

I. SAFETY DURING AN EXPLOSIVE INCIDENT/ INCIDENT OF VIOLENCE

- A. If an argument seems unavoidable, try to have it in a room or area that has access to an exit and not in a bathroom, kitchen, or anywhere near weapons.
- B. Practice how to get out of your home safely. Identify which doors, windows, elevator, or stairwell would be best.
- C. Have a packed bag ready and keep it in an undisclosed but accessible place in order to leave quickly.
- D. Identify a neighbor you can tell about the violence and ask that they call the police if they hear a disturbance coming from your home.
- E. Devise a code word to use with your children, family, friends, and neighbors when you need the police.
- F. Decide and plan for where you will go if you have to leave home (even if you don't think you will need to).
- G. Use your own instincts and judgment. If the situation is very dangerous, consider giving the abuser what he wants to calm him down. You have the right to protect yourself until you are out of danger.
- H. Always remember - YOU DON'T DESERVE TO BE HIT OR THREATENED!!

II. SAFETY WHEN PREPARING TO LEAVE

- A. Open a savings or checking account in your own name to start to establish or increase your independence. Think of other ways in which you can increase your independence.
- B. Leave money, an extra set of keys, copies of important documents and extra clothes with someone you trust so you can leave quickly.
- C. Determine who would be able to let you stay with them or lend you some money.
- D. Keep the shelter phone number close at hand and keep some change or a calling card on you at all times for emergency phone calls.
- E. Make arrangements for any pets to be cared for in a safe location.
- F. Acquire a post office box in your name.
- G. Review your safety plan as often as possible in order to plan the safest way to leave your batterer. REMEMBER - LEAVING YOUR BATTERER IS THE MOST DANGEROUS TIME.

III. SAFETY IN YOUR OWN HOME

- A. Change the locks on your doors as soon as possible. Buy additional locks and safety devices to secure your windows.
- B. Discuss a safety plan with your children for when you are not with them.
- C. Inform your child's school, daycare, etc., about who has permission to pick up your child.
- D. Inform neighbors and landlord that your partner no longer lives with you and that they should call the police if they see him near your home.
- E. Never call the abuser from your home. If he has caller ID, he may be able to locate your residence.

IV. SAFETY WITH A PROTECTIVE ORDER

- A. Keep your protective order on you at all times. (When you change your purse, that should be the first thing that goes in it.) Make an additional copy and place in a safe place, or leave with a friend.
- B. Call the police if your partner breaks the protective order.
- C. Think of alternative ways to keep safe if the police do not respond right away.
- D. Inform family, friends, and neighbors that you have a protective order in effect.
- E. Provide a copy of the protective order to your child(ren)'s school and to your place of employment.

V. SAFETY ON THE JOB AND IN PUBLIC

- A. Decide who at work you will inform of your situation. This should include office or building security (provide a picture of your batterer if possible).
- B. Arrange to have someone screen your telephone calls if possible.
- C. Devise a safety plan for when you leave work. Have someone escort you to your car, bus, or train. Use a variety of routes to go home by if possible. Think about what you would do if something happened while going home (i.e., in your car, on the bus, etc.).
- D. Ask your employer to issue a Criminal Trespass Warning in the event that the abuser comes to your place of work.

VI. YOUR SAFETY & EMOTIONAL HEALTH

- A. If you are thinking of returning to a potentially abusive situation, discuss an alternative plan with someone you trust.
- B. If you have to communicate with your partner, determine the safest way to do so.
- C. Have positive thoughts about self and be assertive with others about your needs.
- D. Read books, articles, and poems to help you feel stronger.
- E. Decide who you can call to talk freely and openly to give you the support you need.
- F. Plan to attend a women's or victim's support group for at least 2 weeks to gain support from others and learn more about yourself and the relationship.

VII. IF YOU ARE A TEEN IN A VIOLENT DATING RELATIONSHIP

- A. Decide which friend, teacher, relative, or police officer you can tell.

CHECKLIST - WHAT YOU NEED TO TAKE WHEN YOU LEAVE:

Identification

- Driver's license
- Child's birth certificate
- Your birth certificate
- Work permits
- Green card
- Passport
- Welfare identification
- Social security card

Money

- Cash
- Bank books
- Checkbooks

Documentation

- Lease, rental agreement, house deed
- Insurance papers
- Medical records (all family members)
- School records
- Divorce papers

House and car keys

Medications

Small sellable objects

Address book
Pictures
Jewelry

**FOR MORE INFORMATION ABOUT YOUR
LEGAL/SAFETY RIGHTS AND OPTIONS,** contact an
advocate at NewBridge Family Shelter, and/or dial the
Domestic Violence Hotline:

325-655-5774

800-749-8631