In emergencies and through stressful times, it can be difficult to think and react clearly. Creating a safety plan in advance will ensure you have a system in place when you need it.

1. **H ave a Support System**
   - Stay connected to family, friends, and online support groups you trust.

2. **Important Documents**
   - Gather important documents: ID's, social security cards, health insurance cards, immigration documents, birth certificate, Custody Order, Protection Order. Take pictures and make copies of them, and give them to trusted relatives and friends.

3. **Code Word**
   - Establish code words with people you trust to signal you’re not safe and need help. Plan in advance what they should do if you tell them the code word.

4. **Pack a Bag**
   - If possible, prepare a bag with any essential items - documents, medication, car keys, cell phone, extra charger, list of phone numbers of people you trust, change of clothing.

5. **Take Care of Yourself**
   - You know your situation the best. Individualize your self care.

6. **Exit Plan**
   - Create an exit plan ahead of time: identify friends or relatives you trust and could support your needs.

**DC Volunteer Lawyers Project**

For more information, please visit: WWW.DCVLP.ORG