

PLANNING TO LEAVE

- Acquire job skills and take online courses where possible.
- Set money aside or ask friends or family members to hold money for you.
- Pack a bag for yourself and your children. Include important documents (ID/Passport, Children's Birth Certificates, marriage certificate, protection order, etc), medication, a cellphone with adequate data/airtime, money/bank cards, change of clothing, toiletries, small toys/teddy bear for children and anything else that is important to you.
- If not possible, shelters are able to provide clothing and toiletries if required. Place this bag in a safe place where you can access it easily or you may want to store these at a trusted friend's neighbour's or family member's house.
- However, try to avoid the homes of next-door neighbours and mutual friends.
- Include your children in your plan and prepare them adequately emotionally.
- Remember that their job is to stay safe and not to protect you.

LEGALLY SPEAKING

- Contact RDAP about laws and available resources during a crisis.
- Have photographs of important documents, including a protection order on your phone should you not get hold of the documents before you leave.
- Try to keep evidence of physical abuse, like pictures and a record of the abuse noting dates, events and threats made. Take screenshots of abusive messages. This will be useful when seeking legal support or protective mechanism like when applying for a protection order.

LEAVING

- When is it safe to leave? Wait until the abuser is asleep or occupied or create an reason for going out. Only do this if you know it is safe to do so.
- Know in advance where you want to go to, like a friend or family member's house (let them know beforehand, if possible), a shelter, hospital or police station. Police officers can refer you to a shelter too. Contact any of the help numbers for assistance.
- If injured seek medical attention, report what happened and request that your visit be documented.
- Have a contingency plan should the abuser find out your initial plan

STAYING SAFE

- "Leaving is often dangerous, and you need to create a safety plan to ensure your safe exit from the situation."
- While leaving is a positive choice, the transition can be a difficult process. Seek the assistance of the police, women's agencies, 24 hour helplines, the courts and shelters to apply for a protection order if you don't have one already.
- Be careful to whom you give your new address and phone number.
- If you cannot change your child/children's school, inform them of the situation and that only you or a person designated by you may collect them from school.
- Also ensure that your employer is aware of the situation. If possible, have your calls screened, change your stores, schedule and routine.
- Change the locks at home and further secure your house. Let friends and neighbours know that the abuser no longer lives with you and to call the police if they see the abuser near your home or children.
- Continue to talk to trusted people about your situation, seek trauma counselling and legal assistance.

SAFETY GUIDELINES

for Domestic and Gender-based Violence and Femicide

The prevalence of violence against women and children in South Africa is among the highest in the world.

DON'T BE A STATISTIC!

If you feel that your physical, mental and emotional well-being is threatened, violated or at risk, the following are a few suggestions for developing a personalized and practical Safety Plan – for staying safe while enduring an abusive relationship, or when planning to leave, and after leaving. While every situation is unique, these tips are meant to help you think of actions that work for your own situation.

Contact the
National Shelter Movement of SA
24hr Toll Free Helpline

Call
0800 001 005

SMS, Whatsapp or 'Please Call Me':

082 057 8600

082 058 2215

072 230 7147

Or email
infohelpline@nationalsm.org.za

BE PREPARED

Keep the following:

- Emergency helpline numbers/numbers of organisations (such as those listed below) on your phone or piece of paper with you at all times. Try to memorize them if you can.
- As much emergency money as you can and an extra set of car keys.

GBV COMMAND CENTRE

- Call: 0800 428 428
- Send a "Please Call Me" by dialing *120*7867#
- SMS 'help' to 31531

LIFELINE DOMESTIC VIOLENCE HELPLINE

- Call: 0800 150 150

MOSAIC

- Telephone counselling & referrals for survivors of abuse
Call: 021 761 7585 (08h30 - 16h00)

RAPE CRISIS

24-hour support including how to access Thuthuzela Care Centres for medical and forensic assistance to rape survivors.

- Afrikaans: 021 633 9229
- isiXhosa: 021 361 9085
- English: 021 447 9762
- WhatsApp: 083 222 5164

- **SADAG** 0800 567 567

TEARS FOUNDATION

- 08000 83277
- *134*7355#

NATIONAL SHELTER MOVEMENT OF SOUTH AFRICA

- **Eastern Cape**
Gary Koekemoer: chairperson@betsheekoom.co.za
- **Free State** Sarah Lekale: lekalese@gmail.com
- **Gauteng** Lisha Stevens: socialworker@nisaa.org.za
- **KwaZulu-Natal** Nadia Munsamy: nadia@pcw.org.za
- **Mpumalanga**
Sindisiwe Msimango: cindysimango@yahoo.com /
Tshidi Mathole: tirisanovep@outlook.com
- **Northern Cape** Rose Bailey: baileyr188@gmail.com
- **Western Cape** Delene Roberts: manager@sisters.org.za
- **General information** 0800 001 005

TRIANGLE PROJECT

Specific support to the LGBTQI community including referrals to shelters. Triangle offers a call back service.

- For information call 021 422 0255
- Helpline, 021 712 6699 (applicable nationally)

REACHING OUT

- Secure the support of a trusted friend, colleague, family member or local organisation. If they are not comfortable, reach out to others who will be.
- Develop a WhatsApp group. In case some people are not reachable when you may need support. Give that group a "safe" name so that it does not alert suspicion like "church/mosque group" or "book club".

LIVING IN AN ABUSIVE RELATIONSHIP

- Identify safe areas in the house where there are no weapons and there are ways to escape if arguments occur.
- Keep weapons like firearms and knives locked away and as inaccessible as possible.
- Don't run to where the children are as your partner may want to hurt them as well.
- Practice with your children how to get out safely and that safety is important.
- Also teach them that violence is never right, that neither you or they are at fault.
- Always try to back the car in the driveway and keep it fueled.
- Leave the driver's door unlocked and the others locked for a quick escape.
- Assess your options by periodically calling a domestic violence helpline.

SIGNALLING FOR HELP

- Create a code word with your trusted person/group to alert them when you need help.
- Develop and discuss a visual signal and plan with your children and neighbours to alert them should you be in distress. Signals like switching an outside light on and off several times or tying a piece of material where it is visible from the outside of your house. Red material could signal that you need your neighbour to contact the police. White material could signal that you need them to create a diversion like ringing your doorbell or calling your cellphone/landline.

DELETE SEARCHES/REQUESTS FOR HELP

- If the abuser looks through your phone or you share a computer at home, delete your Internet browsing history, websites visited for resources, e-mails and/or WhatsApps/sms's sent to friends and family asking for help. If you called for help, dial another number immediately after, in case the abuser hits redial.
- Send screenshots, messages and of abusive incidents to a trusted friend or family member before deleting them.