YOUR SAFETY PLAN

A Guide to Recognizing Danger, Planning to Leave Safely, and Staying Safe Afterward

Recognizing the danger signs · Planning while still at home · Leaving safely · Protecting your kids · Legal protections & resources

A free, confidential resource from the Bulletproof Grace Foundation

From Survival to Purpose

Why This Guide Exists

If you're reading this, you may be trying to figure out how to stay safe — whether you're still at home, getting ready to leave, or already gone. This guide is built to walk through that with you, step by step, in plain language.

You know your situation better than anyone. Use what applies to you and skip what doesn't. There is no single right way to do this — only what keeps you and your children safest.

911	24/7	100%
call if you are in danger right now	S.A.F.E. House hotline (505) 247-4219	confidential — your location stays private

If it is safer to delete your browsing or download history after reading this, many phones and computers let you do that — a trusted advocate at the hotline below can walk you through it.

1. Recognizing the Danger Signs

Abuse often escalates over time. These are patterns advocates watch for — recognizing them isn't about blame, it's about seeing clearly so you can plan.

- Threats to hurt you, your children, pets, or themselves if you try to leave
- Escalating control over money, your phone, your car, or who you can see
- Access to weapons, or specific threats involving them
- Choking, strangulation, or violence that is increasing in frequency or severity
- Monitoring your location, messages, or social media without your consent
- Isolating you from family, friends, or support systems

If Any of These Are True

Choking or strangulation has occurred — this is one of the strongest predictors of future lethal violence — treat it as a serious emergency

There is a weapon in the home — mention this specifically when you call an advocate or law enforcement — it changes the safety plan

Threats have been made against your life — call 911 if you are in immediate danger, and reach out to a hotline below as soon as you safely can

2. Safety Planning While Still at Home

If you are not ready or able to leave yet, these steps can reduce risk in the meantime.

- Identify which rooms have exits and avoid arguments in rooms without one (bathrooms, closets, kitchens with knives)
- Teach children a code word that means "call 911" or "go to a neighbor's house"
- Keep your phone charged and know a safe place to keep it where it won't be taken
- Memorize at least one emergency number, in case your phone is taken
- Identify one or two people you can signal safely if you need help
- If police are called, tell them exactly what happened and ask for a report number

3. Planning to Leave Safely

Leaving is often the most dangerous time in an abusive relationship. A plan — even a simple one — matters.

Documents & Items to Gather (if safe to do so)

- ■ ID, driver's license, or passport (yours and your children's)
- ■ Social Security cards / birth certificates
- ■ Any protective order paperwork already filed
- ■ Bank cards, some cash, or a card only you control
- ■ Medications and prescriptions
- ■ Phone charger and a backup phone if you have one
- ■ House/car keys, spare set if possible
- ■ A few days of clothes for you and your children

If You Can't Gather Items Safely

Leave anyway. Advocates at the shelters listed in this guide can help you get replacement documents afterward. Your safety matters more than any item.

Choosing a Time to Leave

- When the person is not home, or is reliably occupied elsewhere
- Not in the middle of a fight — leaving during an escalation is the highest-risk moment
- With a shelter or trusted contact already expecting you, if possible

4. After You Leave — Staying Safe

- Change your routine: routes to work, school pickup times, and places you're usually seen
- Tell trusted people (work, school, childcare) not to share your new location or schedule
- Consider a protective order (see Section 6) — it creates a legal record and consequences for contact
- Save any threatening messages, voicemails, or emails as evidence, even if it's painful to keep them
- If you moved to a new home, consider changing locks and checking for anyone who may still have a key

A Note on "Going Back"

It's common, not a failure — leaving is often a process, not a single event — many survivors leave more than once before it's final

Your safety plan still applies — keep this guide, keep the numbers below saved somewhere private, and reach out anytime — there's no judgment here

5. Protecting Your Kids

- Tell teachers, daycare, or after-school programs who is and is not allowed to pick up your child
- Give your child's school a copy of any protective order that includes custody terms
- Practice a simple safety plan with children old enough to understand: who to call, where to go
- Reassure children the situation is not their fault — they may blame themselves without saying so
- If you need to formalize custody or visitation safely, Enlace Comunitario and NM Legal Aid (Section 7) can help

6. Digital & Phone Safety

Abusers often use technology to monitor or locate a partner. These steps reduce that risk.

- Assume shared accounts (email, cloud photos, streaming, phone plans) may be visible to them — use a new, separate email for safety planning
- Turn off location sharing apps (Find My, Life360, or similar) on your phone
- Check your phone and car for unfamiliar apps, AirTags, or tracking devices if you suspect monitoring
- Use a device they don't have access to (library, a friend's phone) when researching shelters or legal help
- If safe, log out of shared accounts on shared devices before leaving

An advocate at the hotlines in Section 7 can walk through a full digital safety check with you — you don't have to figure this out alone.

7. Legal Protections

Protective Orders in New Mexico

What it is — a court order that can require the abuser to stay away from you, your home, and your workplace

No income limit applies — NM Legal Aid handles domestic violence protective order cases regardless of income

Where to file — NM Courts Self-Help Center (nmcourts.gov) has the forms; an advocate can help you file them

Legal Help

- New Mexico Legal Aid — 1-833-LGL-HELP (1-833-545-4357), free, no income limit for DV cases
- Enlace Comunitario — bilingual legal advocacy specifically for protective orders and custody
- NM Courts Self-Help Center — nmcourts.gov, free forms and filing guidance

8. Resources — Who to Call

Albuquerque

S.A.F.E. House — (505) 247-4219 — New Mexico's largest DV shelter, 24/7 hotline, up to 90 days lodging

Barrett House — emergency shelter for women & children experiencing homelessness

Enlace Comunitario — bilingual case management & legal support

Crossroads for Women — housing & therapeutic services for women leaving incarceration

YWCA New Mexico — empowerment programs, including Henderson House for women veterans

Need to Leave Albuquerque? Statewide Shelters

Santa Fe — Esperanza Shelter — (800) 473-5220

Las Cruces — La Casa — (575) 526-2819

Farmington — Family Crisis Center — (505) 564-9192

Roswell — Roswell Refuge — (575) 627-8361

Rio Rancho — Haven House — (800) 526-7157

Belen — Valencia Shelter — (505) 864-1383

Taos — Community Against Violence — (575) 758-9888

Silver City — El Refugio — (575) 538-2125

National

National Domestic Violence Hotline — 1-800-799-7233, call or text, free, 24/7, confidential

988 Suicide & Crisis Lifeline — call or text 988 if you are in emotional crisis

9. Videos & Resources to Learn From

A few videos survivors and advocates have found genuinely helpful, plus organizations for deeper reading.

Recommended Videos

- **"Introduction to Safety Planning"** — 1800RESPECT (5:12) — search on YouTube
- **"National Domestic Violence Hotline – Resources & Education"** — Mary Kay Ash Foundation, 6-video playlist — search on YouTube
- **"How To Make A Domestic Violence Safety Plan"** — myPlan App (14:54, closed captioned) — search on YouTube

These links open a YouTube search for the exact title and channel, since a direct video link can go stale — the search result puts the right video at the top every time.

More Organizations to Learn From

- **The National Domestic Violence Hotline** — thehotline.org — safety planning guides and video resources
- **loveisrespect** — loveisrespect.org — content for teens and young adults recognizing unhealthy relationship patterns
- **NCADV (National Coalition Against Domestic Violence)** — ncadv.org — education on the dynamics of abuse
- **RAINN** — rainn.org — support resources for sexual violence alongside domestic violence
- **Futures Without Violence** — futureswithoutviolence.org — resources on children's exposure to violence

These links go to each organization's official site — a stable place to find their current video library, since individual video links change more often than the organization's homepage.

My Safety Plan

This page is a fillable form — tap or click into each box below and type directly into it. Save the filled-in PDF somewhere private, or print it and destroy this page once memorized.

Safe place I can go:

Person I can call in an emergency:

Code word for my kids:

Where I'll keep important documents:

Bag packed / hidden at:

A Note From BGF

We are the shield that stands between you and the obstacles. You are not alone, and reaching out is not weakness — it's the first step forward.

Contact Bulletproof Grace Foundation

Email — bulletproofgracefoundation@gmail.com

Location — 600 Central Ave SW Suite 107, Albuquerque, NM 87102