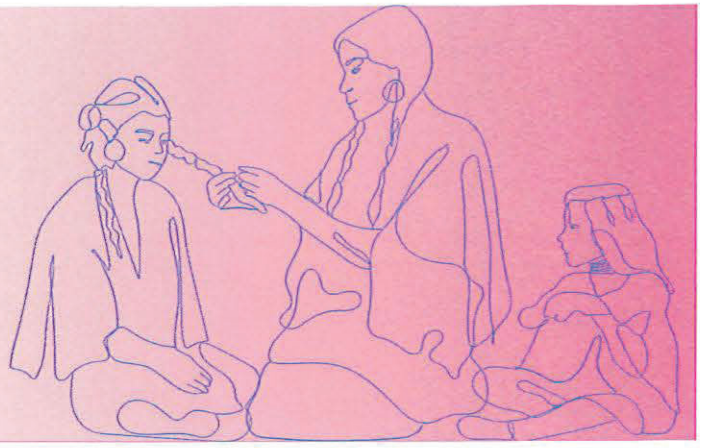


# SAFETY PLANNING WITH CHILDREN



## Developing a Safety Plan with Children

Creating a safety plan for children and youth exposed to domestic violence is a crucial step in ensuring their well-being and security. A personalized safety plan can empower children by giving them a sense of control and a clear course of action in emergency situations. Below are key points to consider when developing such plans, along with sample scripts to guide your conversations.

### Core Safety Planning Points

1. **Understanding the Situation**

Explain to the child what a safety plan is and why it is important. Ensure they understand that it is not their fault if they are in a situation involving violence.

2. *Sample Script:*

"Sometimes, things can get a little scary at home, and it's important to have a plan to keep you safe. This plan will help you know what to do if you ever feel unsafe."

3. **Identifying Safe Places**

Help the child identify safe places they can go to if they feel threatened. These could be specific rooms in the house or safe locations outside of the home, such as a neighbor's house.

4. *Sample Script:*

"Can you think of a place where you feel safe and comfortable? This is somewhere you can go if things get scary at home."

5. **Recognizing Trusted Adults**

Encourage children to think about adults they trust and can turn to for help. This could include family members, teachers, or family friends.

6. *Sample Script:*

"Who are some adults you trust? If you need help, these are the people you can go to or call."

7. **Creating a Communication Plan**

Discuss how the child can contact someone if they need help. This could include memorizing important phone numbers or using specific communication devices.

8. *Sample Script:*

"Let's make sure you know how to contact someone if you need help. Do you know your important phone numbers, or how to use a phone to call for help?"

9. **Practice and Role-Play**

Regularly practice the safety plan with the child. Role-playing different scenarios can help them feel more prepared and less anxious.

10. *Sample Script:*

"Let's pretend that we need to use our safety plan. What would you do first? Let's practice together so you feel ready."

11. **Emergency Contacts and Resources**

Provide the child with a list of emergency contacts and resources, such as hotlines or local support services.

12. *Sample Script:*

"Here is a list of people and places you can call if you ever need help. Keep this somewhere safe where you can easily find it."

## Customizing the Plan

Remember, each safety plan should be tailored to the individual needs of the child or youth you are working with. Consider their age, developmental level, and personal circumstances. Adapt the language and complexity of the plan accordingly to ensure it is comprehensible and actionable for them.

## Conclusion

Safety planning with children requires sensitivity, patience, and a deep understanding of their unique situations. By incorporating these core points and engaging in compassionate dialogue, you can help children develop a sense of safety and resilience in the face of challenging circumstances.