

## **Safety Planning Guide**

### **A Guide to Enhance Safety Planning**

#### **What is safety planning?**

Safety planning is an individualized process to reduce your risk of being hurt by your partner. It is different for every relationship. While you cannot control your partner's behavior, you can find ways to reduce risk of harm for yourself and your loved ones. In fact, you already have ways you try minimize the risk of violence or thoughts of how to respond to potentially dangerous situations. This is the essence of safety planning. The following guide is intended to enhance the planning process you have already begun.

#### **Why do I need a safety plan?**

Everyone deserves a relationship that is healthy, safe and supportive. If you are in a relationship that is hurting you, *the abuse you are experiencing is not your fault*. Regardless of whether you would like to remain in the relationship or not, it is important for you to consider ways to keep yourself safe. While you have probably not used the terminology safety plan, you already consider your safety. The following is intended to be a guide to consider how to keep you as safe as possible.

#### **How do I make a safety plan?**

Safety planning focuses on reducing risks. It involves assessing potential scenarios and finding ways to be safe. The following guide offers an outline to enhance the process you have already begun. Take time to read through and complete the safety plan. It is okay if there are sections you do not feel comfortable writing down or which are not applicable. Sometimes it is helpful to talk with someone you trust. If you would like to work with an advocate, contact Belles Against Violence Office at 574-284-4081 or [BellesAgainstViolence@saintmarys.edu](mailto:BellesAgainstViolence@saintmarys.edu).

#### **Things to Remember:**

- In order for this safety planning guide to be effective, it must contain personal answers.
- You are the most essential element of your safety plan. Always trust your instincts. You know more than you realize.
- After completing this guide, keep it in an accessible but secure location. Carefully Consider giving a copy to someone you trust.
- Finding support from someone who has experience working with college students who have experienced abuse can be helpful. Belles Against Violence Office on campus is always here for you.

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#### **Safety on Campus**

The safest way for me to get to class is: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_.

These are places on campus or at ND where I often run into my partner: \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_.

I will try to avoid these places as much as possible or try to go when he/she won't be there.

There may be places on campus or at ND where it is impossible to avoid my partner. If I need to go to one of those places I can make sure a friend goes with me. I will ask: \_\_\_\_\_ or \_\_\_\_\_.

If I feel threatened or unsafe when I am on campus, I can go to these public area where I feel safe: \_\_\_\_\_ or \_\_\_\_\_.

**I could talk to the following people if I need to rearrange my schedule or transfer dorms in order to avoid my partner; or if I need help staying safe on campus:**

- Campus Security
- Resident Advisor
- Belles Against Violence Office
- Women's Health
- Vice President for Student Affairs
- Residence Life and Community Standards
- Academic Affairs
- Professor: \_\_\_\_\_
- Other: \_\_\_\_\_

#### **Safety in My Own Dorm/Apartment**

I can tell these people about what is going on in my relationship: \_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_, and \_\_\_\_\_.

There will be times when my roommate is gone. If I feel unsafe during those times, I can have people stay with me. I will ask: \_\_\_\_\_ or \_\_\_\_\_.

The safest way for me to leave the dorms in an emergency is: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_.

If I have to leave the dorms in an emergency, I should try to go to a place that is public, safe and unknown to my partner. I could go: \_\_\_\_\_.

I will use a code word so I can alert my family, friends, roommates and/or hall mates to call for help without my partner knowing about it. My code word is: \_\_\_\_\_.

If I have to leave my dorm/apartment, then I can go to: \_\_\_\_\_.

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**During an emergency, I can call the following friends, family members or College staff at any time of the day or night:**

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

**If I live with or near my partner, I will have a bag ready with these important items in case I need to leave quickly (check all that apply):**

- Cell phone and charger
- Spare money
- Keys
- Driver's license or other form of ID
- Copy of protective order
- Birth certificate, social security card, immigration papers and other important documents
- Change of clothes
- Medications
- Special photos or other valuable items

#### **Safety and My Emotional Health**

My partner often makes me feel bad by saying this: \_\_\_\_\_.

When he/she does this, I will think of these reasons why I know my partner is wrong: \_\_\_\_\_

I will remind myself daily of my best qualities, including: \_\_\_\_\_.

I will do things I enjoy, like: \_\_\_\_\_.

I will join clubs or organizations that interest me, like: \_\_\_\_\_.

**If I feel confused, depressed or scared, I can call the following friends or family members:**

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

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### **These are things I can do to help keep myself safe every day:**

- I will carry my cell phone and important telephone numbers with me at all times.
- I will keep in touch with someone I trust about where I am or what I am doing.
- I will stay out of isolated places and try to not walk around alone.
- If possible, I will alert campus security about what is happening in my relationship so that my partner is not allowed in my building or on campus.
- I will avoid places where my partner and his/her friends and family are likely to be.
- I will keep the doors and windows locked where I live, especially if I am alone.
- I will avoid speaking to my partner. If it is unavoidable, I will make sure there are people around in case the situation becomes dangerous.
- I will call 911 if I feel my safety is at risk.
- I can look into getting a protective order so that I'll have legal support in keeping my partner away.
- I can take introduction to self-defense classes on or off campus.
- I will remember that the abuse is not my fault and that I deserve a safe and healthy relationship.

### **These are things I can do to help keep myself safe in my social life:**

- I will ask my friends to keep their cell phones with them while they are with me in case we get separated and I need help.
- If possible, I will go to different malls, bars, banks, parties, grocery stores, movie theatres, etc. than the ones my partner goes to or knows about.
- I will avoid going out alone, especially at night.
- No matter where I go, I will be aware of how to leave safely in case of an emergency.
- I will leave if I feel uncomfortable in a situation, no matter what my friends are going.
- If I plan on drinking, I will be sure to have a sober driver who is not my partner.
- I will spend time with people who make me feel safe, supported, and good about myself.

### **These are things I can do to stay safe online and with my cell phone:**

- I will not say or do anything online that I wouldn't in person.
- I will set all my online profiles to be as private as they can be.
- I will save and keep track of any abusive, threatening or harassing comments, posts or texts.
- I will never give my password to anyone.
- I will not answer calls from unknown, blocked or private numbers.
- I can see if my phone company can block my partner's phone number from calling my phone.

**Note:** Portions adapted and incorporated from Break the Cycle (2008). *A college student's guide to safety planning* [PDF document]. Retrieved from <http://www.breakthecycle.org/content/safety-planning>.

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