

How you can help others

Intimate Partner Violence during COVID-19

JFS is proud to partner with HAVEN, an important resource for our community. They have provided some ways you can be helpful to those you might know or suspect are in a violent relationship during this time.

- Reach out to loved ones. Due to the increased isolation, it is important to check on loved ones especially if you suspect domestic violence. Less communication and participation in social media could be a warning sign.
- Develop code words with survivors and plan for what it means (call them, call the police, etc.)
- Think about whether or not you could take a survivor into your home if things get lethal. Many shelters are full and unable to take in additional residents.
- Financial strain does not cause domestic violence, but it can correlate with it. If an abuser lost a job it is likely that they will use power and control tactics in an attempt to regain control. Similarly, abusers are displaying more lethal tendencies due to the pandemic and feeling a loss of control in their lives.
- People are still able to get PPOs online, HAVEN's Social Action team can help with PPOs and safety plans. To access any of HAVEN's services all they have to do is contact their Crisis and Support Line.

24-HR CRISIS & SUPPORT

248-334-1274

TOLL-FREE CRISIS LINE

877-922-1274

TTY LINE

248-972-2540

haven-oakland.org

How to help yourself

SAFETY PLANNING - COVID19

A GUIDE FOR SURVIVORS OF DOMESTIC VIOLENCE

1. BUDDY SYSTEM CODE WORD

Identify at least two people that you can contact with a "code word" to let them know if you are in trouble. Plan in advance what they should do if you send them the code word.

2. "SAFEST ROOM"

If there is an argument, identify an area of the home you can move to where there are no weapons and there are ways for you to leave the house, apartment, or building, such as a door or window to exit the house/apartment.

For some survivors, especially those quarantined at home with an abuser during coronavirus, no room may feel safe, so we call it the "safest rooms". If you can at least identify the lowest risk areas, you may be able to reduce harm.

3. PLANNING WITH CHILDREN

CODE WORDS: If you have children, decide how to communicate urgency with them. For example, one survivor would open her arms and her daughter knew that meant to come running to her for safety. Some survivors create a "code word" with their children that means they should go to the "safest room" in the home that you have already decided upon.

EMERGENCY NUMBERS: If for some reason you are not able to make emergency calls, give your children the safety number/s, if they are old enough.

4. NOTIFY THE POLICE BEFORE AN EMERGENCY

Ahead of time, you can notify your local police station of your concerns. Let them know the history and your concern of being in isolation due to coronavirus. It may be useful to speak with the Domestic Violence officer.

5. EXIT PLAN

In case you have to flee, create an exit plan ahead of time with someone who could support this need. Is there a trusted friend/relative who you can stay with, if needed?

6. SUPPLIES, FOOD & MEDICATION

Check your supplies and food. If you need food and do not have the money, check your local pantry, temple/church/mosque, etc., or other community organizations.

Remember to keep your medication in the safest, easily accessible location in case of emergency.

7. EMERGENCY BAG

Pack a bag with an extra set of keys, clothes for you and your children, a pay-as-you-go cellphone, medications, copies of important documents, etc.

8. IMPORTANT DOCUMENTS

Make copies or take pictures of your important documents for yourself and send them to a trusted friend or relative. (IDs, social security cards, immigration documents, birth certificates, health insurance information, and Orders of Protection) Be mindful of sending anything via phone or computer. Please use whatever method is safest for you.

9. SEEKING SOCIAL SUPPORT

With social distancing and quarantining, survivors can feel even more isolated, and abusers may use further isolation as a power and control tactic.

Identify trusted friends, relatives or online support groups where you can still connect virtually. If you have a friend who may be experiencing abuse, be sure to reach out to them even more during this time.

10. CREATE A "PEACEFUL SPACE"

If you cannot leave your home, try to create a "peaceful space" for yourself in your home (if that is safe for you). You can draw pictures of a more peaceful place and put them on a wall to help you take an emotional break to visualize a more peaceful place. This is also an activity you can do with your children. You can also write positive affirmations and put them up on the wall to remind yourself of your worth.

11. HOLDING ONTO YOUR PLAN

Consider keeping a list of your safety plan in your phone or wherever might be safe for you. Please consider what is safest for you.

If you choose to write your plan somewhere, consider listing only key words that help you remember the plan, but that would not be clear to your abuser. If this is not safe, try to memorize your plan, focusing on memorizing at least one key emergency number on your list of resources.

FOR MORE INFORMATION & RESOURCES, PLEASE VISIT

sanctuaryforfamilies.org/safety-planning-covid19

 Sanctuary for Families