

Planning for safety is an ongoing fluid process.

Common Aspects of Safety Planning¹

Priorities

- Fluidity
- Expect change
- Review past safety plan strategies
- Timeframes: Urgent, Short-term, Long-range

Risks and life circumstances

- Life-generated risks
- Batterer-generated risks
- Culture, values, and context

Strategies to reduce physical or sexual violence

- Protect self
- Protect children (linked to self)
- Change partner's behavior - what calms him down?

Addressing children's needs

- Will leaving make child safer?
- Protection from partner's violence
- Limited, developmentally appropriate, and task specific safety strategies that are a part of mother's safety plan.

Staying strategies

- Try to placate partner's needs
- Meet family's basic needs
- Hold some sense of well-being for self and children

Leaving strategies

- Is this the safer alternative?
- Is violence increased? Will things be better or worse?
- What needs to happen? How long might this take?
- Will there be ongoing contact because of children, financial ties, or emotional ties?

¹ Jill Davies, Eleanor Lyon Domestic Violence Advocacy 2: Complex Lives/Difficult Choices 2014
WCSAP wcsap.org & WSCADV wscadv.org 2015

Listen Differently

Questions to consider

How will you support her through the process of safety planning?

How will you support her through the changes or intended consequences that happen as a result of safety planning?

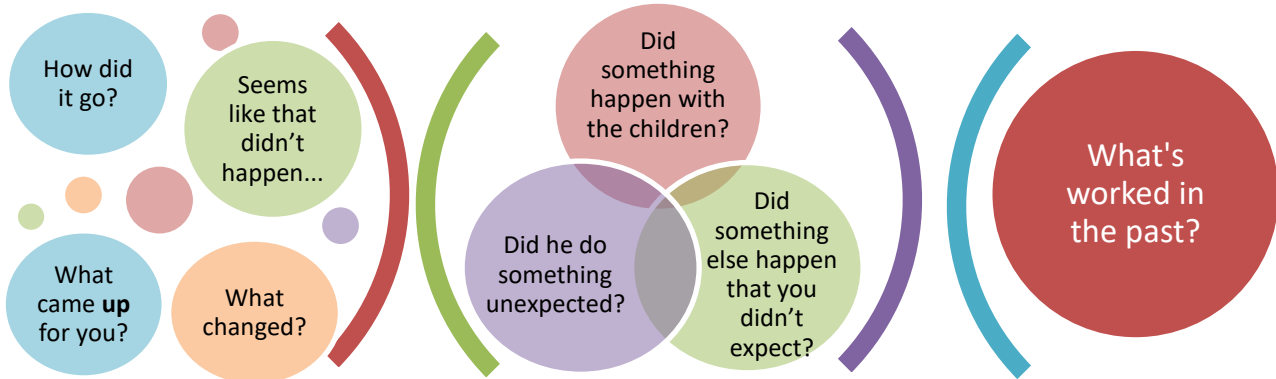
How will you support her if she chooses to stay in the relationship?

How will you support her if she doesn't follow through with the safety plan?

How will you identify her internal strengths and supports around her?

How will you identify her strategies to protect her child, herself (mom and child safety linked)?

Framing statements to get you started



Last time we talked you wanted to...

What's changed?

Do you have a new idea?

Sample prompting questions ² Ask open-ended questions and listen

Explain purpose of the discussion from the home visitor perspective

- I'm here to listen to you, to try to find the help you ask for, and to offer information that might make things better for you and your family.

Relationship, partner

- Tell me about him/her. What's he/she like?
- How did you meet? What was it like in the beginning of your relationship?
- What's it like to live with him/her?
- What's it like when you see (have contact with) him/her?

Children

- Tell me about your kids. How are they doing?
- What do you love about your kids?
- What's their relationship like with their dad? With your partner (if he's not the dad)?
- Has he ever used the kids to control you?
- What do you want for your children?

Money, housing, job

- How is it going with money, paying the bills?
- How does your partner help or hurt the finances?

Violence

- What happens when things get bad? What do you do when your partner is like that?

Health/mental health

- How are you doing with all this? Is there someone you talk to for support?

Family/Friends

- Tell me about our family. How is your partner's relationship with your family? With your friends?
- How is your relationship with his family? With his friends?

Legal issues

- Have the police ever gotten involved with your family? How'd they get involved?
- Would you ever call the police?
- Are you or your kids involved in any court cases?
- How long have you and your partner lived in the U.S.?

RISK REVIEW

Victim's perspective

- What's your biggest worry?
- What priorities do you have?
- What's most important to you now, in the next few months, and long-term?
- How do you think the children are doing?
- How do you view the risks –what do they mean to you?
- What scares you? Why? Why not?
- What have you done in the past to help protect you or your kids?
- What decisions have you made about contact with your partner?

Check your own perspective

- What risks to the survivor and children do you identify? Are they different from her view? Why?

² This is not a checklist, nor are the questions listed in any priority or chronological order. Ask questions based on your relationship and the individual in front of you.

Sample prompting questions ² Ask open-ended questions and listen

Try to form a shared perspective	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Respect the survivor's perspective, offer information in a way that supports each survivor's culture, decisions, and coping mechanisms.
Partner with dv/sa advocacy programs	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Explore survivor's resources and other options relevant to needs, system navigation and safety planning strategies• Develop a resource list for advocacy, shelter, support groups, children's programs, hotline programs that work with individuals who are survivors of abuse.

Excerpted from *Appendix 1, Sample Outline for Safety Planning with Victims in Contact*, pg. 26-29, from author, Jill Davies, *Advocacy Beyond Leaving: Helping Battered Women in Contact with Current or Former Partners, A Guide for Domestic Violence Advocates*. Family Violence Prevention Fund, 2009.