

If you are still in the abusive situation or planning to leave:

CALL 911 in an emergency

Contact a Hotline- Sexual Assault/Domestic Violence 410-828-6390, House of Ruth 410-889-RUTH, rainn.org

- ❑ **Find a safe place** to go if an argument breaks out – if in the house, avoid rooms with only one exit (bathroom), and rooms with weapons (kitchen). If possible, get outside to a public place or a friend's house.
- ❑ **Talk to the people** in your life who can help you in an emergency (friend, neighbor, family member, co-worker, church member), and develop a plan. Establish a "code word" or sign, so they know when you need help.
- ❑ **Memorize phone numbers** of people who can help, crisis hotlines.
- ❑ Keep some **money** for taxi, food and essentials. Keep an **extra set of keys** for the house, car and work hidden somewhere safe.
- ❑ **Protect yourself against cyber-stalking.** Your partner may track your movements on your phone or through social media. Consider purchasing a **prepaid mobile phone with minutes**. **Do NOT use the Internet at home to plan your escape** – use a computer at the library. Internet browsing history on a personal computer, and phone call records, can be monitored by your abuser. Erase if possible.
- ❑ **Teach your children what to do** – go to a safe room, go to the neighbors, call 911. Don't tell them to intervene physically. Make sure they know that their priority is to stay safe, and if possible to get help.
- ❑ **Get medical attention for injuries.** Discuss abuse issues with your health care provider. **Save medical records.**
- ❑ **Document abuse-** save evidence; keep a journal; take photos; keep threatening letters, phone, e-mail & text messages.
- ❑ **If ending a relationship, do so in a safe place and avoid being alone with your abuser.** If you can't be in a public place, call a friend and be connected on the phone while meeting your abuser in case you need help.
- ❑ **Pack a bag with some clothes and essential medications. Hide it where you will have access to it, but abuser won't find it (in the trunk of the car, at a friend's house, at work). Include:**
 - IDs, Social security cards and birth certificates for you and your children
 - Marriage license
 - Leases or deeds in your name or both of your names
 - Insurance cards
 - Money, check book, charge cards, bank statements or charge account statements
 - Proof of income for you and your spouse (pay stubs/W-2's)
 - Any documents of past incidents of abuse (police reports, photos, medical records, torn clothing...)
 - Passport, immigration papers
 - Keys
 - Important records for children (birth certificates, custody orders, school and medical records...)
 - Child's favorite toy, sentimental valuables

****Remember: leaving an abusive relationship puts you at risk - take precautions!****

If you've gotten away from an abuser:

- ❑ Use **police accompaniment** to get needed items out of house. Have regular times to check in with friends and family and let them know your daily plans – instruct them to call police if you cannot be located.
- ❑ **Change your phone number or get a second phone.** Give the number only to people you trust. Get caller ID, block numbers.
- ❑ **Document and save all contacts,** messages, injuries, threats, stalking or other incidents involving abuser.
- ❑ **Install safety devices.** Change locks. Get a security alarm. Add outside lighting.
- ❑ **Vary your routine,** take different routes, and leave at different times.
- ❑ **Notify school/ work security** (give them a description or photo of abuser), have security walk you to your car.
- ❑ **Get legal help;** look into filing for a Protective Order.
- ❑ **Keep your copy of the Protective Order with you** (in car, at work, at child's day care or school). Know that there are rental protections for Protective Orders: eviction defense, getting out of lease, landlord must change locks.
- ❑ **Register with VINE Protective Order** 1-877-846-3420 to be notified when a Protective Order is served.
- ❑ **Register with Victim Notification VINE** 1-866-MD4-VINE to receive updates when offender is incarcerated or released.
- ❑ **Register with Safe at Home – Address Confidentiality Program** 1-800-633-9657 x3875 if you move/relocate.
- ❑ If you absolutely need to meet your abuser (perhaps to pick-up children) – **plan to meet in a public place.** Call a friend and be connected on the phone while meeting your abuser in case you need help. Use Circle of 6 App
- ❑ **Seek ongoing support** from hotlines and/or counselors who understand the effects and dynamics of abusive relationships.

My Personal Plan:

Crisis Counseling and Referrals: _____

Safe Shelter Contacts: _____

Legal Assistance: _____

Financial Help: _____

Other Needs: _____