

Intimate Partner Violence: Safety Planning



If you are experiencing IPV, it's crucial to have a plan in place to protect yourself and those around you.

A **safety plan** is a personalized, practical plan to improve safety while experiencing abuse, preparing to leave an abusive situation, or after you leave. This plan includes vital information tailored to your unique situation and will help you prepare for and respond to different scenarios, including telling your friends and family about your situation, coping with emotions, and various resources suited to your individual circumstances.

Some preparations for a safety plan might seem obvious, but it can be hard to think clearly or make logical decisions during moments of crisis. Having a safety plan laid out in advance can help you protect yourself and others in high-stress situations. The following are general guidelines for creating a plan:

Recognize Warning Signs and Red Flags

- Identify behaviors and patterns that indicate a potential for violence.
- Trust your instincts and take threats seriously.

Establish a Safety Network

- Compile a list of trusted friends, family, and neighbors who can provide support and safe haven.
- Keep their contact information easily accessible.

Plan Safe Exits

- Identify safe areas in your home where you can go if violence erupts, avoid rooms with potential hazards.
- Plan escape routes and practice using them.

Pack an Emergency Bag

- Keep a packed bag ready with essentials such as clothing, medications, important documents (e.g., ID, passport, birth certificates), cash, and keys.

Use Technology Safely

- Keep a charged cell phone with you at all times.
- Save emergency contacts and local authorities.
- Consider using apps that can alert trusted contacts or authorities discreetly if you're in danger.

Financial Safety

- Open a separate, private bank account.
- Secure financial resources and info independently.
- Monitor and protect your credit and personal info.

Legal Protections

- Explore legal options such as a protective order.
- Contact local law enforcement or domestic violence agencies for legal assistance and support.

Trust Your Instincts

- Listen to your gut feelings and prioritize your safety.
- If you feel unsafe, take action to protect yourself, even if it means leaving temporarily.

Safety for Children and Pets

- Develop a plan for their safety, including where they can go if you need to leave.
- Inform schools or caregivers about custody orders.

Seek Support

- Reach out to local domestic violence shelters, hotlines, support groups or the EAP for guidance.
- You are not alone; there are people ready to help you through this difficult time.

For a more specific and personalized plan, visit the National Domestic Violence Hotline website:

thehotline.org - this site has vital info and resources to help you build a safety plan based on your unique circumstance. Whether you are living with an abusive partner, pregnant, preparing to leave, or planning for children or pets, they can help.

You can also call the EAP anytime for support.