

Safety Planning



What is safety planning and how might you be involved?

A safety plan is put in place to support women, keep them safe and assist them to gain a sense of control over their own situation. Workers in the disability sector may be involved in the development and implementation of the safety plan. This fact sheet provides a snapshot of the three main stages of safety planning and what they may mean for a disability worker. **These are general examples only - A safety plan should be developed by a person with appropriate skills and experience to do so and will look different depending on the level of risk.**

Safety when living with a perpetrator of DFV

This means having plans in place for women to enact to keep themselves and their children safe if DFV occurs. This could include:

For the woman:



Determining and moving to safe part of the house or an exit route to the street if DFV occurs.



How to safely use electronic devices.



Keeping records about the types of DFV being perpetrated. Photographing their own injuries or consulting a medical professional to document injuries.

For the disability worker:



Support women to work out where this is, when and how to get there easily with access to a phone to contact 000.



Determine with women how you will communicate safely so that the perpetrator does not know that they are seeking DFV support.



Keep records about DFV and encourage woman to do so. For example, recording information about types of DFV, taking photos of damage to property, or taking screen shots of abusive messages.



TIP

Be aware of perpetrators of violence attempts to manipulate you for information about the woman and children.



TIP

Women are most at risk of lethality or serious harm during and/or immediately after separation.

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Safety when preparing to leave

This means having plans in place for women to enact to themselves and their children safe as they are preparing to leave the relationship. This could include:

For the woman:



Letting the important, trusted people in their life know what is happening. This is likely to include disability support workers.



Packing some personal items and important documentation ready to depart quickly if necessary.



Working out the safest time to leave. This could be when perpetrators are at work or away from the victim/victim's home.

For the disability worker:



Being very careful to maintain the confidentiality of the plan to leave. Not discussing the plans inappropriately with perpetrators of violence or mentioning in front of children.



Being careful not to ask questions or bring to the perpetrator's attention packed clothing or personal items ready for transportation.



Using a planned outing or appointment to assist women to move out of the house and to a place of safety.

Safety after separation

This means having plans in place for women to enact to keep themselves and their children safe after they have left the relationship. This could include:

For the woman:



Accessing legal services for advice and support to implement domestic violence orders.



Informing family, friends and neighbours of what is happening and asking them to contact the police if DFV occurs.



Updating relevant services about risks posed by perpetrators of DFV or changes in circumstances. For example, phone and postal services, schools or child-care centres.

For the disability worker:



Assisting women to access DFV resources and information. Linking women to communication or advocacy support.



Being very careful of protecting the privacy of women. Perpetrators may try to find victims, through you. Do not allow yourself to be followed or manipulated by perpetrators.



Supporting women's communication with relevant services. Implementing organisational policies to keep women safe. Not engaging with perpetrators about women, their supports or contact details.