



**rape and abuse  
crisis center**

advocacy. counseling. education.

## **Safety Planning: When You Fear the One You Love**

### **Safety During an Explosive Incident**

- If an argument seems unavoidable, try to have it in an area that has access to an exit and not a bathroom, kitchen, or anywhere near weapons.
- Practice how to get out of your home safely. Identify which doors, windows, elevator, or stairwell would be best to use.
- Have a packed bag ready and keep it in an undisclosed, but accessible, place in order to leave quickly.
- 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.
- Devise a code word to use with your children, family, friends, and neighbors when you need the police.
- Decide and plan for where you will go if you have to leave home (even if you don't think you will need to).
- Use your own instincts and judgment. You have the right to protect yourself until you are out of danger.
- Always remember-you don't deserve to be hit or threatened!

### **Safety When Preparing to Leave**

- Open a savings account in your own name to establish or increase your independence.
- Leave money, an extra set of keys, copies of important documents, and extra clothes with someone you trust so you can leave quickly. Determine who would be able to let you stay with them or lend you some money.
- Keep the domestic violence crisis line phone number close at hand and keep some change or a calling card with you at all times for emergency phone calls.
- Review your safety plan as often as possible in order to plan the safest way to leave the abuser. Remember, leaving your abuser can be a very dangerous time.

### **Safety in Your Own Home**

- Change the locks on your doors as soon as possible. Buy additional locks and safety devices to secure your windows.
- Discuss a safety plan with your children for when you are not with them.
- Inform your children's school, daycare, etc. about who has permission to pick them up.
- Inform neighbors and landlords that your partner no longer lives with you and they should call the police if they see him/her near your home.

24-hour Crisis Line (701)293-7273

[www.raccfm.com](http://www.raccfm.com)

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### **Safety With a Protective Order**

- Keep your protective order with you at all times.
- Call the police if your partner breaks the protective order.
- Think of alternative ways to keep safe in case the police do not immediately respond.
- Inform family, friends, and neighbors that you have a protective order in effect.

### **Safety on the Job and in Public**

- Decide who at work you will inform of your situation. This should include office or building security (if possible, provide a picture of your abuser).
- If possible, arrange to have someone screen your phone calls.
- Devise a safety plan for when you leave work. Have someone escort you to your car, the 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.).

### **Your Safety & Emotional Health**

- If you are thinking of returning to a potentially abusive situation, discuss your options with someone you trust. If you choose to return, make sure you have a safety plan.
- If you have to communicate with your partner, determine the safest way to do so.
- Have positive thoughts about yourself and be assertive with others about your needs.
- Read books, articles, and poems that make you feel stronger.
- Decide who you can call to talk with freely and openly and who will give you the support you need.
- Plan to attend a victims' support group for at least two weeks to gain support from others and learn more about yourself and your relationship.

### References:

An Abuse, Rape and Domestic Violence Aid and Resource Collection:  
<http://www.aardvarc.org>

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<http://www.lundybancroft.com>

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Forward, Susan and Joan Torres. *The Men Who Hate Women and the Women Who Love Them*. 1986, Bantam Books.

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