

Domestic Violence: *Protect yourself*

Do what you feel will keep you and your children safe.

- ⇒ If possible, leave the home or call the police before any violence starts.
- ⇒ If you need to leave your home or workplace, know the best escape routes and practice your emergency exit plans. Teach children the escape route.
- ⇒ Plan where you can go if you need to leave. Have a list of safe locations where you and your children can go in a crisis.
- ⇒ Keep your purse/wallet easily accessible if you need to leave in a hurry.
- ⇒ Keep spare keys for your home and/or car with you or in a safe place at all times.
- ⇒ Keep copies of important documents in a safe place.
- ⇒ Keep money in a safe place for emergencies.
- ⇒ Keep a small bag of clothes packed and hidden. Keep extra clothes available in case you have to leave in a hurry.
- ⇒ If a problem happens when you're driving home, you can use a cellular telephone to call for help, honk the horn continuously, drive to a well-lit public place that is open and heavily populated, or drive directly to the local police service/OPP detachment for assistance.
- ⇒ Decide with your children on a code word that will let them know to go and get help. Let children know whose house they can run to.
- ⇒ If possible, change the locks, install an alarm system, add window bars and install outside lights.
- ⇒ If you use public transit, sit close to the front by the driver and arrange for someone to meet you at the bus stop and walk you home. Once you have arrived at your home call a relative or friend to let them know you arrived safely.



- ⇒ Tell trusted friends, neighbours or relatives about the abuse and create a code word or signal with them to call the police if you need help.
 - ⇒ Ensure your children's school and/or day care have a copy of all court orders, including restraining orders, custody and access orders and a picture of your partner.
 - ⇒ If possible, make a 'safe area' in your home that you and your children can go to when you feel threatened and cannot leave. Avoid bathrooms, kitchens, the garage, rooms containing weapons and rooms without access to the outside.
 - ⇒ If possible, change daily routines.
 - ⇒ Let children know where the cordless or cell phone is located. Teach children how to call for help and important phone numbers like 911.
 - ⇒ If your partner no longer lives in the home and you fear for your safety, tell your neighbour to phone police if they see your partner around the home.
 - ⇒ Make your boss and/or co-workers aware of the situation. Show them a photo of your partner and ask them to call the police if they see him /her around your workplace. Ask your employer and co-workers not to give out any information about you like your schedule, phone number, where you are, etc.
 - ⇒ Arrange for someone like security or a co-worker to walk you from the building when leaving work.
 - ⇒ If possible, keep a charged cell phone with you at all times.
- For further information, **contact your local police service.**

