

Devising a Safety Plan

As a survivor of domestic violence it is important to think about safety in your home, in your car, in public, and on the job. Take a few minutes to read over the following and think about the options you have if confronted with a dangerous situation.

- 1.** If I decide to leave, I have a quick way out of the house.
- 2.** I can keep my identification (driver's license, social security card, birth certificate, insurance cards, order of protection, divorce papers) and car keys ready and place these items in a safe place so I can leave quickly. (Make copies of keys to hide.)
- 3.** I am able to tell my neighbors, landlord, family, and close friends about the violence and I can ask that they call the police immediately if they hear suspicious noises coming from my house.
- 4.** I have selected a code word that I have shared with my children, family, friends and neighbors. If they hear me speak this word, they know to immediately call the police for help because they will know that I feel I am in danger.
- 5.** I have taught my children how to use the telephone to contact the police and fire department.
- 6.** If an argument erupts, I know to try to move to a place in my house that is open and away from items that could be used as weapons (i.e. kitchen and bathroom). I will try to avoid arguments that trap me in spaces without access to an outside door.
- 7.** If I decide to leave my home, I will have a place to go.

Safety When Leaving

If you are thinking about leaving a violent home you need to plan ahead. Below are a few things you will need if you leave. Remember- Leaving your batterer is the most dangerous time (BE PREPARED).

- 1.** Are you able to leave money, an extra set of keys, copies of documents, extra medicine, and clothes with a friend or family member so you can leave quickly? Can you hide extra clothes in your car if you have to leave during the night?
- 2.** Can you keep shelter or hotline numbers, spare change or a calling card with you at all times for emergency phone calls?

Things to take with you:

- Cash, checkbook, credit cards
- Drivers License
- Social Security Cards
- Birth Certificates (children also)
- School Records

- Keys (copies of house, car, work)
- Medications
- Lease, house deed, rental agreements, mortgage
- Order of Protection
- Divorce Paper Work
- Address Book
- Clothing

Safety on the Job and in Public

You may want to consider telling people you work with about your situation so you will have support in case of an emergency. It is important that you think of ways to be safe from your abuser while you are at work or out in public.

- 1.** Can you inform a supervisor, security personnel, or coworkers of your current situation? If you feel you are in danger, can you provide a photograph of your abuser and your Order of Protection to building security?
- 2.** Can a coworker help you screen telephone calls at work?
- 3.** Can you vary your routes to and from your work? Can you arrange for someone to escort you to the car or bus?
- 4.** Can you change your daily routine so your abuser will not be able to track you?
- 5.** Do you keep a copy of your Order of Protection at all times?
- 6.** Have you developed a safety plan?

Remember if you are out of your home and you feel you are in danger you need to get to a public place as soon as possible. Once there try to draw as much attention as possible. Make sure you are not a willing victim. Make it difficult for your abuser to gain control.