**Safety Planning**

The following steps represent a plan for increasing your safety and preparing in advance for the possibility for further violence. Although you do not have control over your partner’s violence, you do have a choice about *how* to respond to him/her and how to best get yourself and your children to safety.

**Safety in an Abusive Relationship**

Use some or all of the following strategies if you consider leaving:

1. Have important phone numbers nearby for you and your children.
   * 1. Police: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_
     2. Friend/Family: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_
     3. Family Abuse Services Crisis Line: (336) 226-5985
2. Where can you go if you leave your home?
   * 1. \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_
     2. \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_
3. Think about people who might help you if you left.
4. Put together a bag of items you use everyday. Hide it or keep it at someone’s house.
5. Keep coins for making phone calls.
6. Open a bank account in your name.
7. Think about how you might leave. Try doing things that get you out of the house – taking out the trash, walking the dog, or going to the store. Practice how you would leave.
8. Use your judgment and intuition.
9. Think about how you could take your children with you safely. There are times when taking your children with you may put all of your lives in danger. You need to protect yourself to be able to protect your children.
10. Think about reviewing your safety plan often.

**Items to take when leaving**

\_\_\_ Identification \_\_\_ Keys (house, car, office)

\_\_\_ Driver’s license and registration \_\_\_ Medication

\_\_\_ Lease/rental agreement, house deed, mortgage payment book

\_\_\_ Passport \_\_\_ Bank books, insurance papers

\_\_\_ Birth certificate \_\_\_ Checkbook, ATM card, credit cards

\_\_\_ Children’s birth certificates \_\_\_ Address book

\_\_\_ Social security cards \_\_\_ Pictures, jewelry

\_\_\_ School and vaccination records \_\_\_ Children’s favorite toys or blankets

\_\_\_ Medical records – for all family members \_\_\_ Extra Clothes

\_\_\_ Money \_\_\_ Items of special sentimental value

**Safety after Leaving an Abusive Relationship**

Leaving must be done with a careful plan in order to increase safety. Getting a protective order can be an important part of a safety plan, but you should still take other safety planning steps to keep yourself and your children safe.

Here are some safety strategies to consider:

1. Dial 911 if there is an emergency.
2. Make your home as secure as possible – change locks, add deadbolts, improve outside lighting, keep doors and windows locked, consider installing an alarm system.
3. Keep a telephone in a room that can be locked from the inside and has a way to escape (window).
4. Plan several escape routes from the home, such as paths to doors and windows.
5. If you receive phone calls/texts by your partner, keep a log of the date, time, and content.
6. Get an unlisted telephone number, caller ID, and a block on your number when making calls.
7. Keep car keys in an accessible location. Hide an extra set of keys in a location that is out of direct sight, but easy to access.
8. Before getting into a car, look around the car, under the car, and inside the car.
9. Keep the car doors locked, even when driving.
10. Use a different bank than your partner.
11. Vary your routine. Change the time and location of stores you go to.
12. Inform neighbors, friends, etc. that your partner no longer resides with you and they should call the police if he/she is seen near your residence.
13. Inform your boss/supervisor at work of your situation.
14. The national domestic violence hot line number is 800-799-SAFE; you can seek shelter by calling this hot line.
15. Keep any evidence of abuse in a safe place that your abuser will not find. Evidence may include:
    1. Pictures of bruises or other injuries (date the pictures if possible)
    2. Pictures that show my home is destroyed or messed up after a violent incident.
    3. Records from doctors or police that document abuse
    4. Keep a journal (write down all episodes of abuse, threats that were made, and the dates of when these events occurred)

**Safety with a Protection Order**

1. Keep a copy of your protection order with you at all times. Place copies at work, with neighbors, and in the car.
2. Call 911 if the offender violates the order.
3. If you have children, contact the school and daycare provider.
4. If you move, give your protection order to the sheriff’s department in the county you live.
5. Inform your employer that you have a protection order in effect.
6. You can get another copy of your protection order from the County Courthouse by going to the Clerk of Court’s office.
7. If your partner violates the protection order, call the police and report a violation, contact your attorney, and/or call your advocate.

**Safety and your Emotional Health**

1. Attend the domestic violence support group at Family Abuse Services on Wednesdays from 5:30-7:00pm to gain support from others. Call ahead to receive free childcare during the session.
2. Seek individual counseling. You can use Family Abuse Services as a referral to Counseling.