



SAFETY PLANNING

Domestic abuse, also referred to as "domestic violence," "intimate partner violence," or "family violence," is a pattern of abusive behavior in any relationship that is used by one person to gain or maintain power and control over another person through fear and intimidation, often including the threat or use of violence.

ABUSE CAN TAKE MANY FORMS INCLUDING PHYSICAL, SEXUAL, EMOTIONAL, PSYCHOLOGICAL, FINANCIAL, SPIRITUAL, AND STALKING.

Leaving an abusive situation can be the most dangerous time for a survivor. In fact, firearms present in a home increase a survivor's lethality rate by 500%.

Remember, you are not alone, the abuse is not your fault, and no one deserves to be in an abusive relationship.

THE TELL-TALE SIGNS OF AN ABUSIVE RELATIONSHIP

There are many signs of an abusive relationship. The most telling sign is fear of your partner.

DOES YOUR PARTNER

- Intimidate?
- Manipulate?
- Humiliate?
- Isolate?
- Frighten?
- Terrorize?
- Coerce?
- Threaten?
- Blame?
- Hurt, injure and/or cause bruising?
- Control your money?

DO YOU

- Have constant fear of your partner?
- Feel helplessness or emotionless?
- Believe you deserve to be mistreated?
- Believe the abuse is your fault?
- Feel humiliated?
- Feel embarrassed to disclose to your friends/family?
- Feel your partner blames you for their own abusive behavior?
- Feel your partner's temper is unpredictable?
- Feel your partner always tries to control you?

CREATING A SAFETY PLAN

A safety plan is a personalized and practical strategy to leave an abusive situation while maintaining your safety and wellbeing. This includes a plan of action, specific to you and your needs, that will help to increase your safety in your everyday life (e.g. school, home, work, etc.).

It is advised that you do not share your plan for leaving with your abuser. It is important to note it is not necessary to have documentation when seeking emergency housing through the Houston Area Women's Center.

Friends and family are encouraged to be informed and recognize the signs of abuse. Listen empathetically when a survivor shares their story. Respond by accepting and validating the survivor (ex. *I believe you, what can I do to support you?*). Refer them to professional resources that can help survivors find safety.

For a personalized safety plan which considers your unique circumstances, contact HAWC through our 24-hour Hotline at 713-528-2121, or live chat through [hawc.org](https://www.hawc.org)



If you are in immediate danger, call, or text 911.

Learn more about Safety Planning