

SAFETY PLANNING DEMYSTIFIED – PART TWO: HOW TO BRING SURVIVOR SAFETY INTO EVERYDAY INTERACTIONS

Safety Planning – Leaving and Beyond



SAFETY WHEN LEAVING, WHEN STAYING, AND WHEN RETURNING TO THE RELATIONSHIP

SAFETY PLANNING WITH CHILDREN

Presenters



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• Georgia Criminal Justice Coordinating Council

This training is supported by Subgrant No. W16-8-008 awarded by the Criminal Justice Coordinating Council administering office for the STOP Formula Grant Program. The opinions, findings, conclusions, and recommendations expressed are those of the trainers and do not necessarily reflect the views of the Criminal Justice Coordinating Council or the U.S. Department of Justice, Office on Violence Against Women.



Questions...



Review - Key Qualities of Good Safety Planning • Formal vs. Informal Survivor-led What the survivor is Filling out a form willing and able to do O Spontaneous, asneeded · Fluid and ongoing Multifaceted Batterer-generated and • In the moment life-generated risks Trauma-informed Emotional safety Review: Batterer-Generated vs. Life- Generated Risks **Batterer-Generated** Life-Generated • Risk of physical and sexual • Financial considerations violence · Home location Child-related risks Physical and mental health Financial risks • Inadequate response from Risks of psychological harm major social institutions and drug and alcohol use Discrimination based on · Risks to friends and family race, ethnicity, gender, Risks involving arrest or sexual orientation, or other bias legal status Review - Trauma-Informed Safety Planning • Reduce Re-traumatization Emotional Safety – feeling accepted; safe from emotional attack or harm • We are skilled at attending to physical safety, but emotional safety is harder to measure Emotional abuse more harmful than physical

O Hard for survivors to find sense of calm and safety

Who is the survivor?



- O How the survivor identifies is important
- OBe humble, inquisitive
- What is possible or normal for you may not be the same for the survivor
- Allow for possibilities, but don't make assumptions or rely on stereotypes

Safety Planning and the Batterer: Leaving, Staying, and Somewhere In Between





TRUTH
"WOMEN STAY
WITH ABUSIVE MEN
BECAUSE IT CAN BE
EXTREMELY
DIFFICULT TO LEAVE"

The Decision-making Process



- Staying in an abusive relationship does not necessarily mean accepting the violence.
- Leaving does not necessarily mean that the violence will end.
- Advocates: respect the survivor's decision-making process and understand that situations are complex

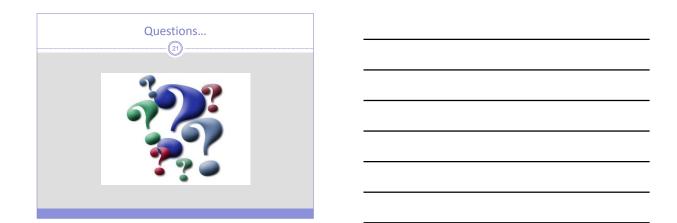
Davies, 199

Safety Planning When Staying	
(13)	
Cofety When Charles	
Safety When Staying (14)	
New focus of advocacy	
Survivors use incredibly creative, complex, and varied	
safety plans for themselves and their children	
Support and respect the survivor's decision	
 Let the survivor know that you are concerned for their safety and why 	
Let the survivor know that your services are always an	
option	
Davies, 1998	
Safety Planning: Protection Strategies	
 Prevent and respond to physical violence Plans to flee – escape path 	
× Code words for children	
 Asking someone to intervene Law enforcement 	
× Neighbor	
Friend/familySelf-defense	
Keeping weapons out of reach	
 Fighting back Not part of the pattern of coercive control 	
not part of the pattern of coeffice Cultion	

Protection Strategies for Children
Sending the children away
Sending the children away Family, friend or neighbor
Sleeping in the children's bedroom
Feed/put to bed early
Never leave children alone with batterer
Involve them in lots of extracurricular activities
 Put children's rooms far from their own to avoid overhearing violence
overneuring violence
Davies, 1998
Safety During a Violent Incident
Avoid certain places in the home during an argument
Bathroom, garage, kitchen, rooms without exits, access to weapons
How to calm or placate the batterer
Identify an escape route
Teach children what to do during an argument
 How to call 911 When to go to the neighbor
Something they have control over
Trust their judgment and intuition
When to stay, when to get out
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Other Cafaty Charteries Miles a Charity
Other Safety Strategies When Staying
18
Resources for gaining self-confidence or support
○ Getting a job
Joining religious or support group
Taking classes – fitness, art, cooking
Checking in with DV program periodically
Therapy/counseling sessions
Identify ways to placate partner
 Δvoid arguments

Give him what he wants Comply with roles

Other Safety Strategies When Staying	
Preserve support system	
Rotate family and friends	
Maintain connections to support system without the	
batterer knowing	
Find ways to save or set aside money	
Secret bank account Family or friends	
Preserve assets for the children	
Life insurance policy	
Separate account	
·	
ies, 1998	
Scenario - Lorin	
Has 3 children, ages 2, 5, and 7	
Married John 2 years ago, father of youngest Father of older children died 4 years ago	
Quit her minimum-wage job when she married John	
She and her children rely exclusively on John's small income and on support from her in-laws, who provide them with a house rent-free	
John is physically abusive and cheats on her	
John has told her, "If you ever try to leave, I'll get custody and you'll	
never get a dime from me or my family." Lorin has a long-term plan	
Stay on good terms with in-laws (provide childcare while she's in school)	
Go back to school for computer programming Do not confront John about cheating	



Safety Planning When Leaving	
4.7	
Safety Planning When Leaving	
Leaving is the most dangerous time in an abusive Risks around batterer finding	
relationship out Safety planning reduces the risk TPO,	
around leaving divorce o Disconnecting emotionally	
Short term and long term plans Walking out the door today Immediate safety vs. long-term safety	
 Preparing to leave after graduating, finding a job, etc. Where will you stay tonight? Tomorrow? Does your batterer 	
know where that is? Transportation and safety Emotional support	
Faces No.	
Escape Plans ———————————————————————————————————	
DV hotline number – 1- 800-33-HAVEN Care for pets (Ahimsa House)	
How to get out of the home (think fire escape) Social media posts/location	
Code word/plan for tracking	
Hide money, car keys, Name/SSN change	
packed bag (complicated!) • Copies of important	
documents	

Safety	Planning	When	Leaving



Batterer-generated risks

• How will he react?

- Have you left before? Did he look for you? Make threats? Talk you into coming back?
- Do you need a confidential location? Protection? Consider the following:
 - o Shelter
- O Staying with friends or family
- · Children's safety

Life-generated risks

- Financial support
- Safe housing or shelter
- Access to transportation
- · Support from family and friends
- Identity (immigration status, sexual orientation, etc.)

Emotional Safety Planning



- Acknowledge the complex emotions involved in ending an intimate relationship
- What support system is available to the survivor?
- o Is it safe to call friends/family?
- O Who provides the right kind of support?
- Self-care practices
 - o Avoiding places or things that remind them of the batterer
 - O Having a plan for when emotions come up
 - HALT: Hungry, angry, tired, lonely
- o Finding things to do that maybe they weren't able to do before
- · Acknowledge unhealthy coping mechanisms and safety
- o Drinking, drug use
- Under or over-eating
- o Dating new people

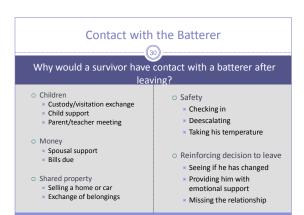
Scenario - Lucas



- Lucas, age 23 has been living with his abusive boyfriend, Greg, for 3 years
- Lucas, age 23 has been living with his abusive boytriend, Greg, for 3 ye
 Violence has been escalating last night they got in a fight, and Greg shoved Lucas into the wall, hit him on the head, and broke his glasses. Lucas called police the officer did not arrest Greg, who left the apartment before the officer arrived. Lucas did not feel like the officer really believed his story or thought he was in danger
- Lucas is ready to leave Greg, but his part-time job at the library does not pay enough to support him moving into his own place
- · Lucas is afraid that Greg will pick the fight back up when he gets home after work today
- Lucas has a few close friends, but they are also friends with Greg and don't know about the violence
- Lucas is cut off from his family in rural Georgia they disowned him when he came out as gay when he was a senior in high school
- Greg, age 46, is a successful business owner in town and financially stable







Contact with the Batterer	
a Describes of the reason it is not the advanta's place to	
 Regardless of the reason, it is not the advocate's place to prevent the survivor from contacting the batterer 	
It is the advocate's place to offer safety planning and support around that contact	
Contact with the Batterer – Safety Considerations	
Where and when the contact will happen	
Public vs. private location During the day	
Over the phone, email	
Who knows about it, who will follow up	
Escape plan If something goes wrong, how to get away Access to help, transportation, 911	
O Access to field, transportation, 911	
Contact with the Batterer – Safety Considerations	
Children Friend or family member to supervise Talking with children about safety	
Including exceptions in the TPO	-
Emotional safety Practice self-care	-
Prepare for emotional impact Have a plan to fall back on for emotional support	

Scenario - Emily



- Emily is staying at the shelter, has been there for 2 weeks with her two children, ages 2 and 4 (not batterer's children, they are not married
- Relays that her batterer, Ryan, contacted her and wants to meet, wants to talk about what happened and apologize
- Emily misses Ryan, but is not sure she wants to go back
- Children witnessed the last violent incident
- Emily has her own car
- She has shared that Ryan owns a gun, but has never threatened her with it
- Emily does not want a TPO, fears that would make Ryan angry and provoke him

Questions...





Safety Planning with Children



Safety Planning with Children	Safety	Plann	ing	with	Chil	dren
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- Begins with a partnership between advocate and parent
- Understanding the strengths and resources of each child
- Every child is unique has different strengths, resources, risks and cultural contexts
- Survivors make decisions for their children in the context of their whole lives, not just domestic violence
- Approach parent with a conversational, non-judgmental tone
- Be open and up front about mandated reporting requirements

Information Gathering

- "Tell me about your kid(s).
 How are they? What do you
 love about them? Does
 anything worry you about
- "What's their relationship like with dad/abusive partner?"

them?"

- "Has your partner ever threatened to take the kids? Call CPS? Used them to control you?"
- "How strategies have you or your kids used in the past to stay safe?"
- "Are you worried about leaving your kids alone with your partner?"
- "How do you feel about talking with your kids about safety planning around _____ (visitation, going to school, talking to dad/partner, etc.?"

Safety Planning with Children



- Create a safety plan for when abusive incidents arise
 - O What to do?
 - O When to call for help?
- Create a familiar code word that children and nonabusive parent can use
- Discuss options for children to find a "safe space" when abusive incidents arise

Safety Planning with Childre	Safety	Planni	ng with	Child	lren
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- Create a safety map of the community for safe places that the child can escape to
- Discuss children learning their address, how to use a phone, dialing safe phone numbers and how to dial 911
- Plans for confidential location
 - o If in shelter, or with family/friends, will child disclose location to batterer?
 - O Depending on age, maturity talk to child about keeping location a secret
 - O Child should be prepared that batterer may ask questions
- Emotional safety
- What to do when feeling sad, scared? What helps me feel safe, strong, loved?

Risks of Safety Planning



- Be very cautious of the serious risks that can be involved with safety planning
 - O Higher risk of harm if abuser is aware of the plan
- Safety planning can sometimes make children feel more fearful
- Children can feel at fault if they are unable to protect themselves, cannot enact their safety plan, or if their non-abusive parent gets hurt

Safety Planning – Things to Consider



- Keep in mind age-appropriateness, maturity and safety issues of the children
- Make sure all steps of the safety plan are realistic and simple
- Educate non-violent parent in empowering ways rather than giving advice
- Remember, it is not possible for us to guarantee safety. Try not to make promises.

Scenario – Linda and Caleb



- Linda, age 28 and her son Caleb, age 5, are staying in the shelter
- Caleb misses his dad, Paul (Linda's abuser) and is eager to go hack home
- Linda wants Paul to have visitation with Caleb, but is worried that Caleb will tell Paul where they are staying, what they've been doing, etc.
- Linda has shared that Paul does not hurt Caleb, but that Caleb has witnessed a few violent episodes
- Caleb has had some angry outbursts at Linda since they've arrived, and he is frequently acting out in the shelter
- Linda wants to take Caleb to meet Paul this weekend for a few hours at a MacDonald's

Questions...





Conclusion



- Staying in an abusive relationship does not necessarily mean accepting the violence.
- Leaving does not necessarily mean that the violence will end.
- Advocates: respect the survivor's decision-making process and understand that situations are complex
- Safety planning with children begins with a partnership between advocate and parent

Thank You!	
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