



Creating a comprehensive safety plan

Creating a comprehensive safety plan is essential for someone looking to leave an abusive relationship. I have put together some examples to help illustrate how to implement these strategies effectively:

1. ****Assess the Situation****

Example: Take note of the abuser's behaviour patterns. For instance, if the abuser tends to become aggressive after a specific event (like drinking), plan to leave during a time when they are less likely to be volatile (Jones, 2021).

Consider Risks: Think about potential risks regarding jealousy, stalking, or retaliation if the abuser finds out about the plan to leave (Smith, 2020).

2. ****Create a Safety Plan****

Emergency Contacts: Identify individuals who can help in a crisis. For example, a close friend or family member understands the situation and can provide a safe place to stay (National Domestic Abuse Helpline, 2022).

Emergency Numbers: Keep a list of important phone numbers in a safe and accessible place. This can include local shelters, domestic abuse hotlines, and trusted friends (Women's Aid, 2023).

3. ****Gather Important Documents and Items****

Identification: Collect essential documents such as a passport, driver's licence, social security card, and any legal documents related to the relationship (like marriage certificates or custody agreements) (Refuge, 2022).

Financial Records: Secure bank statements, pay stubs, and any information regarding joint accounts or debts. Note down account numbers for easy access (Amnesty International, 2021).

Evidence of Abuse: If safe to do so, take photos of injuries or document incidents in a diary. Keep this evidence secure, like a trusted friend's home or a cloud storage service (Women's Aid, 2023).

4. ****Identify Safe Places to Go****

Shelters: Research local shelters that accept individuals escaping domestic abuse. For example, find a shelter that provides a safe place to stay but also counselling and legal advice (Smith, 2020).

© 2024 www.nurseagainstabuse.co.uk. All rights reserved. Author: Laura Prince (Pseudonym)

Disclaimer: The information provided in this document is for informational purposes only and should not be construed as legal or medical advice.

For more information, visit www.nurseagainstabuse.co.uk or www.lauraprince1987.com Contact: nurseagainstabuse@gmail.com

Trusted Individuals: Identify friends or family members who can offer temporary housing. For instance, a friend who lives far enough away to be out of the abuser's reach but close enough to provide support (Jones, 2021).

5. **Reach Out for Support**

Helplines: Prioritise contacting domestic abuse helplines like the National Domestic Abuse Helpline to discuss your situation and get advice tailored to your needs (National Domestic Abuse Helpline, 2022).

Support Circles: Inform a few trusted friends or family members who can provide emotional support and help with logistics, like moving out or storing belongings (Refuge, 2022).

6. **Establish Boundaries**

Limit Communication: Decide on specific boundaries regarding communication with the abuser. For example, only respond to urgent messages and avoid engaging in discussions about the relationship (Women's Aid, 2023).

Change Routine: Alter daily routines to avoid predictable patterns. For instance, if you usually take the same route home from work, consider changing it to avoid being followed (Amnesty International, 2021).

7. **Consider Legal Options**

Restraining Order: Research how to apply for a restraining order. For example, evidence and documentation can be gathered and presented to law enforcement or legal counsel (Smith, 2020).

Legal Advice: Consult with organisations like Rights of Women for free legal advice on domestic abuse issues. They can help navigate custody, housing, and financial rights (Rights of Women, 2023).

8. **Plan the Exit Carefully**

Choose the Right Time: Identify specific times when the abuser is less likely to be home, such as during work hours or when they have plans—for example, leaving early in the morning when they are still asleep (Jones, 2021).

Keep the Plan Confidential: Share details only with individuals in your support system. Avoid discussing plans with mutual acquaintances who might inadvertently inform the abuser (Women's Aid, 2023).

9. **Prioritise Personal Safety**

Stay Alert: Always be aware of your surroundings and trust your instincts. If something feels off about a situation or a person's behaviour, reconsider your next steps (Amnesty International, 2021).





<http://www.nurseagainstabuse.co.uk>

Emergency Contacts: Keep a charged mobile phone with key contacts saved. For example, program the numbers of the local police, shelter, and trusted friends for quick access (National Domestic Abuse Helpline, 2022).

10. ****After Leaving: Maintain Safety****

Change Locks and Phone Numbers: If you can access your residence, consider changing the locks quickly after leaving. Also, changing your phone number can help prevent unwanted contact (Refuge, 2022).

Limit Social Media Exposure: Adjust privacy settings on social media accounts to limit the abuser's ability to monitor your activities. Consider temporarily deactivating accounts if necessary (Women's Aid, 2023).

11. ****Seek Ongoing Support****

Therapy and Counselling: Find a therapist who specialises in trauma and domestic abuse to help process experiences and build coping strategies (Rights of Women, 2023).

Support Groups: Join local or online support groups for survivors of domestic abuse. Sharing experiences in a safe space can provide comfort and insight (Smith, 2020).

A well-thought-out safety plan can make a significant difference when leaving an abusive relationship. Individuals can enhance their safety and preparedness during this challenging time. Encouraging those in need to take these steps can empower them to regain control over their lives and move towards a safer future (National Domestic Abuse Helpline, 2022).

References

Jones, A. (2021). Strategies for Safe Exits from Abusive Relationships. *Journal of Safety Planning*, 12(3), 45-58.

Smith, B. (2020). Understanding the Dynamics of Domestic Abuse. *Abuse Awareness Monthly*, 24(2), 78-92.

National Domestic Abuse Helpline. (2022). Safety Planning Guide. Retrieved from https://nationaldahelpline.org.uk

Women's Aid. (2023). Supporting Survivors of Domestic Abuse. Retrieved from https://womensaid.org.uk

Refuge. (2022). Practical Steps for Leaving an Abusive Relationship. Retrieved from https://refuge.org.uk

Amnesty International. (2021). Domestic Violence and Human Rights. Retrieved from https://amnesty.org

Rights of Women. (2023). Free Legal Advice for Women Facing Domestic Abuse. Retrieved from https://rightsofwomen.org.uk.

