

2 Safety of you and your children is the number one priority.

Safety Planning

Think of ideas that will keep you safe and put them into action. Here are some things you can do now to make it safer for you and your children.

Safety during an abusive incident

- Be aware of all exit routes and safety spots for you and your children
- Seek support from neighbours to call the police if they hear a disturbance
- Develop a safety plan for your children; how to call 000, how to safely exit the house and how to get help
- Phone police as soon as you can
- Seek medical support for any injuries
- Keep a diary of violence incidents, including dates

Safety at work

- Inform someone at your workplace about your current situation
- Avoid taking the same route to work each day
- Develop a safety plan for arriving and leaving work

Deciding to leave

It is a common misunderstanding that it is easy for a woman to leave a violent, controlling and abusive relationship. Many women do leave and many try to leave; however leaving an abusive relationship can be a very difficult, lonely and often a very dangerous time. For some women leaving can mean they risk losing their family and community support networks, financial security, homes, hopes and dreams. Leaving a violent relationship permanently can take on average six attempts; each time women can find they become stronger, clearer and more confident. The number of barriers faced by women leaving violence can be overwhelming but it is important to remember that many women leave violent relationships and find safe and fulfilling lives for themselves and their children.

Women leave a violent relationship to become safe however, it is important to remember that this safety may not occur immediately. **Separation can be the time of greatest danger.** It is important to have a clear safety plan for you and your children before you leave.

Safety when preparing to leave

- Contact the Domestic Violence Hotline and arrange safe accommodation for you and your children
- Contact the RSPCA to arrange safe accommodation for your pets
- Seek support from a domestic violence worker and consider an Intervention Order
- Arrange your transportation in advance
- Practice travelling to your intended safe spot
- Prepare and safely store a leaving package with money, documents, clothes, spare keys
- Seek legal advice
- Program emergency services/contacts and support services into your phone
- Ask your doctor to document your injuries
- Only tell trusted people of your intended new location

A Woman's Guide to Reclaiming a Healthy Relationship. Tweed Shire Women's Service.

Women's Domestic Violence Crisis Service of Victoria 1800 015 188 (24 hrs) www.wdvcs.org.au

National Sexual Assault and Family Violence Crisis Line 1800 737 732 (24 hrs) www.1800respect.org.au

Centres Against Sexual Assault Victoria 1800 806 292 (24 hrs) www.casa.org.au

For a list of essential documents to take with you go to www.whealth.com.au/work_financial-abuse-project.html



WOMEN'S HEALTH
GOULBURN NORTH EAST

Women's Health Goulburn North East P: 03 5722 3009 E: whealth@whealth.com.au W: www.whealth.com.au

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