

# TEEN SAFETY PLAN

## Before and During Violent Incidents

- Get somewhere safe. This may mean getting around other people, going in another room, or just going outside. Avoid areas where you can be cornered or trapped. Before a violent situation begins, plan the best way to leave a room. Consider where you would go, how you would get there, and how that process may look.
- Identify a trusted person you can go to. It can be helpful to identify these people before a crisis arises. Do not be afraid to ask for help when you need it.
- Trust your instincts. You know your situation and your partner better than anyone else. Even if you have a plan, your instincts may tell you to do something different in a moment. Trust yourself and the knowledge you have.

## Break Ups

- Consider areas of school that are unsafe like dark hallways or stairwells where you can be easily cornered. Once you identify these spots, avoid them and use a different route to class.
- Keep a log or diary to document any abuse, if it is safe to do so. If abuse or threats occur online or through your phone, take screen shots or send the posts to a safe account that you can access later.
- Create a plan if you know you may run into your ex. It is not always possible to avoid certain areas or classes but creating a plan with a friend or a trusted adult on what to do when you run into your ex may help you feel more confident, supported and safe.

## Protect Yourself Emotionally

- People who abuse can often make you feel many different emotions: anger, sadness, fear, anxiety, and even a feeling of love. Acknowledging that these feelings may come up and identifying ways to make you feel better will give you a sense of control over your emotions.
- Recognize your strengths. Your ex-partner may make you doubt yourself. Create a phrase or a sentence about your strengths that you can repeat to yourself as a reminder of who you are.
- It is okay to talk about what is happening. There can be a lot of pressure to not talk about your situation, which may cause you to feel alone and unsupported. Once you have identified trusted adults and friends, talk to them about what is going on and how it is making you feel. There is no shame reaching out for support.

## Identify Adult Allies

- Before talking with adults, know your rights. Most adults in the state of Texas are mandated reporters. This means if they hear about you hurting yourself, someone else hurting you, or the abuse of children and older people, they must make a report. For more information on your rights, please see the “Minor’s Rights” part of TCFV’s toolkit.
- Note the language adults use. When you talk with them, do they empower you or make you feel small? Do they accept what you are saying as your truth or have you question yourself? Talking about relationships can be hard, find an adult you know will listen to you.
- There may be many different types of adults in your life that you feel comfortable going to for some things but not for others. If you need help or want to talk about your relationship, find an adult you feel comfortable being open and honest with.

### Smartphones

- Smartphones make being monitored easy. It's important to know there are many ways your smartphone can be used to reduce your safety. Like computers, smartphone can be hacked, monitored, and easily accessed.
- GPS settings in a variety of apps allow you to be easily tracked. Check your location settings and know which apps are using your location.
- Bluetooth is quick and easy to set up. Check your Bluetooth settings to find out which devices are connected. If you didn't grant permission to the device, delete it and get help from a trusted adult.
- Checking your phone app list will tell you what is installed on your phone. Spyware and other spying apps can allow someone to have virtual access to you. If you don't recognize an app, delete it.
- Be cautious with account passwords. Sharing passwords can give someone access to a lot of personal information and your location.

### Social Media

- Social media is a wonderful way to connect but it can be used to harass, impersonate, and intimidate.
- Digital Hygiene is the process of deciding to post something, when not to, and assessing any risk. It can also mean talking to friends and family about your privacy needs before they post something about you.
- Check your privacy settings often to make sure your information remains as private as you want it.
- Geolocation is the location of where a picture is taken that is digitally stored with the image. It's easy to find this information and have it used against you. You have control over this and can turn it off.
- Strong passwords are always a good idea to increase your digital safety. Make them complicated, without personal information, and change them often.
- Document any abuse or harassment, take and save screenshots of abusive messages.

### Internet of Things (IOT)

- Do you own any wearable tech? The data these devices obtain can be monitored from a variety of places including laptops and smartphones. Consider who could have access to this data and try to limit what you share in times of trouble.
- Devices like Google Home, Amazon Alexa, and Apple HomePod can be accessed from outside of your home and used to monitor your personal space.

### More Tech Safety

- [NNEDV's Technology Safety & Privacy Toolkit for Survivors](#) - safety tips, information, and privacy strategies for survivors
- [The Tech Safety App](#) - info on harassment, impersonation, device and location safety, and online safety in an easy-to-use app
- [The Stalking Resources Center](#) - online trainings, resources for safer use of technology
- [eTAG \(End Tech Abuse Across Generations\)](#) - toolkit with technology safety
- [That's Not Cool](#) - an interactive online tool for young people to learn about healthy relationships and digital safety
- [Love Is Respect](#) - chat with an advocate for information on teen dating violence, safety plan, and more