

Safety Plan

If you are involved with an abuser, you should know you are never safe. Sometimes you may feel he is getting better. Maybe he promises to change. You may think you can get him to act right if you are the "perfect" partner. But men who abuse their partners do not just "stop". In fact, abuse gets worse over time. It happens more often and gets more violent.

If you live with a batterer, you need to think about taking care of yourself.

Here are some ideas for increasing your safety in a violent home. Some ideas include leaving the relationship, even if only temporarily. Remember, there is NO excuse for abuse.

A safety plan will help you identify possible ways to protect yourself and your children. The plan will make you more aware of your personal and community resources. Also, it will help you to identify the signs and situations that may precede a violent episode.

Violence repeats itself and gets worse. For your safety, it is best for you to have a plan to get to a safe place if you anticipate or experience your partner's violence again.

You are not powerless or locked into a battering relationship. You can prepare to leave, and be ready to set out on your own at the right time. Victims who are in physically abusive relationships often find it difficult to leave home and end the relationship permanently. If you are unable to leave at this time, you can still protect yourself by doing certain things that will make it easier for you to leave later.

Put these things together in a place where you can reach them quickly. You may think about leaving some of these items at a friend's, neighbor's or relative's house, at work, anyplace that you will be safe when it is time to retrieve the items when they are needed.

1) When you leave, be sure to take the following important items if you have them:

- Driver's license
- Medication(s)
- Keys
- Address book
- Telephone/utility bills
- Bank book
- Green cards
- Car ownership papers
- Insurance papers
- Lease/rental
- Property deed
- Money
- Checkbook
- Children's school records
- Marriage license
- Birth certificates
- Credit cards
- Social security cards
- Divorce and custody papers
- Passports
- Jewelry
- Pictures
- Medical records

2) Try to get a joint bank account or an account in your own name.

3) Hide an extra set of cars keys outside or at a neighbor's house. Plan where you will go, and how you will get there in case you have to leave suddenly.