

Your Safety Plan

When staying in an abusive situation

If you choose to stay, there are some steps that can be taken to increase your safety if an abusive incident occurs. Even if all these precautions are followed, your safety cannot be guaranteed. Remember you do not deserve to be hurt or threatened.

1. Avoid the kitchen and bathroom areas if an abusive situation seems likely, try to avoid rooms with access to potential weapons (i.e. knives, heavy objects), and with only one exit. Do not run to where your children or pets are as they may be hurt as well.
2. If possible, pre-program emergency numbers into your phone (i.e. 911). Keep a phone in a room you can lock from the inside.
3. Talk to your neighbour or friend that you can trust and arrange a signal or code for when you need them to get help.
4. Teach your children not to intervene in the violence. Instead, teach them a code for when you need them to get help.
5. Have an emergency bag packed and hidden in an accessible location. Include numbers of emergency shelters and police, identification, a few items of clothing, extra leashes or cat carriers (a pillow case will work if you do not have a carrier), and money for phone calls and/or transportation. Have an extra set of car keys or enough money for a taxi or bus. Keep your important papers for you, your children, and your pets including, BC Health Care cards, birth certificates, custody agreements, social insurance numbers, and citizenship and immigration papers, licenses for your pets or any proof of ownership papers, medical/vaccination history or medication information, extra medication (if applicable) and a list of like and dislikes, any potential behavioural issues, and a feeding schedule.
6. Ensure that some form of emergency transportation is available upon request. This may be through a trusted friend or through community supports such as Victim Services.
7. Have an escape route out of your home. Teach it to and practice it with your children and pets. If it is safe to do so, have your children gather the pets for the escape plan. When practicing the escape plan it is important that you and your children are aware of your pets hiding places.
8. Work out a code word that can be used on the phone with a person that is trusted. The code could mean to contact the police or to inform them that you are leaving. It may also be important to develop signals or codes for neighbours to call the police such as banging in the floor or wall in case of an emergency.

9. Look at options for safe places (i.e. a friend, a neighbour, a relative, motel, or emergency shelter). If you can do so safely, contact the people in advance to let them know you are coming. This allows them to watch for you and call for help if needed. Do not go to a friend or relative's house if your partner/caregiver is likely to try to find you there. This can be dangerous for both you and those trying to assist you.
10. A life-call system can be part of your personalized safety plan. The shelters have more information on this system.
11. Whenever calling a shelter or other resources, phone another number or press several numbers randomly immediately afterwards, so that your partner/caregiver cannot press the redial button and find out whom you were speaking with.
12. Whenever searching the internet for resources (including this web site) remember to delete your web site history so that your partner/caregiver can not view the safety plan, shelter numbers, etc. Information on deleting your browser's history can be found here.
13. Children should be told that violence is not right, even if the abusive person is someone they love. Tell your children that targets of violence are not at fault. Neither you nor your children, or the family pet caused the violence. The most important thing is for you, your children, and pets to be protected.
14. Review your safety plan monthly.



For assistance contact:

***Delta Police Victim Services
604 940-5019***

***Domestic Violence Helpline/Victimlink BC
at 1-800-563 0808***

Or visit these websites for more information:

**www.domesticviolencebc.ca
www.help.endviolence.ca**