

Supporting your children

Be there for them.



If you have children, identify ways to keep them safe when violence occurs — before it takes place. That includes at home, when you're out and about in public, and if your children spend any unsupervised time with your abusive partner.

You know what's best for your children. **Our advocates are available 24/7** to help you find ways to keep your children safe and to help you equip them with the knowledge they need to get themselves to safety.

Safety planning

An effective safety plan includes personalized planning to keep your children safe at home and during any unsupervised time they may spend with your partner. That includes talking to your children about age-appropriate ways to protect themselves when violence occurs as well as details and items to remember while preparing to leave an abusive situation and after.

Our advocates are available 24/7 to discuss your situation and help you **create a safety plan** for your children. If your children are old enough, **brainstorm with them** to come up with ways that they can stay safe using the same model as you would for yourself.

What to expect when you contact us

Children and domestic violence

Children who experience abusive situations are forced to process complex emotions, often without access to the resources they need to do so. Planning for your children's physical and emotional health is essential for their short-term and long-term wellbeing, no matter how old they are.



Remind them that their first responsibility is their own safety

even if they want to protect you or someone else in a moment of crisis. Teach them that you want everyone to be safe and that the preparations you're making are to ensure their safety and everyone else's during an emergency.



Your partner may try to use your children to harm you

by also abusing them, or by threatening, harassing, or manipulating you or your children depending on the situation. Examples include preventing you from seeing your children, calling or threatening to call police or immigration enforcement to gain custody of your children, humiliating you in front of them, using your children to monitor your behavior, or lying to your children to turn them against you.



Never blame your children for their responses to your partner's abusive behavior

especially if they intentionally or unintentionally reveal your plan to leave. Make sure they know the violence isn't their fault and that abuse is never okay, even when it comes from someone they love.



It's important that your children have access to people other than yourself who they feel comfortable talking with and expressing themselves to.

Help them identify these people in their life and make sure they can contact them when needed. If possible, enroll them in a culturally relevant counseling program or therapy specializing in child counseling. Many domestic violence shelters offer children's counseling – contact a Hotline advocate today to find out what local resources are near you.



Above all else, remind your children that you're there for them

and that you love them unconditionally.

We're here to support you on your path to safety.



You are not alone.

Learn more about planning with your children:

Safety Planning with Children



Emotional Safety Planning with Children



Contact

National Domestic Violence Hotline
PO Box 90249
Austin, Texas 78709
Administrative Line: 737-225-3150

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The Hotline®

National Domestic Violence Hotline

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