## **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