



ACADEMIC SAFETY PLANNING

SUPPORTING THE SAFETY OF SURVIVORS ON CAMPUS

WHAT IS ACADEMIC SAFETY PLANNING?

Safety planning is a collaborative process with survivors of interpersonal violence to establish practical steps to reduce risks for current and future experiences of violence. The goal of safety planning is to identify potentially harmful situations, create plans to avoid or respond to those situations, and increase the overall safety of the survivor. These plans are individual, specific, and adaptable. Safety planning can happen while a survivor is in a violent relationship or planning to leave and can change over time as the survivor's circumstances and sense of well-being changes. In a campus setting the safety plan may respond to the academic harms and needs potentially experienced by student survivors. An **Academic Safety Plan (ASP)** is a "personalized, practical plan that can help student-survivors: avoid and respond to physically and/or emotionally dangerous situations that may impact their academic achievement; disclose violence to academic representatives and engage in academic and institutional processes related to

accommodations, if they choose to do so; and build or rebuild connections on campus" (Voth Schrag, et al., 2020).

ACADEMIC IMPACTS OF INTERPERSONAL VIOLENCE

Experiences of interpersonal violence can result in lasting impacts to physical, social, and emotional well-being, and survivors who are college students may face particular challenges impacting academics and future career path.

Potential impacts include:

- Disruption to housing
- Issues socializing with peers
- Academic disengagement
 - Coming to class late or intoxicated
 - Failure to complete assignments
 - Problems focusing
- Reduced GPA
- Failure to complete a degree
- Unenrollment or dropping out
- Mental health symptoms that limit school participation

ASP ACTIVITIES

Support and advocate for physical and mental safety

- Assess physical safety from perpetrator
- Assess for school sabotage (tactics to intervene with academic progress)
- Create plan for and facilitate safety traveling to, from, and around campus
- Assess physical safety of locations around campus
- Provide psychoeducation on the impacts of trauma
- Provide connections to mental healthcare
- Help identify trauma triggers
- Identify resources for any financial or property loss

Support and advocate for access to academic accommodations

- Contact professors for accommodations for specific support on missed classes or extensions on assignments and tests
- Allow survivor to move class sections to reduce exposure to trauma triggers
- Support decision to withdraw and ensure opportunity to re-enroll
- Work with other services and departments (like campus police and disability services) to access accommodations

Build trust between student-survivor and the school

- Support student's decision to withdraw and support process to ease ability to re-enroll
- Connect student with student-led networks
- Accompany student through institutional processes including Title IX processes

ASP OUTCOMES

The implementation of academic safety planning will provide a greater overall sense of safety and control for the student survivor. In the short term, the survivor will experience:

- a greater sense of safety on and off campus,
- fewer experiences of harm or violence,
- an increased ability to engage with schoolwork, and
- an improved ability to maintain connections and social relationships with peers.

Students will be able to achieve their overall academic goals with less disruption on their degree path.

"I wouldn't have known about that if I hadn't gone [to advocacy services]. I feel like it's gotten a lot better. This semester, I haven't been as overwhelmed. Even with the next semester, like, I'll be taking 18 hours, but I feel like it's actually doable because I have, like, support system, and ways to, like, get around that, and have the accommodations I need to, like, do well.... When I did that with my counselor, that's when they introduced the accommodations to me. "

Student Survivor

Adapted from: Voth Schrag, R.J., Wood, L.G., Hairston, D., & Jones, C. (2020). Academic safety planning: Intervening to improve the educational outcomes of collegiate survivors of interpersonal violence. *Journal of Interpersonal Violence*. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0886260520967162>. And, Wood, L., Voth Schrag, R., Hairston, D., & Jones, C. (2019). *Campus-based Advocacy Evaluation Toolkit*. The University of Texas at Austin.