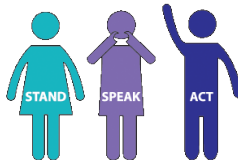


SAFETY PLANNING GUIDELINES



**Albany County Crime Victim &
Sexual Violence Center**

112 State Street, Room 1010
Albany, NY 12207

No abused person has control over their partner's violence, but victims can and do find ways to reduce their risk of harm. This safety plan guideline is a tool to assist you in identifying different options, evaluating these options and committing to a plan to reduce your risk when confronted with the threat of harm or with an actual act of violence.

Everyone's situation is different, which means there is no right or wrong way in developing a safety plan. Use what applies to you, and when needed change and revise these plans so that you make it your own. Most importantly remember to review your plan regularly so that you are always ready for whatever may happen.

If you can't find a safe place to keep a written safety plan where your partner won't find it, maybe you can ask a friend to keep a copy for you. If not, you can ask your local domestic violence program to keep your plan for you. Whether it's safe to write down your plan or not, it's still important to make one.

BEING READY FOR A CRISIS

I can tell _____ about the violence and request they call the police if they hear noises coming from my house.

I can educate my children on how to contact the police or any other important family members, friends, or services that can help. I will make sure they know our address and phone number.

If it is not possible to use the telephone I can educate my children how to go to _____ for help.
(e.g., neighbor, business, etc.)

I can identify my options and see who I can trust and confide in, then memorize their numbers in case of emergencies.

If possible I can keep all weapons and harmful objects locked away or inaccessible.

I will leave the house for short periods of time (e.g. to get the mail or walk the dog) to help myself see how I will get out of my house quickly and safely and where I will go.

I CAN INCREASE MY SAFETY BY

When I expect my partner and I are going to argue, I will try to move to a space that is at lowest risk, such as _____.

- Try to avoid arguments in the bathroom, garage, kitchen, or near weapons.
- Try to stay close to doors if possible in case you're in need of an emergency exit.

I can also teach these strategies to some/all of my children. Also, when an argument is expected I can avoid going near my children so their safety is ensured and they don't get involved.

I will keep internet and computer safety in mind.

- For example, I will be conscious of clearing my history after using a website or moving to a low risk area to engage in computer activity.

PLANNING TO LEAVE

If I decide to leave, I will _____
_____.

- Know all the ways of your residence, and practice how you would get out safely.
- What doors, windows, elevators, stairwells, or fire escapes will you use?
- Where is the nearest transportation from your residence?

I can educate my children on the plan if needed so they can practice it as well.

I can keep my purse and car keys ready and put them _____
so they are accessible to leave quickly.

I will leave extra money, car keys, and clothes with _____
so I can leave quickly.

I will keep copies of important documents or keys at _____.

I will make sure my vehicle has enough fuel in it at all times so I am able to leave quickly.

I will always keep in mind at least four places to go; if I leave home I will go to _____.

If I cannot go to the above location, I can go to _____.

The domestic violence hotline number that is nearest to you is (518) 432-7865. You can call it if you need emergency shelter, information, or help devising a safety plan.

If it's not safe to talk openly, I will use _____ as a code/signal to my children that we are going to go, or to my family or friends that we are coming.

I will use _____ as my code word with my children or friends so they will call immediately for help.

I will keep important numbers and if possible a fully charged cell phone with me at all times. Although, I will still memorize the important numbers just in case my partner takes my phone away from me. I can also see if my friends/family have an extra phone I can borrow if needed for emergency phone calls.

I can ask _____ if I can stay with them or if they can lend money if necessary.

I can leave my pets at home or with _____.

- If I do not have any options than I can contact the Mohawk and Hudson River Human Society Safe Haven Program which is through Equinox at (518) 434-8128.

I can increase my independence by opening a bank account and credit card in my own name, also by making copies of important documents and holding them in _____ or with _____.

Other things that I can do to increase my independence includes:

I will put together a bag that may include some of the following belongings:

ITEMS TO TAKE WHEN LEAVING

- Identification for myself
- Children's birth certificate
- My birth certificate
- Social Security Cards
- School/vaccination records
- Money, checkbook, bank books, ATM cards, tax returns
- Credit Cards
- Medication
- Keys- house, car, office
- Driver's license/car registration
- Insurance papers
- Public Assistance ID/ Medicaid Cards
- Passports, green cards, work permits
- Divorce or separation papers
- Lease, rental agreement or house deed
- Car/mortgage payment book
- Children's toys, security blankets, stuffed animals
- Sentimental items, photos
- My Personalized Safety Plan

AFTER I LEAVE

I can change the locks on my doors and windows.

I can replace wooden doors with steel/metal doors.

I can install security systems including additional locks, window bars, poles to wedge against doors, an electric system, or a motion detector lights.

I can install smoke detectors, carbon monoxide detectors, and fire extinguishers on each floor of my home.

I can purchase rope ladders to be used for escape from second floor windows.

I can obtain caller ID and have my own number blocked so when making phone calls from my home, no one will be able to get a hold of my number unless told by myself.

I will stay away from social media websites such as Facebook, and advise my children not to post anything that could put us at risk such as where we are located.

I can disable "Using GPS Satellites" and "Wireless Networks" in my cell phone under the "Location & Security" settings when I do not need to use them.

I will teach my children how to make a collect call to myself and to _____ (a friend) in the event that my partner takes my child or in any other emergency.

I will tell people who take care of my children, including their school, which people have permission to pick them up and make sure they know to recognize these people.

I will give the people who take care of my children, including their school, copies of custody and protective orders, and emergency numbers.

I will stay in touch with friends and get to know my neighbors, and I will resist any temptation to cut myself off from people even if I believe they may not understand my situation.

I can join the Address Confidentiality Program by reviewing the instructions and completing the application so that my partner will not be able to find my residence.

- You can find the application at the following website: www.dos.ny.gov/acp

AT WORK AND IN PUBLIC

I can inform my boss, the security supervisor and/or Employee Assistance Program about my situation. My workplace EAP number is: _____.

I can ask _____ to possibly relocate myself to another location or change the hours of my schedule.

My workplace security office number is: _____.

I can ask _____ to screen my calls.

When leaving work I can see if security or other work people are available to supervise me while I walk to my vehicle.

When traveling to and from work, I can vary my route and if there is trouble I can _____.

I can change my daily routines by avoiding stores, banks, doctor's appointments, laundromats, or anywhere my partner may expect to find me.

I can tell _____ or anyone else that knows my situation that I am no longer with my partner and to call the police if they believe my children or I are ever in danger. Also I will advise them to call for help if they see my ex partner loitering around the premises.

When I decide to do go somewhere I may not normally feel comfortable going I will let _____ know.

WITH AN ORDER OF PROTECTION

I will keep my order of protection _____.

- Always keep it on or near you.

I will give copies of my order of protection to police departments in the community in which I live and those where I visit friends and family.

I will be sure to give copies to my employer, my religious advisor, my closest friend, my children's school, day care center and anywhere else that is necessary like _____.

If my partner happens to destroy my order of protection or if I lose it, I can get another copy from the court that issued it.

If my partner violates the order of protection, I can call the police and report a violation, contact my attorney, call my advocate, and/or advise the court of the violation immediately.

I can call a domestic violence program if I have questions about how to enforce a court order, or if I have problems getting it enforced I can also call these numbers:

Crime Victim and Sexual Violence Center: (518) 447-7100

Equinox: (518) 432-7865

Crime Victims Unit of District Attorney's Office: (518) 487-5460

MY OWN EMOTIONAL HEALTH

If I am feeling down, lonely, or confused, I will not hesitate to call Crime Victim and Sexual Violence Center at (518) 447-7100 or Equinox at (518) 432-7865.

I can take care of my physical health needs by getting a checkup with my doctor, gynecologist and dentist. If I don't have a doctor, I will call the local clinic or _____ to get one.

If I have concerns about my children's health and well-being, I can call _____.

If I have left my partner and am considering returning, I will call _____ or spend time with _____ before I make my final decision.

I will remind myself daily of my best qualities. They are: _____.

I can attend support groups, workshops, or classes at the local domestic violence program or _____ in order to build a support system, learn skills or get information.

I will be aware of when I drink alcohol or use other drugs.

If I need help concerning my drinking or drug use, I can call _____.

- I can call the Whitney M. Young Jr. Health Center for substance abuse treatment and services at (518) 465-4771.

Other things I can do to feel stronger are: _____.

Remember you don't have to figure it all out on your own. You can ask a domestic violence advocate for help.

Crime Victim and Sexual Violence Center: (518) 447- 7100
Equinox: (518) 432 - 7865

Lastly, for more information or assistance please contact: The Crime Victims Unit of the Albany County District Attorney's Office at (518) 487- 5460.

Albany County Crime Victim and Sexual Violence Center
112 State St., Room 1010, Albany, NY 12207
(518) 447-7100 | (518) 447-7102 (fax) | cvsvc@albanycounty.com
24-Hour Sexual Assault Hotline (518) 447-7716



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