

# MEASURING SAFETY PROJECT

## BARRIER FREE LIVING'S DOMESTIC VIOLENCE PROGRAMS

Barrier Free Living's Domestic Violence Teams have been working on creating outcome measures for its work with victims with disabilities. A report on Outcome Evaluation published by the **National Resource Center on Domestic Violence** stated that *OUTCOME EVALUATION* assesses what occurred as a direct result of the program. Outcomes must be measurable, realistic, and philosophically tied to program activities.

**An OUTCOME is a change in knowledge, attitude, skill, behavior, expectation, emotional status, or life circumstance *due to the service being provided.***

**The most critical outcome for a domestic violence program is promoting attitudes, skills and behaviors that lead to safety from abuse.**

**In our research of available literature, no one has created a comprehensive measure for safety outcomes.**

**Safety has been broken down into five facets:**

- **Travel Safety**
- **Electronic Safety**
- **Financial Safety**
- **Safety of Location**
- **Safety in Relationships**

Barrier Free Living have conducted a series of focus groups with shelter residents and staff to identify attitudes, skills and behaviors related to these five facets of safety. The following checklists were the results of the focus groups.

Barrier Free Living is working with researchers of New York University and the Program Committee of BFL's Board of Directors to refine these checklists into scientific outcome measures.

Barrier Free Living gives other programs permission to use the checklists with acknowledgement of their source.

This checklist is part of the Measuring Safety Project of Barrier Free Living's Domestic Violence Programs. For more information go to [www.bflnyc.org](http://www.bflnyc.org)

## TRAVEL SAFETY

- Are you always aware of your surroundings?
- Do you text while walking?
- Do you listen to music on headsets while traveling?
- Are you mindful of whom you share info with?
- Do you return to unsafe neighborhoods?
- Do you understand where you're going before you leave?
- Do you prepare ahead?
- Are you aware of alternative routes?
- Do you have a sense of purpose when you travel?
- Do you let someone you trust know what your travel plans are?
- Are you cautious when speaking with strangers?
- Do you sit near the driver on a bus or in the car near the conductor on a train?
- Do you cover up the jewelry you are wearing during travel?
- Do you check your surroundings before unlocking your car?

## ELECTRONIC SAFETY

\*Are you using higher security options on social networking sites (Facebook, Twitter, Tumblr) to limit accessibility to your profile and account?

\* Are you careful about what you communicate through text messages and email?  
(They are not completely confidential means of communication.)

\* Do you have a password to maintain the confidentiality of information on your phone? (Make use of the standard lock feature and employ the input of a necessary password to access use of the phone)

- Have you changed all passwords, access codes and pins for:  
ATM pin numbers,  
email passwords,  
phone passcodes,  
logins for web sites

(Use letters, numbers, and other characters to create a password unique to you, but also fairly easy for to remember--avoid birth dates, parts of your SSN, or previous addresses)

### ***GPS and Location Settings***

\*Be aware of GPS or location settings on your phone and computer--some applications (apps) announce your location within 160ft when you use them. If you don't want your location disclosed turn this feature off.

\*Use caution when taking pictures and posting them on any internet website or social networking site because some phones will indicate where you are located at the time of the picture

\*Be aware of "check in" features which will also disclose your location and post information to social networking sites.

\* "find my phone" features and apps make use of a phone's internal GPS to locate it REMOTELY if lost, however if the phone is not in your name or your abuser has lived with you while having the phone this feature can be used against you to compromise the confidentiality of your location.

Using secure cell phones decreases this risk (phones purchased in your name, pay-as-you-go, Safelink, etc). If this not an option, be aware of all the features activated on your phone. If applications on your phone and sometimes computer request to use your location (activate location services) during use, DO NOT activate this feature.

## FINANCIAL SAFETY

- Have you removed yourself from joint accounts to limit abuser's access of your funds?
- Have you changed your bank?
- If you have been receiving benefits in the form of a paper check, have you changed to direct deposit for increased financial security?
- Have you changed your debit card/ credit card numbers to ensure financial security?
- Have you checked your credit report recently?
- Have you gone paperless with bank and credit card statements to ensure that information regarding your finances are not sent to a residence that you have fled? Paper bank statements will indicate all your banking activity, including the location of any ATM where you have withdrawn funds.
- Have you changed all passwords for online financial transactions?
- Have you chosen passwords that anyone else could figure out? (like using names of children, dates of birth or other things that are easy to remember but also easy to guess)
- Have you given out your account information to anyone (EBT card, debit card, credit card)?
- Do you check your accounts regularly for any changes in access to your accounts?
- When receiving financial assistance from friends, family, or acquaintances (services such as Western Union), do you have a safe location that you can use that is not near your shelter or your new safe neighborhood?

## SAFETY OF LOCATION (near the shelter)

- Are you careful with the relationships you develop with people in the neighborhood?
- Do you avoid isolated areas?
- Follow your gut instinct when going to a new location?
- Do you plan what to say if asked, "Where do you live?"
- Do you have a SAFETY PLAN with your KIDS
- Do you alternate your routes instead of going same way every time?
- Do you know where your closest police station is?
- Do you carry your Order of Protection with you ALWAYS?

## **SAFETY OF LOCATION AFTER SHELTER**

### **Before you move:**

- ◆ Have you checked out the safety of your prospective neighborhood?
- ◆ Have you visited the new neighborhood in the evening as well as the daytime to assess its safety?
- ◆ Are basic needs close to your prospective home?
  - Grocery stores,
  - Laundromat,
  - Bank,
  - School
  - Hardware Store
- ◆ Are you near a police station?

### **After you move:**

- ◆ Are you keeping place of residence confidential?
- ◆ Do your children know not to share your address without your permission?
- ◆ Does everyone in the family know where the closest police station is?
- ◆ Have you rehearsed with your family what to say and do in case of an emergency?
- ◆ Are you and your children aware of your surroundings when in your new neighborhood?

## RELATIONSHIP SAFETY

### RED FLAGS IN RELATIONSHIPS:

- ◆ Calling names
- ◆ Hitting
- ◆ Stalking
- ◆ Control → demanding
- ◆ Yelling
- ◆ Isolation
- ◆ “Stop what you are doing and pay attention to me”
- ◆ Picking fights
- ◆ Claiming they love you when you first meet
- ◆ Manipulation
- ◆ “Buying” the children
- ◆ yelling at children
- ◆ Using Silence as punishment
- ◆ “You don’t have to work, I’m your everything”
- ◆ Not supportive of your personal interests
- ◆ Forgetting what makes you happy
- ◆ They want to know about you but they won’t open up about themselves
- ◆ Telling you what to wear
- ◆ Checking your phones to see who you call
- ◆ Being neglected by partner
- ◆ Want you to get rid of important things (friends memorable objects)
- ◆ Too good to be true
- ◆ Blaming former partners for their relationship problems

### GREEN LIGHTS

- ◆ Willing to wait to be intimate
- ◆ Patience, honesty, consistency
- ◆ Can keep and hold a job
- ◆ Healthy community – willing to listen, communicates with you as an equal
- ◆ Supportive of your interests and passions
- ◆ Comfort (feeling secure; sense of stability)
- ◆ Good relationship with children and/or family
- ◆ Willing to compromise (give & take)
- ◆ Examples of functional relationship from caregivers
- ◆ Self content
- ◆ Positive/functional social network
- ◆ Legally employed
- ◆ Takes responsibility for actions, words, emotions
- ◆ Willing to commit

### PERSONAL GREEN LIGHTS

- ◆ Have you found balance in your life?
- ◆ Have you developed Love for SELF?
- ◆ Have you learned to cope with loneliness; appreciation of solitude?
- ◆ Have you developed knowledge of self?