Safety Planning, Risk Assessment, & Cyberstalking

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Safety Planning

What is Safety Planning?

Safe·ty Plan·ning, v.

A safety plan is a survivor's individualized plan developed in partnership with an advocate that focuses on strategies for staying safe. It is typically used with survivors of domestic violence, sexual assault, dating violence, and stalking. In creating a safety plan, advocates discuss the unique needs & circumstances of individual victims.
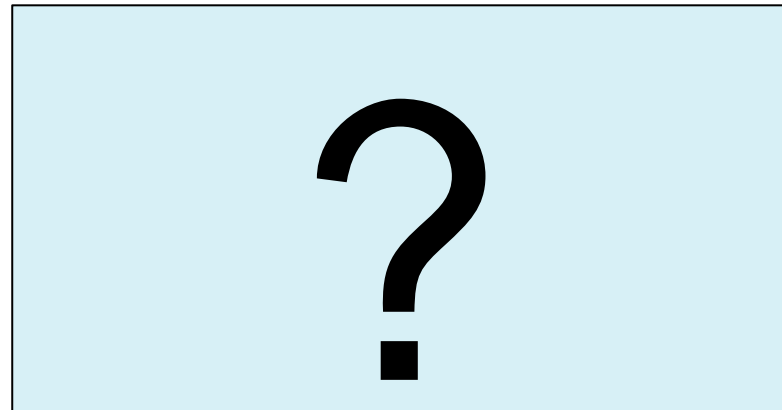
#DVdictionary
#31n31

NNEDV

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Objective for Safety Planning

Reduce Risk of Further Harm

- Identify individual risk factors
- Increase protective factors
- Reduce stress during crisis
- Seek empowerment for survivors

Helping Survivors of Sexual Assault

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Intersectionality within Safety Planning

- **People with disabilities (physical and/or cognitive)**

- **Undocumented individuals**

- **Older adults**

- **Minors**

- **People of color**

- **People who identify as LGBTQ (lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer, or questioning)**

- **Non-U.S. citizens**

- **Those from immigrant communities**

- **Farmworkers**

- **People who have been trafficked or sexually exploited**

- **People living in poverty**

- **People who are homeless**

- **People who are linguistically isolated**

- **Military service members**

- **People who are geographically isolated, such as those living in rural communities**

- **People who are a part of insular, isolated groups/communities (e.g. some religious sects)**

Risk Assessment

What is Risk Assessment?

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Assess for Immediate Safety

⬤ Are you safe now? Safe to contact?

⬤ Have you seen or had any contact with the perpetrator since the assault?

⬤ Where and in what ways might you come into contact with the perpetrator?

Risk Assessment

⬤ Has the perpetrator contacted your friends or family since the assault?

⬤ Does the perpetrator know where you live? Work? Attend school/classes?
Go to the gym?

⬤ Has the perpetrator stalked you, your friends, or your family?

⬤ Are there times of day or places in which you feel less safe?

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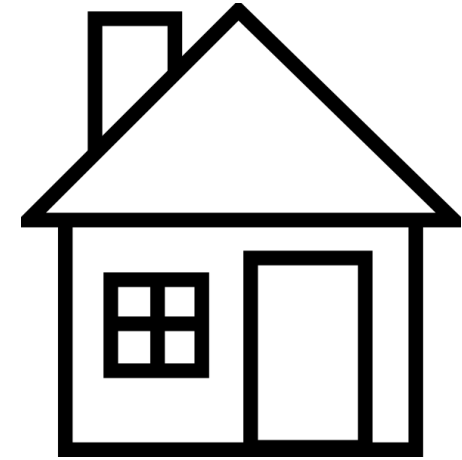Sexual Assault Legal Institute

If you are at Home and Under Threat or Attack

Stay Away from...

● Kitchen/places with weapons

● Small spaces where perpetrator could trap you (bathrooms, closets, or small spaces)

Go to...

● A room with a door or window to escape.

● A room with a phone and locking door to allow you to call for help.

　● Call 911, provide address and information to help police identify the home. Try to get the dispatcher's name or ID # in case you have to call back.

Safety at Home

- Become familiar with local safe places

- Change the locks on your doors, check locks on the windows, change security code

- Confirm you have sufficient and functional outdoor lighting

- Make an escape plan

- Prepare an escape bag

- Ask trusted neighbors to call the police if they see the perpetrator at your house.

Safety Outside the Home

How to Protect Yourself Outside the Home

- Change regular travel habits

- Travel with others, whenever possible

- Alternate where banking, grocery shopping, or other routine activities are done

- Cancel any shared bank or credit card accounts with abuser

Safety in the Workplace

- Provide picture of perpetrator to security and trusted work colleagues

- Talk to your supervisor, discuss what they can do to make it more difficult to find you
(e.g. Remove your name or picture from a company website)

- Request security walk you to your mode of transportation

- Be sure to save any voicemails perpetrator leaves you at work

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Safety on Campus

- Take different routes to class

- Know your on-campus and off-campus resources

- Utilize campus security

- Request a schedule or housing change

- Have back-up plans

- Be mindful of victim blaming
  - "Protect your drink"?

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How to Make Children Safer

- Teach them how to call 911 and give phone and address to police

- Teach them who to call for help

- Make sure they know who to go to if the see perpetrator at school

- Make sure their school knows not to give their name or phone number to anyone

Preparing for an Emergency

- Obtain a cell phone that you keep charged and on your person at all times, if possible.

- Have emergency contacts pre-programmed.

- Memorize emergency and important phone numbers in case you lose cell phone access.

- Secret word or phrase

Addressing Emotional Safety

● Who else knows about the sexual assault?

● Who can you reach out to in time of crisis?

● Refer to local rape crisis center for counseling and 24/7 crisis support

What is Stalking?

In Maryland, stalking is a crime and is legally defined as a **persistent and malicious pattern** of approaching or pursuing someone in order to **make the person feel afraid** that they or someone else will suffer serious bodily injury, assault, rape or sexual offense, false imprisonment or death, or the stalker intends to cause, knows, or should know that such conduct will cause serious emotional distress to another person.

1 in 6 women and 1 in 19 men are stalked during some point in their lifetime

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Unwanted advances or threatening behavior directed towards someone using the Internet or other forms of online communications

What is Cyberstalking?

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Severity

21% of women ages 18 to 29 report being sexually harassed online (Duggan, 2017)

53% of women ages 18 to 29 say that someone has sent them explicit images without their consent (Duggan, 2017)

Stalking on Social Media

- Following/friending someone to track their statuses

- Keeping track of GPS check-ins.

- Sending harassing or threatening messages

- Making fake profiles to track someone

- Posting anonymous abuse

- Posting false or defamatory information

- Posting nude images or other sexual content

Assessing Risk and Safety of Technology

Safe Use of Technology

- Does the perpetrator know your phone number/email?
- Does the perpetrator know any of your passwords?
- Do you have social media accounts?
- Do you share any social media accounts with the perpetrator?
- Are you "friends"/connected with the perpetrator?
- Is anyone in your social media network "friends" with the perpetrator?
- Has the perpetrator or perpetrator's friends contacted you since the assault?
- Has the perpetrator or perpetrator's friends posted anything about you online? What was posted? Is the post still online?
- Have you reviewed your privacy settings since the assault? Can you adjust those settings to make your personal information more secure?

Safety Using Social Networking Sites or Apps

- Do not share information about your home, work, school, child care, preferred shopping venues, prospective social plans, methods of transportation, or any aspect of your location or habits

- Do not accept requests to connect with someone you don't recognize

- Block perpetrator on all shared social media platforms. Block friends, family, or others who might sympathize with perpetrator

- Consider removing your picture from profiles, utilizing a non-descript image instead

- Review privacy and security settings for every profile. Take time to review how your profile appears to you, your friends, and the public. Assume ANY information online is permanently accessible by everyone.

Twitter

HOW TO KEEP YOUR TWITTER ACCOUNT FROM BEING HACKED

Create **A STRONG PASSWORD**

Enable **LOGIN VERIFICATION**

Don't use **UNTRUSTED THIRD PARTY APPS** that require access to your account

Watch out **FOR SHORTENED URLS**

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Facebook

Facebook estimates that up to

4%

of accounts on the platform are fake
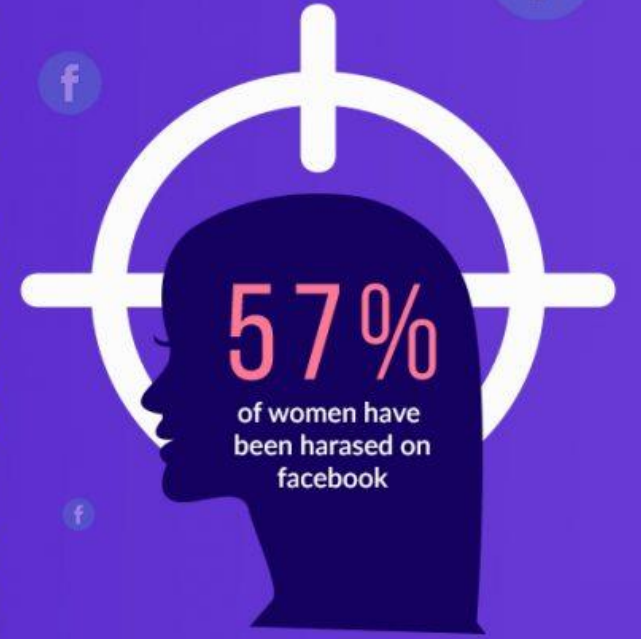
=

At least

66

MILLION accounts

=

Roughly the entire population of the UK

Women are more than

TWICE

as likely as men to describe their most recent experience of online harassment as very or extremely upsetting

57%

of women have been harased on facebook

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Snapchat & Instagram

STAYING SAFE ON SNAPCHAT AND INSTAGRAM

DELETE identifying data from your pictures
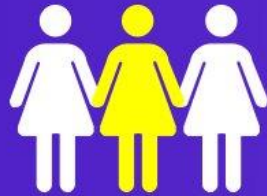
DON'T USE your real information when you sign up

BLOCK creeps and harassers

Technology Harassment in the Workplace

1 IN 3 young women has been **SEXUALLY HARASSED AT WORK**

25% of those women were harassed **VIA TEXTS OR EMAILS**

71% of those women **DID NOT REPORT** the harassment

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Safety Using Technology and the Internet

- Periodically change passwords

- **Use private browsing:** Google: Incognito Mode, Firefox: Private Browsing, Internet Explorer: InPrivate Browsing, Safari: Private Browsing

- Delete old accounts

- Set boundaries with family and friends about tagging

- Preserving your safety and privacy with friends and family

- Do NOT open suspicious messages or emails

- Keep track of unwanted calls, texts, messages, and voicemails from perpetrator

Trends in Spyware

- Average spyware technology cost has dropped from around $250 to $40.

- This lowered cost, combined with anonymity and distance of the internet, may influence people to cyberstalk.

Spyware Signs

- Battery drain
- Background noises
- Random start or shutdown
- Odd text messages
- Higher data usage

These do not necessarily point to spyware, but they can be clues.

ALL OF THIS INCLUDED

Listen to **LIVE CALLS** via BlueTooth

Extract **SMS** Text Messages

View **PHOTOS** Stored on any phone

Read **CALL LOGS** Safely and secure
555-...

IN ONE COMPLETE SOFTWARE PACKAGE

Issue of Privacy and Explanation of Benefits

- **Request for Confidential Communications**
  - Lets you choose where your health information gets sent after your health care visit.
  - You can ask that the information be sent to a different address or by other means that only you will see.
  - Can be used when giving health information to the person paying for the insurance would put the survivor in danger.

  - https://insurance.maryland.gov/Consumer/Documents/publicnew/confidential-communication-form.pdf
  - https://insurance.maryland.gov/Consumer/Documents/publicnew/confidential-communication-form_SPA.pdf

Issue of Privacy and Explanation of Benefits

- If you do not complete the form, health information will be sent to the person who pays for the insurance.
- Applies only to private messages from insurance company.
- If you change insurance companies, you will need to make a new request.
- Check back in with insurance company to make sure the request has been processed and approved.
- Until your request is approved, the insurance company may continue to send your private health information to the person who is paying for your health insurance.
- Depending on insurance, may require written request (the form) OR can be down over phone or email.

In Summary...

- Consider the identities of people you're working with
- Prioritize immediate safety
- Create detailed plans and use support and resources
- Be mindful of the pitfalls of social media and internet

Additional Tips

- Client can take notes
- Review final plan together
- Email or mail survivor a list of emergency contacts and resources

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