

## **PLANNING YOUR CHILDREN'S SAFETY**

- Tell your children their only job is to stay safe themselves, they do not have to protect you. They must always run to safety, even without you
- Teach your children to leave the room or not to come in the room where the danger is and which room or trusted neighbour they should go to
- Practice and role-play safety plans with your children including what to do and where to go if something violent or scary happens. Talk to your children about scenarios. Make a game out of this if they are young
- Let your children know that you might have to leave quickly in order to protect yourselves. Practice a signal and an escape plan with them. Call this a fire escape plan
- Instruct your children never to answer the door or the phone
- Inform your children's school, doctors, and child care provider of your situation and give them a copy of any and all court orders
- Inform these same people about who is allowed to pick up your children or who is to have contact with them. Request that they report any suspicious persons or activity to police and/or to you
- Ensure that your children are accompanied to and from school and any other places they go to
- If the abuser has legal access to your child or children, talk to a lawyer about the possibility of getting supervised access or having access denied
- If the abuser has access to the children develop individual and group safety plans with the children for the visits. The plans can include cues they are in danger, escape plans from the location of the visit and who/where they can go for help
- Arrangements can be made for transporting your children to the access visits so that you do not have to contact with the abuser. Ask someone you trust to drop them off and pick them up. You can arrange for the children to be picked up from a public location
- Make sure that your children know how to use the phone. Provide change for the phone and know how to call 911 and make a collect call to you
- Keep emergency numbers by all phones

- Develop a visual or other code for your children to know that there is danger so that they will not enter the house or the room if they see the code i.e. a light on or off.
- Contact a shelter or 24 hour crisis line for women to find where programs for child witnesses of violence are located. These programs are very helpful in teaching children and women about safety.

**NOTES:**