Planning for safety is an ongoing fluid process.

Common Aspects of Safety Planning[[1]](#footnote-1)

Listen Differently

**Questions to consider**

**Framing statements to get you started**

| Sample prompting questions [[2]](#footnote-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? |
| Try to form a shared perspective | * 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 | * 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.

1. Jill Davies, Eleanor Lyon Domestic Violence Advocacy 2: Complex Lives/Difficult Choices 2014 [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
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. [↑](#footnote-ref-2)