

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Safety Planning for Domestic Violence Victims

On December 8th, 22-year-old ODU senior Claire Cucchiari-Loring was killed at a Chesapeake shopping center by her estranged boyfriend, who then took his own life. Today [The Virginian-Pilot](#) reported that the day Claire was shot to death, she had obtained a protective order against her killer.

[Read the full story here.](#)

The Most Dangerous Time

For many of the one and a half million women who are physically assaulted or raped by an intimate partner each year, according to the [National Center for Injury Prevention and Control](#), the attempt to escape a dangerous relationship is often a frightening and confusing experience, rather than one that brings them hope and relief.

Statistics show that the most dangerous time in a domestic violence victim's life is the moment she tries to leave a violent relationship. However, there are many things a woman can do prior to leaving the relationship that will help ensure she makes a safe escape.

Safety Planning

If you or someone you love is planning to leave an abusive relationship:

- Prepare a safety kit which includes clothing, toiletries, medications, keys, money, copies of important documents, change to use a pay phone, and a phone book or address book. Keep this kit near an exit route or with a trustworthy person.
- Call [Transitions Family Violence Services](#)' 24-hour crisis line 757-723-7774, or the [tollfree statewide crisis line](#) (1-800-838-8238). Make arrangements to stay in a safe place, such as our emergency shelter, a hotel, or the house of someone the abuser does not know. Erase any e-mail or information on a computer that may

- help the abuser discover the location of the safe place. Understand that the abuser may be able to track credit card or cell phone bills to find this location.
- Create a strategy for how to leave, especially if the situation escalates. Try to leave when the abuser is not home. Take the safety kit and leave quickly. Call Transitions (757-723-7774) or the local police for more help.

It is important to be discreet while planning a safe escape. If your partner suspects you are leaving, they will most likely become more violent. Prepare carefully and secretly. This is not the time to break the news to the abuser gently in the hope that they will get less upset.

Learn more about how you can get help...

About Transitions Family Violence Services

For almost 30 years Transitions Family Violence Services has provided “*a pathway to safety... a source of hope*” to tens of thousands of women and children on the Virginia Peninsula. We offer 19 programs to help families with emergency shelter, transitional housing, counseling, legal advocacy, childcare and self-sufficiency. We offer them a place to turn;to help guide them through one of the most difficult times in their lives.

Families experiencing the trauma of violence need your help during the holiday season. Last year, Transitions sheltered 337 women and children for 10,336 nights and provided outreach services to 3,536 men, women, and children in the community. We answered 4,213 hotline calls, from victims, survivors, abusers, concerned friends and family, and community members. Don't let this season of joy and giving pass without remembering the mission of Transitions Family Violence Services. You can help us change lives.

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