

# THE STREETS DON'T LOVE YOU BACK

## DOMESTIC VIOLENCE SAFETY PLAN

The most important first step for a woman/man in a violent situation is to build a Safety Plan to protect him/herself from the abuser! The following steps are important to the development of an effective Safety Plan.

- 1) Keep a list of important telephone numbers handy for you and your children:
  - a. Police - 911
  - b. National DV Hotline
  - c. Friends and relatives whom you trust
  - d. Your Minister
  - e. Your primary physician
- 2) Identify a relative, friend or neighbor you can confide in about your situation. Ask them to call the police if they hear sounds of conflict or suspicious noises coming from your home or if they try to reach you after hearing these noises and cannot get a response.
- 3) Think about places you can go if you leave your home. Always carry the National Domestic Violence Hotline number with you. It may not be wise to place the number on speed dial on your telephone or cell phone as the batterer may gain access to these instruments without your knowledge or control.
- 4) Create a "Crisis Stash". Think about leaving extra money, car keys, clothes and copies of important papers with someone you trust - a close friend, relative or neighbor.
- 5) Keep telephone changer handy. You may need to flee the house and find a public telephone to call for help. You may not be able to readily find telephone changer or may not have access to a telephone credit card.
- 6) Open a savings account. If you are forced to flee your home, a separate savings account, even a very small one, could provide you with at least enough funds to survive for a short while as you stabilize your situation.
- 7) Plan and rehearse an escape route with a trusted person - You need to think about and rehearse how you will escape the violence if you must. In the midst of the situation you may need to act very quickly and decisively in order to escape further injury or save your life.
- 8) Create your "Safety Escape Check List." Compile a list of items you will need to take with you if you leave. Among these important items are the following:

### Items to take checklist:

- |                                                                       |                                                                          |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Identification, including one with a picture | <input type="checkbox"/> Passport(s), green card(s), work permits        |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Birth certificates for you and your children | <input type="checkbox"/> Divorce papers                                  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Social Security Cards                        | <input type="checkbox"/> Lease/rental agreements                         |
| <input type="checkbox"/> School and medical records                   | <input type="checkbox"/> Mortgage information                            |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Money, bankbooks, credit cards               | <input type="checkbox"/> Pets                                            |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Keys - house/car/office                      | <input type="checkbox"/> Insurance papers                                |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Driver's license and registration            | <input type="checkbox"/> Address book, Palm pilots                       |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Medications                                  | <input type="checkbox"/> Pictures, jewelry, items of sentimental value   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Change of clothes for you and your children  | <input type="checkbox"/> Children's favorite toys, books, blankets, etc. |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Welfare identification                       | <input type="checkbox"/> Personal Protection Order                       |

- 9) Change the locks, install steel/metal doors, a security system, smoke detectors and an outside lighting system.
- 10) Tell a neighbor that your partner no longer lives with you and ask them to call the police if he/she is observed near your home or children.
- 11) Provide your child's caregivers with critical information including the names of all persons who have permission to pick your children up. If you have a personal protection order that names your children, give their caretakers and their schools a copy of that order.
- 12) Tell a trusted co-worker or your boss about your situation. Ask them to call the police if your batterer shows up demanding to see you. Try to make a plan at your workplace to have your calls screened.
- 13) Select different stores, banks and other businesses from those you habitually used during the time you lived with your partner.
- 14) Go to Court and get a Protective Order! Keep a copy with you at all times, give copies to the police, to your children's caregivers, to their schools and to your own supervisor at your workplace.
- 15) Find someone to call when you feel despondent, afraid or sad. These are the times when you may convince yourself that it would be better to return to your batterer. Talk to your minister or someone from your church. Find some workshops and support groups to attend so that you can gain support and better understand your situation.
- 16) TRUST YOUR INSTINCTS AND SEEK HELP. YOUR ACTIONS CAN SAVE YOUR SANITY, YOUR SELF-ESTEEM AND EVEN YOUR LIFE.

Important Social Security Information - Effective November 4, 1998, the Social Security Administration (SSA) changed its existing policy of assigning new Social Security numbers (SSN) to victims of harassment, abuse or life endangerment, including victims of domestic violence, to make it easier to obtain new SSNs. The change in policy was designed to make it easier for these individuals to elude their abusers and reduce the risk of further violence.

Internet Safety - The internet can serve as both a friend and a negative source of information for victims of domestic violence. If an abuser can access your computer, they can find out what web sites you have visited, what documents you have edited, what e-mails you have sent or received, etc. There are various applications now available to remove information from your computer which may become available to your batterer. You may be wiser to use a friend's computer, a computer at work or a computer at the library instead of your home computer.

## **The Streets Don't Love You Back**

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

**National Domestic Violence Hotline**

**1-800-799-SAFE (7233) or 1-800-787-3224 (TTY)**

**REMEMBER...**

**ABUSE IS NEVER OKAY...**

**YOU ARE NOT ALONE...**

**IT'S NOT YOUR FAULT...**

**ASK FOR HELP!**

**Created by Lucinda F. Boyd 2011**