

Domestic Violence Victim Checklist

Below are items that are suggested to be taken by a victim of domestic violence if he or she is leaving the common dwelling.

- ✓ Identification
- ✓ Birth Certificates for you and children
- ✓ Social Security cards (or numbers)
- ✓ School/Medical records
- ✓ Money, check book, credit cards, etc.
- ✓ Keys – house, car, office
- ✓ Driver's License and registration
- ✓ Change of clothing
- ✓ Welfare identification
- ✓ Passports/green cards, work permits
- ✓ Divorce papers, Legal documents, Civil Protection Order
- ✓ Lease/rental agreement, house deed
- ✓ Mortgage payment book, current unpaid bills
- ✓ Insurance papers
- ✓ Address book, important phone numbers
- ✓ Pictures, jewelry, items of sentimental value
- ✓ Children's favorite toys, blanket, etc.

SAFETY PLANNING

If you are in a violent relationship, whether you feel ready to leave or not, it is a good idea to develop a safety plan for your children and yourself. You may never know when you may have to leave suddenly to protect your life and the lives of your children.

PERSONAL SAFETY PLAN DURING RELATIONSHIP

- ✓ Prepare a "flight kit" that includes hiding money, important documents (or certified copies) such as birth certificates, passports, health insurance documents and social security cards, extra car keys, and essential items for your children and you (clothing, toiletries, eyeglasses and prescription medication). Choose someone you trust to leave your flight kit with so it is available when you need it in a crisis situation.

- ✓ Maintain a short list of phone numbers. Keep it close by.
- ✓ Tell two or three close friends or neighbors about the violence and ask them to call the police if they hear suspicious noises coming from your house.
- ✓ Make a list of four places you can go and be safe. Know where your area's battered women's shelter is. This is often a secure facility (with a security system) and can provide additional safety.
- ✓ Keep change for phone calls at all times.
- ✓ Open a savings account in your name, or keep money hidden with a trusted relative or friend.
- ✓ Plan where to go and how to get there. Try to select places the batterer will not be able to easily locate you. Ask yourself, "Does he know who this person is and where they live? Does he know their last name?" **Make sure to have alternatives to staying at a shelter in case the shelters are full.**
- ✓ Rehearse your departure
 - Travel from your house to your safe place several times.
 - Think up several plausible reasons for leaving at different times of the day
 - Try to anticipate the need to leave early enough so you can slip away while the abuser is at work; but if that's not possible, say you have to go to the store for something you forgot or offer to get something for the abuser.

If you cannot leave, dial 911 and put the phone down. Dispatchers will hear what is going on in the room and will send police EVEN IF YOU DON'T TALK TO ANYBODY!

PERSONAL SAFETY PLAN AFTER ENDING THE RELATIONSHIP

- ✓ Security - change locks, install steel/metal doors, install security system, smoke detectors, outside motion-sensitive lighting.
- ✓ Buy a dog.
- ✓ Inform your employer of your situation (even keep a current photo of the abuser if they are not familiar enough with him to identify him). Ask to have your calls screened if possible.

- ✓ Register your vehicle to another address if at all possible. Motor vehicle registries are a matter of public record and an easy way to locate somebody.
- ✓ Change to an unlisted phone number. Make sure friends and relatives know they are not to give your number out to anyone. If somebody is supposed to have your number you will give it to them personally.
- ✓ Seek out and follow alternate routes to work and other places you go frequently. Do not establish a predictable routine. Vary the times you return and leave home.
- ✓ Change residence: have mail delivered to a post office box number rather than your physical address.
- ✓ Keep a list of emergency phone numbers handy.
- ✓ Choose some people/neighbors you trust and ask them to call the police if your ex-partner is seen near your home or your children.
- ✓ Instruct the people who care for or pick up your children who is and **who is not** authorized to take them. Keep a photo of the abuser at your children's school and daycare so they can be alerted to whom he is if he shows up. If you have an order keeping the abuser from the children (except during visitation) make sure the school and daycare know this and instruct them to **call 911 and then you** if he shows up.
- ✓ Do not go to the same places of business, pleasure, or recreation you visited with your partner.
- ✓ Keep the phone number of a support person, crisis shelter, or counseling group close at hand for times when you are feeling depressed or need assistance.
- ✓ **If you think he is following you drive to the closest police station. Call 911 and tell the dispatcher you are on your way. Give them a description of your car and why your are coming.**

REMEMBER YOU AND YOUR CHILDREN DESERVE A LIFE THAT IS HAPPY AND FREE OF ABUSE!

A Child's Own Safety Plan

When I get scared I can think about

When I get scared I can go to:

When I am feeling down or afraid I can talk to:

These are the safe exits from my house:

In an emergency I can:

If I need to call for help:

Dial 911

My name is _____

My phone number is: _____

I need help.

My address is _____

