

Leaving a violent relationship

After living with domestic violence your self esteem and self-confidence may be low. Women may leave and return a number of times before they are able to leave permanently.

It is important to realise that leaving does not always mean you will immediately become safe. In fact you may be in the greatest danger from your partner's abuse at the time of separation. Any attempt to leave should be planned with the safety of you and your children in mind.

It is important to remember that whilst the challenges may seem overwhelming, many women have been able to leave abusive relationships and go on to have safe, healthy, happy fulfilling lives for themselves and their children.



For many women leaving a relationship does not mean the end to the violence and abuse. The violence may escalate and can take on different forms.

It is important to understand that whilst you can take steps to avoid violence, you cannot stop the violence. The only person who can do that is the person who is violent.

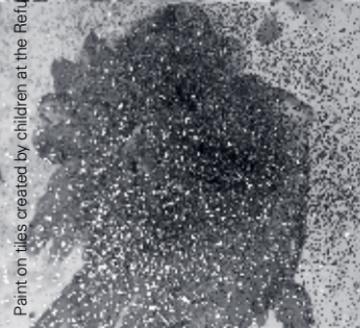
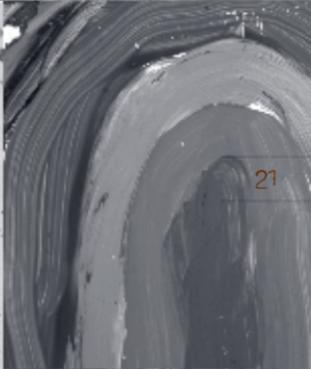
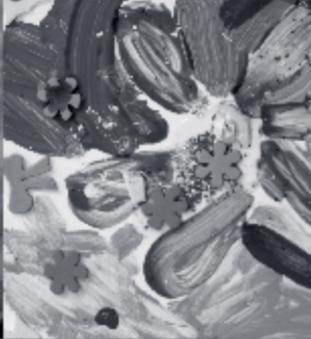
Safety planning

If you have decided to leave or have already done so, it is important that you have a safety plan to assist you and your children to be and stay safe.

If you have left it is always important to review your safety plan and ensure that it is still relevant to you and your circumstances.

For your safety plan to work it is vital you don't let your partner see the plan, but it is a good idea to talk about it with someone you trust that is close to you.

Your partner may have a sense that something has changed, or may be about to change. It is important that you attempt to keep to your usual routines and activities.



Before you leave:

- Plan where you could go to be safe such as friends, family or a women's refuge. Always try to take the children with you.
- Only tell friends and family you are sure you can trust of your plans.
- Arrange your transport in advance, a lift from a friend or book a taxi
- Ask your GP to carefully note any evidence of injuries on your records.
- Keep a small amount of cash to make emergency calls, key cards, house keys, essential medications and important papers together in a place where you can get them quickly or have someone else retrieve them. You may wish to have a copy of these left with someone you trust.

- If you do leave you can request police to accompany you back to the house to retrieve your personal possessions. Do not put your safety at risk to retrieve property or possessions.
- Make a list of personal papers and items you need to take with you.





Some items to remember...

- Birth certificates for yourself and children
- Marriage certificate
- Domestic Violence Protection Order
- Family Court Orders
- Passports for yourself and children
- Drivers licence
- Insurance policies
- Taxation, employment and
- Income documents
- Centrelink card or number
- School Records
- Medicare card or number
- Bank account numbers and statements
- Bank Cards, cheque books, credit cards
- Department of Immigration & Citizenship documentation
- Medical records
- Medication
- Leases or mortgages
- Car registration papers
- Jewellery
- House keys
- Phone numbers in case you cannot take your phone