

“Safety Planning – The Essentials”

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Keeping people safe where they are...

Why Should We Safety Plan?

LEAVING AN ABUSER INCREASES LETHALITY RISK FOR MANY VICTIMS

75% of abused woman are more likely to be murdered after they leave.

- Leaving an abusive partner is notoriously the most dangerous time for a survivor. As an abuser feels they are losing power over their victim, they can become increasingly more controlling, threatening, violent or may even turn lethal.
- On average it takes a victim of domestic violence seven attempts to leave an abusive relationship.

Why Safety Plan?

- it's important to remember that in moments of crisis your brain doesn't function the same way as when you are calm. When adrenaline is pumping through your veins it can be hard to think clearly or make logical decisions about your safety. Having a safety plan laid out in advance can help you to protect yourself in those stressful moments. Having a plan in place, knowing your plan and practicing it is vital.

What is a Safety Plan?

A safety plan is a personalized, practical plan that includes ways to remain safe while in a relationship, planning to leave, or after the survivor leaves. Safety planning involves assisting the survivor on how to cope with emotions, tell friends and family about the abuse, take legal action and more.

<https://www.strongheartshelpline.org/safety-planning/>

Safety Planning is not just for Survivors

Safety planning can be utilized with everyone:

- Survivors
- Family Members
- Friends
- Co-workers
- Doctors, clergy, social workers and other professionals

Traits of an Effective Safety Plan



When Should We Safety Plan?

- When a survivor is ready to leave
- When a survivor is staying with their abusive partner
- When we are concerned for the safety and well being of a caller
- With family members, coworkers, and friends of survivors
- With professionals working with survivors

How to Begin a Safety Plan

- Listen to the survivors experience
- Provide options
- Tailor to meet the needs of the survivor in that moment.
- Listen to the survivor; they are the experts on their abusive partner.

Process of Safety Planning



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graph TD; A[Assess the situation] --> B[Focus on Strengths]; B --> C[Identify Immediate and Future Risks to Safety]; C --> D[Ask the caller what strategies they have tried in the past]; D --> E[Provide an array of options];
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Assess the situation

Focus on Strengths

Identify Immediate and Future Risks to Safety

Ask the caller what strategies they have tried in the past

Provide an array of options



Plans for All Stages

Safety in the Home

- ❑ Consider safer places in the home to go to when an incident of violence is about to occur.
- ❑ Plan an escape route.
- ❑ Memorize important phone numbers.
- ❑ Talk to children about safety.
- ❑ Prepare an emergency bag.
- ❑ Create a code word and share it with neighbors to alert them when violence occurs.

Safety at Work



- Talk with employer/Human Resources Dept.
- What can your employer do to help with safety.
- Changing work hours.
- Screening calls.

Safety When Leaving

- ❑ If possible, leave when the abusive partner is not home.
- ❑ Pack a bag ahead of time and keep it in a secure location.
- ❑ Have a plan of where to go and how you will get there i.e. a shelter, family or friends house.
- ❑ Tell only trusted people your plan.

Emotional Safety Planning

- Seek out supportive people.
- Create a safe space to process emotions.
- Cultivate self-care tactics that can be utilized to attend to emotional distress i.e. yoga, meditation, walking, talking to a friend, talking to a therapist, and all forms of exercise.
- Discuss what the survivor is already doing to attend to their emotional safety.

Tech Abuse and Safety Planning

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=F46W7M4q4iU>

Technology Abuse and Safety Planning

Examples:

- ❑ Unwanted and/or repeated calls or text messages
- ❑ Breaking into someone's social networking account
- ❑ Pressure to share embarrassing or private pictures/videos
- ❑ Posting nude photos without consent
- ❑ Breaking into email
- ❑ Intercepting Wi-fi signals

Devices, Hardware, Software, and Social Media

Abusers go to great lengths to attempt to control the survivor inside and outside of the relationship. Here are some examples of venerable technologies:

- ❑ Computers
- ❑ Cell Phones
- ❑ Social Media
- ❑ Email
- ❑ Cordless Phones

Devices, Hardware, Software, and Social Media

Common ways technology is used by abusive partners to cause harm:

- ❑ GPS Tracking
- ❑ Key stroke logging hardware
- ❑ Hacking into cell phones, email and social media
- ❑ Excessive texting, emailing, or calling
- ❑ Intercepting Wi-Fi signals

Start by Believing



If a survivor says they are being stalked, tracked, or monitored using technology, they probably are.

Fake-A-Text

Created By: William LeGate



Justin Bieber



Hey man. You should get Fake-A-Text! It allows you to create entire fake text conversations to trick



install mSpy



invisibly runs



text messages GPS location e-mails call history



100% UNDETECTABLE * 100% UNDETECTABLE * 100% UNDETECTABLE

REMOTE SPY

RECORD THE FOLLOWING:

- EMAIL CORRESPONDENCE
- CHAT CONVERSATIONS
- INSTANT MESSENGERS
- OVERALL COMPUTER ACTIVITY
- AND MUCH MORE!!!

**RECORD COMPUTER ACTIVITY
EASY TO SETUP, NO PHYSICAL**

SNOOPSTICK™

...CYBERsticker

Keep your eyes on the bad guys!

Monitor Your Computer Remotely

How abusers are misusing technology

The Safety Net Projects surveyed victim service providers

- ❑ 97% said abusers misuse technology to stalk, harass and control
- ❑ 96% said abusers harass victims via text messaging
- ❑ 55% said offenders post abusive content about victims online
- ❑ 71% said abusers monitor victims' computer use
- ❑ 41% said abusers stalk victims using GPS
- ❑ 86% said abusers harass victims through social media

<https://nnedv.org/content/technology-safety>

Ways for Survivors to Stay Safe While Using Vulnerable Technologies:

Tell survivors to trust their instincts, if they feel their technology has been compromised it more than likely has been compromised.

- ❑ Purchase a prepaid phone
- ❑ Check cell phone account to see if parental monitoring has been activated on their phone
- ❑ Change passwords on email and social media sites
- ❑ Check cell phone for any unknown apps
- ❑ Turn off GPS or put phone in “airplane” mode
- ❑ Check computer for any new, unknown, external devices

Computer Safety

- Use a safe computer
 - ▣ Change passwords and don't access those accounts at home
 - ▣ Create new, unidentifiable e-mail addresses to use for financial accounts, trusted friends, etc
- Teach children computer safety (don't open attachments)
- Get a new computer (it is very difficult to remove spyware)
- If the computer is not yet compromised, ensure it has a secure firewall and install anti-spyware software

Cell phone safety

- Turn off phone's GPS
 - ▣ Some phones allow GPS only when dialing 911
- Most victim service providers offer prepaid cell phones free of charge
- How do you safety plan around cell phones?

Social Media Safety

- Be conservative about what is posted
 - ▣ Assume that anything that is posted will be seen by an abuser
- Maintain strict control over privacy settings
- Ask friends not to post or share anything
- Consider unfriending people or deleting social media accounts
- Make changes from a safe computer

Safety for GPS Monitoring

- Remove any GPS devices that can be found – they could be in a car, clothing, shoes or purse
- Look for any surveillance devices in the home or at work

Documenting Abuse: What Survivors Can Do

- Document what is happening:
 - ▣ Keep a log to establish pattern of harassment and stalking behavior
 - ▣ Take screenshots (computer and phone)
 - ▣ Take photographs
 - ▣ Print out pages
 - ▣ Don't delete e-mails, text messages or voicemails
 - ▣ Recording options (if legal)
 - ▣ Facebook "Download Your Information Tool"

Creating a Safety Plan Around Technology

Assess the Technology in the Survivor's Life

Help the survivor identify compromised devices

Discuss possible strategies that will help

Always Keep Safety in Mind

Getting a new phone or not using the compromised device might not be an option

Be flexible and creative with solutions

Document Incidents

Discuss creating a stalking log

Explain how to save emails and text messages

For Review

☐ **ITEMS TO TAKE, IF POSSIBLE**

- ☐ Children (if it is safe)
- ☐ Money
- ☐ Keys to car, house, work
- ☐ Extra clothes
- ☐ Medicine
- ☐ Important papers for you and your children
- ☐ Birth certificates
- ☐ Social security cards
- ☐ School and medical records
- ☐ Bankbooks, credit cards
- ☐ Driver's license

For Review

- ☐ Car registration
- ☐ Welfare identification
- ☐ Passports, green cards, work permits
- ☐ Lease/rental agreement
- ☐ Mortgage payment book, unpaid bills
- ☐ Insurance papers
- ☐ PPO, divorce papers, custody orders
- ☐ Address book
- ☐ Pictures, jewelry, things that mean a lot to you
- ☐ Items for your children (toys, blankets, etc.)

Things to Talk Though

- Having important phone numbers nearby for you and your children. Numbers to have are the police, hotlines, friends and the local shelter.
- Friends or neighbors you could tell about the abuse. Ask them to call the police if they hear angry or violent noises. If you have children, teach them how to dial 911. Make up a code word that you can use when you need help.
- How to get out of your home safely. Practice ways to get out.

Thing to Talk Through

- Safer places in your home where there are exits and no weapons. If you feel abuse is going to happen try to get your abuser to one of these safer places.
- Any weapons in the house. Think about ways that you could get them out of the house.
- Even if you do not plan to leave, think of where you could go. Think of how you might leave. Try doing things that get you out of the house - taking out the trash, walking the pet or going to the store. Put together a bag of things you use everyday. Hide it where it is easy for you to get.



PRACTICE YOUR PLAN

Resources

- <https://www.strongheartshelpline.org/>
- <https://www.niwrc.org/>
- <https://restoringawcoalition.org/>
- <https://mshoop.org/resources/>
- <https://www.udvc.org/>