

Not all of the following suggestions will apply to your situation. Implement those that will keep you and your loved ones safe.

Safety During an Explosive Incident

Trust your instincts

Note the situations that frequently trigger violent episodes and behaviours that usually come before an attack. Trust your instincts. Leave before any violence occurs. This is the surest way to be safe.

Call 9-1-1 if you believe you are in danger.

The 9-1-1 operator only needs a few seconds to trace a call from a landline phone. If you don't have time to talk, dial 9-1-1 and leave the phone off the hook. The operator will send the police to your home. If you are able to talk, make it clear that you are in danger and need help immediately.

If calling 9-1-1 from a cell phone it is essential that you tell the operator where you are or provide a familiar landmark as soon as possible.

Make your way to a safe exit as soon as possible. Do not go to the basement or any other part of your home that does not offer access to an outside exit.

Go to a safe room if you can not get out. Ideally, a safe room is on the ground floor for easy exit or to call the attention of neighbours. It should have a lock on the inside of the door and a phone. It is best to avoid bathrooms, kitchens and other rooms with hard floors and surfaces and where there are objects that could become weapons.

Scream or shout out to alert neighbours and passersby you need help and to call the police.

The choice to physically resist an attack is yours to make. If your partner is armed your options may be limited. When in a physical attack, you may be able to reduce the degree of injury by curling up in a ball and covering your head with your hands.

Practice how to get out of your home safely. Identify which doors, windows, elevators or stairwells provide the quickest and safest escape. Have a rope ladder for escape from second story windows.

Preparing for Safety

Have a plan Even if you think it is unnecessary, decide on and plan various safe places you can go if you have to leave your home quickly. Review your plan frequently.

Get a phone. A phone is your link to help in case of an emergency. Program your phone to allow one-touch access to help. If possible get a cell phone to carry with you everywhere.

Open a bank account and/or a credit card in your name to increase your independence and give you access to emergency funds.

Discuss your financial and legal rights and obligations with a lawyer. If you have children discuss custody, access and child support.

Be aware of any weapons in your home and ensure they are stored safely. In a crisis, avoid areas with easy access to weapons or objects that could be used as weapons against you. If you feel unsafe because your partner has firearms, you may ask the police to get a warrant to remove them.

Alert neighbours and friends to your situation. Ask neighbours to contact the police if they hear a disturbance. Decide on a signal, code word or phrase to let others know that you need the police.

Know crisis service numbers or how to find them. Carry some change or a calling card to make emergency calls.

If you have a vehicle keep it filled with gas and in good repair. Carry an extra set of keys at all times.

Pack an emergency bag with clothing and other necessities and store it with someone you trust.

Safety with a Protection Order

Get information from a domestic violence worker or shelter worker about protection orders that are available.

Keep your protection order with you at all times.

Notify police if your partner disobeys the protection order. Breaching a condition on a protection order is a crime. It is important that your partner knows you are serious about wanting the abuse to stop.

Important Things to Have

Identification:

- Driver's license
- Health, social insurance and treaty cards
- Birth certificates
- Passport
- Immigration documents

Financial:

- Cash, cheques
- Bank and mortgage records
- Debit and credit cards
- Social assistance documents
- Copies of income tax returns and pay stubs, deeds to your house and other property

Other Documents:

- Copies of legal orders including protection, custody, separation and divorce orders,
- Lease and rental agreements,
- Vehicle registration, insurance policies,
- Medical records.

Other Items:

- House and vehicle keys,
- Medication, prescriptions
- Contact information for important people and agencies
- Phone or calling card
- Bus pass
- Recent pictures of you, your children and your partner
- Change of clothing, toiletries, your children's favourite toys
- Small items of sentimental value.

After Separation

Change the locks on your doors as soon as possible. A solid core door with at least a one inch throw is best. If this is not possible, place items (stacked empty cans, noisy toys, etc.) to alert you if someone tries to enter.

Lock all windows and patio doors and place sticks or bars in the sliding tracks. Use chimes or bells to alert you when windows are tampered with. Lock basement windows and place glass jars on the inside windowsills. If an intruder tries to get in the glass will break alerting you to call 9-1-1.

If you come home to find windows or doors tampered with do no call out or enter. Call 9-1-1 from your cell phone or go to the neighbours or an open business and make the call. Do not enter the residence until the police have deemed it safe.

If your partner gets in your home, get out. If your partner is outside, stay inside and call 9-1-1.

Consider a home alarm to protect you when at home and your property when you are not there.

Ensure your home exterior is well lit and consider installing a motion sensitive lighting system.

Notify your neighbours and landlord that your partner no longer lives with you. Ask them to call the police if they see your partner at your residence.

Have someone contact at prearranged times each day to ensure you are okay. Use your code word or phrase to let them know if you need help.

Put all utilities in your name to prevent your partner from having your services cut off. Get a new calling card, change your bank PIN and replace credit cards to prevent your partner from using them. Change your internet server and the codes for your home alarm and phone message manager. Change your social media accounts or restrict access to them.

Only give out your new phone number and address to trusted people and tell them not to give the information to anyone else.

Do not put identifying information on your house, apartment mailbox or buzzer panel. Ensure your phone number is unpublished and that your voicemail message does not identify you.

If you receive harrassing or hang-up calls use your call display to determine their origin or use *57. Record the date, time and what is said for each call. Provide this information to SaskTel or the police. Do not answer calls you know are intended to harrass you. Block your partner's numbers from phoning or texting you.

DV Safety Plan

Safety at Work and in Public

Tell your employer, co-workers, and/or security about your situation. If available, provide them with a copy of your protection order and a picture of your partner. If possible, have someone at work screen your visitors and phone calls.

Devise a safety plan for going to and from work. Get a parking space close to the entrance and have someone escort you to and from your vehicle or bus. Use different routes to go to and from work. If possible, consider transferring to a different work site or branch office, altering your work hours, varying the time you leave for and from work and/or requesting shifts where you are not coming in or leaving at night or working alone.

Designate someone at work to check in on you if you do not arrive at work and have not called in. Provide that person with an alternate contact if they cannot reach you.

Change your routine. Go to a different grocery store, bank, etc. or vary your schedule.

Always park in well-lit open areas close to your destination. Get an anti-theft device and use it all the time. Lock your doors when you leave your vehicle and always check inside before you get in.

If you are being followed while driving, do not drive home or try to lose the vehicle following you. Stay on well-lit busy streets. Call for help if you have a cell phone. During the day, drive to the nearest police station and ask or honk for help. At night go to a hospital or a busy business.

Avoid walking alone, particularly at night. Stay in well lit, populated areas and know your surroundings. If you believe you are being followed, go to a busy public area, an occupied residence or an open business and ask for help. Call 9-1-1 if your safety is at risk.

When using public transportation avoid isolated bus stops and ask the driver to radio the police if your partner is waiting for you at the stop.

Never meet your partner alone. If you need to meet, do so in a public place and with another person.

Safety for your Children

Explain the situation to children at an age-appropriate level and have a safety plan for them as well.

Give your children a code word to alert them that they need to go to a safe place and find help. Practice getting out with them. Tell them their job is to get to safety and they should never try to protect you by getting between you and your partner verbally or physically.

Ensure they know how to dial 9-1-1 and which neighbours they can go to for help. Have them memorize your address. Tell them the safe room in your house to go to if they can't get out of the house.

Take your children with you when you leave. If your partner refuses to let you take them or has court ordered custody, get legal advice immediately. If you are afraid for your children's welfare, report your concerns to Child Protection.

Talk to a Lawyer and pursue a legal custody arrangement. Consult with a lawyer as soon as possible

Talk about answering the door and phone and what information they should not give to callers.

Teach them strategies to avoid or deal with abduction by a non-custodial parent. In addition to knowing their address and how to call 9-1-1, teach them how to make a collect call to you and a trusted friend.

Alert everyone you leave your children with to your situation. Tell your children's school, daycare, etc. who has permission to pick them up. Provide copies of relevant protection orders, custody papers, etc. Alert the School Resource Officer to specific concerns.



For your Consideration

You may need to take legal action at some point in the future. Begin a journal of violent and threatening incidents that includes dates, times and specific facts. Get medical attention for any injury as soon as possible. Save evidence of assaults such as pictures of injuries, damaged property, bloodied and ripped clothing, weapons used, etc. Keep your journal and evidence in a safe place. Tell a trusted person the details of the abuse in your relationship.

Witnessing and/or experiencing violence will have an impact on you and your child's emotional wellbeing. Finding appropriate professional support is essential so you and your children may safely talk about your feelings and experiences.

Your message to your partner must be that you will not tolerate mistreatment. Follow through by testifying as a witness in criminal proceedings resulting from your partner's violent actions. A consistent message and imposed intervention may be necessary for your partner's behaviour to change.

Important Numbers

Family Service Regina

Domestic Violence Unit 757-6675

Mobile Crisis Services 757-0127

Regina Police Service..... 777-6500 or 9-1-1

Sexual Assault Line 352-0434

Isabel Johnson Shelter 525-2141

Regina Transition House 569-2292

Wichihik Iskwewak Safe House (WISH) 543-0493

Legal Aid 787-8760



Family Service Regina
Healthy Families Strong Communities

© 2011