

YWCA Domestic Violence Intervention and Prevention Program

605 N. 6th Street, Lafayette

PERSONALIZED SAFETY PLAN

Domestic Violence Crisis Hotline 765-423-1118 • Toll Free 1-888-345-1118 • Office 765-423-4486

Although you may not have control over your partner's violence, you do have a choice about how to respond to him/her and how to best get yourself and your children to safety. Here are some suggestions for increasing your safety.

Safety Strategies to use BEFORE a Violent Incident

- I will create an emergency bag that includes money, clothes, important documents, and an extra set of car keys and leave it with a friend/family member or hidden somewhere in my home or at work so I can leave quickly.
- I will create a code word to let my family and others know I (and my children) need help immediately.
- I will teach my children to call 9-1-1 for help.
- I will practice the best way to leave my home by knowing what doors, windows, elevators, stairways, or fire escapes I can use in order to get out safely.
- I will contact the YWCA Domestic Violence Intervention and Prevention Program to learn more about their emergency services.
- I will make advance arrangements to go to a family member or friend's home to escape the violence.
- I will tell my neighbor(s) about the violence and request they call the police if they hear suspicious noises coming from my home.
- I will purchase a rope ladder to escape from a second floor window.
- I will change the locks on my doors and windows.
- I will teach my children how to use the telephone to make a collect call to me and other family members or friends in the event my abuser takes the children.
- I will give the people who take care of my children the names of the individuals who have permission to pick up my children and indicate that my abuser is not permitted to do so (notify schools, daycare, babysitter, etc.)
- I will rehearse my escape plan and, if appropriate, practice it with my children.
- I will keep my cell phone charged at all times and be prepared to call 9-1-1 if I encounter any problem.

Safety Strategies at Home DURING a Violent Incident

- I will use my judgment and intuition. If the situation is very serious, I will give my abuser what he/she wants to calm him/her down, then call 9-1-1 as soon as possible. I have to protect myself (and my children).
- I will move to a low-risk room in my home if I anticipate an argument.
- I will get my emergency bag if it is at home and leave the violent situation as soon as I can.
- I will seek emergency shelter at the YWCA Domestic Violence Intervention and Prevention Program or at a family member or friend's home.

Safety Strategies at WORK and in PUBLIC

- I will inform my boss, security supervisor, and colleagues of my personal situation.
- I will ask my colleagues to screen my telephone calls at work.
- When driving to or from work, I will take different routes rather than the same route all the time.
- I will use public transportation whenever possible.
- I will shop at different grocery stores and shopping malls to conduct my business and shop at hours that are different than those when I was residing with my abuser.
- I will use a different bank and take care of my banking business at hours that are different from those I used when residing with my abuser.
- I will be vigilant while driving to or from home to make sure I am not being followed.
- I will have on me at all times the telephone numbers I need to know (school, work, YWCA DVIPP, supervisor's home number, minister, etc.)

Safety Strategies with a PROTECTIVE ORDER

Some abusers obey Protective Orders, but others may violate them. Recognize that you need to notify the police EVERY TIME your abuser violates the Protective Order.

- I will **ALWAYS** keep my Protective Order on or near me.
- I will register my Protective Order with the court in other counties where I often visit.
- I will make a copy of my Protective Order and keep in a safe place away from my home.
- I can get another copy of my Protective Order from the county courthouse if my partner destroys my copy.
- I will notify my family, minister, closet friend, and anyone else I trust that I have a Protective Order in effect.
- I will contact the police and my attorney/advocate if my abuser violates the Protective Order. If the police do not help, I will ask my attorney/advocate to file a complaint with the chief of police.
- If I often visit other counties in Indiana, I will consider registering my Protective Order with the courts in those counties.
- I will contact the YWCA Domestic Violence Intervention and Prevention Program if I need any assistance or have any questions.

When I leave, I should have these items:

It is important to take certain items with you when you leave your home and abuser. In addition to the items listed below, you can pack a bag with an extra set of clothing and copies of important papers to keep at a friend or relative's home if you have to leave your home quickly.

Money*	Health records
Driver's license	School records
Special medication	Credit Cards
Birth certificate for me	Address book
Birth certificates for my child(ren)	Keys
Mortgage payment book	Welfare ID
Social Security cards	Passports
Work permits, Green cards	Insurance papers
Checking account books	Jewelry
House deeds, rental/lease agreements	

*Money: Even if you have never worked, you can legally take half of the funds in the checking and savings accounts, as Indiana is a community property state. If you do not take any money from the accounts, your abuser can legally take all money and/or close the account. If this happens, you may not get your share until the court rules on it, if ever.

Safety Strategies for EMOTIONAL HEALTH

The experience of being battered and verbally degraded is exhausting and emotionally draining. The process of building a new life free from that abuse takes courage, patience, and an incredible amount of energy.

- I can participate every week in the women's self-esteem class at the YWCA Domestic Violence Intervention and Prevention Program.
- I can contact the YWCA Domestic Violence Intervention and Prevention Program to get the names and phone numbers of community resources for children's services, clothing, counseling, education, financial, food, housing, legal, maternity, medical, senior citizen's services, support groups, special needs, etc.

Safety and DRUG or ALCOHOL Use

The legal consequences of using illegal drugs or alcohol can be very hard on a battered victim. It may hurt his/her relationship with their children and/or put the abused victim at a disadvantage in other legal actions with the abuser.

- I will carefully consider the consequences of using illegal drugs or alcohol or misusing over-the-counter medication.
- I understand that the use of drugs or alcohol can reduce my awareness and ability to think and act quickly to protect myself and/or my children.
- If I decide to use drugs or alcohol, I will do so in a safe environment with people who understand the risk of violence and are committed to my safety.

Safety Strategies for CELL PHONE Usage

Be advised that cell phone service and networking are not secure and their location may, therefore, be tracked by your abuser through cell phone use.

- I will have my cell phone GPS system turned off.
- I will call my cell phone service provider to ensure that no one can call and inquire about account activity.

Protective Orders cover a victim's right to cell phone privacy, although there are exceptions. For example, in the case where custody is shared with an abuser, the judge may allow the abuser limited communication with the child via the victim's cell phone.

Contact the YWCA Domestic Violence Intervention and Prevention Program immediately if you are being harassed through your cell phone by your abuser or by another party on behalf of your abuser. (Harassment includes unwanted phone calls, text messages, e-mails, pictures, or videos.)