

Abuse

Recognizing Abuse

In the last year have you been hit, slapped, kicked, or yelled at by anyone you know? Do you feel scared or isolated? Does your partner control your activities? If you are the victim of abuse, there are some important steps to take to safely end the abuse.

Develop a Safety Plan

A safety plan is a strategy to get out of an abusive situation. Though you can't control your partner's violent actions, you can control how you prepare for your safety.

During a Violent Incident:

- Stay out of rooms with potential weapons (kitchen, bathroom, garage, etc.) and stay in rooms that have an exit.
- Keep your purse and keys nearby, and always keep a key hidden in a safe place.
- You may need to tell neighbors to call the police if they hear suspicious noise coming from your home, and you should make sure your kids know how to call 911.

Men often become more violent when they think their partner is leaving, so be extra careful when planning to leave.

- Several days before you plan to leave, take money, extra keys, clothes and copies of important papers to a trusted friend's home or a safe house.
- Make sure you take all bank cards and account information, insurance forms, school papers, medical records, immigration documents, welfare papers, legal documents and clothing for you and your children.
- Determine who might be able to loan you money or give you a place to stay.
- Inform your children's schools of who can and cannot pick up your kids from school.

Resilience

Resilience is the process of "bouncing back" from bad experiences. Some people think this is a natural trait, but really its behaviors, thoughts and actions that anyone can develop. The key to successful resilience is having a caring support group of friends and family.

10 Ways to Build Resilience

- Stay close with friends and family members; don't be afraid to accept their help and support.
- Avoid seeing crises as unfixable problems.
- Accept that change is a part of life.
- Move toward your goals.
- Don't just wish for something to go away, take steps to deal with it.
- Look for opportunities to help you learn more about yourself, your relationships, your spirituality.
- Nurture a positive view of yourself and trust your instincts and your ability to solve problems.
- Focus on the big picture to avoid blowing an event out of proportion.
- Be hopeful and focus on what you want instead of what you fear.

- Take care of yourself.

If you find yourself in an emergency situation, call the Hillsborough County Domestic Violence 24–Hour Hotline at (813) 247–SAFE or (813) 247–7233.