## [Tool B2] Safety plan and action Worksheet

[downloadable word document]

**What are safety plans? Safety actions?**

Once the level of harm and risk are considered, you and your team will want to think about safety plans in case there is immediate danger, and safety actions to try to get safe.

Safety plans

Safety plans are often made for ‘what if’ situations. They include who to call in an emergency, signals for others that help is needed, safe-keeping things needed for escape, plans to pick up children and keep them safe.

Safety actions

Safety actions might need to happen immediately in order to be safe, reach safety or get people out of harm’s way. Safety actions are particularly necessary when there is crisis or high danger. This includes danger of physical harm, as well as emotional, sexual and financial harm. Safety plans include removing weapons, moving children to a safer place, involving friends and whānau, and distracting someone who is dangerous to lower the level of violence or get them away while plans for safety are being made.

**Getting together as a safety network**

Safety actions are often taken when there is danger, so they should include at least one other person (more is better) to help with planning, support and follow up.

They are best done with a group of community allies whose roles might include:

1. Brainstorming risks, safety plans and actions

2. Brainstorming who is best for roles in creating safety

3. Getting more information on who can help or what the dangers might be

4. Planning or taking action for safety

5. Being a back-up person.

**How to use the safety plan and action worksheet**

1. Get together with another person or as a team

2. Make a risk assessment chart [link tool b1 Risk Assessment Chart] or check it if you have already made one. Make sure it is based on what’s happening now.

3. Think about how each risk can match up to a Safety Plan that responds to it. Start with the highest risks before thinking about ones with lower levels of danger. Make notes to help with fulling out the worksheet. Things to think about:

a. What do you need to do to be safe (or reduce risk)? For example:

* + Prepare for escape (see Escape safety checklist [link to tool B4] for help)
  + Tell trusted people about what is happening
  + Ask trusted people to help (See Who can help for people harmed [link to 1C], people causing harm [link to 2c] and allies [link to 3c] for more ideas about how people can help). They could:
    - Watch for danger in specific situations
    - Be an emergency person to call
    - Brainstorm in times of confusion or crisis
    - Remember plans and details
    - Check in regularly by stopping by, calls, emails, texts
    - Get emergency help if a signal is given
    - Be physical protection
    - Be emotional or spiritual support
    - Be around as a witness to harm
    - Distract or reason with person doing harm
    - Confront person doing harm to prevent further harm
    - Get and take care of children or other dependents
    - Get and take care of pets
    - Provide a safe place (home, office, school, church, etc)
    - Keep emergency items in a safe place
  + Find out about and contact resources. They might include stopping violence programme/organisation, counsellor, knowledgeable family members or friends, internet, legal services, workplace, union, school
  + Prepare or gather things that you need to take action
  + Get locks or change locks
  + Keep important things in protected areas—friend’s home, safety deposit box, workplace.

b. What are safe ways to contact people?

* Think about confidentiality and making sure that information doesn’t become public through shared computers, emails, voice mail or reading other people’s texts.

c. Can you get where you need to go safely?

* Safe routes
* Safe ways to travel
* Safe place to park car
* Back-up transport
* Picking up other allies, family, or friends.

d. Do you have a safe place to meet?

* + Think about confidentiality and making sure that people are safe to talk
  + If you are meeting with someone who might cause harm, think about using a public space where there are people around.

e. Do you have safe places to escape to or hide?

* People may need places to hide or public places where they might be safer.

f. What needs to be in a communication plan?

* Signs or signals that things are okay or not okay
* Follow up communication that things went okay or not okay
* Follow up communication for next steps
* Agreement on who can know what and who can’t.

4. What needs action now?

Sometimes you need to take action to make things safe because the danger level is so high. Other times, you might act now because something has happened that gives you have a chance to act.

Examples of times when you may want act:

* Someone needs to escape from immediate risk of harm
* Children or youth need to be removed from risk of harm
* Weapons need to be removed to decrease level of danger
* Health or mental health concerns need immediate action
* Someone causing harm needs to be immediately removed from a situation, asked to stay away, distracted from entering a situation, locked out, banned (at least temporarily), physically restrained (if this is necessary to keep them from causing harm).

**Other things to think about**

This website encourages honest communication and action, but that’s not always safe. Distraction, hiding information and outright dishonesty are often needed, especially when there is high danger. Safety Plans and Actions may also need some level of force.

Safety must come first. At times, you may need to use dishonesty or threats, force or restraint on the person doing harm.

If the person doing harm is taking accountability, it may be safe to be more honest. That could include talking about why earlier actions were less honest.

### Safety plan and action worksheet

This safety plan is for the following situation:

This safety plan covers the time period:

The safety plan includes:

* What are the risks and dangers? What can go wrong?
* Who do we need to look out for? Who or what can cause risks and dangers—people, situations or systems?
* Who can get hurt? How?
* What can we do to stay safe?
* Who is responsible for what part of the safety plan?
* Have we covered everything? Do we need to bring in more people?
* Is there an emergency back-up plan? What is it? How will we know to go to the back-up? A signal or code?

The follow up plan includes:

* How did it go?
* What did we learn?
* How does this affect our safety plan? Our overall intervention?
* Are there any changes to be made? What are they?
* Who do we need to get in touch with? Who will do that?
* What do we need to tell them?
* Who can know?
* Who should not know?
* What are the next steps?