

CREATING A SAFETY PLAN

You can't control your partner's abusive behavior, but you can take steps to protect yourself from harm. Whether you decide to stay or end the relationship, you should consider creating a safety plan. A safety plan is a personalized and practical plan for reducing your risk of being hurt by your partner. It can help you avoid dangerous situations and know the best way to react when you are in danger.

What do I need to know?

Often victims believe, and have been told by their abusive partner, that the abuse is their fault. Remember that the abuse is not your fault and you can't control it by changing your own behavior. But you can change your behavior to better protect yourself when abuse happens. Even if you are not ready to leave your partner, or even if the violence hasn't escalated yet, you should consider a safety plan.

An effective safety plan makes changes to your daily lifestyle to better protect you at your home, school, work and community. These changes may be big, like going to a confidential shelter or changing schools. But these changes may also be small, like changing your email passwords or the route you take to work. Your safety plan will also help you to escape a violent incident safely, and prepare you to end your relationship when you are ready.

What can I do?

Prepare a safety plan and remember to follow it whenever possible. Consider involving someone you trust to help you create the best plan for you. When creating your safety plan, ask yourself these important questions: What can I do to stay safe in my home? How do I safely get to work or school? Is there a safe place I can go when abuse happens?

Creating a safety plan can be difficult on your own. Break the Cycle can help you create a detailed safety plan. Contact Break the Cycle for specific tips on creating a safety plan or to find help in your local area.

You have the right to a safe and healthy relationship...
free from violence and free from fear.