

SAFETY PLANNING: WHEN VIOLENCE HITS HOME

BE PREPARED TO GET AWAY

- Keep with someone you trust:
 - A spare set of keys
 - A set of clothes
 - Important papers
 - Prescriptions
 - Money
- Keep any evidence of physical abuse.
 - Ripped clothing, photos of bruises and injuries, etc.
- Plan the safest way to get away.
 - Know where you can go for help.
 - Tell someone what is happening to you.
 - Have phone numbers of friends, relatives, and domestic violence programs near you.
- If you are injured, go to the hospital emergency room or doctor and report what happened to you, ask that they document your visit.
- Plan with your children and identify a safe place for them; a room with a lock or the neighbor's house where they can go for help. Reassure them their job is to stay safe, not protect you.
- Arrange a signal with a neighbor, e.g., if the porch light is on, call the police.

Contact your local Victim Services Program or for more resources [click here!](#)

How to make a go bag when leaving an abusive relationship

Did you know that 1 in 4 women (24.3%) and 1 in 7 men (13.8%) aged 18 and older in the United States have been the victim of severe physical violence by an intimate partner in their lifetime?

Think about your closest circle of friends. Now, notice the statistic above. 1 in 4 women. 1 in 7 men. Statistically, someone you know has been a victim of domestic abuse, yet you probably have no idea. Frightening, right?

We all would like to think it would never happen to us or someone we know, but the reality is that it does happen. There are warning signs of abuse that we should be aware of, both in our own relationships and those of others around us. Plus, abuse can be more than just physical or emotional—sexual, financial and digital are a few other forms abuse can take.

If you live with your partner and begin to notice the red flags, or sense a friend may be in trouble, it's a good idea to be prepared to leave when necessary. One way to do this is to keep a “go bag” ready and waiting. This way, in case of an emergency situation, you are able to leave immediately with all the essentials.

Your go bag could include:

- Birth certificates and social security cards for yourself and your children
- Driver's license and/or passports
- Marriage, divorce or custody papers
- Legal protection or restraining orders
- Health insurance cards and medical records
- Immunization records
- Car title, registration, and insurance documentation
- Cash and prepaid credit cards that can't be traced
- Prepaid cell phone or a cell phone with a new contract and number. Try to keep it fully charged.
- Current medications and prescriptions for yourself and your children
- Clothing for you and children
- Keepsakes
- Spare set of keys

Keep your go bag somewhere you could easily access it if you had to leave in a hurry. Some ideas might be in the trunk of your car, near your front door, or at a trusted friend's house. Try to keep your phone charged and your car full of gas, just in case.

In many cases, returning to your home once you leave may not be an option. If you do feel the need to return for more items, make sure you are keeping your safety in mind. Consider when you might be able to go when your abuser won't be home, and bring someone with you, such as a friend or police escort.