My Safety Plan: On the Internet

If your partner is **abusive and controlling**,
he may **monitor your activities on the Internet**.
Your help-seeking activity, such as looking for services for
abused women, may upset him.
You can take the following steps to
INCREASE YOUR SAFETY ONLINE.

Is there a record of my activity on the Internet?

Yes there is. Internet browsers record a history of your activity when you are on the computer. Your Internet browser may be saving the following types of information when you go online:

- **Browsing & Download History:** browsing history includes the list of sites you've visited, while download history includes the list of files you've downloaded.

- **Form & Search Bar History:** form history includes information you've entered into web-page forms (such as your name and address), and terms you've entered into search bars or sites.

- **Cookies:** cookies store information about websites you visit, and can be used by third parties to track you across sites.

- **Cache:** the cache stores temporary files, such as web pages that you Internet browser downloaded to speed up the loading of pages you've already seen.

- **Site Preferences:** site specific preferences include permissions for sites and zoom levels.

Who can see my activity on the Internet?

It is easy for someone who has access to your computer or mobile devices to check the history and see where you have been "surfing" for the day, or the week or several months. If your partner is abusive and controlling, he may check your history. He may get upset to see you are looking for information about services and resources for women experiencing Intimate Partner Violence. This could put you in harm.

Can I hide my activity on the Internet?

It is never possible to completely delete all of the evidence of your computer activity. However, you can **clear the computer's memory** of the most recent pages you viewed on the Internet. This memory is the browser's cache. By emptying your computer's cache it will delete your recently visited sites.

How do I delete recently visited sites?

Deleting your online history may depend on the browser you use. The table below shows you how to clear or delete the memory on your computer by browser type.

Internet Explorer

- In Internet Explorer, select the **Tools** button, point to **Safety**, and then select **Delete** browsing history.
- Choose the types of data or files you want to remove from your computer, and then select **Delete**.

Firefox

- Click the menu button, choose **History**, and then **Clear Recent History**
- Select how much history you want to clear: Click the drop-down menu next to Time range to clear to choose how much of your history Firefox will clear
- Finally, click the **Clear Now** button.

What if I'm not sure which browser I am using?

If you don't know what browser you are using, follow these instructions:

- Find the **Menu** bar;
- Click on the **Help** menu and choose **Help**;
- In the search box, enter "**Clear Internet History"** or **"Delete Temporary"**. This should give you instructions for the computer program you are using.

Safari

- Choose **History**
- Clear **History**, then click **Clear**.
- Choose **History**
- Show **History**, select **history** entries and daily sets of entries,
- then press **Delete**

Google Chrome

- On your computer, open Chrome.
- At the top right, click **More**.
- Click **History**
- Click the button **Clear browsing data**. A dialog will appear.
- From the drop-down menu, select how much history you want to delete. To clear your entire browsing history, select the **beginning of time**.
- Check the boxes for the data you want Chrome to clear, including "browsing history."
- Click the button **Clear browsing data**

General Tips for

Safety on the Internet

- **Use the Quick Escape Button (if available) when you don't want someone to see the site you are visiting:** Many websites on the topic of "woman abuse" or "intimate partner violence" have a "quick escape" button. Click on this button to quickly exit the webpage. Typically this opens a more general website, such as google or a weather tracking website. **BE AWARE:** Clicking the 'quick exit' button will not clear the website from your browsing history.

- **Deleting your history after searching for resources and services.** Be careful. This may be a "red flag" to your partner that you are trying to hide something. Try to visit some general sites after deleting the history.

- **Use a safe computer.** To look online for information about services for women experiencing abuse, try to use a safe computer that your partner does not have access to. This might be mean using a computer at a friend's house, your workplace, a library or other public place.

- **Use secure passwords:** Do not include your name, your pet or child's name, or anything that could be easily guessed. Try to use a combination of letters, both upper and lowercase, and numbers. Don't use your birthdate.

- **Change your user names and passwords.** Create new usernames and passwords for your email, online banking, and other sensitive accounts. Even if you don't think your partner has your passwords, change them anyway. He may have guessed or used a spyware or keylogging program to get them.

- **Be careful using email, instant messaging and social networking sites.** Email and instant messaging are not a safe way to communicate. Your partner may know how to access your accounts. Be careful what you post on facebook as he may access it from a friends page.

- **Do not send sensitive information or plans by texting and Instant Messaging.** This is not a secure way to discuss sensitive information because your partner may be able to access these conversations as well.

- **Clear your browsing history on your mobile phone.** If you use your cell phone to look at websites and information, be sure to clear your history on the Internet browser on your phone if you do not want your partner to see it.

- **Find out what others can see on your public facebook page.** To do this, just do a full search in your browser for your name in quotation marks – **"Full Name"**. You can even search by a specific person's name to find out what they can see. Change your privacy settings if necessary.

- **Be aware of other technologies that your partner might use to monitor your activities.** You partner might install hidden cameras, such as a "Nanny Cam". It is even possible to use a baby monitor to check in on you. Global Positioning System (GPS) devices can be hidden in your car, your purse, or other objects you carry with you. If you find such tracking or recording devices, do not remove them until you are ready to leave.

- **Seek support from crisis workers.** For more information on hiding your internet activities, seek the assistance of a local service provider such as a transition house, domestic violence outreach worker.