

## Safety Planning to Leave

**Research shows that the most dangerous time for a person in a violent relationship is when they are planning to leave or have recently left the relationship.**

If you are thinking about leaving, it is very important that you do not let the person using violence know about this. Make sure you keep your normal routines and activities so that they don't guess you are planning to leave. Most importantly, have a safety plan.

- Think about escape routes out of the house if necessary
- Plan where you could go to be safe such as friends, family or a women's refuge. Always try to take the children with you.
- Only tell people you are sure you can trust about your plans
- Arrange your transport in advance
- Keep essentials together, ready for your exit. This should include:
  - o A small amount of cash
  - o Key cards
  - o House keys
  - o Essential medications for you and your children
  - o Important papers (see below)
  - o Things of high emotional value to you
- Have these together where you can get someone else to retrieve them if you need to leave without them. Arrangements can be made for the police to accompany you back to the house to retrieve possessions after you have left. Do not risk your safety to retrieve possessions.

## Important Documents

If you are worried about getting these without arousing suspicion, you could organise to get certified copies in advance and store them somewhere safe.

- Birth certificates for yourself and your children
- Passports for yourself and your children
- Social Security documents and identification
- Bank account numbers
- Bank cards, cheque book and credit cards
- Drivers Licence
- Citizenship or immigration documentation
- School and Medical Records
- Address Book
- Marriage certificate
- Domestic Violence Protection Order
- Family Court Orders
- Lease or mortgage
- Car registration
- Phone numbers (in case you are unable to take your phone)
- Insurance Policies
- Taxation, employment and income documentation
- Things that mean a lot to you or your children

### Staying Safe if Things Escalate

- Stay as calm as possible
- Be aware of where your children are
- Where possible move to a safe area or leave the property
- Be aware of rooms where there is no exit
- Follow your safety plan
- In emergencies call the Police on '000'