## **PLANNING YOUR SAFETY DURING A VIOLENT INCIDENT**

#  • Make and practice a plan to get out of the home or other place(s) where violence might  occur • Develop some excuses to leave the home i.e. need groceries, visiting a friend, etc. • Know what doors, windows, elevators, stairwells are available for use• Know the quickest route out of your home• Determine which rooms are dangerous (kitchen has knives) and move out of them • During an incident, know which rooms are safer and offer an escape route

# • Keep a phone near you at all times • Get extension phones• Get a cell phone• Keep your keys and purse in a place that you can access quickly • Keep extra car keys in an accessible place • Back your car into the driveway and make sure there is always gas in it • Tell neighbors/co-worker/teacher or some person you trust to call the police if they think you are at risk• Develop a visual code or verbal code to let others know to call the police• Keep clothes, money, medications or other things you may need in an emergency at a friend or family member’s home• Ask a friend or neighbor for a key to their home in case of emergency• Memorize or keep the number of a 24-hour crisis line or shelter• If an assault is occurring, curl up in a ball and cover your head neck and ears • Take a self-defense course

## **PLANNING YOUR SAFETY FOR LEAVING**

# • Do not tell the abuser when you are leaving or where you are going

# • Contact a shelter or 24-hour line for women to discuss in detail how to leave safely and what resources are available to you

#  • Stay at a shelter or have a shelter help you relocate to another city if that feels safer

#  • Request police come to your home when you are leaving

#  • If you have to leave quickly, you can ask for a police escort back to your home to pick-up your personal items

#  • Get a safety deposit box/and /or a post office box

#  • Use a pay phone to make calls that you do not want the abuser to know about

#  • Open up a bank account in a bank the abuser does not know about and arrange for statements to be picked up or sent to a friend’s home

#  • Use a trusted friend or family member’s address for any mail

#  • Clear your phone of the last number you called to avoid the abuser utilizing redial

#  • If you have a pet that you can’t take with you, contact the Toronto Humane Society

# ITEMS YOU MAY WANT TO TAKE WITH YOU WHEN YOU LEAVE

# • Personal identification including: social insurance card, driver’s licence and registration, OHIP card, passports and any immigration papers

#  • Children’s birth certificates and OHIP cards

#  • School and medical/vaccination records

#  • Necessary medications and medical supplies for self and children

#  • Money

# • Chequebooks, credit cards and ATM cards

#  • Bank books and statements

# • Keys for home, storage, car, work, safety deposit box etc.

# • Copies of all court orders: restraining orders, peace bonds, bail papers, custody and access agreements, divorce papers, etc.

#  • Lease/rental agreements, deeds, mortgage agreement, insurance policies and other papers concerning assets • Small, valuable objects such as jewellery

# • Children’s favourite toys and blankets

# • Sentimental items

# • Address book with all telephone and other numbers you may need

#  • Appointment book

#  • Pictures or other evidence of the abuse

## **PLANNING YOUR SAFETY IN THE HOME**

• Keep bushes and trees that can be used to hide in trimmed back

 • Ask your telephone service provider what is available for your safety (call block, call privacy, unlisted number, answering service, etc.

 • Make sure your phone is connected before moving into a new place

• Be aware of all entrances and exits to your home or building

 • Change your locks and make sure you have a good dead bolt

 • Make sure all windows are locked and that sliding glass doors are blocked with a dowel. There are locks available for sliding glass doors that prevent them from being lifted out of the doorframe. • Install outdoor lights (sensor)

 • Get a security system

 • Purchase a ladder to use from second story windows (also good in case of fire)

 • Ask the officer in charge of your case if you can have a Special Address System (this flags your address for 911 operators)

 • Create an emergency room in your home (put a lock on a bedroom door or bathroom and have a phone in that room, prop a chair under the door handle)

 • Get a dog

• Inform landlord, neighbor, superintendent that the abuser is not residing there and if they see the abuser to call you or the police

 • Install a peephole so that you can see who is at your door

• Make sure your street address is clearly visible and well lit for emergency calls

• Always have your home and car keys in your hand when you are entering your home or leaving

 • If you come home and something is out of the ordinary i.e. a door is ajar, do not go in. Go to a neighbor’s or a payphone and call the police

 • Be very cautious about who you give a new address or phone number to

 • If you live in an apartment building, do not put your name on the residence listing in the lobby

 • If you have an assigned parking space, ask if you can use another spot

 • Be very careful about what you throw out in the garbage (get a shredder)

• If you have a computer online service and the abuser knows your e-mail address, change it and be careful of who you give it to