

SAFETY PLANNING TIPS and IDEAS

IN AN EMERGENCY

- If you are at home & you are being threatened or attacked:
- Stay away from the kitchen (the abuser can find weapons, like knives, there)
- Stay away from bathrooms, closets or small spaces where the abuser can trap you
- Get to a room with a door or window to escape
- Get to a room with a phone to call for help; lock the abuser outside if you can
- Call 911 (or your local emergency number) right away for help; get the dispatcher's name
- Think about a neighbor or friend you can run to for help
- Get medical help if you are hurt
- Take pictures of bruises or injuries
- Call a domestic violence program or shelter (some are listed here); ask them to help you make a safety plan

HOW TO PROTECT YOURSELF AT HOME

- Learn where to get help; memorize emergency phone numbers
- Keep a phone in a room you can lock from the inside; if you can, get a cellular phone that you keep with you at all times
- If the abuser has moved out, change the locks on your door; get locks on the windows
- Plan an escape route out of your home; teach it to your children
- Think about where you would go if you need to escape
- Ask your neighbors to call the police if they see the abuser at your house; make a signal for them to call the police, for example, if the phone rings twice, a shade is pulled down or a light is on
- Pack a bag with important things you'd need if you had to leave quickly; put it in a safe place, or give it to a friend or relative you trust
- Include cash, car keys & important information such as: court papers, passport or birth certificates, medical records & medicines, immigration papers
- Get an unlisted phone number
- Block caller ID
- Use an answering machine; screen the calls

HOW TO MAKE YOUR CHILDREN SAFER

- Teach them not to get in the middle of a fight, even if they want to help
- Teach them how to get to safety, to call 911, to give your address & phone number to the police
- Teach them who to call for help
- Give the principal at school or the daycare center a copy of your court order; tell them not to release your children to anyone without talking to you first; use a password so they can be sure it is you on the phone; give them a photo of the abuser
- Make sure the children know who to tell at school if they see the abuser
- Make sure that the school knows not to give your address or phone number to ANYONE

HOW TO PROTECT YOURSELF OUTSIDE THE HOME

- Change your regular travel habits
- Shop and bank in a different place
- Cancel any bank accounts or credit cards you shared; open new accounts at a different bank
- Keep your court order and emergency numbers with you at all times
- Keep a cell phone & program it to 911 (or other emergency number)

HOW TO MAKE YOURSELF SAFER AT WORK

- Keep a copy of your court order at work
- Give a picture of the abuser to security and friends at work
- Tell your supervisors - see if they can make it harder for the abuser to find you
- Don't go to lunch alone
- Ask a security guard to walk you to your car or to the bus
- If the abuser calls you at work, save voice mail and save e-mail
- Your employer may be able to help you find community resources