

SAFETY EXIT PLAN

&

RISK FACTORS



Copyright © 2024 by Kate Beesley

All rights reserved

No part of this book may be reproduced in any form or by any electronic or mechanical means, including information storage and retrieval systems, without written permission from the author, except for the use of brief quotations in a book review.

Table of Contents

About the Author	1
Safety Exit Plan	6
Risk Factors	23

About The Author

As a survivor of domestic abuse, I can say without a doubt, it is soul-de- stroying for any victim of abuse to not feel heard, seen or believed when dealing with any of the authorities or professionals responsible for safe-guarding them and their children.

And this often leaves a victim feeling even more vulnerable and scared.

Hi, I'm Kate, and I'm a trauma and domestic abuse breakthrough specialist and DASH risk assessor and educator.

Not only have I trained intensively in the

world of trauma and the topics that embody violence against women and girls, but by combining my professional expertise with my own personal experience, I am confident that if more professionals were trained to take a trauma-informed, yet factual approach to risk assessing and when engaging in any investigative process it would not only strengthen a victim's confidence and trust when dealing with these professionals, but it could reduce the rate of fatalities and improve outcomes for women and girls.

I'm also a firm believer that a big part of the jigsaw puzzle to reduce the rate of fatalities is to arm

women and girls with the facts around coercive control, stalking, violence, and other abuse-related crimes.

And helping them to better understand what is reportable and how best to approach this when engaging with the authorities and navigating day-to-day life.

Nobody deserves to live their life in fear or walk through life looking over their shoulder, which is why my mission is to bring about a change in how professionals approach this ever-growing problem and empower women and girls to transition from victim to survivor.

My Professional Qualifications

Certified Trauma Practitioner which includes knowledge in neuroscience, the nervous system, positive psychology and behaviour analysis.

Accredited Domestic Abuse, Stalking & Harassment Risk Assessor and Educator (Formerly certified and trained by Laura

Richards in her university-accredited DASH & DASH Train the Trainer program)

Anti-Pathology Trauma Informed Advocate (Formerly trained and certified by the founder of Victim Focus Dr Jessica Taylor)

Diploma in Criminal and Forensic Psychology

Certified Meditation Teacher

Certified Clinical Hypnotherapist

Certified Breath Meditation Teacher

I have also developed my own trauma-informed accredited training, which is approved by the Complementary Medical Association and holds CMA CPD Accreditation.

If you are passionate about transforming your past into a purpose-driven career, don't hesitate to reach out to learn more about becoming a trauma-informed advocate and expert witness.

Safety Exit Plan

Your exit plan is an important process to consider when leaving any abusive relationship.

Quite often when an abusive partner realises you are planning on leaving, the abuse can escalate, but not only does the emotional abuse increase, but this is also the time physical safety is compromised.

An exit plan is designed to help you consider all your options and implement steps to limit the risk to yourself or your children.

A perpetrator who has a history of coercive and controlling behaviour and meets several of the high-risk factors, once discarded has at higher risk of committing a murder or serious assault.

This is in no way to frighten you; it is simply to highlight the importance of exiting in the safest possible way for you and your children.

THINGS TO THINK ABOUT

- Become aware of low-risk areas in the home where there are no implements that could be used as weapons, and if possible has more than one exit route.
- If an argument or heated discussion was to occur, try move the conversation to this part of the home.
- Always keep your phone on you, having it discreetly in a pocket is preferred so that you can access it easily if you need to call 999 for emergency assistance.
- Additionally, if it is safe use your phone to record any event which could later be used as evidence with the police or courts.
- Keep your handbag, keys, money, or cards in an easily accessible place in case you need to grab them in a hurry.

- If you have a neighbour you can trust, let them know about the situation and ask them to call the emergency services if they are concerned at all.
- Have a discrete secret word for friends and family so you can message them or call them using this word as a signal you need help.
- Store in your phone emergency numbers under female friend's names.

LEAVING WITH CHILDREN

Unless your children have been directly exposed to the abuse, it is always best to avoid alerting them to the situation until the time is right. One thing we must be mindful of is being accused of badmouthing the other parent. This could backfire on you when it comes to court and child arrangements.

Obviously if the children are aware of the situation, then I don't believe in diluting the seriousness of the situation or lying to them in any way because this can also result in trust issues occurring and one thing the children need in a situation like this is

certainty, they have one safe parent in their life that they can trust.

And the children are victims also, so we certainly do not want to minimise what they have experienced or how they have been impacted.

It's very much a case of weighing up and evaluating the conditions your children are exposed to and how much awareness they currently have.

- Talking to children about what to do in an emergency is a vital life skill regardless of there being domestic abuse in the house.
- Depending on their age, ensure they remember as many of the details needed for the emergency services, such as their full name, Mummy and Daddy's first names, address, and phone number.
- Teaching them to call 999 or shout for help if anyone is seriously hurt or unconscious or in case of a fire is vital for your current situation.

- If your children are aware of the situation, encourage them to call for help if things were to escalate but not to try intervening or get involved.

EMERGENCY BAG

Pack an emergency bag for yourself and the children and hide it somewhere safe. Ideally, this needs to be out of the family home but if you can't leave it at a friend's house or neighbours, then have this somewhere your abuser won't find it and you can grab it easily in a hurry.

When I think back to when my abuser locked me and my daughter out, we had nothing other than a small amount of credit on a credit card, which I only had by chance, so before checking into a hotel for the night I had to buy everything we needed so I could at least attend to my daughter's immediate needs.

When packing an emergency bag think about the worst case scenario because you may not be able to gain access to the home you shared with the perpetrator for some time.

THINGS TO CONSIDER:

- Money/cards
- Extra set of house or car keys
- A couple of sets fresh clothes for you and the children
- Passports
- Birth certificates
- Marriage certificates
- Any other legal documents you may need for the house or insurances etc.
- Bank details
- Medication
- Any documents related to children

If it's not possible to go to a friend or family member, maybe have an idea of a couple of hotels, you could affordably book into until you can contact the relevant authorities and women's refuges.

BEFORE YOU LEAVE

Discuss with a trusted friend or family member your intention of breaking away from your abuser. It is important to know where you are going to be able to stay until you get back on your feet.

If it's not possible to go to a friend or family member, maybe have an idea of a couple of hotels, you could affordably book into until you can contact the relevant authorities and women's refuges.

One of the most dangerous times as previously mentioned, is when you leave your abuser.

The moment you remove any degree of control from your abuser and pose a risk of exposing the abuse, you're no longer the women they moulded and groomed to control throughout the relationship. You become a risk and their only thoughts will be, how do they keep you silent and how do they continue to make you suffer. Therefore, the sooner you can put a call into the police the better and at the very least get a crime logged and a statement on record.

Ask them to place a critical marker on any address in case the perpetrator was to locate you.

Provided the evidence, you provide the police is strong enough they should bring them in for questioning and pass over to CPS for a charging decision.

If this results in the suspect being released on conditional bail, you at least have a small amount of protection for a max of 90 days. This is when you will need to consider a non-molestation order or a stalking protection order.

Regardless of an official legal investigation, always apply to the family court for an emergency non-molestation and an occupational order.

A non-molestation order is an order made by the family court which restricts your abuser from directly contacting or coming within a certain distance of where you live. It may also have other restrictions such as preventing the perpetrator making contact via a third party such as family or friends.

An Occupational order is an order made by a judge around the residence of the family home. The aim in applying for an occupational order in the case of a domestic abuse case is for the judge to order the perpetrator to move out of the family home so you and the children can reside there.

The order will usually instruct your partner to not turn up at the family home unless otherwise agreed.

If the family home is in your ex partner's sole name you will need to apply for a residency order in your name on the land registry. This will prevent the other party from selling or borrowing against the property without your say so.

This will strengthen your position if you apply to court for an occupational order.

THINKING ABOUT DIVORCE?

As a rule, I wouldn't be encouraging a victim to start divorce proceedings until they are safely away from the perpetrator. However, not everyone's situation is as extreme, so this is a decision you must weigh up carefully, but from my experience, perpetrators can become more volatile and antagonistic once this process is put into motion.

Just a quick note on divorce, I know the cost implications around this can be something that can stop people from making that break. But I promise you, you can do this without a solicitor, and even if you decide to invest in representation for court, you can save an absolute fortune by doing all the application process yourself.

POST SEPARATION AND MAINTAINING SAFETY AROUND CHILD ARRANGEMENTS.

This is where it gets a bit tricky, and you must weigh up the risk to your safety.

The first thing to consider is the age of the children and if they are expressing any wishes to see the other parent.

Whether the children wish to see the other parent or not, I would encourage you to apply for an emergency child arrangement hearing highlighting there is a history of domestic abuse.

And if the other parent does not know your new location of residence it is also important to complete a C8 form which will prevent the courts from giving the other side any of your contact information.

Depending on how quickly the court respond, if the children are asking to speak to or see the other parent, I would potentially arrange telephone communication which takes place with an external family member or friend present.

Be sure to highlight in advance that any calls that are arranged must be child focused and it is not an invitation to engage in dialogue regarding any other matter and advise them that the call will be recorded.

If the conversation at any point becomes abusive, threatening or not child focused, terminate the call and report to the police as a stalking offence.

If the children on the other hand are expressing strong wishes not to see the other parent due to their own fear, as their resident parent you have the right to do what you feel is in their best interest to keep them all safe and well. But I would advise applying to court as soon as possible.

I know some McKenzie friends and solicitors would say wait and see if the other parent applies to court for access, but there are three reasons I would recommend not to.

The first reason is so you feel more in control of the process and the last thing you want is to be wondering when your ex is going to creep out of the woodwork with a child arrangements application. This is going to add to your anxiety.

The second reason is by taking the bull by the horns you can put the true facts across to CAFCASS from the start, and as the applicant it means it is down to the perpetrator to disprove any allegations.

The final reason is, it looks like you are being child focused and looking to seek a safe outcome for your child/children. And by being proactive you are less likely to be accused of alienation.

Remember, always be legally factual and back everything up with examples and evidence if you have it.

OTHER THINGS TO CONSIDER

No contact is vital at this stage of your recovery and if you must communicate regarding the children try to avoid getting into dialogue.

Change your main day to day number and if the children have telephone contact with the other parent, have a dedicated email and cheap phone just for that contact at the arranged time, and have that phone switched off between arranged call times.

I honestly cannot tell you how much of a difference no contact makes. It is hard at first because your system will want to draw you to what's familiar and will be craving that dopamine hit, but, as hard as it feels, please stick it out. If you get the urge to contact them, distract yourself with a meditation or one of the tools I am going to be walking you through. Call a friend or family member instead if you need to get it out of your system.

If you're tempted to message, type all you want to say and send it to your spare phone.

If you must engage on calls with the children or handovers if child arrangements are firmed up via an order, it is important to continue to avoid any verbal engagement and try to have a friend or family member with you whenever possible and any handovers need to take place in a public place.

For Example in a supermarket car park as an example. Just make it somewhere there are plenty of people around.

This is where regulation tools come in, because reacting is an instinctive response when we are operating from the emotional part of our brain. The other thing I want you to consider, once you have arranged accommodation for you and the children, is a security camera. I know it may seem extreme, but if the police are currently involved, or need to be involved in the future, this evidence will prove useful.

Let your children's school know immediately of the situation. Advise them of any court applications and any safeguarding matters they need to consider if the father was to turn up and they know to contact you straight away.

It's also important to remind them to update any emergency contact information if necessary.

If your ex-partner turns up at the address you and the children reside at, call 999 immediately and never arrange for any collections to take place at your address, these must only ever happen in a public place or by another person like a grandparent or other relative who you can trust.

Make a list of friends and family that could support you in an emergency if you need it.

Start to work on your timeline. If you can have this done before engaging with the police, this would be beneficial. But please don't put off reporting anything if your risk is imminent.

This is discussed further into this resource and in your free members area.

If you need help and a safe space contacting or reaching out to police when the uk government has connected up with some banks and pharmacies and supermarkets which are acting as a safe space for victims.

These can be located by going to www.heistia.org and asking for an ANI and you will be taken to a safe and private space and offered support to call police and domestic abuse services.

This only applies to victims living in the uk.

You can also access our free women's only support group where you can get guidance on any safeguarding and risk concerns from trained professionals...

**“The Journey to Safety & Freedom Begins With
A Single Step.”**

- Would you describe yourself as extremely anxious / distressed?
 - Are you afraid?
 - Are you separated?
 - If yes, is there ongoing unwanted behaviour that is causing you distress?
 - Is there a history of Sexual abuse / sexual assault / rape?
 - Is there a history of Abuse towards a minor?
 - Is there a history of Threats of suicide?
 - Is there a history of Coercive Control?
 - Is there a history of non-fatal Strangulation or suffocation?
 - Has the proprietor used Weapons either to harm or induce fear?
 - Is there a history of Threats to kill?
 - Is there a history of Isolation
 - Is there a history of drug / alcohol misuse from the suspect
 - Are you pregnant?
 - Do you have Children with the suspect?

If you have any worries regarding your safety or that of your children, it is essential to document everything clearly to improve outcomes with both law enforcement and family court.

The Safe Voice Tool-Kit is specifically designed to equip you with the resources you need for this purpose. You can purchase it from my Stan store.

Additionally, if you would like an expert evaluation of your current situation and risks, feel free to book a call for a conversation through my Stan store as well.