

Planning For Your Safety

WHEN YOU ARE STILL IN THE RELATIONSHIP:

- Identify the danger signs.
- Think of a safe place to go if an argument occurs—avoid rooms with no exits (bathroom), or rooms with weapons (kitchen).
- Devise an escape route (and rehearse it!).
- Think about and make a list of safe people to contact.
- Keep change with you at all times.
- Memorize all important phone numbers.
- Establish a code word or sign so that family, friends, teachers or co-workers know when to call for help.
- Think about what you will say to your partner if they become violent.
- Remember that you have the right to live without fear and violence.

WHEN YOU HAVE LEFT THE RELATIONSHIP:

- Change your phone number.
- Screen calls.
- Save and document all contacts, messages, injuries or other incidents involving the abuser.
- Change locks, if the abuser has a key.
- Avoid staying alone.
- Plan how to get away if confronted by an abusive partner.
- If you have to meet your partner, do it in a public place.
- Vary your routine.
- Notify school and work contacts.
- Call a domestic violence shelter.

Personalized Safety Plan Examples

The following is a plan for increasing my safety and preparing, in advance, for the possibility of further violence. Although I do not have control over my partner's violence, I do have a choice about how to respond and how to best get myself to safety.

SAFETY DURING AN ARGUMENT:

- 1. If we have an argument on a date and I feel unsafe, I will ...**

_____. *(Who could you call to get a safe ride home? What would you do if left in an isolated area?)*

- 2. If we have an argument in a public place and I feel unsafe, I will...**

_____.
(Who could help you? Where could you be safe?)

- 3. If we have an argument at my house and I feel unsafe, I will try to have us discuss it in the...**

_____.
(Try to avoid arguments in the bathroom, garage, kitchen near weapons, or in rooms without access to a door. If possible, it is a good idea to do this in a place where another person is in the next room in case you need help.)

- 4. I will use..._____ as my code word with my family and friends so that they can call for help.**

SAFETY IN MY HOME

- 1. I will..._____ if they come over and I'm alone and feeling unsafe.** *(Who can you call to come over? Who can you call if you need help?)*

- 2. I will..._____ if we get into an argument and I feel unsafe.** *(What exits are there in your house? Where are phones that you can use to call 911?)*

- 3. When they call and I feel threatened, I will _____.** *(Can you screen your calls with an answering machine? Change your phone number? Could you have the telephone company trace the calls for use in a stalking report?)*

- 4. If I see them standing outside, I will..._____, so that I can be safe.** *(Who can help you? Can you take pictures, or document in writing, how many times it happens, in order to file a stalking report?)*