



# Safety Plan

**SECTION A: If you have decided to stay in a relationship that has been violent in the past**  
*If your partner has been violent in the past, chances are very good it will happen again – even if your partner promised it wouldn't. You may not want to think about that possibility, but for your own safety, it's best to be prepared just in case. Remember, you do not have control over your partner's violence, but you do have control over how you prepare for it and respond to it.*

1. These are the 'cues' I have seen in the past right before my partner has been violent. I can keep these in mind as warning signs, and when I see these things in the future I will know it is time to take action to protect myself:

- Use of drugs/alcohol       Jealousy       Verbal abuse/put-downs  
 Embarrassing me in front of friends       Disagreements about sex

\_\_\_\_\_

2. These are some of the ways I have tried to protect myself in the past that HAVE worked. In the future, as soon as I sense that my partner may become violent, I will do as many of these things as I can to protect myself:

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

3. These are some of the ways I have tried to protect myself in the past that HAVE NOT worked. I will not rely on these things in the future:

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

4. When I sense there is going to be an argument, I will try to go to a place where other people might hear the arguing, and/or a place where there is less risk of injury. (Avoid kitchens, bathrooms, garage, anywhere near weapons or any room without an outside exit.)

These are the places I will try to avoid having an argument:

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

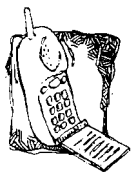
5. These are the numbers I can call for help when I sense that I'm in danger:

(Always have these numbers and change for phone calls on you.)

Police: \_\_\_\_\_ Under what circumstances will I call? \_\_\_\_\_

Hotline: \_\_\_\_\_ Under what circumstances will I call? \_\_\_\_\_

(continued on next page)



# Safety Plan

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6. These are the people I can turn to for help who are willing to be a part of my safety plan:

Name

How they will help

At home: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

At school: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

At work: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Around the neighborhood: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Other: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

7. This is the code word I will use to let the people above know I am in danger and need help: \_\_\_\_\_

8. If I need to get out of the house quickly when I am in danger, this is how I will escape:

(Plan as many escape routes as possible, including using doors, windows, fire escapes, elevators, stairwells, etc. Practice the escape route.)

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

9. If I need to go to a safe location where my partner will not find me, this is where I will go:

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

10. I may be able to get a certain type of order of protection that does not require my partner to stay away from me, but does order him or her not to abuse me. This way, my partner knows there will be more serious consequences if s/he is abusive. This is who can help me get the order of protection:

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

11. If I get the order of protection, I should carry a copy on me at all times and have copies at my home, school, work and anyplace else I am likely to be. This is where I will keep copies of my order of protection (or who will hold them for me.)

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

12. If I need medical care, this is where I will go: \_\_\_\_\_

This is how I will get there: \_\_\_\_\_

My insurance/Medicaid information or how I will pay for it: \_\_\_\_\_

13. These are some ways I can increase my independence so I will be better prepared to make it on my own if I decide to end this relationship in the future:

(I can become more independent financially, emotionally, socially, physically, etc.)

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

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# Safety Plan

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## SECTION B: If you have decided to break up with an abusive partner

***If you are in an abusive relationship – if your partner has ever been violent or threatened violence – it is very important to have a well-planned safety plan in place before attempting to end the relationship. While ending the relationship now is probably the best decision for you in the long run, you should know that the breakup period is the most dangerous time in an abusive relationship.***

1. I will plan the breakup carefully with the help of people I trust. If possible, I will involve a parent and a counselor from a local domestic violence services organization. I can also involve friends, counselors, teachers – the more people who are aware of what's going on, the more people can look out for me and support me.

This is who will help me to carry out my breakup safety plan:

\_\_\_\_\_

2. Getting an order of protection is highly recommended if I think I might be in any danger. It is not a guarantee of safety, but it is a legal court order that says my ex-partner must stay away from me and can be arrested if he or she does not. This may scare my ex into leaving me alone. (See the worksheet on Orders of Protection, or ask a domestic violence services agency for help.)

This is where I can go to get an order of protection:

\_\_\_\_\_

3. I will not break up with my partner in an isolated place. I will do it in public, with people around who are a part of my safety plan and know what's going on. If necessary for safety reasons, I will do it by phone or by letter.

This is where and when I will break up with my partner: \_\_\_\_\_

This is who will be around when I do it: \_\_\_\_\_

4. I will be very clear with my partner that I am ending the relationship and that my decision is not negotiable.

These are the words I will use: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

5. I will be prepared for my partner's reaction. It could be violent, or my partner could be very sweet and try to win me back.

Ways my partner might react:

How I will handle these reactions:

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

6. After breaking up, I will avoid being alone with my ex-partner or being in a situation where s/he might try to corner me. I can change my routines, change my travel routes, ask a friend or family member to travel with me to school or work. I will try not to go out alone, especially at night. I should never open the door if my ex comes knocking, no matter how sweet or apologetic s/he sounds.

These are the routines I will have to change: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

These are the people who are willing to travel with me: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

This is what I will do if my ex shows up at my home: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

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## Safety Plan

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### **Section C: If you are breaking up with an abusive partner who you live with**

***Breaking up with someone you live with is even more complicated.***

***Aside from following all of the steps in section B, take the extra precautions below before breaking up.***

1. A safe place I can stay, (preferably one where my partner will not find me) is:  
(If necessary get information about how to access a shelter from your local domestic violence hotline)  
\_\_\_\_\_
2. If I am going to move back in with a parent or stay with a family member or friend where my partner can find me, I will make sure that everyone living in the household is a part of my safety plan.
3. I should get any important personal possessions, identification, documents, money, etc., out of my home. Going back for them could be dangerous, or my partner could try to control me by destroying or 'holding hostage' things that I need.  
These are the things I will remove from the home: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
This is where I will keep them: \_\_\_\_\_
4. If I plan to stay where I live now and ask my partner to leave, I should change the locks so my partner doesn't have access to the home. (I should do this before I break up or immediately after, and won't stay home alone until the locks are changed.)  
This is the name and number of the locksmith I will use, and how I will pay for it: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
5. If I plan to stay where I live now, I will not allow my ex-partner in the home when I'm alone to get his or her belongings. I will have my partner get his or her things when I'm not home. If I have an order of protection, I can request police be present when my partner picks up his/her things.  
This is when and how I will stay safe when my partner gets his or her belongings: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

### **SECTION D: If you have a child or children with your abuser**

***If you have a child or children with your abuser, your safety plan will also have to include making sure your children are safe physically and emotionally. In addition to the precautions above, make sure you do the following things for the safety of your children:***

1. This is where I can get counseling for my child(ren) and advice on how to help them deal with the emotional effects of witnessing the violence: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
2. I will call the police or child welfare services if my partner abuses my child(ren). (I am responsible for protecting my child(ren), and if my partner hurts them and I fail to seek help, I could be charged with neglect and the child(ren) could be taken away.)
3. If my child(ren) are old enough, I can teach them how to use the phone to call the police or fire department. (If I have a programmable phone, I can program these numbers on speed dial and teach the child(ren) when and how to use them.)
4. If my child(ren) are old enough, I can teach them the escape plan in case they feel they are in danger.
5. I will let anyone who cares for my child(ren) know who else has permission to visit or pick the child(ren) up. If I have an order of protection that includes the child(ren), I will make sure the school, day care or sitters have copies.