

checklist

what you need to take when you leave

- Identification
- Driver's license, car title & registration
- Children's birth certificates
- Your birth and marriage certificates
- Money, credit cards, ATM card, telephone calling card
- Personal Protection Order
- Lease, rental agreement, house deed
- Checkbooks, bank books, & withdrawal slips
- Health insurance or medical card
- Insurance papers
- House & car keys
- Medications or prescriptions
- Small belongings you can sell if needed
- Address book
- Pictures
- Medical records for all family members
- Social security card, for self & children
- Welfare identification
- School records
- Work permits
- Green card/immigration papers
- Passport, for self & children
- Divorce papers, including custody order
- Jewelry
- Children's small toys
- Pets
- Other _____

Any one can be a victim of domestic violence. Anyone can be abused, regardless of age, gender, ethnic group, nationality, religion, sexual orientation/gender identity, income level, job skills or level of formal education.

For help or information, contact:

YWCA of Kalamazoo
353 E. Michigan Avenue
Kalamazoo, MI 49007
(269) 385-2869
www.ywcakalamazoo.org

If you need emergency assistance, please call 911.

For help developing a safety plan, please call (269) 385-2869.

This brochure has been adapted with permission from the YWCA of Greater Cincinnati, Ohio. We thank them for their support.

domestic violence safety plan

If you have been physically abused by your partner, or are afraid and controlled by your partner's intimidating behavior, the information and suggestions in this brochure can help you in making a safety plan.

**eliminating racism
empowering women**

ywca

kalamazoo

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safety during an explosive incident

- If an argument seems unavoidable, try to get to a room or area with an exit and not in the bathroom, kitchen or anywhere near potential weapons.
- Practice how to get out of your home safely. Identify which doors, windows, elevator or stairs would be best.
- Have a packed bag ready and keep it in a secret but accessible place so you can leave quickly.
- Identify a neighbor you can tell about the violence and ask them to call the police if they hear a disturbance coming from your home.
- Come up with a code word to use with your children, family, friends and neighbors when you need them to call the police.
- Decide, plan and tell your children and other supporters where you will go if you have to leave home (even if you don't think you will need to).

safety when preparing to leave

- Determine who will let you stay with them or lend you some money.
- Always try to take your children with you or make arrangements to leave them with someone safe.
- Leave money, extra keys, copies of important documents and clothes with someone you trust.
- Open a savings account in your own name to establish or increase your financial independence.
- Keep the shelter numbers close by and keep change or a calling card with you at all times.
- Review your safety plan with a domestic violence advocate to plan the safest way to leave your abuser.

safety on the job and in public

- At work, decide who to tell about your situation. This should include office or building security. Give the human resource department a picture of your abuser if possible.
- Arrange to have someone screen your telephone calls, if possible.
- Come up with a safety plan for when you leave work. Have someone escort you to your car, bus or train. Use a variety of routes to go home if possible. Think about what you would do if something happened while going home.

safety with a personal protection order

- If criminal charges are filed against your abuser, be sure to let the police and court know that you want a protection order.
- You may qualify to get a personal protection order at the family court at 1400 Gull Road, Kalamazoo, MI 49007.
- Protection orders don't last forever—make sure you know when yours expires.
- Keep your protection order with you at all times. Leave extra copies at work, with a friend, in your car, etc.
- Call the police if your abuser breaks the personal protection order.
- Think of other ways to keep safe if the police do not respond right away.
- Inform family, friends and neighbors that you have a personal protection order in effect.
- Be especially careful if you must go to places where your abuser might go.

safety in your home

- Tell neighbors and landlord that your partner no longer lives with you and that they should call police if they see your abuser near your home.
- Practice a safety plan with your children for when you are not with them.
- Let your children's school or day care know who has permission to pick up your children. Give school authorities a copy of your personal protection order.
- Change/add locks on your doors and windows as soon as possible.
- Change your telephone number.

your safety and emotional health

- If you are thinking of returning to a potentially abusive situation, discuss an alternative plan with someone you trust.
- If you have to communicate with your abuser, determine the safest way to do so.
- Have positive thoughts about yourself and be assertive with others about your needs.
- Plan to attend a support group for at least two weeks to gain support from others and learn more about yourself and the relationship.
- Decide who you can call freely and openly to give you the support you need.
- Read articles, books and poetry to help you feel stronger.

ALWAYS REMEMBER — you have the right to feel safe in your relationship. Abuse is not your fault and you are not alone.

The YWCA of Kalamazoo can help.