PROTECTING CHILDREN:

Safety Planning Strategies

For

Children, Youth, & Teens

Fall 2012
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INTRODUCTION

Safety planning is an essential tool to prepare ourselves and our children for dangerous or threatening situations. The goal of safety planning is the empowerment of children. Help your children identify safety issues and build problem-solving skills. All safety plans must be realistic and age appropriate. The plan should be simple and the child must be competent to implement the steps of the plan. Assure the child that abuse is not their fault. Let your child know it is okay to talk about what is going on. Also provide opportunities for the child to just have fun. Help the child have a consistent structure and schedule to help provide normalcy.

As the caretaker or a concerned adult, if you feel a child is being abused or neglected call child protection or call the police. Remember the child’s safety always comes first.

What Is Considered Abuse and Neglect in Minnesota

Neglect:
Neglect is the failure of the child’s caregiver to:

- Supply the child with necessary food, clothing, and shelter, medical or mental health care or appropriate supervision
- Protect the child from conditions or actions that endanger the child
- Take steps to ensure that a child is educated according to the law.

Physical Abuse:
Any physical injury or threat of harm or substantial injury inflicted by a caregiver upon a child other than by accidental means. Physical abuse can range from minor bruises to severe internal injuries and death. Physical abuse does not include reasonable and moderate physical discipline of a child that does not result in an injury.

Emotional or Psychological Abuse:
Harm to the child’s psychological capacity or emotional stability evidenced by an observable and substantial impairment of the child’s functioning.

Sexual Abuse:
Sexual abuse is the subjection of a child to a criminal sexual act or threatened act by a person responsible for the child’s care or by a person who has a significant relationship to the child or is in a position of authority.

**Creating a safety plan involves identifying action steps to increase safety and reduce the possibility of harm**
GUIDING PRINCIPLES

- Put your safety plan in writing. Give each child a copy and provide copies to trusted adults.
- Post important phone numbers in a central location
  - police, fire, emergency contacts
  - crisis lines, crisis nursery, child abuse hotlines, and domestic violence programs
  - family members and children’s friends
- Maintain current photos, accurate physical descriptions, and pertinent documentation for each child.
- Keep copies of birth certificates, custody documents, social security cards, etc. together in a safe place. Store originals with a trusted friend or relative, attorney, or a safety deposit box.
- Provide schools, daycare, and police a copy of all court orders, including restraining orders and custody orders, as well as a picture of threatening parties.
- Practice how to get out of your home safely.
- Decide where you will go if you have to leave the home.
- Choose a safe location to meet your children, so you can easily find each other if it is necessary to leave the home.
- Teach your children the safest route to the planned place of safety. Practice to ensure the child knows where to go.
- If you live in an apartment, check the hallway when getting off the elevator. Be aware of doorways and other hiding areas.
- Install an outside motion activated light system.
- Devise a code word to use with children, family, and neighbors if you need to initiate the safety plan or call the police.

** Review, revise & rehearse your safety plan regularly. Threatening or abusive situations and risk factors can change quickly **
TODDLER & PRE-SCHOOL SAFETY PLANNING STRATEGIES

Safety is essential and even very young children can participate and learn strategies to stay safe. Before engaging in a conversation with your child, remember to consider what age and developmentally appropriate actions they can accomplish. It is important to explain and discuss strategies in a fun and creative manner. Use role play, skits, games, and activities. Instill confidence, not fear.

- Practice the safety plan regularly. Always be secure that your child knows what to do.
- Create a code word to activate the safety plan.
- Teach your child their full name and yours, address and phone number.
- Teach your child to use the telephone to make emergency calls (use speed dial codes).
- Teach your child to call 911 if they are afraid or hurt – leave the phone off the hook after calling.
- Practice what they should say:
  - My name is . . .
  - I need help, send the police
  - My address is . . .
  - My phone number is . . .
- Provide written instruction with schools, daycare providers, Sunday school, etc about who is and who is not allowed to pick up your child.
- Guarantee that the child always has identification with them that includes yours and alternative emergency contact information.
- Get to know the neighbors where the child is visiting. Provide emergency contact information.
- Make child familiar with neighborhood where visits with parents occur.
- Teach your child to let you know when someone is at the door before they open it.
- Do not allow your child to go anywhere without a trusted, responsible adult who is informed of the child’s situation.
- Teach your child to never go with anyone (even mom or dad) without asking you first or unless the adult knows the code word.
- When on the telephone with their parents use code word or signal for children to notify they are experiencing verbal or emotional abuse.
- Monitor phone calls (speaker phone, listen on extension).
- Listen to your child after visits - believe what they are trying to tell you.

**Trust your instincts**
SCHOOL AGE CHILDREN SAFETY PLANNING STRATEGIES

Before engaging in a conversation with your child, remember to consider what age and developmentally appropriate actions they can accomplish. It is important to explain and discuss strategies in a fun and creative manner. Use role play, skits, games, and activities. Instill confidence, not fear. Children are more likely to follow through with a plan when they have been part of creating it.

- Increase child’s telephone skill
  - Teach child how to make a collect call
  - Teach your child how to talk to an answer machine and to indicate whether they are calling to say hello, hear a reassuring voice, or to report an emergency or abuse.
  - Consider giving them a cell phone that can only be used to call you, other trusted adults and 911
- Make sure child’s school records are up-to-date
  - Your contact information with current work, home, and cell numbers
  - Alternative contact information is correct
  - Medical records including allergies, current medications, and treatments
- Obtain a copy of the school emergency policies.
- Ensure your child carries identification and contact information with them at all times.
- Provide cash for emergencies only (phone call, bus or cab fare, etc.).
- Determine the safest walking and biking routes to and from school or bus stop.
- Expand network to inform who is and is not allowed to pick up children (scouts, coaches, leader/instructors of all extra-curricular activities, parents of friends, etc.).
- Have your child use the buddy system at all times.
- Get a phone number where you can reach your child.
- Get to know the parents and caregivers of their friends.
- Call the other parents or caregivers to verify sleep over or party arrangements.
- Review Teen Safety Planning: Anti-Bullying Safety Strategies if applicable.

** Know the three W’s:

WHO they are with, WHERE they are going and WHEN they will be back **
**PRE-TEEN & TEEN SAFETY PLANNING STRATEGIES**

**Introduction:**

As your children enter their teen years, they become more independent and their lives become increasingly complex. Teens are accustomed to adults being in control of what they can and cannot do. It is important to bridge the divide by showing respect for your teen’s choices, even if you don’t agree with them. Tailor your input to address their unique needs and your concern for their well-being. An effective safety plan for teens requires your child’s input, emphasizes empowerment, and provides a holistic approach that accounts for all aspects of your teen’s life; home, school, work, activities, dating, friends, etc. Frequent evaluation and revision is important since the places your teen goes, the things they do, and the people they associate with are constantly changing. Safety planning for a teen is the creation of an individualized set of actions, strategies, and resources designed to ensure their safety at all times.

**Share your concerns, but respect their choices**
PRE-TEEN & TEEN SAFETY PLANNING

Universal Strategies:

- Review School Age Children Safety Planning Strategies. Implement as appropriate.
- Determine what safety risks exist and discuss, with your teen, how to address them. Give your teen the chance to express their feelings without interruption or judgment. Refrain from criticizing or attacking a parent or other abuser. Keep the discussion focused on your teen and encourage them to plan for their safety even if they dismiss your concern.
- Identify your teen’s support network.
  - Ask what people in the teen’s school, such as teachers, administrators, counselors, and security personnel, can help keep your student safe. Discuss if there are other trusted adults, like a coach, religious leader, family friend, or relatives that your teen feels comfortable confiding in.
  - Encourage your teen to reach out to friends for assistance.
- Stress the importance of keeping the following items readily available at all times
  - Cash and ATM Card, driver’s license and other forms of identification
  - Cell Phone, keys, and medications
  - Copies of Orders for Protection and/or Custody Orders
- Carry cell phone at all times. Keep a list of important phone numbers separate from cell phone.
- Do not go out alone, especially at night. Stay out of isolated places.
- Encourage your teen to express their emotions in a healthy way (writing a journal, doing art, sports, music, clubs, etc.).
- Ensure your teen knows how to connect to community resources.
- Encourage your teen to leave if in an uncomfortable situation, no matter what their friends are doing.
- Know the signs of common teen risks: alcohol/drug use, dating violence, bullying, and depression.
- Seek medical evaluation and counseling if you have concerns about your teen. Trust your instincts!

** Empower your teen to gain control of their life, to protect themselves from harm **
PRE-TEEN & TEEN SAFETY PLANNING

Anti-Bullying Strategies: Victims of bullying often suffer emotional and psychological stress and anxiety. They often do not know how to get help, believe no one can help, and feel that the bullying is their fault. Anti-bullying safety plans are intended to reduce feelings of powerlessness and isolation. It is important to work with develop a plan with your child. Tailor the plan to their individual circumstances, worries, and needs. This will empower your child, making them feel listened to, included, and valued.

- The most important thing is to tell someone that you are being bullied. Speak to them in private.
- Schools have a legal duty to protect their students from bullying. All school personnel are mandated to listen and take reports of bullying seriously.
- Don’t be afraid to contact the police. In an emergency call 911.
- Provide detailed information of bullying
  - Where and when you are being bullied
  - How you are being bullied
  - Who is doing the bullying
  - Who witnessed the bullying? Who stuck up for victim and who encouraged bullying behavior.
  - Evidence of bullying (damaged property, copies of emails, text/phone messages, bodily harm)
- Do not isolate yourself. Hang out in places that are public or well-supervised by staff.
- Consider changing school locker.
- Change/vary routes to and from school or bus stop.
- Always be aware of how to leave a location or situation safely in case of emergency.
- Always know where the child/teen is going, what they are doing, and when they are expected to return.
- Learn conflict resolution skills and techniques.
- Learn self-regulation skills to reduce reaction to provoking behaviors.
- Trust your instincts. Walk away from potentially violent or harassing situations.
- Avoid places where bully and their friends/family are likely to be whenever possible.

** Teach your child respect for self and others **

Lutheran Social Service of Minnesota: Families in Safe Hands

www.lssmn.org
PRE-TEEN & TEEN SAFETY PLANNING

Internet & Cell Phone Safety Strategies:

- Locate computers in a central location within the household.
- Monitor use of computers.
- Know login information and passwords of all children, youth, and teens in your care.
- Conduct regular checks of children and teen’s email and social networking sites.
- Set all online profiles as private as possible.
- Have a family discussion about internet safety and rules
  - Never enter personal information such as name, address (home or email), telephone number, or school name and location
  - Never send or post your picture
  - Never post your current whereabouts on the internet
  - Never meet someone who has contacted you over the internet
  - Chat only with friends you know in real life
  - Do not share information about others on the internet
  - Do not share passwords with anyone other than trusted caregiver
- Report any online bullying or suspect behavior or posts with trusted caregiver.
- Save and keep a record of any abusive, threatening, or harassing comments, posts, or text messages.
- Do not answer calls from unknown, blocked, or private numbers.
- Block phone numbers of unwanted contacts.
- Do not communicate with any abuser using any form of technology.
- If abuse or harassment continues, change usernames, email addresses, and cell phone number.

** Do not say or do anything online that you wouldn’t in person **
PRE-TEEN & TEEN SAFETY PLANNING

Alcohol & Drug Use: Knowing the signs of alcohol and/or drug use can be essential to starting a conversation with your teen. Remember that many of the signs of drug or alcohol use, in isolation, can be attributed to normal teen development. Multiple or an increase in warning sign behaviors could be an indication of dependency or substance abuse. The average age of first marijuana use is 14, and it is not uncommon for alcohol use to begin at age 12. The use of both substances has become common for high school students.

- Teenagers at the highest risk of developing serious alcohol and drug problems include individuals
  o with a family history of substance abuse
  o who are depressed
  o who have low self-esteem
  o who feel like they don’t fit in or are on the fringes of the mainstream

- Warning signs of teenage alcohol and drug abuse
  o Physical: fatigue, repetitive health complaints, red and glazed eyes, lasting cough
  o Emotional: personality change, mood swings, irritability, irresponsible behaviors, low self-esteem, poor judgment, depression, and general loss or lack of interest
  o Family: withdrawing from family members and activities, breaking rules, starting arguments
  o School: drop in grades, truancy, unexcused absences, decreased interest and negative attitude, discipline problems
  o Social: loss of previous friends and relationships, new friends that are not interested in family and school activities, altercations with authority, breaking the law, changes in dress (less conventional style of clothing), change in music preference

** If you have concerns, consult with a physician to rule out physical causes.
Follow up with a comprehensive evaluation by mental health professional **
PRE-TEEN & TEEN SAFETY PLANNING

Depression: Approximately 5 percent of adolescents suffer from depression at any given point in time. Teens under stress, who experience loss, who have attention, learning, conduct, or anxiety disorders are at the highest risk for depression. Depression also tends to run in families. Depressed children and adolescents have an increased risk of committing suicide. They often abuse alcohol or drugs as a way of trying to cope. The good news is that depression is a treatable illness.

Signs of depression in children and adolescents:

- Frequent sadness, tearfulness, crying
- Decreased interest in activities or inability to enjoy previous favorite activities
- Hopelessness
- Persistent boredom, low energy
- Social isolation
- Poor communication
- Low self-esteem
- Guilt
- Extreme sensitivity to rejection or failure
- Increased irritability, anger, or hostility
- Difficulty maintaining relationships
- Frequent complaints of physical illness such as headaches and stomachaches
- Frequent absences from school or poor performance in school
- Major change in eating and/or sleeping patterns
- Talk or actions of running away from home
- Self-destructive behaviors
- Expressions of suicide

**Early diagnosis and treatment are critical.**

*Depression is a real illness that requires professional help.* **
PRE-TEEN & TEEN SAFETY PLANNING

Teen Dating Safety Strategies: Girls between the ages of 16 and 24 experience the highest rate of intimate partner violence – almost triple the national average. Statistics indicate that one in three teenagers’ experience dating violence. Only 33% of these teens tell anyone about the abuse. Eighty one percent of parents or caregivers are unaware of the magnitude of teen dating violence. Teen dating violence puts the victims at a higher risk for substance abuse, eating disorders, risky sexual behavior, and continued domestic violence. A teen’s confusion about the law and a desire for confidentiality are two of the most significant barriers to seeking help and to stopping teen dating violence.

- Insist your teen double or group date in the beginning of a new relationship.
- Before your teen goes on a date, know their exact plans and what time to expect them home.
- Teach your teen to be assertive.
- Tell your teen to trust their instincts about a person or situation.
- Instruct your teen to tell a friend when they leave a party. Have the friend call home to ensure safe arrival.
- Keep a record of dates and descriptions of any violent incidents.

Early Warning Signs of Abusive Relationships
- Extreme jealously
- Controlling behavior
- Quick involvement
- Unpredictable mood swings
- Alcohol & drug use
- Explosive anger
- Isolates from family & friends
- Uses force during arguments
- Hypersensitive
- Believes in rigid gender roles
- Blames others for problems
- Cruel to animals or children
- Verbally abusive
- History of abuse with previous partners
- Threatens violence

Common Signs of Dating Violence
- Physical injuries
- Truancy or dropping out of school
- Changes in personality
- Alcohol or drug use
- Emotional outbursts
- Isolation
- Failing grades
- Indecision
- Pregnancy
PRE-TEEN & TEEN SAFETY PLANNING

Dating Bill of Rights:

I HAVE THE RIGHT TO:

- Ask for a date
- Refuse a date
- Suggest Activities
- Refuse any activities, even if my date is excited about them
- Have my own feelings and be able to express them
- Say, “I think my friend is wrong and their actions are inappropriate”
- Tell someone not to interrupt me
- Have my limits and values respected
- Tell my partner when I need affection
- Refuse affection
- Be heard
- Refuse to lend money
- Refuse sex at any time, for any reason
- Have friends and space aside from my partner

I HAVE THE RESPONSIBILITY TO:

- Determine my limits and values
- Respect the limits of others
- Communicate clearly and honestly
- Not violate the limits of others
- Ask for help when I need it
- Be considerate
- Check my actions and decisions to determine whether they are good or bad for me
- Set high goals for myself
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<td><a href="http://www.childhelp.org">www.childhelp.org</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Children’s Rights of America</td>
<td>800-559-0886</td>
<td><a href="http://www.childrensrights.org">www.childrensrights.org</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Youth Crisis Hotline</td>
<td>800-448-4663</td>
<td><a href="http://www.psychotherapis.net">www.psychotherapis.net</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>MN Child Abuse Hotline</td>
<td>651-296-8337</td>
<td><a href="http://www.reportchildabusenow.com">www.reportchildabusenow.com</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Crisis Line</td>
<td>Covenant House Nineline</td>
<td>800-999-9999</td>
<td><a href="http://www.nineline.org">www.nineline.org</a></td>
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<td></td>
<td>Kid Help</td>
<td>800-543-7283</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>United Way Minnesota</td>
<td>211</td>
<td><a href="http://www.unitedwaytwincities.org">www.unitedwaytwincities.org</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Elder Abuse</td>
<td>MN Elder Abuse Hotline</td>
<td>800-333-2433</td>
<td><a href="http://www.dhs.state.mn.use">www.dhs.state.mn.use</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Exploitation of Children</td>
<td>Cyber Tipline</td>
<td>800-843-5678</td>
<td><a href="http://www.missingkids.org">www.missingkids.org</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Family Violence</td>
<td>National Domestic Abuse Hotline</td>
<td>800-779-7233</td>
<td><a href="http://www.thehotline.org">www.thehotline.org</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LGBTQ Youth</td>
<td>The Trevor Project</td>
<td>866-488-7386</td>
<td><a href="http://www.thetrevorproject.org">www.thetrevorproject.org</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MENTAL ILLNESS</td>
<td>NAMI Helpline</td>
<td>800-950-6264</td>
<td><a href="http://www.nami.org">www.nami.org</a></td>
</tr>
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<td></td>
<td>National Institute of Mental Health Information</td>
<td>800-647-2642</td>
<td><a href="http://www.nimh.nih.org">www.nimh.nih.org</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>National Mental Health Association</td>
<td>800-969-6642</td>
<td><a href="http://www.nmha.org">www.nmha.org</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Missing/Abducted Children</td>
<td>National Center for Missing &amp; Exploited Children</td>
<td>800-843-5678</td>
<td><a href="http://www.missingkids.com">www.missingkids.com</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Operation Lookout-National Center for missing youth</td>
<td>800-566-5688</td>
<td><a href="http://www.operationlookout.org">www.operationlookout.org</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Jacob Wetterling resource center</td>
<td>800-325-0470</td>
<td><a href="http://www.jwrc.org">www.jwrc.org</a></td>
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<tr>
<td>Type of Crisis</td>
<td>Organization</td>
<td>Phone</td>
<td>Website</td>
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<tr>
<td>Rape/Incest</td>
<td>Rape Abuse and Incest National Network (RAINN)</td>
<td>800-656-4673</td>
<td><a href="http://www.rainn.org">www.rainn.org</a></td>
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<td>Ext. 1</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Rape and Sexual Abuse Center Hotline</td>
<td>612-374-9077</td>
<td><a href="http://www.neighborhoodinvolves.org">www.neighborhoodinvolves.org</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Stop It Now!</td>
<td>888-773-8368</td>
<td><a href="http://www.stopitnow.org/mn">www.stopitnow.org/mn</a></td>
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<tr>
<td>Respite for Caregivers</td>
<td>National Respite Locator Service</td>
<td>800-677-1116</td>
<td><a href="http://www.archrespite.org">www.archrespite.org</a></td>
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<tr>
<td>Runaways/Youth in Trouble</td>
<td>Boys Town</td>
<td>800-448-3000</td>
<td><a href="http://www.boystown.org">www.boystown.org</a></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Covenant House Hotline</td>
<td>800-999-9999</td>
<td><a href="http://www.covenanthouse.org">www.covenanthouse.org</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>National Referral Network for Kids in Crisis</td>
<td>800-543-7283</td>
<td><a href="http://www.kidsgrowth.com">www.kidsgrowth.com</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>National Runaway Switchboard</td>
<td>800-621-4000</td>
<td><a href="http://www.1800runaway.org">www.1800runaway.org</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>National Youth Crisis Hotline</td>
<td>800-448-4663</td>
<td><a href="http://www.psychotherapist.org">www.psychotherapist.org</a></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>The Bridge for Youth</td>
<td>612-377-8800</td>
<td><a href="http://www.bridgeforyouth.org">www.bridgeforyouth.org</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Self-Abuse</td>
<td>SAFE (Self Abuse Finally Ends)</td>
<td>800-366-8288</td>
<td><a href="http://www.selfinjury.com">www.selfinjury.com</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Suicide</td>
<td>National Suicide Prevention Lifeline</td>
<td>800-273-8255</td>
<td><a href="http://www.suicidepreventionlifeline.org">www.suicidepreventionlifeline.org</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teen Dating Violence</td>
<td>Break the Cycle</td>
<td>800-988-8336</td>
<td><a href="http://www.breakthecycle.org">www.breakthecycle.org</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Teen Dating Abuse Hotline</td>
<td>866-331-9474</td>
<td><a href="http://www.loveisrespect.org">www.loveisrespect.org</a></td>
</tr>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>866-331-9474 TTY</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Violence</td>
<td>National Victim Center</td>
<td>800-394-2255</td>
<td><a href="http://www.victimsofcrime.org">www.victimsofcrime.org</a></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Safety Plans for Children & Young People

*The child needs to rehearse safety plan with you as part of safety planning intervention.

**Child’s Plan**

This is my Safety Plan ______________________________ (name of child)
and ______________________________ (caretaker)

If there are any angry actions or words in my house – I can’t stop it
This is what I can do:

1. **GET OUT OF THE WAY**

2. **Find a safe place**
   In my house this is a safe place ______________________________

3. **If it’s SAFE phone the Police**
   The number is ______________________________
   I will say: my name ______________________________
   My home address ______________________________
   What’s happening ______________________________
   (Like, “Someone is hurting my mom”)

4. **I can also get help from** ______________________________
   (maybe a neighbor or friend nearby)

5. **Later I can talk with** ______________________________ about what happened

6. **If I am hurt I will tell** ______________________________

7. **All feelings are okay. It’s okay to have these feelings**
   ______________________________
   ______________________________
   ______________________________
   ______________________________
**Child’s Plan**

The people that know about this plan are:

| Me (draw a picture) | Caregiver (draw a picture) |

Others (draw a picture) i.e. social worker, teacher, neighbor

8. **Signatures**

Child’s ________________________________________________________________

Caregiver’s ___________________________________________________________

Date ______________________________
Young Person’s Plan

This plan records how to keep (name) ___________________________________________ safe.

You have a right to be safe and cared for in a safe place        agree
Violent words and actions at home are not your fault        agree
You cannot stop the violence        agree

To protect yourself you can break rules, like: say no, shout, kick and scream if you need help, also:

________________________________________________________________________

1. The best thing you can do when there is violence at home is get out of the way        agree

To be safe I can do things:
Get out of the room where the violence is occurring
The room/place in my house where I feel safe is

_____________________________________________________________________

There is a lock on the door        yes        no

2. The nearest telephone is

________________________________________________________________________

If it is safe I can telephone 911, ask for the police. I will need to say:
My name ____________________________
My home address _______________________________________________________

What’s happening ____________________________

3. People I can trust in an emergency are: ____________________________

_____________________________________________________________________

A code word so they know I need help is ____________________________

4. My brothers and sisters have a safety plan too, that I know        agree
   They know my safety plan        yes        no

Lutheran Social Service of Minnesota: Families in Safe Hands
www.lssmn.org
**Young Person’s Plan**

5. If we leave the house I would like to go to

____________________________________________________________________________________

I have a bag of things that are important to me at (safe relative/friend’s house)

____________________________________________________________________________________


6. If I am hurt I will tell (including telephone numbers)

____________________________________________________________________________________

If my mom is hurt I will tell (including telephone numbers)

____________________________________________________________________________________


7. I can talk about how I feel with (including telephone numbers)

____________________________________________________________________________________

The people who know this plan are:

Caregiver __________________________________________________________

Safe relative/friend ________________________________________________

Teacher __________________________________________________________

Social Worker _____________________________________________________

Others ____________________________________________________________

I can’t stop the violence but I can do these things to keep safe __________ agree

Signatures

Child’s ____________________________ Caregiver’s ____________________________

Date ________________________________
PLANNING YOUR CHILD’S SAFETY

☐ The first step of your plan is for your child to get out of the room where the violence is happening. Help your child pick a safe room/place in the house, preferably with a lock on the door and a phone.

☐ Emphasize the importance of being safe and that it is not their responsibility to make sure anyone else is safe.

☐ Teach them to call 911 out of sight and quietly away from the violence so that they are not at risk of harm. Talk to them about using a cell phone or a neighbor’s phone if they can’t use the one in your house. If you have a cell phone, teach them to use it.

☐ Make sure your child knows their full name and address.

☐ Practice with your child to help them know what to say when they call for help.

For Example

Teach your child to call Dial 911

The operator answers and says: “911 how may I help you”

Your child says: “My name is__________________________________________________________,”

“I am _______ years old.”

“I need help. Send the police. Someone is hurting my mom.”

“My address is__________________________________________________________________.”

“Our phone number is________________________________________________________.”

☐ When they are done talking with the operator, it is important for them to leave the phone off the hook. The police may call the number if they hang up which could create a dangerous situation for you and your child/children.

☐ Find a safe place to meet your child, out of the home after the situation is safe for you and for them (so you can easily find each other).

☐ Teach your child/children the safest route to the planned place of safety for the
Staying Safe at School:

The safest way for me to get to and from school is:

________________________________________________________________________

If I need to leave school in an emergency, I can get home safely by:

________________________________________________________________________

I can make sure that a friend can walk with me between classes. I will ask:

________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________

I will eat lunch and spend free periods in an area where there are school staff or faculty nearby. These are some areas on campus where I feel safe:

________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________

Staying Safe at Home:

I can tell this family member about what is going on in my relationship:

________________________________________________________________________

There may be times when no one else is home. During those times, I can have people stay with me. I will ask:

________________________________________________________________________

The safest way for me to leave my house in an emergency is:

________________________________________________________________________

If I have to leave in an emergency, I should try to go to a place that is public, safe and unknown by my abuser. I could go here:

________________________________________________________________________

and/or here: __________________________

I will use a code word so I can alert my family, friends, and neighbors to call for help without my abuser knowing about it. My code word is:

________________________________________________________________________
Staying Safe Emotionally:

My abuser often tries to make me feel bad about myself by saying or doing this:

_____________________________________________________________________________________

_____________________________________________________________________________________

When he/she does this, I will think of these things I like about myself:

_____________________________________________________________________________________

_____________________________________________________________________________________

and

_____________________________________________________________________________________

_____________________________________________________________________________________

I will do things I enjoy, like:

_____________________________________________________________________________________

_____________________________________________________________________________________

and

_____________________________________________________________________________________

_____________________________________________________________________________________

I will join clubs or organizations that interest me, like:

_____________________________________________________________________________________

_____________________________________________________________________________________

Getting Help in Your Community:

For emergencies: 911

Break the Cycle: 888.988.TEEN or www.thesafespace.org

National Teen Dating Violence Hotline: 866.331.9474

Local police station:

Name: __________________________

Phone #: ________________________

Name: __________________________

Phone #: ________________________

Local domestic violence organization:

Name: __________________________

Phone #: ________________________

Address: _________________________

Local free legal assistance:

Name: __________________________

Phone #: ________________________

Address: _________________________

Nearest youth shelter:

Name: __________________________

Phone #: ________________________

Address: _________________________

During an emergency, I could call the following friends or family members at any time of day or night:

Name: __________________________

Phone #: ________________________

Name: __________________________

Phone #: ________________________

Name: __________________________

Phone #: ________________________
**MY SAFETY WORKBOOK - PAGE 3**

**These are things I can do to help keep myself safe everyday:**

- I will carry my cell phone and important telephone numbers with me at all times.
- I will keep in touch with someone I trust about where I am or what I am doing.
- I will stay out of isolated places and try to never walk around alone.
- I will avoid places where my abuser or his/her friends and family are likely to be.
- I will keep the doors and windows locked when I am at home, especially if I am alone.
- I will avoid speaking to my abuser. If it is unavoidable, I will make sure there are people around in case the situation becomes dangerous.
- I will call 911 if I feel my safety is at risk.
- I can look into getting a protective order so that I’ll have legal support in keeping my abuser away.
- I will remember that the abuse is not my fault and that I deserve a safe and healthy relationship.

**These are things I can do to help keep myself safe in my social life:**

- I will ask my friends to keep their cell phones with them while they are with me in case we get separated and I need help.
- If possible, I will go to different malls, banks, grocery stores, movie theaters, etc. than the ones my abuser goes to or knows about.
- I will not go out alone, especially at night.
- No matter where I go, I will be aware of how to leave safely in case of an emergency.
- I will leave if I feel uncomfortable in a situation, no matter what my friends are doing.
- I will spend time with people who make me feel safe, supported and good about myself.

**These are things I can do to stay safe online and with my cell phone:**

- I will not say or do anything online that I wouldn’t in person.
- I will set all my online profiles to be as private as they can be.
- I will save and keep track of any abusive, threatening or harassing comments, posts, or texts.
- I will never give my password to anyone other than my parents or guardians.
- If the abuse and harassment does not stop, I will change my usernames, email addresses, and/or cell phone number.
- I will not answer calls from unknown, blocked or private numbers.
- I can see if my phone company can block my abuser’s phone number from calling my phone.
- I will not communicate with my abuser using any type of technology if unnecessary, since any form of communication can be recorded and possibly used against me in the future.
REFERENCES

American Academy of Child & Adolescent Psychiatry
Angelfire.com
Beatbullying.org
Break the Cycle
Jacob Wetterling Resource Center
Minnesota Department of Health
Minnesota Department of Human Services
National Association of Students Against Violence Everywhere
Safety Planning with Teens
Teen Dating Violence Technical Assistance Center
The Trevor Project
United Way Minnesota
Youth Violence Project
Lutheran Social Service of Minnesota

Families in Safe Hands

Contact information:

Raising Relative’s Children

Family Support Specialist, Kris LaFleur - 612-879-5307
Latino Family Support Specialist, Lorena Astudillo - 612-879-5290
Kinship Navigator Warmline, Janet Salo – 1-877-917-4640 (toll free)

Restorative Parenting Programs

Parent Educator, Sandra Lester, 612-879-5211
Latino Family Support Specialist, Lorena Astudillo - 612-879-5290

LSS Website

www.lssmn.org

Email Addresses

Kristine.lafleur@lssmn.org
Lorena.Astudillo@lssmn.org
Janet.Salo@lssmn.org
Sandra.lester@lssmn.org
Connie.booth@lssmn.org