

Safety Planning

+ What is safety planning?

Victims of domestic violence cannot always avoid violent incidents. However, in order to increase their and their children's safety, here are some things they can do.



+ Safety planning

- Develop an emergency escape plan** on where to go if you have to escape (like a friend or relative's home) and go over it in your mind.
- Pack a bag** with some money and a change of clothes. Keep it either hidden in your home or leave it with a friend or relative.
- Position yourself** near the door or phone to get out or call 10111 quickly.
- Move to a space where the risk is the lowest.** Try to avoid arguments in the bathroom, garage, kitchen, near weapons, or in rooms without access to an outside door.
- Use your judgment and intuition.** You know your partner well, if the situation is very serious, you can agree with your partner to calm him/her down. You have to protect yourself until you are out of danger.
- Call the police** at 10111 or go to a police station after you have been assaulted. If you call, leave the phone off the hook because if they call back and your partner picks up, you may be in greater danger.
- Make as much noise as possible** when you are being assaulted. Set off the fire alarm, break things, turn up the stereo or TV, so that neighbours might hear and call the police for you.
- Set aside money each month** to use if you decide to leave.

+ Safety planning for kids

- Develop and use a code word** with your children so they can call for help.
- Have the child pick a safe place in the house,** preferably with a lock on the door and a phone. The first step of any plan is for the children to get out of the room where the abuse is occurring.
- Pick a safe place outside the house and a safe adult** where the child knows to go and make sure the child knows the route there.
- Stress that it is not the child's responsibility** to make sure that his/her mother is safe.
- Teach the child how to call for help.** The child should not use a phone that is in view of the abuser. This puts them at risk. Tell the child to a neighbour's phone or a pay phone if they are unable to use a phone at home. If you have a cell phone, teach the child how to use it. Teach the child the police emergency number, **10111** and Childline, **08000 55 555**.
- Teach the child their details:** full name, address and telephone number.
- Rehearse what the child will say** when calling for help:
My name is _____.
I am ___ years old.
I need help. Send the police.
Someone is hurting my mom.
The address here is _____.
The phone number here is _____.