

SAFETY PLANNING WITH DOMESTIC VIOLENCE VICTIMS

From *“Domestic Violence: Strategies For Screening, Assessment, Intervention, And Documentation.”* Trainer’s Manual For Health Care Providers, *Family Violence Prevention Fund (1998)*.

Safety Measures While You’re In An Abusive Relationship

If you are living with the person who is battering you, here are some things you can do to ensure your and your children’s safety.

1. Have important phone numbers memorized

—friends and relatives whom you can call in an emergency. If your children are old enough, teach them important phone numbers, including when and how to dial 911.

2. Keep this information about domestic violence in a safe place

—where your batterer won’t find it, but where you can get it when you need to review it.

3. Keep change for pay phones with you at all times.

4. If you can, open your own bank account.

5. Stay in touch with friends. Get to know your neighbors.

Resist any temptation to cut yourself off from people—even if you feel like you just want to be left alone.

6. Rehearse your escape plan until you know it by heart.

7. Leave a set of car keys, extra money, a change of clothes and copies of the following documents, with a trusted friend or relative:

your and your children’s birth certificates, your children’s school and medical records, bank books, welfare identification, passport or green cards, immigration papers, your social security card, lease agreements or mortgage payment books, insurance papers, important addresses and telephone numbers, any other important documents.

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Reproduced from a booklet developed by the Los Angeles County Community and Senior Services Domestic Violence Unit, 1996.

“DOMESTIC VIOLENCE: STRATEGIES FOR SCREENING, ASSESSMENT, INTERVENTION, AND DOCUMENTATION.” *TRAINER’S MANUAL FOR HEALTH CARE PROVIDERS, FAMILY VIOLENCE PREVENTION FUND (1998)*.
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Safety After You Have Left The Relationship

Once you no longer live with the batterer, here are some things you can do to enhance your and your children's safety.

1. Change the locks

—if you're still in your home and the batterer is the one who has left.

2. Install as many security features as possible in your home.

These might include metal doors and gates, security alarm systems, smoke detectors and outside lights.

3. Inform neighbors that your former partner is not welcome on the premises.

Ask them to call the police if they see that person loitering about your property or watching your home.

4. Make sure the people who care for your children are very clear about who does and who does not have permission to pick up your children.

5. Obtain a restraining order.

Keep it near you at all times, and make sure friends and neighbors have copies to show the police.

6. Let your co-workers know about the situation

—if your former partner is likely to come to your work place to bother you. Ask them to warn you if they observe that person around.

7. Avoid the stores, banks and businesses you used when you were living with the batterer.

8. Get support counseling. Attend workshops. Join support groups.

Do whatever it takes to form a supportive network that will be there when you need it.

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