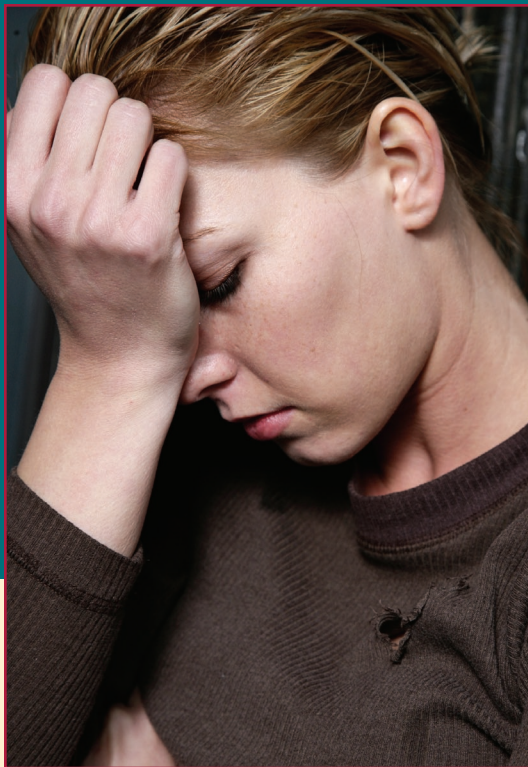


Leaving Abuse: TIPS FOR YOUR SAFETY



Public Legal Education
and Information Service
of New Brunswick

Did you know... leaving an abusive relationship is not always the end of the violence and abusive behaviours? In fact, Statistics Canada reports that many victims of family violence experience greater violence from the abuser when they separate. This is particularly the case for women. Because separation from a controlling person is a time of heightened risk, it is a good idea to take precautions for your safety when you do leave. One way to protect yourself is to prepare home and community safety plans for you and your children. Don't forget to make a safety plan for the workplace. Although you may have other protections, such as peace bonds and restraining orders, remember that these legal measures are not a guarantee of safety. Do not let a peace bond or a restraining order give you a false sense of security. Although most people obey such orders, some do not, so be sure to have a safety plan even with a protection order.

After you leave consider these personal safety tips:

Safety at home and in your community...

- Get an unlisted phone number
- If possible carry a cell phone for emergencies
- Make sure your windows and doors are locked, consider the use of deadbolts
- Use security alarms or other security features if possible
- If travelling in a car, change your travel route to and from work often
- Keep emergency numbers at your disposal
- Make sure others are informed of your situation and if possible, create a signal to let them know if you are in danger
- Have an escape route mapped out in case you need it
- Try to stay away from places that the abuser frequents
- Find out how you can safe guard your personal information on the Internet when you are sending emails, searching for information or chatting on-line
- If children are involved teach them a safety plan, emphasize that they are not responsible for protecting you, and make sure they know emergency numbers
- Contact your local transition house for information and help on developing safety plans

Safety at work...

- Inform your employer, security, supervisor or a person of your choice of your situation
- Save any threatening emails or voicemail messages
- Park close to the entrance of your building, and talk with security, the police, or a manager if you fear an assault at work
- Have your calls screened, transfer harassing calls to security, or remove your name and number from automated phone directories
- Identify an emergency contact person if the employer is unable to contact you
- Make sure your employer is aware of court orders such as custody orders, peace bonds or restraining orders that forbid the harasser from being near or contacting you at your workplace
- Ask security or other employees to escort you to and from your car or public transportation

(Adapted with permission of the Family Violence and the Workplace Toolkit)

You can gather more information on safety plans by searching the Internet.

- Check out Shelter Net's Internet and Email Safety Tips at <http://www.shelternet.ca/en/women/internet-safety/>
- For information on safety planning for Aboriginal women and children, see the Healing Journey website at www.thehealingjourney.ca

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