers
- Medical records

If You Are Planning To Leave

If You are Planning to Leave

For Women

If you're thinking about leaving an abusive relationship, it could be helpful to start using services at a women's centre, or other women-only places — especially if your partner is a man. This reduces your isolation and provides you with a reason to have time away from your partner on a regular basis. Some day this may become your opportunity to get the support and help you need to leave the relationship.

For Men or Women

It may not be safe to tell your partner you are leaving, as this often makes an abuser get even more violent and controlling. You might want to plan to leave when your partner is not able to follow you, i.e. when your partner is in the shower, asleep, at work or out of town, or when you are picking up children from school or going to an appointment.

If you have children, take them with you when you leave. Take copies of children's medical papers, birth certificates and other important documents. If you are planning to leave, take the list of items set out on page 1 of this guide.

Even if you have never worked, you can legally take one-half of the funds in the chequing and savings accounts. If you don't take any money from the accounts, he/she can legally take all money and/or close the account and you may not get your share until the court rules on it, if ever.

Always remember:

If you need to return to your home to retrieve personal possessions for either your children, or yourself you should contact the police and ask them to accompany you to ensure your safety.

Additional notes:

Personal Security

Years ago, all of our financial dealings were with people. Now, we bank, shop, even apply for loans over the phone or online.

Victims of identity theft often have no direct contact with the person who steals their information. Each time we pay with a credit card, submit personal information to a company or throw out our garbage, we run the risk of having our personal data taken and used without our permission.

- Shred financial documents, paperwork with personal information and discarded mail
- Don't leave personal information in open view in your car or home
- Telephone answering machines can screen calls to a residence
- Telephone listings can be placed under a maiden or fictitious name
- Always store personal information, such as account numbers and credit card details, in a secure place
- Never carry your birth certificate or Social Insurance Number card in your wallet and make sure the credit card you get back is your own
- Never carry your passport with you when you are travelling. Keep it in a hotel safe.
- Never give out your Social Insurance Number unless it is required for employment or tax reporting
- Never give personal information to anyone over the telephone unless you initiated the call
- Keep a list of names, account numbers and expiration dates of credit and debit cards in a secure place

Banking

- Never tell anyone your password or PIN for automated banking machines (ABM) and always ensure no one is watching when you use an ABM
- Choose difficult passwords that cannot be easily identified and change them often
- Use cash in places where you cannot physically watch your card being scanned
- Destroy expired and unused credit and debit cards
- Check your credit reports regularly

Online

- Keep your computer and its contents secure by using anti-spyware and anti-virus software to avoid information stored on your computer from being stolen
- When shopping and banking online, ensure that the Internet browser you are using has a secured link
- Do not reply to spam or emails that ask for banking information, credit card details, passwords or other sensitive information
- Clear your browser's cache regularly
- Monitor your children's Internet practices; never allow a child to arrange a face-to-face meeting with another computer user without

Fraud

Fraud

I should try to remember that people of all ages are targeted every day. It is not a disgrace and it is not my fault. Fraudsters can be very persuasive.

Financial exploitation by family members, friend or caregivers is particularly painful because it is usually committed by someone I know well and it destroys what has previously been a relationship of trust. I can remind myself that the exploitation is not my fault and it is important to protect myself from further harm.

Identity Theft

To protect myself, I can

- Keep copies of the front and back of all cards and important documents, my PIN numbers, passwords and my Social Insurance card hidden in a safe place in my home.
- Shred all documents containing personal information.
- Contact the company if I don't receive an expected bill on time. Someone may have changed the billing address without my knowledge.

Telephone Fraud

To protect myself, I can

- Assume that a telephone caller may not be who she/he claims to be and refuse to trust contact information provided by a caller.
- Refuse to give out personal information over the telephone unless I have looked up and dialed the number myself and confirmed that I am speaking to a trusted person.

Fraud

- Refuse to allow a caller to pressure me into making an immediate commitment.
- Check companies with the Better Business Bureau before I transact any business with them.
- Keep a pad at the phone to record information about any call I think may be a scam – date, time, phone number, name of caller or business and callback number.
- If I receive a telephone call telling me that my computer security may be compromised, it is important that I NOT follow the caller's instructions. Instead, I should hang up immediately and notify my internet service provider.

Mail Fraud

To protect myself, I can

- Refuse to respond to a mail request for my personal information.
- Use caution if ordering goods or services by mail. I can try to deal only with established and reputable companies.
- If I am responding to a mail request for money from a charitable organization, I can verify that the name and address are valid and that the organization has a valid registered charitable number.

Investment Fraud

To protect myself, I can

- Assume that if an investment opportunity sounds too good to be true, it is. Legitimate investment opportunities do not offer huge returns in a short period of time.
- Assume that someone who offers me an investment opportunity on condition that I don't tell anyone is not to

be trusted.

- Be aware that a legitimate investment opportunity will not require me to make a decision without adequate research.
- Consult a qualified investment professional before making investment decisions.
- Be aware that verbal or written endorsements by people I don't know personally may not be legitimate. Even if I do know the people, I can check the information with them and with a professional.

Banking Security

To protect myself, I can

- Refuse to give my personal or banking information to a telephone caller who claims to work for my bank. Instead, I can contact my bank at the number listed in the telephone directory.
- Be aware that an e-mail appearing to come from my bank requesting my banking information is always fraudulent. Banks never request personal or banking information through e-mail.
- Shield my PIN from people around me when using a public ATM (Automatic Teller Machine) or a merchant's bank machine and refuse to tell anyone my PIN.

Door to Door Sales Fraud

To protect myself, I can

- Refuse to let a stranger into my home unless I first asked the company to send someone.
- Refuse to give out personal information to a stranger at the door or show anyone my utility bills.

Fraud

- Ask for and check references.
- Check any company with the Better Business Bureau and with the municipal building department if the matter involves home repair/renovation.
- Before signing a contract, check that I actually need the product or service, that the company is legitimate, and that the price is competitive. I can always take a few days to think it over before signing.
- Call Police immediately if I feel threatened or excessively pressured.

Computer Safety

To protect myself, I can

- Set my computer to not remember passwords.
- Install anti-virus and anti-spyware programs and set them to be active whenever the computer is turned on. Run them regularly.
- Always install operating system and software updates as soon as I receive them. They often relate to security weaknesses.
- Refuse to open e-mail attachments or click on links that do not feel/look right, even if the sender is someone I know. Instead, I can contact the sender and ask if she/he sent the attachment.
- Refuse to respond to an e-mail request for personal data, passwords etc. Such a request is always fraudulent. Legitimate financial institutions and businesses will never request such information by e-mail.
- Never respond to an unsolicited e-mail request for money.
- If I receive a telephone call telling me that my computer security may be compromised, I should refuse to follow

the caller's instructions. Instead, I can hang up mediately and notify my internet service provider.

- Use caution if shopping online. I can try to make sure the company is reputable and the area containing my personal details is secure.
- Cover the lens of my webcam when not in use, even while the computer is turned off.
- Delete my web browser history each time I close the browser.

Fraud Safety Plan

If I believe I have been the target of fraud, I can notify the following as appropriate:

Police (number of local Police Service) _____

Family Member _____

Friend _____

Lawyer _____

Bank _____

Mortgage Company _____

Fraud

Credit/Debit Card Company

VISA 1-800-847-2911

Mastercard 1-800-307-7309

Utility Companies

Service Ontario 1-800-267-8097
(Driver's License, Health Card)

Service Canada 1-800-622-6232
(Old Age Security, Canada Pension Plan,
Social Insurance Card)

Credit Rating Agencies

Equifax 1-800-465-7166

TransUnion 1-866-525-0262

Repair/Renovation Fraud Investigation

1-877-665-0662 (ask for Pat Blake)
(Inspector, Ontario Ministry of Consumer
Services)

Canadian Anti-Fraud Call Centre

1-888-495-8501

(Internet, telephone, mail, door-to-door fraud)

I keep copies of my important documents and information

I have given copies to

_____ to keep for me.

I have told

_____ where my information is kept.

An Emotional Safety Plan

The experience of being abused and verbally degraded by a partner is usually exhausting and emotionally draining. The process of surviving and building a new life requires much courage, and incredible energy. Abuse may isolate you from your friends and family. It is critical to have people around you that care about you. To conserve your emotional energy, and to support yourself in hard emotional times, there are a number of things you can do:

- Attend as many abuse specific counselling group sessions as you can
- Collect resources and pamphlets concerning abuse. Keep in a safe place, not in your home
- Become involved in community activities to reduce feeling isolated
- Take a part-time job to reduce isolation and to improve your finances
- Enroll in school to increase your skills
- Join support groups to gain support and strengthen your relationships with other people
- Learn about the law and your rights.
- Have positive thoughts about yourself and be assertive with others about your needs
- Take time for you - to read, meditate, play music, etc.
- Remember to eat nutritional food and to sleep regularly
- Decide who you can call freely and openly to give you the support you need. Spend time with people who make you feel good and provide positive support .
- Take part in social activities, i.e. movie, dinner, exercise
- Keep your Client Profile up to date to help you feel prepared for upcoming events.

- Keep a personal journal to write about your feelings, especially when you are feeling low or vulnerable. Keep it in a safe place.
- Write something positive about yourself everyday – your own personal affirmations
- Take time to prepare yourself emotionally before entering stressful situations like talking with your partner, meeting with lawyers, or attending court
- Try not to overbook yourself – limit yourself to one appointment per day to reduce stress
- Be creative and do whatever makes you feel good.
- Do not find your comfort in excessive use of alcohol or food – it only serves to increase your depression
- Avoid excessive shopping and impulse buying
- Join a health club or start an exercise program. It will increase your energy level and increase your sense of well being.
- It's okay to feel angry, but find positive and constructive ways to express your anger
- Remember that you are important and that you need to take care of yourself in order to be able to care for others
- If you are thinking of returning to a potentially abusive situation, discuss an alternative plan with someone you trust
- If you have to communicate with your partner, determine the safest way to do so

A Child's Safety Plan

This plan was developed to help someone in an abusive situation to teach their children some basic safety planning. **It is based on the belief that the most important thing that children can do for their families is to get away from the area of violence!** They cannot stop the abuse, although they often try by distracting the abuser or directly interfering in the abusive episode. It is important to tell the child that the best and most important thing for them to do is keep safe.

Children who experience domestic violence can be profoundly affected. It is very traumatic for them to be faced with violence directed at them or at someone they love. Personal safety and safety planning are extremely important and necessary for children whose families are experiencing violence. Children should learn ways to protect themselves. There are several ways to help you develop a safety plan with your children.

- Have your child pick a safe room/place in the house, preferably with a lock on the door and a phone. The first step of any plan is for the children to get out of the room where the abuse is occurring.
- Stress the importance of being safe, and that it is not the child's responsibility to make sure that his/her parent is safe
- Teach your children how to call for help. It is important that children know they should not use a phone that is in view of the abuser. This puts them at risk. Talk to your children about using a neighbour's phone or a pay phone if they are unable to use a phone at home. If you have a cell phone, teach your children how to use it.
- Teach them how to contact police by dialing 9-1-1
- Ensure that the children know their full name and address. Rural children need to know their Fire number.
- Rehearse what your child/children will say when they call for help.

For example:

Dial 9-1-1

The person answering the phone will say "Police, Fire, Ambulance."

You say "Police"

Then your child says:

My name is _____.

I am _____ years old.

I need help. Send the police.

Someone is hurting my mom/dad.

The address here is _____.

The phone number is _____.

- It is important for children to remain on the line with police as long as possible and while safe to do so.
- Pick a safe place to meet your children, out of the home, after the situation is safe for you and for them so you can easily find each other
- Teach your children the safest route to the planned place of safety for them.

A Child's Safety Plan

1. I will set up a safe room in our home for the children to go to in the event that my partner becomes abusive. This room will be, if possible, on ground level so the children can leave through a window if necessary

Location: _____

2. The safe room will have a lock on the door and a cellular/cordless telephone in a location known only by the children and I, with the Police emergency number, 9-1-1, programmed on a speed dial.
3. The children will become familiar with the telephone and the location of the emergency speed dial key. We will practice saying, "someone is hurting my mommy (or: daddy/aunt/stepmom/stepdad/etc.)" just in case one of the children has to call the Police.
4. I will teach the children to take the telephone inside the closet in the safe room when they call the Police. The children will not hang up the telephone after they call. I will teach them to stay on the line with the Police operator until the Police arrive at our house.
5. I will teach my children our home telephone number and complete address, including directions:

6. The children and I will have a predetermined code word:

to alert the children to go immediately to the safe room.
We will have an additional code word

_____ to alert
the children to immediately leave our home and to run to

_____ our pre-arranged emergency friend (our neighbour's house, or the corner store, or a Block Parent house, etc.) and to have an adult call the Police.

7. The children know the location of the emergency friend and the fastest route to get there

8. The children will contact their pre-arranged emergency care-giver:

My closest friend: _____

Or their grandparents: _____

Or our religious leader: _____

Or another pre-selected responsible adult:

9. Immediately after the emergency friend has called the children will go with the emergency friend to their home where I will meet them as soon as I am able.
10. We have discussed the Neighbourhood Block Parent Program. The children are familiar with the Block Parent red and white sign and when they see it in the window of a house or a store they know it is a safe place where adults will be present and willing to help.

Keeping Your Children Safe

Suggestions to help families in today's fast-paced society:

- Know where each of your children is at all times. Communicate with your children by advising them of your schedule and changes to it. In turn, impress upon them the need for them to communicate with you their plans and changes to such.
- Never leave young children unattended in a vehicle.
- Be involved in your children's activities. Children, even teenagers, enjoy parental engagement. It makes them feel wanted and it gives you opportunity to observe how the adults in charge interact with your children.
- LISTEN to your children. Pay attention if they tell you they don't want to be with someone or go somewhere. This may be an indication of more than a personality conflict or lack of interest in the activity or event. Notice when anyone shows your child a great deal of attention or begins giving them gifts. Take the time to talk to your child and find out why that person is acting in this way.
- Teach your children that they have the right to say NO to any uncomfortable or confusing touch or actions by others. Teach children to loudly yell, kick or scream to get out of an unwanted situation. Reassure them you're there to help and it is okay to tell you anything.
- Set and respect family boundaries. All members of the family have rights to privacy in dressing, bathing, sleeping, and other personal activities. If anyone does not respect these rights, an adult should clearly tell them the family rules.
- Use the proper names of body parts. This knowledge gives children correct language for understanding their bodies, for asking questions that need to be asked, and for telling about any behavior that could lead to sexual abuse.

- Be sensitive to any changes in your children's behavior or attitude. If your children confide problems to you, strive to remain calm, reassuring, and nonjudgmental. Listen compassionately to their concern, and work with them to get the help they need to resolve the problem.
- Stay attuned to your children's use of technology. Model safe choices and behavior. The illusion of anonymity on these electronic mediums often leads to a breakdown of social rules and expectations that would be assumed if the interactions were face-to-face. Establish clear, firm guidelines and stick to them.
- Create a family safety plan that is clear to everyone and easy to follow. List who to talk with when you see something you are unsure about and who to call if you believe there is a need to report sexual abuse. Report anything you know or suspect might be sexual abuse. If nobody speaks up, the abuse will not stop.
- Screen babysitters and caregivers. Ask your children how the experience with the caregiver was, and carefully listen to the responses.
- Practice basic safety skills with your children. Practice using pay phones, going to restrooms and locating adults who may be able to help if they need assistance.

Keeping Your Children Safe

Home Alone

- Ask your child how he or she feels about being alone. Is your child afraid to be left alone, or does he or she have the maturity and initiative to want to assume that responsibility?
- Decide if your child is able to follow directions and solve problems on his or her own.
- Make sure you've set specific rules to be followed by your child while he or she is alone, and give your child specific instructions about how to reach you at all times. This should also include information about what to do if your child needs assistance and can't reach you right away.
- Ensure your child knows:
 - * His or her full name, address and telephone number; your full name, exact name of the place where you work, your work telephone number and any pager or cellular telephone numbers you may have;
 - * How to make a telephone call to request help in an emergency using 911.

Take Responsibility for the Prevention of
Sexual Abuse

THERE IS NO SUBSTITUTE FOR YOUR
ATTENTION AND SUPERVISION.

BEING AVAILABLE AND TAKING
TIME TO REALLY KNOW AND LISTEN
TO YOUR CHILDREN HELPS BUILD
FEELINGS OF SAFETY AND SECURITY.

20 Ways to Connect With Your Children

1. Talk with your children – always listen.
2. Tell your children how much you love them.
3. Encourage your children to talk about their feelings.
4. Never threaten your child.
5. Encourage your child's curiosity.
6. Hug your children – often.
7. Eat together as a family as much as possible.
8. Have family outings weekly, monthly, and annually.
9. Be a positive role model.
10. Set a good (not perfect) example.
11. Keep your home atmosphere organized.
12. Respect your child's feelings – praise them.
13. Help your kids learn from their mistakes.
14. Allow your child to learn from all their life experiences – don't be overprotective.
15. Let your children pick up after themselves.
16. Keep your children accountable for their actions.
17. Let your children solve their problems – independently.
18. Expect the best from your children – their best.
19. Give your children the benefit of the doubt.
20. Trust them.

Bill 168 Workplace Violence & Harassment

Bill 168 Workplace Violence and Harassment


On June 15, 2010 the Occupational Health and Safety Act was amended to ensure that women are safe and respected in their workplace. Under the Act, workplaces in Ontario where more than 5 workers are regularly employed will be required to develop written policies addressing violence and harassment.

With respect to workplace violence:

- Employers are required to develop a program to implement their workplace violence policy, including measures and procedures to:
 - (a) Assess and control the risk of workplace violence
 - (b) Summon immediate assistance when workplace violence takes place or is likely to take place, or when a threat of violence is made
 - (c) Enable workers to report incidents of threats of workplace violence to the employer, and determine how the employer will investigate and address incidents, complaints or threats of workplace violence.
- Employers need to take reasonable precautions to protect workers from domestic violence that may occur in the workplace. They are also required to educate workers about the policy and program, and inform a worker about any risk of workplace violence from a person with a history of violent behavior if it is likely the worker will come into contact with that person in the workplace.

With respect to workplace harassment:

- Employers are required to develop a program to implement a workplace harassment policy that includes measures and procedures to:
 - (a) enable workers to report incidents

- 
- (b) determine how the employer will investigate and address incidents and complaints of workplace harassment
 - employers need to educate workers about the harassment policy and program
 - workers do not have the right to refuse work because of workplace harassment.

My Notes and Numbers

Important Phone Numbers

Police: _____

Victim

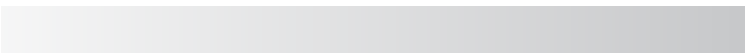
Services: _____

Hotline: _____

Friends: _____

Shelter: _____

Other: _____



My Notes and Numbers



My Notes and Numbers



Victim Services Contact Numbers

519-376-9852

24 Hour Contact Line: 1-866-376-9852

611 9th Avenue East,
Owen Sound, Ontario N4K 6Z4

www.victim-services.com

email: info@victim-services.com

519-376-7474

1-888-577-3111

Fax: 519-376-0865

People
HELPING
People



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