

SAFETY PLAN - CRISIS PREVENTION PLAN

Name: _____ Date: _____

PROBLEM BEHAVIORS: These are behaviors I sometimes show, especially when I'm stressed:

- Losing my temper
- Fighting/Assaulting people
- Feeling suicidal
- Running away
- Injuring myself
- Attempting suicide
- Threatening others
- Using alcohol
- Other (please describe): _____
- Using other drugs
- Feeling unsafe

TRIGGERS: When these things happen, I am more likely to feel unsafe and upset:

- Not being listened to
- Feeling pressured
- Being touched
- Lack of privacy
- Loud noises
- Feeling lonely
- Arguments
- Not having control
- Darkness
- Being stared at
- Being teased
- Particular time of day:
- Contact with family
- Particular person:
- Other (please describe): _____
- People yelling
- Being isolated
- Particular time of year:

WARNING SIGNS: These are things other people may notice me doing if I begin to lose control:

- Sweating
- Breathing hard
- Racing heart
- Clenching teeth
- Red faced
- Wringing hands
- Loud voice
- Sleeping a lot
- Acting hyper
- Swearing
- Bouncing legs
- Rocking
- Being Rude
- Pacing
- Crying
- Squatting
- Damaging things
- Eating more
- Eating less
- Not taking care of myself
- Isolating/avoiding people
- Singing inappropriately
- Becoming very quiet
- Other (please describe): _____
- Clenching fists
- Sleeping less
- Can't sit still
- Laughing loudly/giddy

INTERVENTIONS: These are things that might help me calm down and keep myself safe when I'm feeling upset:

(Check off what you know works; star things you might like to try in the future)

- Time out in my room
- Listening to music
- Talking with friends
- Talking with an adult
- Exercising
- A cold cloth on face
- Taking a hot shower
- Taking a cold shower
- Screaming into pillow
- Ripping paper
- Male staff support
- Bouncing a ball
- Being read a story
- Drawing
- Being read a story
- Doing chores/jobs
- Being around others
- Other (please describe): _____
- Calling family (who?)
- Reading a book
- Coloring
- Writing in a journal
- Playing cards
- Holding ice in my hand
- Female staff support
- Making a collage
- Cold water on hands
- Sitting with staff
- Molding clay
- Punching a pillow
- Video Games
- Getting a hug
- Deep breathing
- Crying
- Drinking hot herb tea
- Pacing
- Humor
- Hugging a stuffed animal
- Lying down
- Using the gym
- Speaking w/ my therapist
- Snapping bubble wrap
- Using a rocking chair

THINGS THAT MAKE IT WORSE: These are things that do NOT help me calm down or stay safe:

- Being alone
- Being disrespected
- Being reminded of the rules
- Being around people
- Loud tone of voice
- Being touched
- Humor
- Being ignored
- Other (please describe): _____
- Not being listened to
- Having staff support
- Peers teasing
- Talking to an adult

CRISIS PLAN:

- 1) I will try to notice the following warning signs and triggers:
- 2) I'd like staff/my family to notice the following warning signs:
- 3) When I notice these triggers or warning signs, I will take action to prevent a crisis from developing by doing the following:
- 4) When staff/my family notice that I'm getting upset, I'd like them to help me prevent a crisis by doing the following:
- 5) When I handle a potential crisis without doing anything to make it worse, I can reward myself by:
- 6) Other ideas about what to do if a crisis develops:

My Signature: _____

Date: _____

My Supporter: _____

Date: _____

Suggestions about using this safety plan with young people who are showing frequent problem behavior:

- Make sure the plan belongs to the young person. Ideally, a safety plan should be developed with a young person at a time when they are calm and well regulated. As much as possible we want to help the young person have ownership of their own plan, rather than seeing it as some kind of routine paperwork they are required to do for the adults working with them. With many young people, it will be best to work through it with them item by item, giving plenty of encouragement and validation, but others will prefer to take the form and fill it out on their own – you also might use a combination of these approaches.
- Make the plan a living document – The safety plan should be taken out and used when a problem is brewing and it should be revised whenever there has been an incident when safety was threatened or where a crisis was averted. As your work progresses and more is learned about triggers, warning signs, useful interventions, and what to avoid doing, all of this information should be added to the plan. You may want to take the information on the form and put it in a more easily accessible format. For example, you could make a 3X5 card with “Things to notice” on one side and “Things to try” on the other, as shown below:

My Safety Plan

Things to notice:

Triggers: Sudden loud noises, being teased, being told “no,” being physically crowded, being reminded about the rules, dinnertime

Warning signs: Getting really quiet, withdrawing, clenching my fists, heart pounding, thinking “it’s not fair,” getting a headache

My Safety Plan

Things to try:

Distractions: play a videogame, do a crossword puzzle, call a friend on the phone, get some physical exercise (run around the block, play hoops, jump rope), hold on to an ice cube

Self-soothing: put on happy music, take a hot shower, play my guitar, have a cup of tea, say to myself “I can handle it,” do deep breathing

Don’t try:

telling me to “chill,” giving me a hug, watching a sad movie

- Safety Plans are not just for young people! Youth workers and counselors may find it helpful to fill out their own plan, share it with co-workers, and show it to youth. This is a way of recognizing that everyone struggles to regulate our emotions and handle stress effectively. When working with a family, it may be helpful to have parents and siblings develop and share safety plans, as well as the identified client, so that all family members can be more aware of how to help keep the home environment calm and safe for everyone.