

PERSONAL SAFETY TIPS

Your personal safety is as important as the work that you do. The home visit has never been, nor ever will be, a totally controlled situation. The responsibility for personal safety rests with the individual practitioner making safe choices before, during and after the home visit. Here are some tips to assist you in making an informed decision, thereby decreasing the threat to your personal safety. For more detailed information, review [WV Birth to Three Personal Safety Guidelines](#).



Provide a schedule of your appointments with someone so they are aware of your planned visits for the day.



Plan visits in advance. Make certain you have the address, phone number, directions and correct time for appointment.



Know the area where you are going. Pay attention to your surroundings.



Carry your cell phone with quick access emergency numbers and let someone be aware when you will be in a non-service area.



Keep your vehicle in good repair. Try to keep gas tank at least half full. Have an alternative for directions when GPS is not available.



When possible, park on the street. If you have to park in a driveway, back in to face your vehicle towards the road. Do not block anyone's parking space. Always lock your car and lock valuables in the trunk.



Do not enter a home without being invited OR if your intended party is not present. If you suspect an unsafe situation exists or you feel in danger, leave immediately. **TRUST YOUR GUT!**



Maintain a self-confident, self-assured posture and attitude. Respect the family. Build a rapport and begin to develop a relationship.



Be alert to signs of violence. If you feel frightened or unsafe during a visit, remain calm but leave as soon as possible. Once in a safe location, contact your TA for direction.



While you will want to look your best, dress modestly. Shoes should be comfortable and protect your feet. Your attire should not be a barrier to families seeking support, so use a moderate approach to dress.



Boundaries are important and set the tone for a professional relationship. Take a moment to think about the kinds of boundaries you would set for yourself and your families.