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Canadian Domestic Homicide
Prevention Initiative



Safety Planning Among Domestic Violence Service Providers: A call for an intersectional approach

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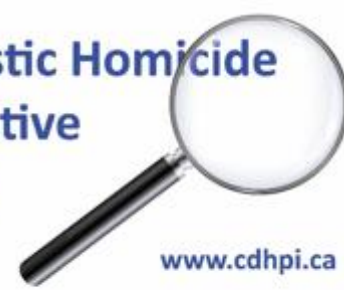


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Introduction

- Explored interviews with service providers and their perceptions of safety and use of safety planning strategies

- Safety planning:

- Critical first step when working with survivors
- Complex and individually specific
- Physical, Cultural, Emotional safety planning

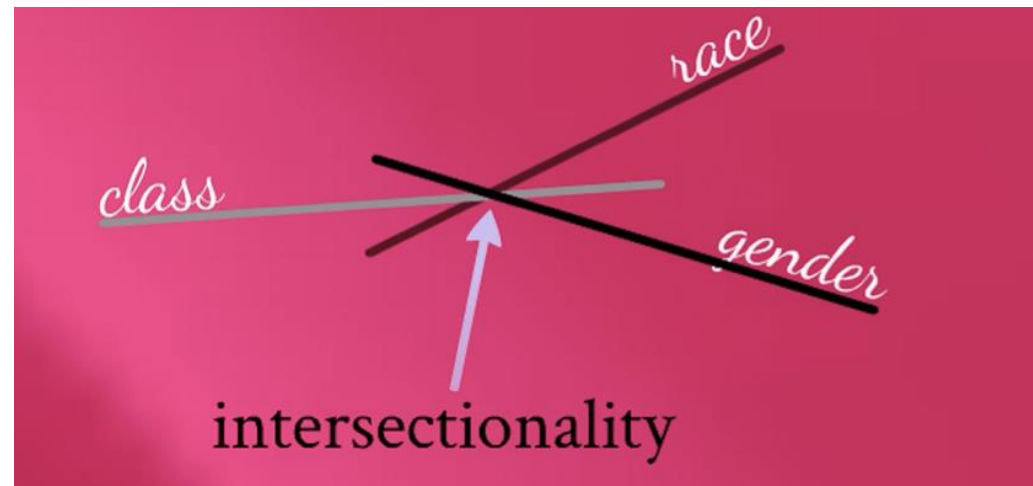
+ Traits of an Effective Safety Plan





Intersectionality

- Advocating for an *intersectional* approach to safety planning
 - We all have multiple identities (race, ethnicity, sex, sexuality, gender, ability, status, cultural background, etc.)
 - These “intersect” and change the way we experience oppression and vulnerabilities





Not a “one size fits all”

“

- “Safety planning with the women really has to be individualized and we have to look at what community the person is coming from, what police are there, what kind of response they’re getting, cause it’s not the same. Accessible items to leave the home in an emergency, that might not happen either.”

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City Versus Rural

- Example of safety planning with individuals who live in the city versus those who live in rural areas

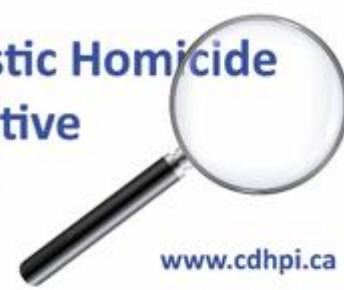




Physical Safety Planning

- Help individuals respond when fearing for their physical safety and children's
- Safety planning when staying in unsafe/violent situations
- Address specific problems for safety depending on location, isolation, transportation, normalization of firearms

“We do safety planning differently, so [...] talking about whether or not the women are aware of if the guns are stored safely and how would she know if a gun had a trigger lock on it or not or whether she knows where the ammunition is kept in the house. So, the safety planning would be a bit more specific. We would also consider the isolation piece[.]”



Abusers Who Stay

- Important to understand that some victims can't or don't want the abuser to leave, thus safety planning may involve:
 - Triggers and how to manage them
 - Code words and phone apps alerts

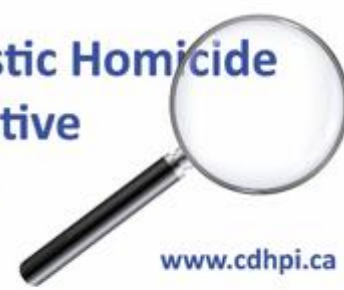


Cultural Safety Planning

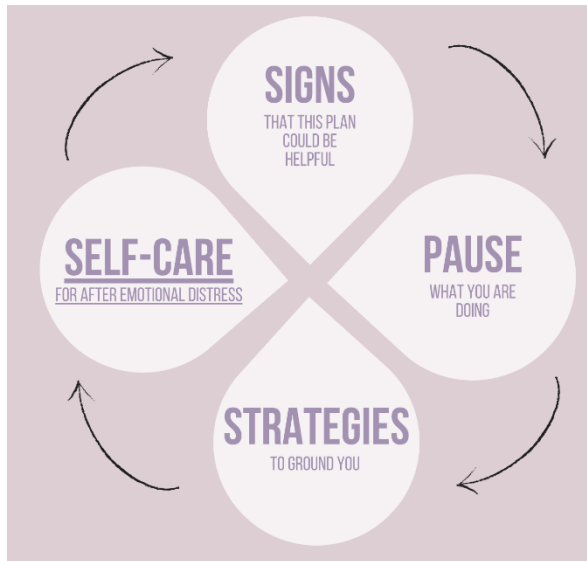
- Survivors of domestic violence are not a homogeneous group
- Necessary to be “culturally aware”
- Systems designed to keep survivors safe do not serve all survivors equally

“[I]t’s systemic oppression so things like you do not feel safe around police officers, you do not feel safe around social workers, you don’t feel safe within the justice system [...] and so this allows those domestic abuse situations to go for many, many years sometimes until it’s too much and often until it’s too late and that needs to change.”



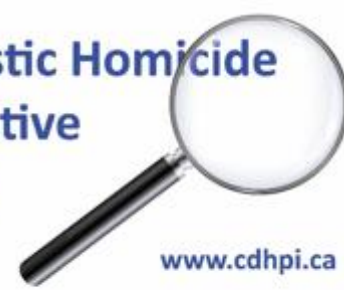


Emotional Safety Planning



- Emotional safety planning infrequently discussed
- Often provided when individuals are physically safe

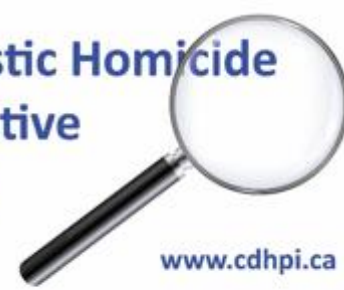
“We also include emotional safety planning. We emphasize the need for self-care and look at things like the use of substances like you know if you’re going to use these substances or drink like, risk manage in doing this safely [...] Just kind of around that and just making sure you sleep, making sure you eat, so basic things and emphasize the need to be rested so you can deal with things and who can you talk to, who do you trust that you can talk to.”



Taking A Break...

- Many victims and survivors are pressured by the abuser to have conditions varied. What does that “emotional break” look like?





An intersectional safety plan

- Approaching safety in an intersectional way looks like:
 - Accounting for the intersection of individuals' co-existing identities (e.g., Indigenous, woman) within systems of oppression (e.g., racism, sexism)
- Intersectional approach to safety planning provides more space to understand and meet the needs, experiences of individuals, create effective safety plans for them

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Thank you!

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