

Domestic Violence Safety Plan

Safety During An Abusive Incident

- Always remember that you can call 911.
- Attempt to stay in a room with more than one exit.
- Stay out of rooms that contain items that can be used as weapons (kitchen, bathroom, garage, etc.)
- Devise a code word to use with your children, family, and neighbors to alert them that you need emergency assistance.
- Trust your intuition. You know your abuser better than anyone else.

Safety When Preparing to Leave –here are some things to think about

- If possible, practice how you and your children would get out safely. What doors, windows, elevators or fire escapes would you use? You and your children should have a special place to meet in case you get separated during your escape.
- Create and rehearse your escape plan mentally and with your children as appropriate.
- Teach older children to call 911 or a neighbor or relative for help.
- Keep copies of important papers and keys in a safe place (not your purse).
- Inform your children's school or daycare who has permission to pick your children up.
- Keep the shelters numbers and change or a calling card with you at all times.

Safety In Your Home –If your abuser has left the residence.

- Inform neighbors and your landlord that your partner no longer lives with you and if you see him/her, to immediately call the police.
- Change/add locks to all doors, windows and sliding glass doors.
- Add a peephole and outdoor lighting if possible. Consider an alarm system or motion-sensors.
- Borrow or buy a cell phone to keep with you at all times. A 911 cell phone, available at the shelter or program office, can be used to call 911 and can be hidden in various places throughout the house.
- Trim bushes/trees around your home to eliminate hiding places.

Safety and Your Emotional Health

- If you are thinking of returning to a potentially abusive situation, discuss an alternative with someone you trust.
- If you have to communicate with your partner, determine the safest way to do so, preferably not in person.
- Read books, articles, and poetry to help you feel stronger.

- Abuse is NOT YOUR FAULT. Anyone suggesting YOU should change to prevent the abuse is disregarding you and your children's safety.

It is important to take certain items with you when leaving, if accessible.
Some of the items may include the following:

- Identification for yourself and your children (drivers license, birth certificates, social security cards, insurance verification, car title, etc.)
- School and vaccination records.
- Checkbook, ATM card, and money.
- Medication and any medical records.
- Welfare ID, work permit, green card, passport
- Keys
- Photos jewelry, sentimental items
- Small, sellable items
- Children's favorite things (blankets, toys, books, etc.)
- Clothing.

If you have any questions, please call our 24-hour hotline at 850-863-4777 or toll-free at 1-800-44ABUSE