





SAFETYPLANNING

for people dealing with abuse or violence
within their relationship or family

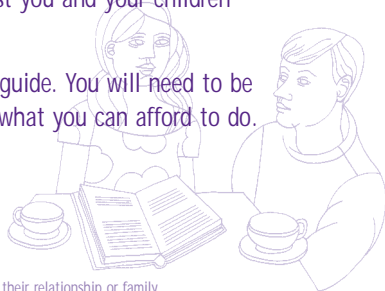
- Do you change your behaviour to avoid being abused or to avoid your dependants being abused?
- Are you fearful of your partner, child, parent, spouse, or ex?
- Have you ever experienced an incident of violence, cruelty or threat of violence to you, your children or dependants or your pets?

If you can answer “yes” to any of these questions, you may find that talking with a friend, a support service or making a Safety Plan can help.

You are not responsible for the abuse or violence being used against you or your dependants. A Safety Plan can help you see that you have some options or choices about how to reduce the danger. A Safety Plan can help you to gain a better sense of control over the situation for yourself and your children or dependants.

A Safety Plan can be used just the once. However, as your situation changes you may need to look at it again regularly and update it. It is also important to think about how to keep your Safety Plan secret from the person who is using the abusive and violent behaviours against you and your children or dependants.

The ideas contained in the Safety Plan are only a guide. You will need to be the judge of what is safest; what is realistic; and what you can afford to do.



Are you Helping a Person Do a Safety Plan?

If you are a person assisting someone who is experiencing abuse and violence to complete the Safety Plan it is important to remember:

- Never minimise the person's safety situation—think of all the risks. Violence and harassment can get worse after leaving or threatening to leave an abusive situation.
- Take notice of the person's own assessment of the situation. It is usually accurate.
- A small number of people will tend to minimise the potential for violence. This may be because they have experienced extreme violence and believe nothing can protect them from the person using violence and abuse.
- Working in partnership with the person may help them to take the first step.
- The level of risk that a person experiencing abuse is currently facing may mean taking immediate action.
- Make another appointment to see or call the person you are helping or ensure that she is in contact with another support agency to review the Safety Plan.
- Provide information about the resources available for survivors of physical, psychological and sexual violence.
- Make contact and develop co-operative relationships with other agencies working in this field.
- When you help someone in need, think about what risks this may expose you to.
- If you continue to support this person, make sure that you are also supported by colleagues, other agencies, friends or family members.

Every adult person at risk must decide themselves whether and when they wish to tell others about their situation. In the case of child abuse and neglect however some workers may not have a choice whether to tell. Friends, family, neighbours and co-workers can often help to support and protect people who have experienced violent and abusive behaviours whether they have told someone or not. You should help each person to consider carefully which people they most need and those they most trust to help secure their safety during violent incidents and in the long term.





PERSONALIZED SAFETY PLAN

Date: _____

Review Dates: _____

During a Violent Incident at Home

I can use some of the following strategies:

- A** When I anticipate an incident, I will try to move to a space that is lowest risk to escape an injury (that is, not the bathroom, kitchen or rooms without access to outside door)
- B** I will tell _____
about the violence and ask them to call the police if they hear suspicious noises coming from my home.
(Name at least two people here who are your neighbours)
- C** I will use _____
as my code word with my children/ dependants or my friends so they know I want them to call for help.
- D** I will teach my children our name and full address, and how to use the telephone to contact the police and say, "someone is hurting my mummy/daddy/sister/brother".
- E** I will also teach any dependants other than my children how to contact the police and what to say.
- F** I will teach my children where to go in the house during a violent incident, how to get out of the house (through a low window) and where to go if they leave the house if I am being attacked.
- G** If I decide to leave, I will _____

(Think about how to get out safely and in what order including getting dependants out if possible. What doors, windows, lifts, stairs or fire escapes would you use?)

H I can keep my purse and (car) keys ready and put them (place) _____ in order to leave more quickly

I If I have to leave my home, I will go to _____

(Decide this even if you don't think there will be a next time)

If I cannot go there, then I can go to _____
or _____

J I can tell _____ (family or friend other than neighbour) about the violence and request that they call police if they hear suspicious noises coming from my home.

Remember to tell all the people you have mentioned here about your plans, and what you may need them to do for you.

Safety When Preparing to Leave Your Home

Leaving is best done with a bit of planning, since this makes it safer for you, but sometimes you just have to run. If you can plan though, this is good for you (and your children/dependants), since many people who use violence are often more controlling, abusive and dangerous when they think you may leave them or you make the decision to leave.

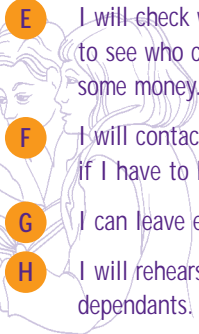


When planning to leave I will use some or all of the following plans:

A I will leave money, and an extra set of keys with _____ so I can leave quickly.

B If I can I will make copies of all my important documents like birth/marriage certificate, insurance papers, children's birth certificates, passports and precious photos or make sure they are safe, I will leave them with _____

C If I can afford to, I will open a savings account nobody knows about and try to put money into it by _____ to increase my independence. I will make sure accounts are sent to a safe address.

- 
- D** I will get legal advice from a lawyer who understands these issues.
- E** I will check with _____ and _____ to see who could let me stay in an emergency and/or lend me some money.
- F** I will contact a refuge and talk to them about ideas for accommodation if I have to leave.
- G** I can leave extra clothes with _____.
- H** I will rehearse my escape plan for myself and with my children/dependants.
- I** Other things I can do to increase my independence are:
- Contact the Domestic Violence Crisis Service on **6280 0900**
 - I can keep change for phone calls on me at all times.
 - I will sit down and review my safety plan every _____.
 - I will arrange to see friends or join an activity group to increase my support network.

Safety in My Own Home

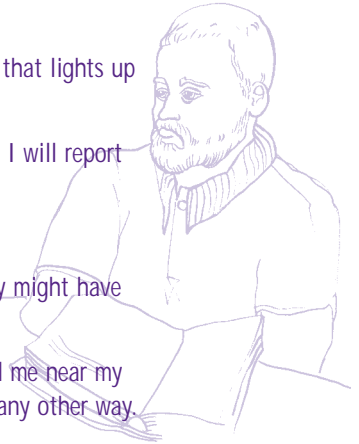


Safety measures at home can involve costs. If you are a tenant, check with your landlord about what they can provide. You can also call CLASP on **6282 3777** for a safety and security review of your home.

Other ideas include:

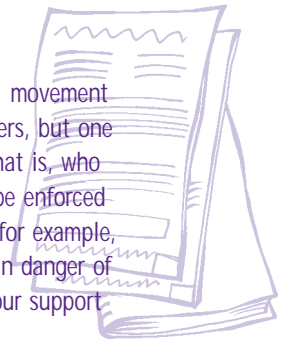
- A** I can change the locks on my doors and windows as soon as possible.
- B** I can ask _____ to help me install window locks and/or security chains on my front door.
- C** I can install security systems including additional locks, window bars, poles to wedge against doors, an electronic alarm system.
- D** I can replace wooden doors with steel/metal doors.
- E** I can install smoke detectors and purchase fire extinguishers for my house/flat.

- F I can install a motion sensitive lighting system outside that lights up when a person is coming close to my home.
- G I can get an answerphone so I can screen my calls, and I will report abusive calls to the telephone company and the police.
- H I can buy a mobile phone.
- I I can ask the police about any protection measures they might have to help me.
- J I will call the police if I see the person who has abused me near my home, or if they threaten me/communicate with me in any other way.
- K I will ask _____ to call the police if they see the person who has abused me or his vehicle near my home.
- L I will teach my children or dependants how to use the telephone to call _____ if we are in danger, or to call me if they are abducted. I will set up a homelink number and teach them how to use it.
- M I will inform all the people who provide care for my children/dependants who has permission to pick them up and who does not.



Safety with a protection order

Protection orders are restrictions placed by the court on a person's movement and actions. Some people who use violence do obey protection orders, but one can never be sure who will not obey the conditions of the order (that is, who may "breach" the order). If an order is "breached" it may need to be enforced by police or the courts. If you want to talk with the other person, for example, about children or to attempt reconciliation, then you may also be in danger of breaching the order. If you feel you need to do this then talk to your support people named in this document first.



The following are some steps that I can take to help the enforcement of my protection order.

- A I will keep my protection order document(s) (original if possible) in _____ (place). I will always keep it on or near me. If I change bags, that's the first thing I will check. I will also make copies, just in case.

- B** I will inform my employer, friends, neighbours (say who here) _____ that I have a protection order. I will ask them to make a note of any phone calls or actions by the person using the abusive behaviour as a record.
- C** If the person using violence destroys the order, I can get another copy from the court, my lawyer or _____.
- D** If the person using violence breaks the order (“breaches”), I will keep a diary of their actions. I will call the police and report the breaches and report them to anyone else who needs to know including my lawyer. I will make a note of or report every breach of the order.
- E** If I am not satisfied with the action of the police, I can call the police Victim Liaison Officer or the Officer-in-Charge of the station for assistance.

Safety at Work and in Public Places

At work it is important that some other people know what is happening. This might be your closest colleagues, or your boss, and people like door staff or receptionists. They do not need to know the whole story, but they can be asked to limit who is allowed in, or to phone you.

I might do any or all of the following:

- A** I can inform my boss, the security supervisor and _____ at work of my situation.
- B** I can ask _____ to help screen my telephone calls at work.
- C** When arriving at work I can park my car in a safer place and when leaving work I can get the security guard to escort me to my car and I can _____.
- D** When driving home if problems occur, I can _____.
- E** If I use public transport, I can _____.
- F** I can use different locations for shopping, going to the post office, bank etc. to reduce the risk of contact with the person who abuses me and my children or dependants.

- G I can buy a mobile phone.
- H I can buy a very loud alarm that I carry in my pocket.
- I I can practice shouting really loudly "get away from me" or "call the police this man is dangerous."
- J I can wear or take with me shoes that I can run in.
- K I can take a self-defence class or go to a support group to increase my confidence.
- L I can also _____.

Safety and My Well-Being

The experience of being assaulted, abused or threatened is frightening, exhausting and emotionally very disturbing. The process of keeping your health and strength up or of re-building your life requires much courage, support and energy.

To look after my energy, feelings and strength I can do some of the following:

- A If I feel depressed and that I might return to a potentially abusive situation, I can _____.
- B If I feel low and that everything is too much, I can lift my spirits by _____.
- C If I am not sure what to do, and am worried about my or my children/dependants' safety I can talk to _____.
- D I can join a family violence support group at _____.
- E I can join a common interests support group _____ at _____.
- F If my dependants/children or I have to communicate with the perpetrator in person or by telephone, I can _____.



- G** I will use “I can.....” statements with myself and be assertive and confident with others.
 - H** I will keep reminding myself that I have a right to live, deserve to be safe and to have control over my life.
 - I** I can call any of the services listed below for help and support.
- This is the end of this Safety Plan. Thank you.

Community & Agency Contacts

24 HOUR CRISIS & SUPPORT SERVICES

Domestic Violence Crisis Service

Crisis Line **62-800-900**

TTY **62-281-852**

Provides crisis intervention and telephone support, information and referrals, contacts, court support, education and resources for anyone affected by abusive and violent behaviours in a relationship or the family.

Victims Services Scheme **1800 822 272**

Provides access to counselling and other services to assist victims of crime to recover from the consequences of a criminal act.

Sexual Assault Counselling Service (Canberra Rape Crisi Centre) **62-472-525**

Provides sexual assault counselling, crisis support and advocacy/telephone counselling and community education.

Victims of Crime Assistance League (VOCAL) **62-959-600**

Provides services and support for victims of crime.

Lifeline **131 114**

Youthline **62-572-333**

Kids Helpline **1800 551 800**

LEGAL & WELFARE ADVICE

Legal Aid Office (ACT)

Switch	62-433-411
Helpline	1300 654 314
Appointments for advice	62-433-471
After Hours Urgent matters	0429 440 084
Personal Protection	62-174-299
Legal Advice Bureau (ACT Law Society)	62-475-700
Women's Legal Centre	62-574-499 or 1800 634 669
Welfare Rights and Legal Centre	62-472-177

Criminal justice agencies

ACT Magistrates Court (including Children's and Coroner's Courts)	62-174-444
ACT Supreme Court	62-672-707
Office of the Director of Public Prosecutions	62-473-800

Australian Federal Police

Attendance Line	11444
-----------------	-------

Police Victim Liaison Officer

(North)	62-457-441
(South)	62-692-706
Sexual Assault & Child Abuse Team	62-567-777
ACT Sentence Administration Board	62-070-744
ACT Corrective Services	62-070-888
Victims of Crime Coordinator	62-578-452/62-174-381

Produced for the Domestic Violence Prevention Council by the Office of the Victims of Crime Coordinator, ACT Legal Aid Office, Domestic Violence Crisis Service and the Australian Federal Police. ISBN 0 642 60141 0
© Australian Capital Territory, Canberra 2002
Publication No 01/2321



