

SAFETY PLANNING

Tips for creating a safety plan!

SAFETY AT HOME

- Windows and doors! Know which windows and doors open easily and which ones stick, know which ones provide easy access to getting outside.
- Plan an escape route! Even if there are no immediate plans to leave, it helps to know the plan should it become necessary in an emergency.
- Think about where to go and who would help.
- Identify a support network, Who can be trusted to help in carrying out the plan? It is helpful to have someone to check-in with on a regular basis.
- Develop a code word to use with the support person. A code word could help the support person know when assistance is needed from the police.
- As soon as the children are old enough, they should be taught to dial 911.
- Plan for copies of important documents to be in a place that is easily accessible or prepare a go-bag. REMEMBER THAT SAFETY COMES FIRST.
- Packing an overnight bag and leaving it at a friend's house or in a place where the abuser will not find it is an option if it is not safe to return home. Again, safety is the first priority

SAFETY DURING A VIOLENT INCIDENT

- Be aware of immediate surroundings. The kitchen is a room that has many weapons that are easily accessible. Other rooms to avoid are the bathroom (with only one exit and small windows) and the bedroom (or rooms where weapons might be kept).
- Remember the planned escape route.
- If there has been a code developed with someone and there is time to call that person, make them aware that assistance is needed.
- Have the children call 911 and/or remind them of the escape drill

PLANNING TO LEAVE

Financial Issues

- Money should be kept available when possible. Think about where money can be kept so the abuser will not be aware of it.
- Plan around the dates that money or assistances comes to the home. Arrange to have the checks sent to a different address or P.O. Box. Consider direct deposit if it is available.
- If there is a bank account involved, think of ways to access that money so that it does not arouse suspicion (i.e. avoid withdrawing large amounts of money at once).

Transportation Issues

- If there is a car, make sure there is an extra set of keys available.
- Decide if the car is the best alternative or whether it will affect anonymity and confidentiality. If public transportation is an option, plan how to utilize it, identify what obstacles might present themselves, such as coordinating children's schedules.

Documents and Other Materials

- Identify important documents to have, such as: social security cards, birth certificates, medical records, legal documents, immigration documents, etc.
- Decide which are crucial documents and which can be replaced later.

The Escape Route

- This requires longer-term thinking. Leaving is when there is the most danger.
- Plan a way to get there and alternative ways to get there.
- Share your safety plan with a trusted individual who may be able to provide help and support during the process.

Other Considerations

- Figure out whether it is appropriate to tell the children about plans to leave. Would it risk safety (would they tell?)
- Make sure the school knows who the children can be released to and to not give out any information.



SAFETY AFTER LEAVING



- Only essential people should be contacted (i.e. employers, parents, other loved ones who are aware of the precariousness of the situation). They should only be told essential information, the less they know the safer they could be.
- If there is a Restraining Order, give copies to key people (employer, school, neighbors, family, building management or other identified trustworthy people). Always keep a copy available.
- Caution should be exercised around visitation and custody exchanging agreements.
- Remember that domestic violence often escalates after leaving and that leaving does not guarantee safety.

IMMIGRATION CONSIDERATIONS

Documented Victims

- Know which agencies to connect with in case you need to complete your immigration paperwork without the abuser.

Undocumented Victims

- Know which agencies can help in self-petitioning. Bring important documents such as birth certificates, immigration paperwork police reports (helpful but not required).

OTHER TIPS

- Vary your route to work and change passwords on bank and e-mail accounts.
- Keep a diary, journal, or log, with harassing e-mails or voice mails, violations of orders and actual attempts at contact recorded.

IMPORTANT NUMBERS

Emergency - Police/Fire/Ambulance: 911

Police (non-emergency): _____

Fire (non-emergency): _____

Poison Control: _____

Doctor: _____

Dentist: _____

Pediatrician: _____

Pharmacy: _____

Veterinarian: _____

Emergency Vet: _____

Emergency Contact #1:

Name: _____

Phone Number: _____

Address: _____

Emergency Contact #2:

Name: _____

Phone Number: _____

Address: _____

Resources: _____

Other Important Information: _____

GO-BAG CHECKLIST

Be sure to include any personal important items not included in this list!

General

- Change of clothes and underwear
- Necessary hygiene products (i.e. pads/tampons, toothbrush, soap)
- Cash

Important Documents (physical copies or photocopies)

- Birth Certificate
- Social Security Card
- License
- Car Registration
- Car Insurance Card/Policy
- Health Insurance Card/Policy
- Dental Insurance Card/Policy
- Marriage/Divorce Documents
- Any other Important Documents
- Immigration information
- Vaccination Records
- Children's School/Daycare Contact Information
- Income Assistance Documents
- Work Permits
- Court Orders or Protection Orders
- Custody Documentation
- Photos or documentation of abuse (screenshots, records, notes, etc.)

Medications

- List of medications and their dosages
- Any necessary medications
- Copies of prescriptions and contact information for the doctor who prescribed them

Photos

- Photo of abuser
- Photos of any children
- Photos of family members
- Photos of pets

RESOURCES

In case of an emergency call **911**

AVDA (Aid to Victims of Domestic Abuse)

Confidential domestic violence shelter in Palm Beach County. Provides advocacy, shelter, and connects to domestic violence resources.

Crisis Hotline: 1-800-355-8547

<https://www.avdaonline.org/>

Women in Distress

Confidential domestic violence shelter in Broward county. Provides advocacy, legal assistance, shelter and connects to domestic violence resources.

Crisis Hotline: 954-761-1133

Phone: 954-760-9800

www.womenindistress.org

If you are looking for support and want to discuss options, Victim Services is here to help.

Victim Services Office: (561) 297- 4841

24/7 Victim Services Number: 561-297-0500

(ask to speak to an advocate)

victimservices@fau.edu

The Victim Services Office is located on the Boca Raton Campus in the S.E. Wimberly Library Room 156. Office hours are 8 a.m. to 5 p.m.