

William and Mary

Student Safety Plan



The Office of Sexual Assault Services
757-221-7369

www.wm.edu/sexualassault

Important Information about Personal Safety Planning

By having a comprehensive Personal Safety Plan for everyday and/or crisis situations, you are not preventing dangerous situations or violence from happening. However, you can reduce the risks you may encounter on a daily basis by avoiding potentially dangerous situations AND by having a plan in place that helps you and your friends know what to do in case you end up in a situation that makes you uncomfortable or that is potentially dangerous.

Nobody ever chooses to become a victim of a crime. Unfortunately, there are people in our society who choose to commit crimes against other people. Crimes such as sexual assault, dating violence, and stalking are about power and control. When a person chooses to commit acts of violence, they take away another person's choice and violate their legal and human rights.

Talking with your group of friends about safety and planning together for situations that may be potentially dangerous will help prepare you to know what to do if you encounter these situations. For example, you and your friends can plan beforehand that you will all leave a party together if one of you feels uncomfortable. That way, nobody is left alone or forced to be in an uncomfortable or dangerous situation. You can plan to have a designated, sober driver to take you home at any point during the night.

For safety planning to be most effective, you should communicate your plan to others and discuss with your friends situations that involve doing things as a group or intervening if you think a friend might need help.

CREATE YOUR PERSONAL SAFETY PLAN!

This is an example of items a person might include in a Personal Safety Plan. You can add/delete any of these items to fit your unique situation. Remember, safety planning is about talking with your friends about what you can do as a group if you encounter potentially dangerous situations.

MY GUIDE TO PERSONAL SAFETY PLANNING

What is a Safety Plan?

A safety plan is a tool that is designed to empower you in becoming proactive about your personal safety. Safety plans are individualized plans that you should share with a trusted friend(s) describing daily actions you take to stay safe. A good safety plan covers everything from simple actions such as keeping your door locked at all times to more elaborate plans that detail actions for emergency or crisis situations.

Why do I need a Personal Safety Plan?

Most of us plan for our safety everyday without knowing it. We each have the ability to sense when a situation might be risky or dangerous. Often, we dismiss these “warning” signals and ignore any potential threats to our safety. Having a written safety plan simply helps us become more vigilant about our personal safety in any situation that may be potentially risky or dangerous. Some people may choose to safety plan only for emergency or crisis situations such as leaving an abusive partner or to avoid a stalker.

However, having a personal safety plan in place for everyday situations helps you and the people in your life become more aware of your surroundings.

Visit www.wm.edu/sexualassault for more information!

GENERAL SAFETY TIPS

The following are general safety tips that you should keep in mind while developing your Personal Safety Plan. For additional tips and information on safety, please contact with the W&M Police Department or visit <http://www.wm.edu/police/cptips.php>

- Always keep doors locked- even when at home.
- Do not prop exterior doors.
- Do not lend your key card to anyone.
- Always find out who is knocking before opening the door.
- Store all valuable property in a safe place.
- Do not carry large sums of money or valuable items or keep them in the residence halls.

- Be sure to keep a list of all serial numbers, model information, and other identifying characteristics for your property and valuables in a safe and accessible place.
- Post emergency contact numbers in a visible place (Note: remember to write down or memorize important numbers from your cell phone so if you are stuck without your cell phone or it dies you still have the numbers you may need).
- Share weekly/daily schedules with your roommate(s) or a trusted friend(s) and create a process for checking in if someone is going to be out past a certain time or will be gone for an extended time.
- Create a signal to indicate when someone is in danger and needs assistance (this could be a simple but easily recognizable code word or phrase that can be communicated in person or over the phone). Be sure to practice it so that it is not forgotten.
- Plan out a primary and alternative escape route from your residence in the event of an emergency. Be sure it is accessible at all times.
- Designate a “safe” place(s) to go or meet friends if you are in danger.
- Store emergency money, credit cards, and identifying information in a secure but easily accessible location. It is also a good idea to have the phone number of your credit card company available to report theft, etc.
- Do not walk or jog alone- Campus Escort is available to provide safe walks around campus. The number is 221-3293 and is also on the back of the student ID card.
- If you end up walking or jogging alone, always stay alert and tuned in to your surroundings. Do not take shortcuts if it means walking alone in untraveled or unlighted areas.
- Always plan your routes with safety in mind. Only walk or jog in well-lighted and well-traveled areas.
- If you own or operate a motor vehicle, be sure to perform routine preventative maintenance.

OTHER SITUATIONS THAT MIGHT REQUIRE ADDITIONAL SAFETY PLANNING...

- When you are “Going Out”
- Situations where alcohol is present
- When you are traveling
- Crisis or Emergency Situations

WHEN YOU ARE “GOING OUT”

You and your friends should form an additional plan for when you are “going-out” (this could be going to a party, a bar, a nightclub, etc. either on or off-campus) which includes:

- Steps on how to make it home safely if you get separated from your friends.
- Before you leave, designate a sign or word indicating if person needs help or feels uncomfortable in a situation.
- Come up with a plan as to how you will get home. This could include a promise with friends to leave as a group, including leaving early if any situation feels uncomfortable for any person in that group.
- Be sure to bring with you the numbers for local taxis, Campus ESCORT, and Steer Clear (a service providing safe rides home for students on the weekend).

WHEN ALCOHOL IS INVOLVED

The safest and only legal option for those under 21 is to choose not to drink! We know that most William and Mary students already use strategies to reduce their risk when drinking alcohol. Some students choose not to drink. Most students consume 4 drinks or less when they party. Here are a few tips for you and your friends to remember if you decide to drink alcohol:

- Set a reasonable limit of how much you are going to drink and stick to it.
- Talk with your friends beforehand about your limit.
- Make a plan with your friends about how to intervene if one of you is drinking too much or becomes impaired.
- Be sure to eat before you drink and while you are drinking.
- Pay attention to how much you are drinking throughout the night. Pace drinks over time and avoid playing drinking games.
- Alternate an alcoholic beverage with a non-alcoholic beverage.
- Try to keep your Blood Alcohol Content (BAC) below .05.
- Never leave your drink unattended.
- ALWAYS use a designated driver, call Steer Clear or a taxi and don't get into a vehicle driven by anyone who has been drinking.
- Be sure to know the signs of alcohol poisoning and get help immediately if you suspect someone has alcohol poisoning.
- Remember that alcohol can impair your ability to make decisions like whether or not to engage in sexual activity. A good rule to follow? When alcohol is involved... hands off!

For more information about low-risk drinking, the effects of alcohol, to access an online BAC calculator, or to access alcohol-related resources, visit www.wm.edu/tribechoices

WHEN YOU ARE TRAVELING

For additional tips on traveling safety, visit <http://www.wm.edu/police/cptips.php>

GET EDUCATED!

For more information about healthy relationships, communication, alcohol, or helping your friends, visit www.wm.edu/sexualassault

CRISIS SITUATIONS

Creating a Personal Safety Plan for a crisis situation helps someone plan for times when they might be in danger and think through what is needed to get out of that situation and to a safe place where further help and support can be accessed. Even though someone may never have to use a crisis safety plan, they are a critical component of crisis management. Often in emergency or crisis situations, it is hard to think clearly or logically, and having a plan laid out will help someone get help quickly and safely:

Note: If you are unsure of whether or not you or someone you know might need a crisis safety plan, you can contact a Sexual Assault Peer Advocate, the Sexual Assault Educator or The Director of Sexual Assault Services for confidential consultation or help creating a plan. Examples of situations in which you might need to create a crisis safety plan include, but are not limited to:

- If you or someone you know has been/is a survivor of intimate partner violence and is still living with the abuser or is trying to leave an abusive situation (note: a situation or relationship can be abusive even if there are no physical signs of abuse. Even if there is no physical abuse taking place, a safety plan is still important).
- If you or someone you know is being stalked by an intimate partner or a stranger, either in person or over the internet or phone.
- If you or someone you know is a survivor of sexual assault and is worried about their personal safety or the possibility of having contact with the offender.

A BASIC CRISIS SAFETY PLAN SHOULD INCLUDE:

- **Emergency Contacts.** Designate a trusted emergency contact(s) and share your safety plan with them so they are aware of your situation and can check in with you on a pre-arranged, regular basis.
- **Designated A Safe Place(s).** Pick locations on campus that can be your safe space if you are in danger. Safe places can include friend's rooms, the W&M police department, etc. Keep in mind that you need an I.D. card to get in to many places on campus. Have a location(s) in mind that you can enter without your I.D. card, 24-Hours a day.
- **Escape Routes/ Transportation:** Plan an escape route from your residence to your safe place(s). If you have to go through other rooms (such as your suitemate's) inform the inhabitants of your escape route and make sure it's okay

with them. Keep in mind well lit, well traveled paths on and around campus. Know where the emergency blue lights are located on your route(s). If you don't have a car or cannot get to it, brainstorm alternate transportation. This can include having phone numbers of friends with cars (on paper in case you do not have your cell phone). Write down the number for taxis and have a bus schedule available in case you need to use the bus.

- **What to bring with you:** This can vary by person and by situation. Make sure your important documents and identification are easily accessible. Set aside a safe stash of cash and/or emergency credit card(s) that is secure but easily accessible. Take your list of emergency contacts and any necessities you might immediately need.
- **A Back-Up Plan:** Have a back up plan for what to do if your transportation falls through, or your safe place is locked etc.
- **Sexual Assault/Dating Violence/Stalking:** If your crisis safety plan is for situations of sexual assault, dating violence, and/or staking, there are additional services on campus and within the local community to keep you safe. For example, on campus you can request an order of no contact against the offender from the Dean of Students. Off-campus, you can request a Protective Order from the local magistrate. You should contact an advocate to learn about all of your rights and available options.

ADDITIONAL RESOURCE INFORMATION

Emergency Response	911
William and Mary Police	757-221-4596
Sexual Assault Peer Advocates	757-645-8367
Director of Sexual Assault Services	757-221-3620
Sexual Assault Educator	757-221-7369
Student Health Center	757-221-4386
Counseling Center	757-221-3620
Dean of Students	757-221-2510
Residence Life	757-221-4314
Sentara Wmbg Community Hospital	757-984-6000
Wmbg Police Dept.	757-220-2331
JCC Police Dept.	757-253-1800
Avalon Helpline	757-258-5051

For resources and information if you or someone you know has been sexually assaulted, or to learn more, visit:

www.wm.edu/sexualassault