

SAFETY PLANNING

A safety plan is important because it is easier to plan ahead than to plan while dealing with a crisis. These suggestions should only become part of your safety plan if they fit with your knowledge of your own unique situation. You likely also have things you are doing to keep yourself/your children safe that are not included in this list. Many women involved in a domestic violence situation find it's helpful to make a safety plan. While you are working on a safety plan, remember, you don't have to figure it all out on your own. To help decide what is best for you, it can be helpful to talk to staff at your local transition house or a crisis line counselor. They have experience working with victims of domestic violence and who know how to work with the different systems (police, courts, and shelters) that can make things easier for you. They are familiar with your community and can help you make a safety plan that meets your individual needs.

Remember that you always have a choice. If you are in a dangerous situation, there is help available for you if you need it. If you write out a safety plan, ***be sure to keep it in a place where your partner won't find it.***

Plan Ahead

- Make a safety plan for yourself when you can think things through. That way, if you need to get out quickly, you'll know where to go and what options are available to you.
- Know your abuser's red flags. Be alert for signs and clues that your abuser is getting upset.
- Come up with several believable reasons why you may leave the home both day and night if you sense trouble brewing.
- If you don't have a car, think of a safe place, close to your home, where your friend could pick you up. Also, know the routes to the transit systems nearest to your home.
- Create a code word or phrase to use on the telephone with a friend if you need to access help when your abuser is present. Tell your friend that when you say "blank" it means you're in trouble and you need them to dial 911 for you.
- If you feel comfortable, tell your neighbors about the violence, and ask if they will call the police if suspicious noises are coming from your home.
- Know the warning sign of your partner's substance use as this is often a high-risk time. What behaviors does he display when he is using or about to use?
- Substance use may reduce your ability to gauge your level of risk. Include in your plan: What to do in situations to stop overusing and safe places/situations to drink/use.

Planning

- Decide on a pathway if you must leave at night. Think of public places you can access 24 hours a day. Know the route to police stations, hospitals, fire stations, and 24-hour convenience stores in your area.
- If you leave by car, make sure you lock the car doors immediately.
- Consider making a plan for each room in your home. What can you do to get out of the basement or upper floors of your home?
- Know which doors lock in your home.
- If you live in an apartment building, think of all the ways to get out safely. Is there a fire escape that could get you safely to the ground? Is there a stairwell you could use?
- Inform necessary people that you have a protection order (schools, childcare).
- It may not be safe to tell your partner you are leaving. Plan to leave when he is busy elsewhere.
- If you have children, take them with you when you leave.
- Keep fuel in the vehicle
- Keep your purse and keys in a safe place in case you must leave quickly.
- Park so you can easily drive away such as backed into your parking space.
- Hide a spare key where you can get it easily.
- Remember to pack your important documents.
- Practice your escape plan.
- Teach your children how to call 911.
- Turn off your phones location/GPS.
- Share your location, or where you plan to go with a safe relative or friend.
- Get a prepaid cellphone.
- Don't seek help online on a home computer.
- Change usernames and passwords for email, online banking, Facebook etc. even if you don't think your abuser has your passwords.
- Change your PIN # on bank and credit cards.
- Cancel shared bank accounts and credit cards.
- Keep your new location safe and secretive.
- Instruct your children on where to go in an emergency

Important Documents

Keep important documents together in a safe place, such as a friend's house. These documents and other necessities could include:

- Protection Order
- ATM card
- Money/cab fare
- Check book
- Credit card
- Passport
- Work permit
- Driver's license & registration
- Social insurance number/card
- Your partner's social insurance number
- Medical records
- Address book
- Insurance policies
- Important legal documents
- Police records
- Record of abuse/violence incidents
- Baby's things (diapers, formula, medication)
- Children's school and immunization records
- Birth certificates
- Medications
- Essential clothing
- Eyeglasses
- Copy of lease
- Anything of sentimental value
- Non-perishable snacks for children (I.E., juice and crackers)

Memorize or keep a listing of important telephone numbers:

Campbell River Hospital – 250-287-7111

Campbell River Transition House (Ann Elmore House) – 250-286-3666

VictimLink BC – 1-800-563-0808

Campbell River RCMP Non-Emergency Line: 250-286-6221

If you are in immediate danger, you should always call 911.

Other emergency numbers:

- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____