**DFV Safety planning notes:**

I do safety planning with Children from 5 years to 17 years of age in my counselling sessions **only if the child or youth brings it up in their sessions.**

This is a common theme with children who have experienced DFV, that children become scared of being kidnapped, taken or fear of never seeing their mother/carer again.

Some safety planning ideas.

* Mother/Carer can safety plan with their children’s/youth school if they feel okay and safe to do this (DFV Counsellor can do this on behalf of the carer if they consent to this)
* Mother/Carer can speak to their children’s/youth school about their current family DFV situation or current family situation (Good idea to speak to a trusted and safe teacher that is understanding of DFV )
* Mother/Carer can provide school with a copy of the DVO
* Mother stated to school that no one is allowed to check the children out of school without her permission first.
* School Chaplain is aware of the family’s situation and regularly check in on the children’s emotional wellbeing.
* **If PUV is still at home**-there must be extra careful not to take any brochures, stickers or business cards or item branding with any DFV information or CFW info.

In the counselling room when the children bring it up, I assist the children by gently reminding them in their session, that I have already spoken to their mother/care who has spoken to the school about a plan to keep them safe and that the school teachers are there to protect them too.

I also safety plan with the children if they are fearful that PUV turns up at their home, similar to stranger danger safety planning that happens at all primary schools;

* I ask them if they know what the emergency number to call **is 000** (not 911)
* Do they know their mother or carers mobile number by memory? And we practise ways in the session to remember it so if in an emergency they know
* They all need to go straight to their mother if they see PUV
* I ask “What is the safest room in the house with a lock at the door?” where they can go with mother/care and lock themselves in without others coming into the room (every child/youth I have asked knows this room in their house)

Sometimes I can contact the School Chaplain or School Guidance Officer to check in with the families too.

Hope this is helpful

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[](https://centreforwomen.org.au/her-platform)

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We acknowledge the traditional owners of country throughout Australia and their continuing connection to land, sea and community. We also pay sincere respect to our Elders both past and present.