

PERSONAL SAFETY PLAN

The following steps represent my plan for increasing my safety and preparing in advance for the possibility for further violence. Although I do not have control over my partner's abuse, **I do have a choice about how to respond to him/her and how to best get my children to safety.**

A. SAFETY DURING A VIOLENT INCIDENT

Check the item(s) that you want to work on or have completed:

- 1. I can make an extra copy of the house and car keys and keep them in a secret place, preferably outside of my house, so that I can leave quickly.
- 2. I can tell _____ and _____ about the violence and request that they call the police if they hear suspicious noises coming from my house.
- 3. I can teach my children how to use the telephone and contact the police.
- 4. I will develop a code word with my children and friends so they will know to call for help.
- 5. During an argument, I will avoid rooms with an outside door (i.e., bedroom or bathroom) or those containing potential weapons (i.e., kitchen knives, guns, etc.)
- 6. I will teach my children to be safe by developing their own plan:
 - Stay in their bedroom or behind locked doors during arguments
 - Leave the house and go to a neighbor or friend's house.
 - Call 911
 - Tell a relative or trusted adult
- 7. I will call the police (911 or other emergency number).
- 8. If possible, I will get an a automatic "Speed dial" telephone which gives me one button access to call the police.
- 9. If I have to leave the home, I will go to _____ or _____.

B. BEING PREPARED TO LEAVE

The decision to leave can be a difficult one. Although you may not be considering the possibility at this time, it is very important to be prepared. An abuser will often become more dangerous when they believe a partner is leaving a relationship. A careful plan is needed to promote safety.

Check the item(s) that you want to work on or have completed:

- 1. I will save a little money every week and place the cash in a place that only I know about.
- 2. I will leave money and an extra set of keys with _____.
- 3. I will open a savings account in my own name at _____ in order to

increase my independence. I will make sure the statements are mailed somewhere other than to my home address.

- 4. The domestic violence shelter agency closest to my house is _____.
I can seek shelter there 24 hours a day by calling _____.
- 5. I can call and stay with _____ or _____ anytime of the day or night.
- 6. The closest telephone to my house is located at _____.
- 7. I will sit down and review my safety plan every _____ months and make all appropriate changes.

REVIEW DATES: (1) _____ (2) _____ (3) _____

- 8. I will pack a change of clothes for me and for each of my children and place them in a safe place (with friends, family or at work).
- 9. I will organize my important papers and put them in a place I can easily get to in case I need to leave quickly. When I leave, I plan to take:
 - Birth Certificate Green Cards Passports Bank Books
 - Address Book Identification Medications and Prescriptions
 - Vehicle Registration Social Security Number (including abuser's)
 - Medical/Immunization records Divorce/Separation Papers
 - Insurance Papers (health, home, auto) Lease/Rental Agreement
 - Mortgage Papers/House Deed Pictures, Jewelry, sentimental items
 - Children's favorite toys and blankets All court orders/documentation of abuse
- 10. I will rehearse my escape plan and, if appropriate, rehearse it with my children.

C. ONCE YOU HAVE LEFT:

Leaving an abusive relationship is a very difficult step, and one of courage and strength. This step can also be dangerous if you do not plan in advance to maintain safety for yourself and your children. Many times an abuser feels that they have lost control of the relationship and will go to great lengths to restore this control. A careful plan is needed to promote safety and avoid another incidence of violence.

Check the item(s) that you want to work on or have completed:

- 1. I will obtain an Order of Protection for myself and my children at _____.
Once I have the Order I will keep it with me at all times, and provide a copy for my children's school/day care, and my place of employment or school.
- 2. If possible, I will change locks and install metal/steel entry doors, a security system, smoke detectors, and an outside lighting system.
- 3. I will inform _____ and _____ that my abuser no longer

lives at my residence, and ask them to call the police should they observe him/her near my home.

- 4. I will inform my children's school/day care/care-giver of who has permission to pick up my children by providing a written list.
- 5. I will inform my co-worker, _____, about my situation and request that they screen my calls.
- 6. I can avoid social places and situations (known restaurants, banks, stores, bars) and _____ that I frequented while living with my abuser.
- 7. If I feel upset or down and want to return to the abusive relationship, I can call _____ or _____ for support.

Congratulations! You have taken important steps to increase your safety and future choices!