

The Role of an ADVOCATE

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VICTIM SERVICE SPECIALIST*



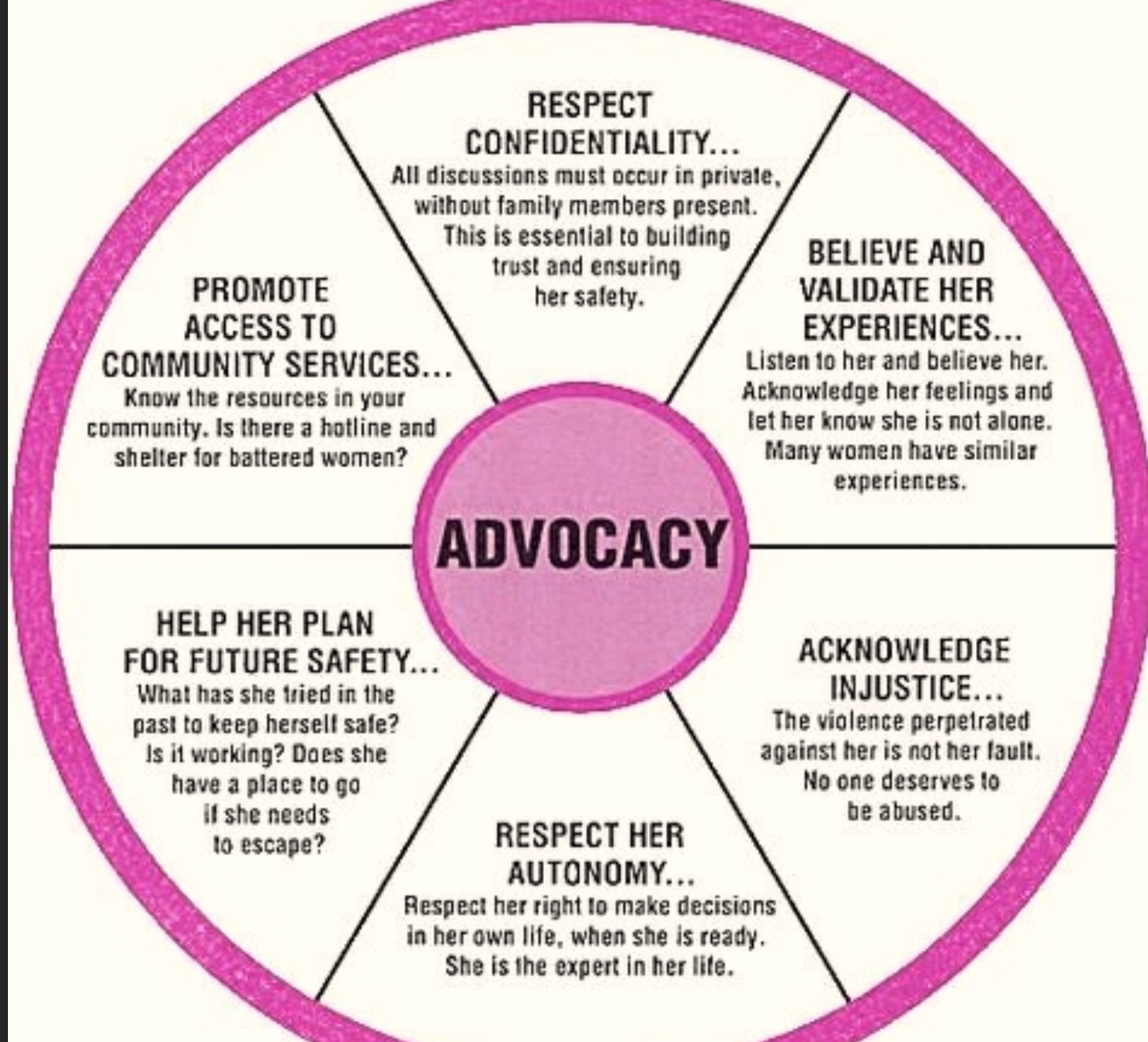
**Serving
Victims**

**Building
Trust**

**Restoring
Hope**



What is Advocacy?



The Role of an Advocate



An advocate help victims in the midst of overcoming their situation. The advocate is a messenger for change to prevent future violence. Victims of domestic violence have a long road ahead of them when they make the brave decision to leave their abusers and reclaim their lives.

The Role of an Advocate

The role and responsibilities of an advocate depends on the needs of the agency. The responsibilities may consist of:

- **Answering the crisis hotline**
- **Accompany client to hospital**
- **Accompany client to legal hearings**
- **Case management**
- **Safety planning and assessment**



Safety Planning

A safety plan is intended to assist victims in securing their physical safety and personal well-being. It is not a substitute for law enforcement and professional help.



Safety Plan



Client's Name: _____

If your partner has been violent in the past, chances are very good it will happen again – even if your partner promised it wouldn't. You may not want to think about that possibility, but for your own safety, it's best to be prepared just in case. Remember, you do not have control over your partner's violence, but you do have control over how you prepare for it and respond to it. Below are suggestions for doing so.

1. Identify the 'cues' you have seen in the past right before your partner has been violent. Keep these in mind as warning signs, and when you see these things in the future you will know it is time to take action to protect yourself:

____ Use of drugs/alcohol ____ Jealousy ____ Verbal abuse/put downs
____ Embarrassing you in front of friends ____ Disagreements about sex

2. Write down the ways you have tried to protect yourself in the past that HAVE worked. In the future, as soon as you sense that your partner may become violent, do as many of these things as you can to protect yourself:

3. Now write down the ways you have tried protect yourself in the past that HAVE NOT worked. Do not rely on these things in the future:

Safety Planning

A safety plan empowers the victim to reclaim a sense of safety and security by addressing immediate safety needs and outlining strategies to help reduce incidents of harm.



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Safety Planning

*Unfortunately,
constructing and
implementing a safety
plan cannot ensure that
an individual will not
face violence again.*



Safety Plan



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Safety Planning

The goal is to help victims be as safe as possible given their current circumstances.



Safety Plan



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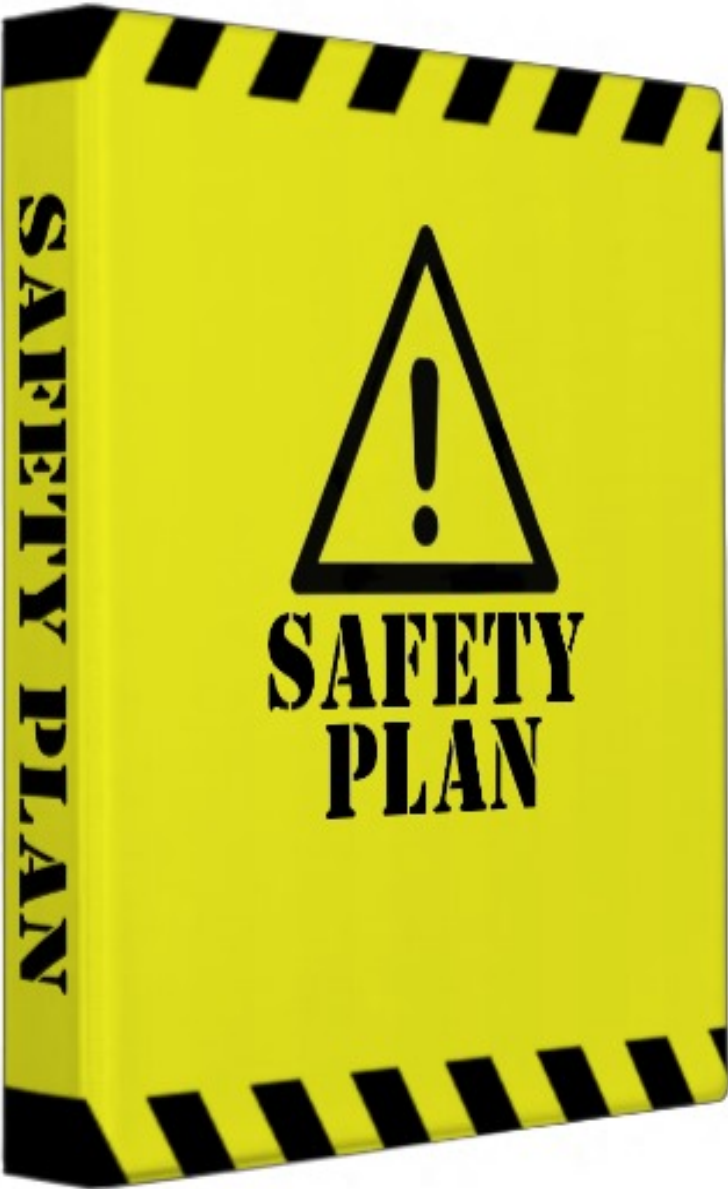
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Safety Planning

When an advocate is assisting the person with a plan of safety, keep in mind the following:

- **Victims may not want to share the answers to all the questions that the advocate ask. It is okay.**
 - **The advocate does not have to ask every question, because it may be overwhelming to the victim!**
-
- **Allow the victim's experience and current situation to help determine which questions are appropriate.**
 - **Safety planning is an ongoing process, not a one-time conversation.**





Safety Planning

The Advocate's initial conversation with the victim should give the advocate a sense of his or her immediate safety needs, which in turn, will help the advocate and the victim to identify safety issues that require immediate attention and those that can be addressed when the advocate meet with the victim.





Safety Planning

Two types of safety plans:

- **If the victim chooses to stay at their current address**
- **If the victim has left their current address**

A red, jagged-edged graphic with a white border. The text 'DOMESTIC VIOLENCE SAFETY PLAN' is written in white, bold, capital letters, centered within the graphic.

**DOMESTIC
VIOLENCE
SAFETY
PLAN**



Safety Planning

If the victim chooses to leave their current address, the advocate should:

- **Inquire about the emotional state and safety of the victim.**
- **Explore housing and safety options with the victim**
- **Explore seeking medical attention and completing a “rape kit.”**
- **Ask the victim about their concerns and/or feelings of reporting the perpetrator to law enforcement.**
- **Discuss with the victim dynamics of The Victim’s Rights and Victim’s Compensation.**
- **Make referrals as needed.**
- **Make a list of individuals they can trust.**

OFFICE OF THE ATTORNEY GENERAL

Crime Victim Compensation Division
Post Office Box 220
Jackson, Mississippi 39205-0220
1-800-829-6766 or 601-359-6766
601-576-4445 (FAX)
(WEB)



For Office Use Only

CLAIM NO. _____

Received Date: _____

VICTIM COMPENSATION APPLICATION

APPLICATION MUST BE COMPLETED, SIGNED AND
VICTIM/CLAIMANT TO NOTIFY THIS DIVISION OF ANY CHANGES TO ADDRESS OR TELEPHONE NUMBERS.

Instructions

Please read the enclosed "General Eligibility Requirements" to see if you may qualify for this program. Fill out this form completely (please print). Attach any required documentation, including all itemized bills, and mail to the above address. If the victim is deceased, include itemized funeral burial expenses.

CHECK THE TYPE OF VICTIM COMPENSATION BENEFITS YOU ARE REQUESTING:

- ☐ Medical Expenses ☐ Transportation (funeral)
☐ Mental Health Counseling (victim) ☐ Domestic Violence Relocation Assistance
☐ Mental Health Counseling (family member) ☐ Domestic Violence Temporary Housing Assistance
☐ Transportation (Medical/MHC) ☐ Court Related Travel Expenses
☐ Funeral Expenses ☐ Crime Scene Cleanup Assistance
☐ ☐ Repair/Replacement Expenses
- ☐ Loss of Wages (victim) ☐ Loss of Wages (funeral)
☐ Loss of Wages (claimant) ☐ Loss of Support (dependents of deceased victim)
☐ Loss of Wages (court proceeding)

SECTION A – Victim Information

A. Please type or print legibly without ink. B. A separate application must be completed for each victim who received injuries. C. If a person witnessed the crime and is requesting mental health counseling, complete a separate application.

1. Victim's Name _____ 2. Marital Status _____

3. Mailing Address _____ 4. City/State/Zip _____

5. _____

6. Date of Birth: _____ : _____ #: _____

7. E-mail Address: _____

8. Briefly describe your injuries: _____

Responses only and is needed to comply with federal regulations.

A. Sex ☐ Female ☐ Male : ☐ Asian/Pacific Islander
☐ Yes ☐ No ☐ African American ☐ Caucasian
C. Handicapped After Crime ☐ Yes ☐ No ☐ Alaskan Native
☐ American Indian ☐ Other

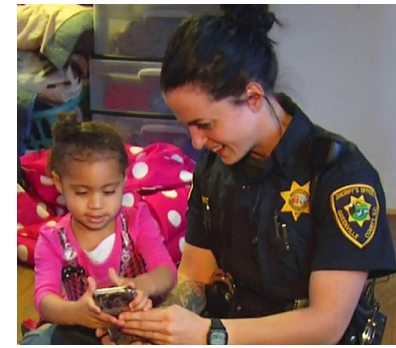
☐ Hispanic

Crime Compensation Application

The Crime Victim Compensation Division provides financial assistance to victims of crime and their family members. The goal of the Crime Victim Compensation is to provide a method of compensating and assisting those persons who are innocent victims of criminal acts and who suffer bodily injury or death.



Safety Planning



Safety planning if the victims choose to stay at their current address:

- ☐ **Ask the victim who can they trust that can respond to a crisis.**
- ☐ **Advise the victim about the importance of preparing a “safety place” to go during arguments.**
- ☐ **Advise the victim to avoid rooms with no exits or rooms with weapons such as the kitchen.**
- ☐ **Advise the victim about the importance of teaching the children where to go to be safe and who to call for help.**
- ☐ **Share an option concerning the sleeping arrangements.**



Safety Planning

Safety planning if the victims choose to stay at their current address:

- ☐ Share that it is important to regularly clear history and cookies on the home computer.
- ☐ Share safety tool of establish a “code word or sign that mean, “get out!” or share with your support network that means “I Need Help!”
- ☐ Share the importance of memorizing all important numbers.
- ☐ Share with the victim it is important to keep an old cell phone available.
- ☐ Suggest to the victim another safety plan is to park the vehicle in a parking spot so that they can leave quickly.





Safety Planning

Safety planning if victims choose to leave their current situation. The advocate can suggest the following options:

☐ Pack a bag that includes all important papers and documents



☐ Share that it is important to hide the bag in a secret location. If it is discovered call it a, “hurricane or tornado bag” or a if a fire occur!

Safety Planning

checklist

what you need to take when you leave

- ☐ Identification
- ☐ Driver's license, car title & registration
- ☐ Children's birth certificates
- ☐ Your birth and marriage certificates
- ☐ Money, credit cards, ATM card, telephone calling card
- ☐ Restraining order
- ☐ Lease, rental agreement, house deed
- ☐ Checkbooks, bank books, & withdrawal slips
- ☐ Health insurance or medical card
- ☐ Insurance papers
- ☐ House & car keys
- ☐ Medications or prescriptions
- ☐ Address book
- ☐ Pictures
- ☐ Medical records for all family members
- ☐ Social security card, for self & children
- ☐ Welfare identification
- ☐ School records
- ☐ Work permits
- ☐ Green card/immigration papers
- ☐ Passport, for self & children
- ☐ Divorce papers, including custody order
- ☐ Jewelry
- ☐ Children's small toys
- ☐ Pets
- ☐ Other _____

Examples of important papers, documents and other items

- Bank Statements
- Marriage License
- Passport
- Social Security Cards
- Bills In Your Names
- Prescription Drugs & medical records
- Cash, Keys, and Credit Cards.



Safety Planning

- **Do not tell the children your plans until it is time to leave. Reassure them they will be safe.**
- **An option is to relocate to the nearest domestic violence shelter or homeless shelter.**
- **It is important that the advocate share with the victim the importance of keeping their support network a secret.**

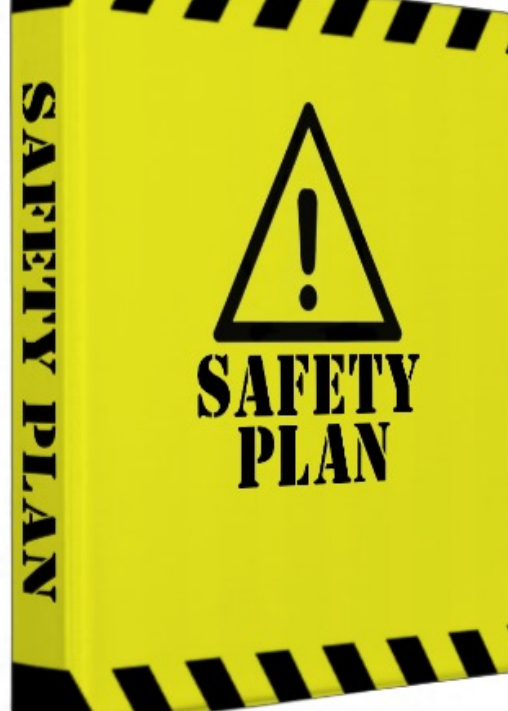
Safety Planning

- **Suggest to the victim when they feel comfortable to notify their employer, family and friends that they have left the abusive relationship and they do not want any contact with the abuser.**
- **Share with the victim they should change all appointments relating to medical and legal matters.**
- **Share with the victim another safety tool is to change phone and phone number as there are devices that can be placed on phones that monitors their current and present location.**
- **Another safety tool to share with the victim to change the password to their computer or take it with them when they are leaving.**

Safety Planning

Safety planning when victims are being stalked

- ❑ **STALKING SHOULDN'T BE KEPT A SECRET.** Share with parents, a trusted adult or the local police to determine if a report can be made.
- ❑ **Keep cell phones charged and have emergency contact numbers programmed under a different name.**
- ❑ **Memorize all important numbers.**



REPORT STALKING

Stalking is a crime.

If you are experiencing stalking, please do not suffer in silence.

More advice and guidance on stalking can be found at www.glostakeastand.co.uk

Call Police on 999 in an emergency or 101

Stalking
Following
Hate mail
Monitoring
Fear
Cyber stalking
Spying
Damaging property
Threats
Unwanted gifts
Phone calls

Report it
Don't suffer in silence
Talk to someone
Help is available



Safety Planning

Safety planning when victims are being stalked

- ❑ Take different routes when driving or use the different modes of transportation.
- ❑ Current and long-term safety can be ongoing concern for victims. Safety planning should be periodic and conducted throughout the advocate-client relationship.
- ❑ However, if the victim fears for their life that they are in imminent danger should call 911 immediately!



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Seminar 102: Thursday, September 3, 2020

Session 1: What is the Role of Advocate & Safety Planning

Objectives:

- To define the role of a sexual assault advocate
- To outline/discuss the importance of safety planning with survivors of interpersonal abuse
- To describe the need for advocates to help empower victims to make life choices

Learning outcomes

At the end of this track, the participants will learn the responsibilities of an advocate and why creating a safety plan with the survivor should be one of their first steps to having a violence free life

Presenters:

Ms. Doris Lee, *Victim Service Specialist, Our House, Inc.*

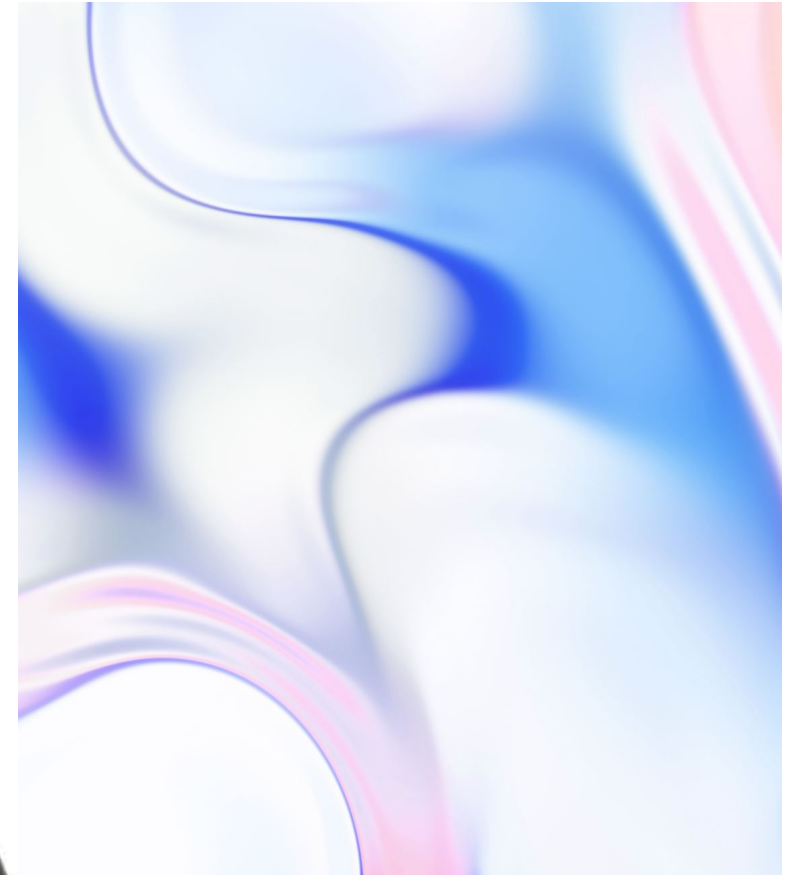
Dr. Patricia Ann Davenport, L.S.W., *Executive Director, Our House, Inc.*

(2 General CEUs)

Safety Planning, v.

A **safety plan** is a survivor's individualized plan developed in partnership with an advocate that focuses on strategies for staying safe. It is typically used with survivors of domestic violence, sexual assault, dating violence, and stalking. In creating a safety plan, advocates discuss the unique needs & circumstances of individual victims.

#DVdictionary
#31n31



Safety Planning

Dr. Patricia Ann Davenport, L.S.W.

Safety Planning Differences

Domestic Violence

Focus safety planning on anticipating the actions of the abuser, looking at dangers, recognizing that abusers shift their tactics, adaptable, exploring options, considerations for children, putting in place strategies to protect, to inform support, and to escape.

Dating Violence

Many people minimize the seriousness of the abuse safety planning will need to make sure supports will believe the victim. Social media and social community can be used to vilify the victim and further isolate, with possible retaliation.

Sexual Assault

Focus safety planning on knowing community resources, normalizing potential responses and triggers, creating a sense of safety within themselves and within their personal space as well as anticipating dangers that may result from the perpetrator.

Stalking

Stalking may not be the result of an intimate relationship. The abuser may not have had a relationship but is infatuated/obsessed with the person being stalked. Documentation is critical to demonstrate the existence and extent of the stalking.



Checklist

- ☒ _____
- ☒ _____
- ☒ _____
- ☒ _____
- ☒ _____
- ☒ _____
- ☒ _____
- ☒ _____

Safety Planning List

Here are some helpful items to get together when you are planning on leaving an abusive situation. Keep these items in a safe place until you are ready to leave, or if you need to leave suddenly. If you have children, take them. And take your pets, too (if you can).

Identification for yourself and your children

- ☐ birth certificates
- ☐ social security cards (or numbers written on paper if you can't find the cards)
- ☐ driver's license
- ☐ photo identification or passports
- ☐ welfare identification
- ☐ green card

Important personal papers

- ☐ marriage certificate
- ☐ divorce papers
- ☐ custody orders
- ☐ legal protection or restraining orders
- ☐ health insurance papers and medical cards
- ☐ medical records for all family members
- ☐ children's school records
- ☐ investment papers/records and account numbers
- ☐ work permits
- ☐ immigration papers

- ☐ rental agreement/lease or house deed
- ☐ car title, registration, and insurance information

Funds

- ☐ cash
- ☐ credit cards
- ☐ ATM card
- ☐ checkbook and bankbook (with deposit slips)

Keys

- ☐ house
- ☐ car
- ☐ safety deposit box or post office box

A way to communicate

- ☐ phone calling card
- ☐ cell phone
- ☐ address book

Medications

- ☐ at least 1 month's supply for all medicines you and your children are taking, as well as a copy of the prescriptions

A way to get by

- ☐ jewelry or small objects you can sell if you run out of money or stop having access to your accounts

Things to help you cope

- ☐ pictures
- ☐ keepsakes
- ☐ children's small toys or books

