

## COVER YOUR TRACKS!

**Abusive people are often controlling and want to know your every move...even online.**

- It is not possible to delete or clear all of the “footprints” of your computer or online activities. It may be dangerous to change your computer behaviors suddenly (i.e. deleting your entire Internet history).
- Email and instant/text messaging are not safe or confidential ways to talk to someone about the danger or abuse in your life.
- Computers store a lot of private information about what you look at via the Internet, the emails you send, web purchases you make and banking.
- There are many ways for an abuser to monitor your Internet activity with programs like spyware, keystroke loggers and other hacking tools.
- It is important to remember that your abuser does not have to be a computer expert or have any special skills to monitor you and your computer activities.



**Overall, it may be safer to use a computer in a public library or at a trusted friend's house to research an escape plan, look for new jobs or ask for help.**



SUPPORTED BY THE UNITED WAY

## SAFETY PLAN WITH YOUR CHILD

**Identify a list of trusted adults who can help:**

- Neighbors
- Friends
- Family members
- Teachers
- Coaches



**Familiarize children with basic information:**

- Make sure children know important phone numbers including their own phone number.
- Help children memorize their home address.

**Discuss techniques to stay safe:**

- Go to their bedroom.
- Teach your children an escape route out of the house and where to go for safety (neighbor, etc.).
- Develop a signal (closing the blinds or flashing the porch light) or a code word for “help” or to let someone know “I’m scared.”
- Make your child’s school or daycare provider aware if your Protection from Abuse order includes temporary custody.
- Dial 911 if help is needed RIGHT NOW.

**INSTRUCT YOUR CHILD TO NEVER GET IN THE MIDDLE OF A FIGHT EVEN IF THEY WANT TO HELP!**

DVSSP is a member program of PCADV

8/21

## Safety Planning

# DVSSP

Domestic Violence Services  
of Southwestern PA



EDUCATING COMMUNITIES • EMPOWERING SURVIVORS  
ELIMINATING RELATIONSHIP VIOLENCE

**24/7 hotline:**

Washington County 724-223-9190

Greene County 724-852-2463

Fayette County 724-439-9500

or

800-791-4000

**peacefromdv.org**



# NO MORE

TOGETHER WE CAN END DOMESTIC VIOLENCE & SEXUAL ASSAULT

## IN AN EMERGENCY

- Stay away from the kitchen, garage and bathroom where the person who is abusing you can trap you or find weapons.
- Get to a room with a door or window to escape.
- Get to a room with a phone to call for help, lock the abuser outside if you can.
- Call 911.
- Think of a neighbor or friend you can run to for help.
- Get medical help if you are hurt.
- Take pictures of bruises or injuries.
- Call DVSSP for assistance.

## WORKING WITH POLICE

- Be as calm as possible.
- Tell the police officer to make a report.
- Tell the police officer about the assault in detail and show him/her any injuries, bruises and/or damaged property.
- Let the officer know if anyone witnessed the attack and if the abuser has hit you before.
- Ask the police officer for his/her name and badge number and the case number of the report.
- Ask the police officer for phone numbers of shelters, hotlines, prosecutors and counselors.
- Show your Protection From Abuse order, if one has been filed, to the officer.

## EMERGENCY ESCAPE PLAN

- Plan where to go for safety: friend, relative, safe house.
- Plan an escape route out of your home and teach it to your children.
- Gather items of real or sentimental value over time and begin placing them within one or two rooms of the house so they can be packed quickly.
- Keep in a safe place or with someone you trust:
  - A spare set of house and car keys
  - Clothing for you and your children
  - Important papers
  - Money for cab fare, gas or hotels
  - Phone numbers for relatives, doctors, etc.
- Find excuses to go out that will not make your partner suspicious (going to the laundromat, walking the dog, taking out the garbage). Use one of them to escape.
- Get a cell phone to keep with you at all times.
- Talk with agencies to find out what help is available once you leave.
- Withdraw half of the money in your checking and/or savings accounts and remove your name from the accounts or credit cards you have in common.

## IMPORTANT ITEMS TO CONSIDER

Social security cards (you and child)	Birth certificates (you and child)	Driver's license or photo I.D.
Address book	Set of house keys	Checkbook
Rent receipts for the last two months	All accessible cash and credit cards	Immunization records (child)
Prescriptions	Glasses/Contacts	Insurance cards

## PROTECTING YOURSELF AT HOME

- Change the locks on the doors and get locks on the windows; if the abuser has moved out.
- Keep a phone in a room that locks from the inside.
- Plan an escape route out of your home and teach it to your children.
- Get an unlisted phone number.
- Block outgoing caller ID.
- Use an answering machine to screen calls.
- Ask neighbors to call police if they see the person who is abusing you at your home; make a signal for them (flicker the porch light, pull the shade down, etc.).
- Invest in a security system, extra locks, window bars or motion detecting lights.
- Teach your children to call the police or go to a neighbor if you cannot escape.

## PROTECTING YOURSELF OUTSIDE OF THE HOME

- Change your regular travel habits and patterns.
- Cancel any bank accounts or credit cards you shared with your abuser; open new accounts at a different bank.
- Keep your court order and emergency numbers with you at all times.
- If you need to go out alone, inform someone you trust of your whereabouts.
- Inform your employer of your situation and give them a picture or description of your abuser.
- If necessary, only meet the person who abused you in a public place.