

**NO HOME**



**FOR DOMESTIC  
ABUSE**

## DOMESTIC ABUSE

### PERSONAL SAFETY PLAN – AT HOME

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## **PERSONAL SAFETY PLAN – AT HOME**

It's difficult to create a plan like this, without it seeming "alarmist." However, it's absolutely essential, if you're in a domestic abuse situation, that you plan to keep yourself and your children (If you have any) safe. This is especially true when it comes to leaving your abuser, which can be the most dangerous time.

**Please note that the following information is not exhaustive and does not guarantee your safety.**

Having a personal safety plan is essential if you or your children are suffering abuse or living in a violent home. In an emergency the single most important factor is your physical safety and the safety of any children you may have.

Every person's situation is different, so you may need to take all, or only some of the steps, recommended in this plan.

**Remember - In an emergency, always call 999. If for some reason, you cannot speak to the emergency operator, press 55 when prompted and the police will respond.**

### **SAFETY DURING A VIOLENT INCIDENT**

- If an argument seems unavoidable, try to have it in a room or area where you can exit quickly and easily. Try to stay away from the bathroom, kitchen, bedroom or anywhere else where weapons might be available.
- Practice how to get out of your home safely. Identify which doors, windows, lifts or stairwell would be best.
- Have a bag packed and keep it at a relative or friends' home, in order to be ready to leave quickly.
- Identify one or more neighbours you can tell about the violence and ask that they call the police, if they hear a disturbance coming from your home.
- Devise a codeword to use with your children, family, friends and neighbours when you need them to call the police.
- Decide and plan for where you will go, if you have to leave home (even if you don't think you will ever need to).

- If the situation is very dangerous, consider giving the abuser what they want to get them to calm down. You have the right to protect yourself until you are out of danger.

Always remember that you don't deserve to be hit or threatened.

### **AFTER A VIOLENT INCIDENT**

- Get to a safe place.
- Call the police.
- If injured, see your doctor or go to hospital as soon as possible.
- Think about speaking to a police officer.
- Consider seeking advice from a solicitor.

### **PREPARING TO LEAVE**

- Open a savings account and/or credit card in your name to start to establish or increase your independence. Think of other ways in which you can increase your independence.
- Get your own post office box, so that you can privately receive cheques and letters.
- Leave money, an extra set of keys, copies of important documents, medicines, clothes and sentimental items with someone you can trust so you can leave immediately.
- Identification is critical for many things when making a new start. The most valuable forms of ID are: Birth certificate (and if you're married, a marriage certificate), passport and driving License.
- This is a list of the other important things to keep: Pay slips, or a P45 or P60. Details of any benefits you are receiving. Bank statements. Documentation relating to the ownership of your home, mortgage or tenancy. Utility bills in your name. Details of any credit cards that are in joint names. Documents relating to immigration status and Right to Remain.
- If you have children: Their birth certificates. Their passports, if they have them. Their savings books or details of their accounts.
- Determine who would be able to let you stay with them, or lend you some money.
- Keep a list of important contact numbers close at hand and keep some change or a phone card on you at all times for emergency phone calls.

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- Keep a detailed log of what is happening to you. Place, date, time, who the incident involved and what happened.
- Leaving an abuser can be the most dangerous time. Review your safety plan as often as possible in order to plan the safest way to leave your abuser. You should speak to trained staff at a domestic abuse organisation, who can help you to plan your escape.

## SAFETY IN THE HOME

If you don't live with the abuser or he or she has left the home, it is important that you take some or all of the following steps to stay safe.

- Discuss a safety plan with your children for when you are not with them. **Please be careful not to alienate your children against the non-resident parent.**
- Inform the children's school or nursery about who has permission to pick up your children.
- Inform your neighbours and landlord that your partner no longer lives with you and that they should call the police if they see them near your home.
- Get in touch with the local police Community Safety Unit so they can ensure a speedy response to an emergency call from your address
- Consult a solicitor to see if you are able to change the locks on your doors if your property is rented and, if you can, buy additional locks and safety devices to secure windows. If you can't afford a solicitor, remember that most, provide a free half hour consultation. Make sure that before you go, you have written down your questions, to make the most of the time that you have. If you need more time, book another free half an hour with another solicitor.
- Some Councils have a "Sanctuary Project" which can provide a range of security measures to make your home secure. This is a free scheme and referrals can be made by the police, domestic violence advocacy worker, social worker and housing officer.
- One of the big problems with leaving home can often be controlling the post. Letters to the home can contain important personal details, be crucial when setting up new bank accounts and services, and be impossible to get back. Changing an address before leaving home will

always mean using a temporary address. This could be a friend, family, or even a PO Box.

- Depending on your situation, it may simply be impossible for you to exercise any control over your post. However, if you do have limited control over your post, you can consider changing the address for your mail.
- This means calling the important providers with new address details. You need to be aware that:
- Some providers will send an e-mail confirming a change of address. Is this email address secure?
- Providers can make mistakes: the address change may not take effect immediately or at all.
- Data breaches shouldn't happen, but do occur. Does the new address you've chosen belong to someone that will be aware of your situation in case a former partner approaches them?
- You don't always need your physical mail. Scanning and keeping a copy of the most recent letter will often contain all the reference numbers and information you need to talk to the provider later.
- Royal Mail redirection can let you redirect mail to a PO Box number if you don't want to send anything to friends or family. It is meant to take 5 working days to set up, although the post office recommends doing it three weeks in advance: we recommend five weeks if you can.
- The benefit is that you can redirect mail for you and your children whilst leaving mail for a partner untouched.
- Unfortunately, mail relating to benefits cannot be redirected. Also, if you redirect mail in joint names, your partner may be able to redirect it back.

EQUALITY - INCLUSION - EMPATHY

## COURT ORDERS

The local courts can grant a non-molestation or occupation order, commonly known as an injunction. This legally orders the abuser not to contact you in an aggressive way either directly or through another person. It also means they have to stay away from your home. Your solicitor can help you put an order in place.

If the court grants an injunction, remember to:

- Keep your injunction with you at all times.
- Call the police if your partner breaks the injunction.
- If you have a solicitor let them know if your partner breaks the injunction.
- Think of ways to keep safe if the police do not respond right away.
- Inform family, friends, neighbours, your doctor or health care worker and the people you work with that you have an injunction.
- If the court order does not cover your workplace, speak to your employer. Is there a domestic abuse workplace policy? If so, discuss this with your manager. If not, approach your manager and let them know your situation. Remember, 75% of domestic abuse victims are targeted at work.

## OTHER SAFETY TIPS

- **Situational Awareness** - Simply put, situational awareness is being aware of your surroundings. More specifically, in the context of personal safety, it refers to a mindset that allows a person to notice potential threat scenarios in time to react accordingly.
- **Limit your distractions** - If you're walking through a deserted carpark, is it really necessary to send a text at that moment? If you're focused solely on your phone and checking your email, you're not going to notice if something, or someone, looks out of place.
- If you're inside a car with the perpetrator, do not try and get out unless it's safe to do so.

- If you're driving and the perpetrator is following you, drive to the nearest police station, or to a public area that you know is covered by CCTV, such as a 24-hour petrol station, where you can also ask for assistance.
- When parking your car, ensure that it's in a safe area (well lit, covered by CCTV)
- If you use public transport, sit closest to the driver/exit if possible.
- Public areas do not guarantee safety, so shop at different supermarkets and shopping centres, at different hours, than you did when you were with your abuser. Or consider online shopping.
- Likewise, use a different bank and bank at different hours than you did when you were with your abuser. Or consider online banking.
- Change any regular appointments that your abuser knows about.
- Alter your routines as much as possible.
- Carry a personal attack alarm. These are cheap and easy to buy.
- Never trust a door chain lock. Whether in a hotel or at home, never rely on door chain locks for safety. Even amateurs can often undermine them in seconds.
- Some "experts" will suggest carrying car keys and placing them between your fingers. However, this can give you a false sense of security and you should remember this; if you're in a position to strike out with keys, you are already too close to the assailant.
- Never set your smart phone tracking device, or sat nav, to your exact home or work address. Always use an address nearby. This will prevent anyone finding you, should your phone, or sat nav be lost or stolen. (See additional information on how you can be tracked by your phone).
- Likewise, do not leave documents in your car that can lead someone back to your home or workplace.

- **This is a big one** – NEVER accept friend requests from anyone on social media unless you know exactly who they are. Have your privacy settings set to friends only and think before you post, especially if it involves telling people where you are going and what you are doing.
- Unfortunately, arson has been used several times against ex partners, so keep a fire extinguisher, upstairs at home. **Dry powder** can be used on the widest range of fires in the home. It is safe to use on textiles, wood, flammable liquids/gases and electrical fires. However, it cannot be used on kitchen fires involving cooking fats and oils.
- If you or your children are using any item that is connected to the internet, such as a mobile phone, or your car has an inbuilt connection to the internet, you can be tracked and hacked. It is essential that you check the settings and passwords on all of your devices and the devices of your children, especially if your ex-partner ever had access. You can find more details here:  
**<https://serocu.police.uk/cyber-domestic-abuse/>**  
If you are not a resident in Hampshire, please contact your local Police Force.  
**<https://www.ceop.police.uk/safety-centre/>**  
**<https://www.internetmatters.org/>**

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# DIGITAL SAFEGUARDING



AID116

Considerations to help protect victims of online stalking and domestic abuse.

## Historic factors

- ⦿ Does the perpetrator want to show the victim that they have some knowledge of their life and movements?  
If so, how?
- ⦿ From what platforms does it appear they have gleaned information about the victim?
- ⦿ Do they know about other conversations the victim has had with other people online?

## Perpetrator's knowledge and capabilities

- ⦿ What IT knowledge does the perpetrator have?
- ⦿ Do they have access to the IT that the victim uses in their home (*e.g. internet provider*)?
- ⦿ Do they still (or have they had) access to any IT device that the victim, their relatives or children still use?  
(*This might include routers, mobile phones, tablets, laptops and PCs.*)
- ⦿ Do they have knowledge of the passwords, social media accounts, email addresses, platforms, numbers and any other individuals living with the victim (*especially those of any children*)?

# DIGITAL SAFEGUARDING



AID116

## Specialist knowledge or opportunity

- ⦿ Who does the perpetrator work for?
- ⦿ Does this job give them access to 'insider privilege'?  
For example, do they work for a mobile phone provider, communications company or internet service provider?
- ⦿ Do they work for the IT department for the victim's employer?
- ⦿ Do they have the programming skills to create mobile phone apps?
- ⦿ Do they have the funds and/or the motivation to purchase private investigation skills from hackers /social engineers?

There is no one-size-fits-all advice to protect victims of stalking and domestic abuse. Be adaptable and flexible and take account of all the circumstances.

Appropriate safeguarding and protection will depend on the victim's lifestyle as well as the knowledge, tools, and tactics of the perpetrator.

Always signpost them to other help and support.

**Have you identified any additional crimes which need to be recorded and investigated?**

Finally, I want to finish with a military quote:

**“No plan, survives first contact with the enemy.”**

In other words, expect the unexpected and be prepared to be flexible in your response to a threat.

I am living proof, that there is a better life away from your abuser. You can do this and live a long and happy life.

Stay safe and the best of luck.

Robert Wells. DABS founder.

## RESOURCES

**Remember - In an emergency, always call 999. If for some reason, you cannot speak to the emergency operator, press 55 when prompted and the police will respond.**

Bright Sky is a free to download mobile app, providing support and information to anyone who may be in an abusive relationship or those concerned about someone they know.

The app is also designed to be used by specialist and non-specialist practitioners and other employers, and for anyone looking for information about issues around domestic abuse such as online safety, stalking and harassment and sexual consent.

**You should only add this to your phone if it is safe to do so.**

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## **Mankind**

Helpline: 01823 334244

**mankind.org.uk**

The Mankind Initiative supports male victims of domestic violence, though **it helps all callers regardless of sex, race or sexual orientation.** There is also a referral system for single men or men with children fleeing from domestic violence.

## **National Domestic Violence helpline**

The National Domestic Violence Helpline is a freephone 24-hour helpline which provides advice and support to women and can refer them to emergency accommodation.

The National Domestic Violence Helpline is run by Refuge.

There are translation facilities if your first language is not English. The Helpline also offers BT Type talk for callers with hearing difficulties. The Helpline worker contacts the Type talk operator so that the caller can communicate through them.

Telephone: 0808 200 0247 (24 hours)

Website: **[www.nationaldomesticviolencehelpline.org.uk](http://www.nationaldomesticviolencehelpline.org.uk)**

## **The National LGBT Domestic Abuse Helpline**

Freephone: 0800 999 5428

**<http://www.galop.org.uk/domesticabuse/>**

Our National Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Trans (LGBT) Domestic Violence Helpline provides confidential support to all members of the LGBT communities, their family, friends, and agencies supporting them. The helpline is run by trained LGBT people and provides a space where you can talk through what is going on, and explore your options.

### **Men's Advice Line**

Helpline: 0808 801 0327

**[mensadvice.org.uk](http://mensadvice.org.uk)**

Monday and Wednesday, 9am to 10pm

Offers advice, information and listening support for men with experience of domestic abuse. Includes help for men in same-sex and heterosexual relationships

### **Refuge**

Their helpline offers advice and support to women experiencing domestic violence.

Refuge also provide safe, emergency accommodation through a network of refuges throughout the UK, including culturally-specific services for women from minority ethnic communities and cultures.

Their website also includes some information for men who are either being abused or who are abusers.

Telephone: 0808 200 0247 (24 hours)

Email: **[info@refuge.org.uk](mailto:info@refuge.org.uk)**

Website: **[www.refuge.org.uk](http://www.refuge.org.uk)**

### **Women's Aid**

The Women's Aid website provides a wide range of resources to help women and young people.

They also run a website to support to children and teenagers who may be living in a home affected by domestic violence, or who may be in a violent relationship themselves.

Telephone: 0808 200 0247 (24 hours)

Email: **[helpline@womensaid.org.uk](mailto:helpline@womensaid.org.uk)**

Website: **[www.womensaid.org.uk](http://www.womensaid.org.uk)**

**AMIS - Abused Men in Scotland (Mon-Fri 9-4)**

Helpline: 0800 800 0024

**[abusedmeninscotland.org](http://abusedmeninscotland.org)**

We support men who are experiencing or who have experienced domestic abuse and also to offer advice to those concerned about the position of such men and their children. We work with any man over 16 concerned about domestic abuse, regardless of sexuality, transgender status or history, age, dis/ability, religion, race, nationality or ethnic origin and promote full recognition for male victims of domestic abuse and their affected children. We also promote specialist services to help relieve the isolation, distress and hardship faced by male victims and enable men and their children to recover from domestic abuse.

**Scotland's Domestic Abuse and Forced Marriage Helpline**

Helpline number: 0800 027 1234

**[sdafmh.org.uk](http://sdafmh.org.uk)**

Scotland's Domestic Abuse and Forced Marriage helpline is open 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, 365 days a year. We support anyone in Scotland who has experienced, or is at risk of experiencing domestic abuse or forced marriage, as well as those concerned about someone, they know experiencing these. We can discuss your options and provide contact details to relevant support agencies. We will help you regardless of age, disability, sexual orientation, gender, nationality or background. If English is not your first language, we can speak to you through a confidential translation service.

**The Dyn Project**

Helpline: 0808 801 0321

**[dynwales.org](http://dynwales.org)**

The Safer Wales Dyn Helpline provides free confidential support to all men who experience domestic abuse in Wales. We can provide:  
Information on services available in your area. Help in developing a personalised safety plan. Support in accessing other services and organisations. Someone to listen without judging.

**Men's Aid**

Helpline: 0871 223 9986 (8am to 8pm daily)

**[mensaid.co.uk](http://mensaid.co.uk)**

Provides free practical advice and support to men who have been abused.

**Men's Advisory Project (Northern Ireland)**

Belfast – (028)90241929

Foyle – (028)71160001

MAP exists to provide counselling services for men experiencing domestic abuse. We can provide support and facilitate you to understand your options and make your own choices and decisions.

**[www.mapni.co.uk](http://www.mapni.co.uk)**

**Respect**

Helpline for Male Victims of Domestic Violence: 0808 801 0327

Helpline for Domestic Violence Perpetrators: 0808 802 4040

**[respect.uk.net](http://respect.uk.net)**

**Armed Forces Domestic Abuse Support**

Advice and guidance for members of the armed forces community who are affected by domestic abuse.

[www.gov.uk/mod/domestic-abuse-support-for-the-armed-forces](http://www.gov.uk/mod/domestic-abuse-support-for-the-armed-forces)

For Information for veterans and their families.

[www.domesticabusearmedforces.co.uk](http://www.domesticabusearmedforces.co.uk)

**Aurora New Dawn Armed Forces Advocate**

Support for serving armed forces personnel and their families experiencing domestic abuse, sexual abuse and / or stalking.

Telephone: 07496 333473

Email:

**MOD Military Mental Health Helpline**

0800 323 4444

**Army Welfare Service**

Personal Support (PS) Staff provide accessible, independent, confidential and professional specialist welfare services to soldiers and their families with any personal or family difficulty.

For the Intake and Assessment Team

Telephone 01904 882053

Aldershot Office: Telephone 01252 349900

Worthy Down: Telephone 01962 886989

**Alcoholics Anonymous**

[www.alcoholics-anonymous.org.uk](http://www.alcoholics-anonymous.org.uk)

Call our National Helpline

FREE on

0800 9177 650

[help@aamail.org](mailto:help@aamail.org)

**Drug addiction: getting help - NHS**

[www.nhs.uk](http://www.nhs.uk)

**The Samaritans**

National helpline: 116 123

Email:

Website: [www.samaritans.org](http://www.samaritans.org)



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