

# Safety Planning for Teens

You are never responsible for your partner’s abusive behavior, but there are things that you can do to protect yourself. It doesn’t matter if you stay together or breakup – you should still consider making a safety plan. By thinking about your safety before a dangerous situation occurs, you can reduce the risk of being hurt by your partners. You can personalize a safety plan so that it is practical and tailored specifically for you.

Depending on your relationship and your life, some changes might be big, like going to a new school or staying at a confidential safe shelter. However, most changes are usually smaller like changing your passwords or phone number or taking a different way home or to class. Although it may seem daunting, a safety plan can help you to escape a violent situation and end your relationship if you are ready to do so.

## Things You Should Know



Your partner may have told you that the abuse is your fault and that if you behaved differently everything would be fine.

Remember that the abuse is NEVER your fault and changing things that you do will NOT stop the abuse.

### ***Cell Phones, Computers and the Internet are Weapons of Dating Violence!***

Technology can be a great way to get information and keep in touch with your friends. Lately, however, technology has become a way for people to stalk, control, threaten, or humiliate someone through cell phones and the Internet. Constant cell phone calls and texting means constant control day and night!

### ***Calling the Police.***

It’s a scary thing to call police, however; sometimes it is the best way for you to keep yourself safe especially if you feel like you are in immediate danger, if you have been injured by your partner, or if your restraining or protective order has been violated.

## Getting Started

To prepare a safety plan, consider involving someone that you trust to work with you to help you determine the plan that will work best for you. Many areas have a nonprofit organization to assist people who have experienced abuse. The people that work in these programs are called advocates, and have special training in safety planning. This is another option that could be available to you. When you begin developing your safety plan, ask yourself the following questions:

- What can I do so that I am safe in my home?
- Is there a safe place where I can go when I am in danger?
- Who can I call if I feel like I am in danger?
- How can I get safely to and from school? Work? Home?

- How can I be safe in school?
- How can I be safe using computers and cell phones?
- Is there something that my friends & family can do that will help me be safe?
- Should I call the police?