

Safety Planning – Preparing to Leave

So far, the following are people who already know about the abuse:

Their responses have been helpful/unhelpful in the following ways:

The process of living in or leaving an abusive relationship can be overwhelming. The following are people I can trust to keep my privacy about what I am thinking and/or planning: _____

Below are some strategies that others have sometimes found to be helpful in increasing safety while planning to leave someone who has used abusive behaviours. Check off ones that you want to try and discuss with a worker if you need help getting started

- I will make a personal “To-Go” Pack of items that I would want to take with me in a hurry and leave in a safe place at _____ (see ideas on specific things you might want to take with you at the end of this safety plan)
- I will open a personal savings account by (date) _____.
- I can get a spare cell phone without a plan to keep for making emergency calls for police
- I can contact _____ and _____ for a temporary place to stay and for emergency financial assistance.
- The Medicine Hat Women’s Shelter phone number is 403-529-1091 or 1-800-661-7949. This number is available 24/hours a day and I can call it for support, for additional safety planning, or if I feel I might need to go into shelter. Another person/place I can call for support is: _____.
- I will be aware of what information my abuser can access via phone records, security systems, or joint accounts. Someone I can talk to about possible concerns is: _____.
- Other people in my home that also need to know about the safety plan include _____.

If I am worried that one of these people might accidentally tell my abuser, I can say it is an “Emergency Plan” in the event of fire, intruder etc.

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- I will teach my children our address and identifying landmarks and how to contact 911.
- If I have been injured I can go to the doctor or an emergency room for medical attention and to document the incident. If I am unable to do this or choose not to, then I may also ask _____ to take pictures of any visible injuries and keep in a safe place.
- I can keep a journal of abusive incidents (physical, emotional, financial, sexual etc) and also record visits to the doctor or hospital with dates and times.
- Keep a full tank of gas in the car and/or money for a taxi.
- Use public computers such as those at the library if searching for supports/resources to help you leave. If this is not possible, erase search history on your computer but know that if your abuser is tech-savvy they might still be able to access this information.
- I will review and revise my safety plan every _____ in case my circumstances change.

One area that I still feel I need support/help in is: _____

NOTE: If you would like additional information on safety plans for other situations such as: having contact with an abusive person, emotional safety, if you have children, for in public, if you have a pet, for stalking or harassment concerns or other personalized situations please contact the Medicine Hat Women's Shelter at 403-529-1091.

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Items to Take With Me When Leaving:

If you leave an abusive partner, it is important to take certain items with you, if you are able, as it can sometimes be difficult to get items after the fact. If you are unable to take all of the items with you when you leave, you might also think about making copies of some or of taking pictures of important documents and upload them to the internet (such as a secure email) so they are accessible. You might think about leaving some of these items with a trusted friend, just in case you have to leave quickly.

Items with asterisks on the following list are the most important to take, but are not in order of priority. If there is time, the other items might be taken or stored outside the home. Items to take when leaving should be placed earlier in one location so they can be grabbed quickly if you have to leave in a hurry. Items to take:

- My identification (birth certificate, driver's license, passport, etc.)*
- Children's ID (birth certificates, health cards, passports, etc)*
- Social Insurance Cards*
- My health card*
- School and vaccination records
- Money, Credit Cards, Cheque book, ATM card*
- Keys-house, car, office*
- Medications/prescriptions
- Custody Orders*
- Welfare/Family's Allowance identification
- Work permits, green card, visa*
- Lease/Rental agreements, property*
- Mortgage payment documents*
- Photographs
- Jewelry
- Small Salable objects
- Immigration papers*
- Divorce documentation, marriage license
- Medical records for all family members
- Insurance papers, including health and life insurance*
- Children's favorite toys and or blankets
- A few changes of clothes for you and your children
- Items of special sentimental value
- Vehicle ownership documents*
- Aboriginal person status card/documentation*
- Employment /Pension documentation

Remember, your current safety is more important than making sure you take all of your belongings with you. If you are unable to take some of your personal belongings with you when you leave, the police are often able to assist to help you get items safely after you have left.