

# A COLLEGE STUDENT'S GUIDE TO SAFETY PLANNING

## 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, it is important for you to know that *the abuse is not your fault*. It is also important for you to start thinking of ways to keep yourself safe from the abuse, whether you decide to end the relationship or not. While you can't control your partner's abusive behavior, you can take action to keep yourself as safe as possible.

## WHAT IS A SAFETY PLAN?

A safety plan is a practical guide that helps lower your risk of being hurt by your abuser. It includes information *specific to you and your life* that will help keep you safe. A good safety plan helps you think through lifestyle changes that will help keep you as safe as possible on campus, in the dorms and other places that you go on a daily basis.

## HOW DO I MAKE A SAFETY PLAN?

Take some time for yourself to go through each section of this safety plan. You can complete the workbook on your own, or you can work through it with someone else that you trust.

## Keep in Mind:

- In order for this safety plan to work for you, you'll need to fill in personalized answers, so you can use the information when you most need it.
- Once you complete your safety plan, be sure to keep it in an accessible but secure location. You might also consider giving a copy of your safety plan to someone that you trust.
- Getting support from someone who has experience working with college students in abusive relationships can be very useful. Keep in mind that Break the Cycle is always here to help you.

# MY SAFETY PLAN - PAGE 1

## Staying Safe on Campus:

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

These are places on campus where I often run into my abuser: \_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_. I will try and avoid those places as much as possible or try to go when s/he won't be there.

There may be places on campus where it is impossible to avoid my abuser. If I need to go to one of those places I can make sure a friend can go with me. I will ask \_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_ and/or \_\_\_\_\_.

If I feel threatened or unsafe when I am on campus, I can go to these public areas where I feel safe (dining hall, quad, etc.): \_\_\_\_\_ and/or \_\_\_\_\_.

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

Campus Police

Resident Advisor

Professors: \_\_\_\_\_

Dorm Security \_\_\_\_\_

Dean of Students

Sexual Assault Center

Women's Center

LGBTQ Center

Counselor

Other: \_\_\_\_\_

## Staying Safe in the Dorms

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

Cell phone & charger

Spare money

Keys

Driver's license or other form of ID

Copy of Restraining Order

Birth certificate, social security card, immigration papers and other important documents

Change of clothes

Medications

Special photos or other valuable items

If I have children—anything they may need (important papers, formula, diapers)

I can tell these people (hall mates, roommates or RA's) 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: \_\_\_\_\_.

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 by my abuser. I could go here: \_\_\_\_\_ and/or here: \_\_\_\_\_.

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

# MY SAFETY PLAN - PAGE 2

## Staying Safe Emotionally:

My abuser often makes me feel bad by saying this:

\_\_\_\_\_

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

\_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_

I will do things I enjoy, like:

\_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

## Getting Help in Your Community:

For emergencies: 911

Break the Cycle: 888.988.TEEN or www.thesafespace.org

National Domestic Violence Hotline: 800.799.SAFE

Campus police station: \_\_\_\_\_

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

Location: \_\_\_\_\_

Campus Health Center: \_\_\_\_\_

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

Location: \_\_\_\_\_

Campus Women's or LGBTQ Center: \_\_\_\_\_

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

Location: \_\_\_\_\_

Local Free Legal Assistance: \_\_\_\_\_

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

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

# MY SAFETY PLAN - PAGE 3

## These are things I can do to help keep myself safe everyday:

- 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 never walk around alone.
- If possible, I will alert dorm or campus security about what is happening in my relationship so that my abuser is not allowed in my building.
- I will avoid places where my abuser or 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 abuser. 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 abuser away.
- I can see if there are any self-defense classes available at my college or university.
- 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 theaters, dining halls, etc. than the ones my abuser 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 doing.
- If I plan on drinking, I will be sure to have a sober driver who is *not* my abuser.
- 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.
- If the abuse and harassment does not stop, I will change my usernames, email addresses, and/or cell phone number.
- I will not answer calls from unknown, blocked or private numbers.
- I can see if my phone company can block my abuser's phone number from calling my phone.
- I will not communicate with my abuser using any type of technology if unnecessary, since any form of communication can be recorded and possibly used against me in the future.