

## What is a Safety Plan?

A safety plan is a guide for staying safe from violence.

Planning for your safety is a process of looking at your situation and assessing what you might need to help you feel and be safer. Your safety plan must be relevant to your needs and be adapted if your situation changes. It needs to incorporate an escape plan as well as practical strategies to improve your home and personal security. Safety planning is not about focusing on living in fear; it is about taking proactive steps to improve your and your children's safety. It is about taking safety strategies for different environments such as home, social, work and vehicle security.

This booklet highlights some strategies for making your home and workplace safer. There is also space for you to make your own notes.

### Points to Remember

- If there have been threats made against you or your family, **contact Police on 000**
- Speak to the Domestic Violence Liaison Officer at your local police station or any other police officer about applying for a Domestic Violence Order (DVO). This can include an ouster order to keep the person you fear away from you
- Report ALL breaches of your DVO to police
- Keep a record or diary of any DVO breaches or suspicious behaviours such as phone hang ups

### Planning for My Safety - Your Home:

- Have deadlocks installed, but **DON'T** deadlock yourself in at night – you may need to leave in an emergency
- Install lockable security screens & keep locked
- Keep external doors locked when at home
- If door keys go missing, change the locks
- Ensure windows and sliding doors have good locks  
NB. A cheap alternative – drill a hole through the window jamb into the frame and secure with a bolt. Use a dowel stick to prevent sliding doors and windows from being opened (they must be an exact fit so they can't be jimmed open).
- Trim shrubs and bushes from entrance ways

- Keep a note by your phone, that includes your street address and nearest cross-street. This will help guide police to your location
- Be alert to any suspicious people hanging about. Trust your intuition and don't ignore any 'funny feelings'
- Ask for identification before opening the door
- Install a verandah light that's hard to reach and consider installing a sensor light
- Ensure pathways are well lit
- Lock electric fuse boxes. Your electricity supplier may supply padlocks as they'll need access to read the meter
- Keep torches and spare batteries in an easy to reach place
- Keep side gates and sheds padlocked
- Consider a back-to-base alarm system with a remote button. Know the range of this device & keep it on you
- Let trusted people know if you go away e.g... Family or neighbours
- Give trusted people a phone contact list in case of emergencies
- Consider installing a loud, outside alarm that can be activated from inside the house
- Ensure everyone in the house discusses suspicious calls or occurrences
- Choose a code word that you can use without attracting attention. Let trusted people know that when they hear the word it means that a crisis is occurring
- Keep trusted people informed about what's going on
- Keep in touch with neighbours; ask them to inform you if anyone has been hanging around your house and to contact police if they hear any violent incidents or have any concerns about your safety
- Make a safe evacuation plan. Make sure all household members know about and practice it occasionally
- Get a dog. A family dog can be one of the least expensive and most effective alarm systems. Some breeds are better watch dogs, but any breed will bark at an intruder. If it has been a family dog known by the violent person, consider getting another. You also need to check with landlords/estate agents if it is okay to have a dog
- If possible lock the area under your house and consider installing a manhole padlock

- Is there a 'safe room' in your house that you can secure that has mobile phone coverage? This could be a bathroom or laundry with a lock installed that could be a more secure place for you and your children to wait for the arrival of the police
- Keep your outside area clear of garden utensils such as rakes, shovels, ladders or wheelie bins. Keep the shed door locked
- Be prepared. Keep important papers together so you can grab them when you leave. Store copies at a safe location

**NB.** Some of the costs incurred to upgrade your security may be reimbursed through the Safety Upgrade, Sunshine Coast Service Brokerage fund.

### How Do I Teach My Children to Manage Their Safety?

- Teach your children how to call the police and how to give their full name and address
- Tell your children's school or childcare centre about your situation; provide a copy of your DVO and or family law orders; provide who has authority to collect your children

### Telephones and Mobile Phones

- Get an unlisted phone number. Ensure everyone you give it to knows it is silent and doesn't give it out
- Consider getting call ID installed and use an answering machine
- If a Family Court order allows contact with children, consider purchasing a pre-paid mobile that the other parent can call. That way you don't have to give out your home phone number
- Make sure you know where you have mobile phone reception in your house
- Keep your mobile charged and with you in case the home phone line is disconnected. Note: portable phones rely on electricity so if there's no power, you have no phone
- Report all phone abuse. This is against the law. Keep accurate records and original messages for police and courts. Don't delete text or voice messages
- Consider changing your phone number if phone abuse continues

**Telephones and Mobile Phones** continued.....

- Dialling 000 on mobile phones will work, however if you have a GSM digital mobile the Emergency Services number for Police, Fire & Ambulance is 112
- Program emergency contacts into your home and mobile phone

**Your Car**

- Keep the garage door locked at all times
- Keep car locked when at home
- Always park in a secured garage if possible
- Park in well lit areas when shopping or at work
- Keep a torch in the car
- Keep a personal alarm on your key ring (regularly check battery)

**Work, Shopping or Social Event**

- Inform someone at your workplace of your situation e.g. a Manager or office person
- Ensure everyone at work knows not to give out your contact details
- Park in a well lit space and ask security to escort you to your car
- Share a ride or catch public transport with a colleague
- Have a plan of action in case you're followed home. Know where the nearest police station is and drive there if possible
- Make an action plan if followed while using public transport
- Change your routines i.e. shop on different days and at different places
- Purchase a battery operated personal alarm and have it where it is easily accessible
- If there is an emergency in a public place find someone (even a shopkeeper) and ask for help

Notes:

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**Vision Statement**

Leading social change  
 strengthening families  
 supporting people and communities  
 in the spirit of the Gospel



Crisis Plan

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Regional Domestic & Family Violence Service is funded by:

**Department of Communities**

Managed by:

**Centacare CFCS, Maroochydore**



**Domestic & Family Violence  
 SAFETY UPGRADES  
 Sunshine Coast Services**



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