



Safety Plans for Domestic Violence Victims & Survivors Safety in Your Own Home

If the abuser does not live with you:

Upgrade your security system. Change the locks on doors and windows as soon as possible. Consider a security service, window bars, better lighting, smoke detectors and fire extinguishers.

Have a safety plan. Teach your children or grandchildren how to call the police or someone they can trust. Have a secret code word that you and your children agree on - to communicate trouble and for the people who are allowed to pick the children up.

Change your phone number. Screen your calls if you have an answering machine or caller ID. Save all messages with threats or that violate any orders. Contact your local phone company about getting an unpublished number.

Talk to neighbors and landlord. Inform them that the abuser no longer lives with you and that they should call the police if they see the abuser near your home.

Get legal advice. Find a lawyer knowledgeable about domestic violence to explore custody, visitation and divorce provisions that protect you and the children. Discuss obtaining an order of protection as an option. The abuser may be mandated to a batterers' intervention program.

Contact a local Domestic Violence Program. Talk with the program to find out more about potential risks to you while your abuser participates. Additionally, contact your local domestic violence victim services program.

These suggestions do not apply to every survivor in every situation. These are to be used as a guideline. Please safety plan around your own individual needs and circumstances.