

COVID-19 & DOMESTIC VIOLENCE SAFETY BULLETIN

Keeping families safe from domestic violence during COVID-19 (coronavirus)

For people dealing with domestic violence, home is not a safe place. Mandates to quarantine may keep you safe from a pandemic, but can be deadly when you live with an abusive partner. Domestic violence spikes during times of stress and economic hardship. Violence can be less predictable and more severe.

Warning signs of violent behavior

- Obsession over you; your abuser says they cannot live without you
- Threats or attempts to kill you, your children, your relatives or your pets
- Threats or attempts to kidnap you or your children
- Violence or severe incidents of abuse towards you, your children, your relatives or your pets
- Choking/strangulation
- Depression or talk of suicide
- Fantasies of homicide or suicide
- Possession of or threats to use weapons
- Increased use of drugs or alcohol
- Unpredictable changes in behavior
- Destruction of property

Take extra precautions when weapons are present and always be prepared and alert.

If you recognize any of these behaviors, take them seriously. Call The Rainbow House's 24-hour hotline, (800) 956-6656.

Tips to stay safe when living in violence

- Identify safe areas of the house where there are no weapons and there are ways to escape. If arguments occur, try to move to those areas.
- Don't run to where the children are, as your partner may hurt them as well.
- If violence is unavoidable, make yourself a small target. Dive into a corner and curl up into a ball with your face protected and arms around each side of your head, fingers entwined.
- Watch for patterns of abuse and try to manage possible triggers before violence occurs.

3 THINGS YOU CAN DO RIGHT NOW TO STAY SAFE:

- 1) **Make a safety plan.**
Call Rainbow House for help with safety planning, restraining orders and ongoing support. Call the free, confidential 24-hour hotline, (800) 956-6656, to speak with an Advocate or visit therainbowhouse.us for more info.
- 2) **Learn the facts about COVID-19.**
Knowledge is power. Learn to safeguard against COVID-19 from trusted sources (i.e., cdc.gov) or call 2-1-1, Mon.- Fri., 8 a.m.-4:45 p.m. Weigh your options based on the facts.
- 3) **Ask for help.**
You are not alone. It's not your fault and we're (still) here to help. Call the 24-hour hotline any time, day or night. Phone, text and email support also is available. Call 911 for help, if needed.

Social distancing is necessary for public health. To avoid further isolation, stay connected with at least one trusted adult in your life. Scheduled, daily check-ins are important.

Tips to stay safe when living in violence *(continued)*

- If possible, have a phone accessible at all times and know what numbers to call for help. Memorize Rainbow House's hotline, (800) 956-6656. Call 911 if your life is in danger.
- Let trusted friends and neighbors know of your situation and develop a plan and visual signal or code words for when you need help.
- Teach your children how to get help. Instruct them not to get involved in the violence between you and your partner. Plan a code word to signal to them that they should get help or leave the house.
- Tell your children that violence is never right, even when someone they love is being violent. Tell them that neither you, nor they, are at fault or are the cause of the violence, and that when anyone is being violent, it is important to stay safe.
- Practice how to get out safely. Practice with your children.
- Plan for what you will do if your children tells your partner of your plan or if your partner otherwise finds out about your plan.
- Keep weapons like guns and knives locked away and as inaccessible as possible.
- Make a habit of backing the car into the driveway and keeping it fueled. Keep the driver's door unlocked and others locked — for a quick escape.
- Try not to wear scarves or long jewelry that could be used to strangle you.
- Create several plausible reasons for leaving the house at different times of the day or night.

Call Rainbow House Domestic Abuse Services for help

Source: End Abuse Wisconsin

Rainbow House continues to serve the Marinette, Oconto and Menominee county areas during the ongoing COVID-19 crisis. We have taken precautions to keep you and our staff safe from COVID-19.

Call the 24-hour hotline, (800) 956-6656, any time, day or night. Phone, text and email support also is available. A text line is also available at (906) 290-9081. Call 911 for emergency help, if needed.

Mailing Address

PO Box 1172

Marinette, WI 54143

Phone: (800) 956-6656

TEXT LINE: (906) 290-9081

Marinette Office

1530 Main St.

Marinette, WI 54143

Phone: (715) 735-6656

Oconto Office

1008-B Pecor Street

Oconto, WI 54153

Phone: (920) 834-5299



*Rainbow
House*

"Empowerment Beyond Abuse"

