



Circles of Safety and Support

Circles of Safety and Support is a collaborative safety planning process for women who are at high risk from family violence, especially those who are at risk of domestic homicide. While there are existing services to support women experiencing violence, a clear, collaborative strategy for developing safety plans is helpful in bringing those services together in a way where women feel confident the plan will be understood and followed by all involved.

A Safety Circle brings a woman together with service providers and personal supports to develop a detailed plan for her safety. It gives women the opportunity to gather information about available resources and options; develop supportive relationships with people and places such as victim support workers, police, schools, employers, mental health and addictions staff, friends, family, neighbors, or others; and they offer a place for deep support which reduces stress and enhances confidence and self-esteem.

Circles of Safety and Support have tremendous results. How it works:

- Women are referred to Circles of Safety and Support by Victim Services or FVPS Outreach Workers.
- The woman and the referring member meet with a Circle facilitator to prepare and identify who else can help.
- The facilitator contacts those identified to see if they will participate.
- Face-to-face meetings bring together the woman and her supports to identify the safety issues and make a comprehensive, detailed plan that everyone supports. This will take several meetings.
- A safety plan is written. Everyone knows their role and is accountable for follow through. The Circle can meet again if circumstances or risk changes.