

Shelter for Family Safety

PERSONALIZED SAFETY PLAN

Name: _____ Date: _____

The following steps represent my plan for increasing my safety and preparing in advance for the possibility of 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.

Step 1: Safety During a Violent Incident

- A. If we are going to have an argument, I can try to move to a space that is lowest risk, such as _____ . (Try to avoid arguments in the bathroom, garage, kitchen, near weapons or in rooms without access to an outside door.)
- B. If it is not safe to stay, I can _____ . (Practice how to get out safely. What doors, windows, elevators, stairwells, or fire escapes would you use?)
- C. I can keep my purse and car keys ready and put them _____ so that I can leave quickly.
- D. I can tell _____ and _____ about the violence and ask them to call the police if they hear suspicious noises coming from my home.
- E. I can use _____ as my code word with my children or my friends so they can call for help.
- F. I can teach my children how to use the telephone to contact the police and the fire department.
- G. If I have to leave my home, I can go _____ or _____ or _____. (Decide this event even if you don't think there will be a next time.)
- Use your judgment. If the situation is very serious, give him/her what he/she wants to calm him/her down. You have to protect yourself until you (and your children) are out of danger.
 - Always remember: YOU DESERVE BETTER THAN THIS!

Step 2: Safety When Preparing To Leave

Victims of violence frequently leave the residence they share with the violent partner. Leaving must be done strategically in order to increase safety. Perpetrators of violence often strike back when they believe that their partner is leaving a relationship.

- A. I can leave money and an extra set of keys with _____ so that I can leave quickly.
- B. I can keep copies of important documents or keys and some extra clothes with _____.
- C. I can open a savings account to increase my independence. (Preferably opened in a separate bank than that you and your partner use jointly.)
- D. Other things I can do to increase my independence include:

_____.
- E. The domestic violence program's hotline number is _____. I understand that if I use my telephone, the following month's telephone bill will tell my partner those numbers that I called after I left. To keep my telephone communications confidential, I can either use a public phone or I might get a friend to permit me to use his/her telephone for a limited time when I first leave.
- F. I can check with _____ and _____ and _____ to see who would be able to let me stay with them or lend me some money if needed.
- G. I can sit down and review my safety plan every _____ so that I know the safest way to leave my home.
- H. I can rehearse my escape plan and, as appropriate, practice with my children.
o Remember: If you tell your partner that you'll leave if he/she ever hits you again, think about whether you're going to give him/her permission to hit you "just one more time."

Step 3: Safety In My Own Residence

- A. If my partner no longer lives with me, I can take action to ensure my safety and my children's safety in my home. Safety measures I can use include:
- I can change the locks on my doors and windows as soon as possible.
 - I can replace wooden doors with steel/metal doors.
 - I can install security systems including additional locks, window bars, poles to wedge against doors, and electronic system, etc.
 - I can purchase rope ladders to be used for escape from second floor windows.
 - I can install smoke detectors and purchase fire extinguishers for each floor in my home.
 - I can install an outside lighting system that lights up when a person is coming close to my home.
- B. I can teach my children to _____ when I am not available.
- C. I can inform _____ and _____ and _____ about who has permission to pick up my children.

- D. I can teach my children how to use the telephone to make a call to me and to _____ in the event that my partner abducts them.
- E. I can inform _____ and _____ and _____ that my partner no longer resides with me and they should call the police if he/she is observed near my home.

Step 4: Safety With A Protective Order

- A. I can keep my protective order _____. (Always keep it on or near your person. If you change a purse or a car that is the first thing that should go in.)
- B. If my partner breaks the protective order, I can _____.
- C. If the police are not responsive, I can _____.
- D. I can inform _____ and _____ that I have a protective order in effect.
- E. If my partner destroys my protective order, I can get another copy from the _____ Court.

Step 5: Safety On The Job And In Public

- A. I can inform _____ and _____ and _____ at my work or my situation.
- B. I can use voice mail, the receptionist or a co-worker to help me screen my telephone calls at work.
- C. When leaving work, I can _____.
- D. If problems occur when I am driving home, I can _____.
- E. If I use public transportation, I can _____.
- F. I can also _____.

Step 6: Safety And Drug or Alcohol Consumption

The use of any alcohol or other drugs can reduce a person's awareness and ability to act quickly to protect himself/herself from a violent partner. Furthermore, the partner's use of alcohol or other drugs may give him/her an excuse to use violence. Therefore, in the context of alcohol or other drug consumption, specific safety plans must be made.

- A. If I am going to consume alcohol or other drugs, I can do so in a safe place with people who understand the risk of violence and are committed to my safety.
- B. I can also _____ or _____.
- C. If my partner is consuming drugs or alcohol, I can _____.

D. To protect my children, I might _____ or _____.

* The legal outcomes of using illegal drugs can be very hard on a victim of violence; it may hurt his/her relationship with children and put him/her at a disadvantage in other legal actions with a violent partner. Therefore, the potential cost of the use of illegal drugs should be carefully considered.

Step 7: Safety And Emotional Health

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

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

B. I can try to use positive self-talk with myself and be assertive with others. I can tell myself that I don't deserve to be beaten whenever I feel others are trying to control or abuse me.

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

D. I can call _____ and _____ and _____ Children's Home Shelter for Family Safety as additional resources to support me.

What I Need To Take When I Leave:

- | | |
|---|---|
| Identification for myself | Address book |
| Driver's License | Pictures |
| Children's birth certificates | Medical records – for all my family members |
| My birth certificate | Social Security cards |
| Money | Welfare identification |
| Lease, rental agreement, house deed,
Mortgage payment book | School records |
| Bank books | Work permits |
| Check books | Green card |
| Credit cards | Passport(s) |
| Insurance papers | Divorce papers |
| Keys-house/car/office | Jewelry |
| Medications for me and my children | Children's favorite toys and/or blankets |
| Small sellable objects | Items of special sentimental value |

I can keep the items concerning me in one location. If I have to leave in a hurry, I can grab those items quickly.

Important Telephone Numbers:

Police department: 911 _____	Other: _____
Attorney (name & number): _____	_____
Victims Witness Assistant: _____	_____
Shelter for Family Safety Crisis Hotline: 605-338-4880 _____	_____
Shelter for Family Safety Toll Free Hot Line: 1-888-378-7398 _____	_____
National Domestic Violence Hot Line: 1-800-799-SAFE _____	_____

* Adapted from "Personalized Safety Plan," Office of the City Attorney, City of San Diego, CA; April, 1990.Revised 3-08