

## Safety Strategies for Domestic Violence Victims

Your safety is the most important thing. This information may serve as a guide to help you develop your own safety plan. There is no guarantee that if you follow your plan you will be safe; however it may help improve your chances.

### PREPARING TO LEAVE

Keep a journal of all violent incidents. Include dates, details of the violence and any injuries you sustained. Keep this information and any pictures of injuries in a safe place.

If it is safe to do so, contact Victim Assistance for a 911 cell phone.

Get legal advice to explore options to protect you and your children. Discuss the advisability of obtaining a protection order.

Try to put money aside or ask a friend or family member to hold money for you. If possible open a bank account in your own name and do not use your home address for correspondence regarding your account. Consider renting a post office box for private communication.

Gather important documents, make extra keys, pack necessary clothing and medication, make a list of important phone numbers. Leave these items with someone you trust, so you can leave quickly.

#### *Checklist*

- |   |  |
|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> <i>Driver's License</i>      | <input type="checkbox"/> <i>Birth Certificates</i>     |
| <input type="checkbox"/> <i>Cash</i>                  | <input type="checkbox"/> <i>Clothing</i>               |
| <input type="checkbox"/> <i>Lease/deed</i>            | <input type="checkbox"/> <i>Bank book/check book</i>   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> <i>Insurance information</i> | <input type="checkbox"/> <i>house and car keys</i>     |
| <input type="checkbox"/> <i>Medications</i>           | <input type="checkbox"/> <i>Medical records</i>        |
| <input type="checkbox"/> <i>Social Security Card</i>  | <input type="checkbox"/> <i>Welfare Identification</i> |
| <input type="checkbox"/> <i>School records</i>        | <input type="checkbox"/> <i>Work Permits</i>           |
| <input type="checkbox"/> <i>Green card</i>            | <input type="checkbox"/> <i>Passport</i>               |
| <input type="checkbox"/> <i>Divorce papers</i>        | <input type="checkbox"/> <i>Irreplaceable photos</i>   |
| <i>Other</i> _____                                    |  |
| _____   |  |

## **LEAVING**

### ***LEAVING YOUR BATTERER IS THE MOST DANGEROUS TIME.***

Identify safe areas of the house which have a door or window where there are ways to escape, if an argument occurs.

Keep a cell phone available at all times, if possible.

Devise a code word with family or neighbors so you can communicate to them that you need help.

Contact a local shelter for emergency assistance and ongoing support.

You may request a police stand-by while you leave.

## **AFTER LEAVING AN ABUSIVE RELATIONSHIP**

Alert your employer, school, daycare provides and neighbors of the situation.

Change the lock on your doors as soon as possible. Buy additional locks and safety devices to secure your windows. If possible, add additional outside lighting.

Discuss an age-appropriate safety plan with your children.

Change your regular travel routes and times.

If you have a protection order, keep it with you at all times.

INFORMATION PROVIDED BY:  
THOMAS A. THOMPSON, WILLIAMS COUNTY PROSECUTOR  
WILLIAMS COUNTY VICTIM ASSISTANCE PROGRAM  
228 S. MAIN STREET  
BRYAN, OH 43506  
(419) 636-6195