

My Safety Plan

In reality, you cannot control your partner's violence. But you can find ways to reduce your risk of harm. Use this tool to help you identify your options, and plan for safety in the event your partner places you or your children in danger.

There is no right or wrong in developing this plan. Use what applies to you. Change it, add to it—make it fit your unique situation. Make it your own, then review it REGULARLY and make changes as needed.

If you can't keep a written safety plan in your home, ask a friend, co-worker, trusted neighbor, or clergy person to keep it for you. Even if you can't write out a safety plan, it's still important to make one. **You don't have to figure it out on your own—ask for help!**

Staying at Home with Your Partner

- I can contact my local crisis center for support at:

- I will have important phone numbers available for my children and myself;
 - Police: _____
 - Hotline: _____
 - Friend: _____
 - Neighbor: _____
 - Relative: _____
 - Shelter: _____
- I can tell _____ and _____ about the violence, and ask them to call the police if they hear or see signs of violence at my home.
- If I must leave home for safety, I can go to:
 - _____
 - _____
 - _____
 - _____
- I can leave extra money, car keys, clothes and copies of important papers with:
 - _____

- To ensure safety and independence, I can:
 - Always keep change for phone calls with me, or always have my 911 cell phone charged
 - Open my own savings and credit accounts
 - Take classes or develop job skills
 - Rehearse my escape plans with my children
 - Review my safety plan on ___/___/_____

Safety Planning for Your Children

- I can teach my children how to use the house and 911 cell phones to contact the police to provide our address and reason for needing help.
- I will use a code word with my children or friends when they need to go get help. Our code word is:
 - _____
- I will teach my children to never physically get involved if they see my partner hurting me.
- Sometimes my children feel very scared or worried, and they may need someone with whom to talk. If they don't feel like they can talk to me about what they see in my home, they can talk to:
 - _____
 - _____

Anticipating an Assault

(Verbal, Emotional, or Physical)

- When I anticipate an argument with my partner, I will go into a room with no weapons, and has access to the outside. That room would be:
 - _____
- If I anticipate an argument with my partner, and there are weapons in the home, I will hide them, disarm them, or bring them to a safe person to hold onto if I am able.
- I will make every effort to remove myself and/or my children from the tension before it breaks.
- I will use my judgment and intuition. If things get serious, I will consider doing what I know will calm my partner down. I must remember that I have to protect my children and myself until we are out of danger.

If I Have to Leave

- I can contact my local crisis center for help at:

- If my partner has access to phone records (cell or home), I can ask if friends or neighbors will let me use their phones, or obtain a phone card.
- I can leave my pets with _____.
- I will check with _____ and _____ to see if I can stay with them, or if they can lend me money in an emergency.
- If I think it is helpful, I can go to court or the local police (after court business hours) to get an order of protection. The court that serves my town is:
 - _____

Don't Forget to Take with You!

- Children and pets—if you can get them safely out
- Your identification (driver's license, state ID)
- Birth certificates for you and your children
- Social security cards/numbers for you/children
- Children's school/vaccination records
- Money, checkbook, bank books, ATM cards, credit cards, tax returns, other financial info
- Medication and prescriptions
- Car registration and insurance papers
- Public assistance ID/Medicaid cards
- Passports, "green cards," work permits
- Divorce/separation/custody orders
- Lease/rental agreement or house deed
- Car/mortgage payment book
- Children's toys, comfort items, clothes, etc.
- Sentimental items, photos
- Your personal items, clothes, etc.

If My Partner Leaves

(Voluntarily long term; under arrest or restraining order)

- I can change the locks on my doors, replace wooden doors with steel doors, and secure my windows.
- I can install a security system (including additional locks, panic buttons, electronic monitoring, etc.).

- I will instruct my children on whether or not they can have contact with my partner, and when. We will pick a code word to be used by someone who is authorized to pick them up. The code word is:
 - _____
- I will teach my children how to use the phone to make a collect call to me if they are concerned about their safety, or give them other options on how to reach me.
- I will inform child caregivers who can and cannot pick up my children, and how to respond if an unauthorized person comes to get them.
- I will update the emergency contact list and phone numbers at my children's school, and give them a copy of any current court orders regarding my children's safety.

At Work and in Public

- I can inform my boss, security supervisor and/or Employee Assistance Program (EAP) about my situation. Important work numbers are:
 - EAP: _____
 - Security: _____
 - Boss: _____
- I can ask _____ to screen my work calls.
- When leaving work, I can ask for an escort.
- When traveling to and from work/activities, I can change my route. If there's trouble, I can go to:
 - _____
- I can change my routines: where I shop or bank, times for doctor's appointments, or other places or activities where my partner might look for me.
- I can tell _____ and _____ that I am no longer with my partner, and ask them to call the police if they believe my children or I are in danger.
- I can keep a charged 911 cell phone with me.

With an Order of Protection

- I will keep my restraining order with me at all times. I will leave additional copies in or with:
 - The glove compartment of my vehicle
 - My children's schools and/or daycare
 - My work, school, or other location where I frequently spend time
 - Friends or relatives where I spend time
 - My local police department
 - _____
- If my protection order gets destroyed or lost, I can get another copy from the court that issued it.
- If my partner violates the order, I can call the police. I can also call my attorney or advocate for direction, or notify the court at the next hearing.
- I can call my crisis center for direction if I am having difficulty getting my restraining order enforced.

Risk Factors to Consider When You Leave

(Factors increasing your risk for harm)

- You have been recently separated.
- Your partner's violence has escalated in severity and frequency.
- Your partner owns, has access to, or recently acquired guns or other weapons.
- Your partner has, or appears to have, a mental illness or personality disorder associated with depression or aggression.
- Your partner has attempted or threatened suicide.
- Your partner uses/abuses alcohol or drugs.
- Your partner has made death threats, or has expressed fantasies of murder.
- Your partner stalks you.
- Your partner has seriously injured you, held you hostage, or sexually assaulted you in the past.
- Your partner has hurt or killed animals/pets.
- Your partner still has access to you, your children, or other loved ones.
- Your partner has no concern for personal, social or legal consequences of his actions.
- You believe your partner will attempt homicide.

Protecting Your Emotional Health

- If I am feeling down, lonely or confused, I can call:
 - _____
 - _____
 - Crisis Center: _____
- I can take care of my physical health by getting check-ups with my regular doctors and dentist. If I don't have a doctor, I can get help by calling:
 - _____
- If I have concerns about my children's health and well-being, I can call:
 - Pediatrician: _____
 - Dentist: _____
 - Therapist: _____
 - School: _____
 - GAL/CASA: _____
 - DCYF Central Intake: 800.894.5533
 - DCYF Caseworker: _____
- Before making a decision to go back with my partner, I will talk to or spend time with:
 - _____
 - _____
- I can build a support system, learn coping or professional skills, or get information by getting into support groups, workshops or classes. For more information, I can call:
 - Crisis Center: _____
 - _____
 - _____
- I will start today to cope with my mental illness, drug dependency, or other issues that are hindering my well-being. If I need help, I will call:
 - _____
 - _____
 - _____

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Your Personal Security...



...In an Uncertain World

For more information regarding the co-occurrence of domestic violence and child maltreatment, contact your Domestic Violence Specialist at: