



the IRIS *project*

A Study of the Effectiveness of an Online Safety
Intervention for Abused Women

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National Institute of Mental Health R01-MH085641

Enrollment Criteria

- Female Arizona resident
- Over the age of 18
- English OR Spanish speaking
- Currently in an abusive relationship (physical or sexual IPV, threats from partner to harm physically, or feeling unsafe in the relationship in the past 6 months)
- Has access to a safe computer w/ Internet
- Okay if residency/relationship status changes during the course of the study

Recruitment Strategies

- Majority of IPV studies recruit women from formal resources
- But, many abused women never access formal resources (Goodman et al, 2003; Ansara & Hindin, 2010)
- Our strategy is to reach beyond these formal services to engage women currently in abusive relationships



THE IRIS PROJECT

**ARE YOU CURRENTLY IN AN UNSAFE
INTIMATE RELATIONSHIP?**

**DO YOU HAVE ACCESS TO A SAFE
COMPUTER WITH INTERNET?**

**BE A PART OF A VOLUNTARY, CONFIDENTIAL STUDY ON AN
INTERNET-BASED SAFETY PLANNING TOOL FOR WOMEN!**

- *You will be reimbursed for your time (up to \$180 in gift cards)*
- *The study involves four different internet-based survey sessions (no in-person meetings required), over a period of one year*



**FOR MORE INFORMATION, PLEASE CALL OUR
CONFIDENTIAL RECRUITMENT LINE AT**

1-888-822-5799

OR EMAIL MARYLAND@WOMENSINTERNETSTUDY.ORG

Study Enrollment

- Women call toll-free telephone # or email
- RA screens for eligibility by phone and obtains informed consent and safe contact info
- Surveys at enrollment, 3 mos, 6 mos, and 12 mos
- Gift card incentives w/ each survey, up to \$180 total
- Study is voluntary – can drop out at any time
- Participant is auto-emailed information: login, RA contact, and computer safety

Safety Protocols

Gathering Safe Contact Information

Example from the recruitment script...

It is possible your partner may become angry if he or she finds out about you taking part in this study. We will take all steps to make sure that we don't put you in any danger. We will only contact you in the ways that you tell us are safe. We will not tell anyone else who answers the phone who we are or what we are calling about.

What Does the Intervention Look Like?

<http://safetydecisionaid.com/>

Username:

Password:

LOG IN

Welcome to The IRIS Project!



RESOURCES

CONTACT US

Invitation to Participate and Instructions

The screenshot displays the IRIS project website interface. At the top left is the logo for "the IRIS project" and at the top right is the phone number "1-888-822-5799". Below the header is a dark grey bar with the text "Emergency Exit Area". A progress bar shows "Start" at "0%" and "Finish" on the right. The main content area features a survey question: "1 of 3. We want to know where women are finding safe computers to use: where are you using a computer?". Below the question are radio button options: "My house", "My workplace", "Family member's home", "Friend's house", "Library", and "Other". A "Hear Question" button is visible. A white modal window titled "Introduction" is overlaid on the survey. It contains a photograph of a woman looking down, a "TURN AUDIO ON" button, and the following text: "We are studying women's health, domestic violence and safety decisions. We consider you the expert and we want to learn from your experience. By telling us what matters most to you when making a decision about safety in an unsafe relationship, we may be able to help you develop an action plan for safety that gives resources that are useful to you and other women." Navigation arrows are at the bottom of the modal. On the right side of the website, there is a profile picture of a woman, a "Play Instructions" button, and a "Logout" button.

the IRIS project 1-888-822-5799

Emergency Exit Area

Start 0% Finish

1 of 3. We want to know where women are finding safe computers to use: where are you using a computer?

Hear Question Hear Question

- My house
- My workplace
- Family member's home
- Friend's house
- Library
- Other

Introduction



TURN AUDIO ON

We are studying women's health, domestic violence and safety decisions. We consider you the expert and we want to learn from your experience. By telling us what matters most to you when making a decision about safety in an unsafe relationship, we may be able to help you develop an action plan for safety that gives resources that are useful to you and other women.

Play Instructions Logout

Demographic Questions

Background



I'm going to start by asking you some questions about yourself and your relationship.



TURN
AUDIO
ON

START

Abuse Measures

Abuse Questions



Next are a number of statements that women have used to describe their lives with their partners. Please read each statement, and then indicate how much you agree or disagree in general with each one as a description of your relationship. There are no right or wrong answers: just indicate how much you agree or disagree with each statement.

Mental Health Measures

Additional Mental Health Questions

Next is a series of questions about problems and complaints that people sometimes have in response to stressful life experiences. Please read each one carefully, and then indicate how much you have been bothered by that problem in the past month.



TURN
AUDIO
ON

START

Safety Seeking Behavior Measure

Safety Check



I'm going to ask you about the kinds of things you have done to stay safe. I will also ask you about types of community resources you may have used.



TURN
AUDIO
ON



Example of Safety Seeking Behavior Question

Remembering over the last year...

20 of 35. **Have you made an escape plan so that you would know how to quickly get away from your abusive partner if you needed to?**

 Hear Question  Hear Answer

- No
- Yes, but have not used it yet
- Yes, used it and it was not helpful
- Yes, used it and it was helpful

Did you discuss this escape plan with your friends or family?

 Hear Question  Hear Answer

- No
- Yes

the IRIS project



 Play Instructions

 Logout

Set Priorities (Intervention Only)

Priorities



This next section will ask you questions about making decisions for your safety and your children's safety while in a violent relationship.



TURN
AUDIO
ON



Priorities

Having resources

Having a job, home, and health insurance.

Keeping my privacy

Issues in my relationship are not something I share with others.

My child's well-being

Concerns for custody of my children and concerns for safety of my children.

Feelings for my partner

Love and concern for my partner.

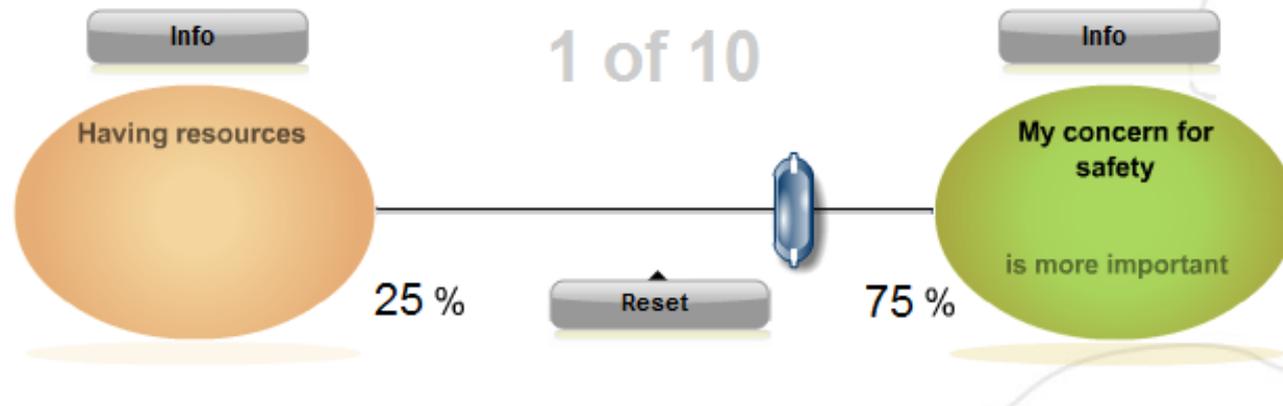
My concern for safety

Safety of myself, friends, and family.

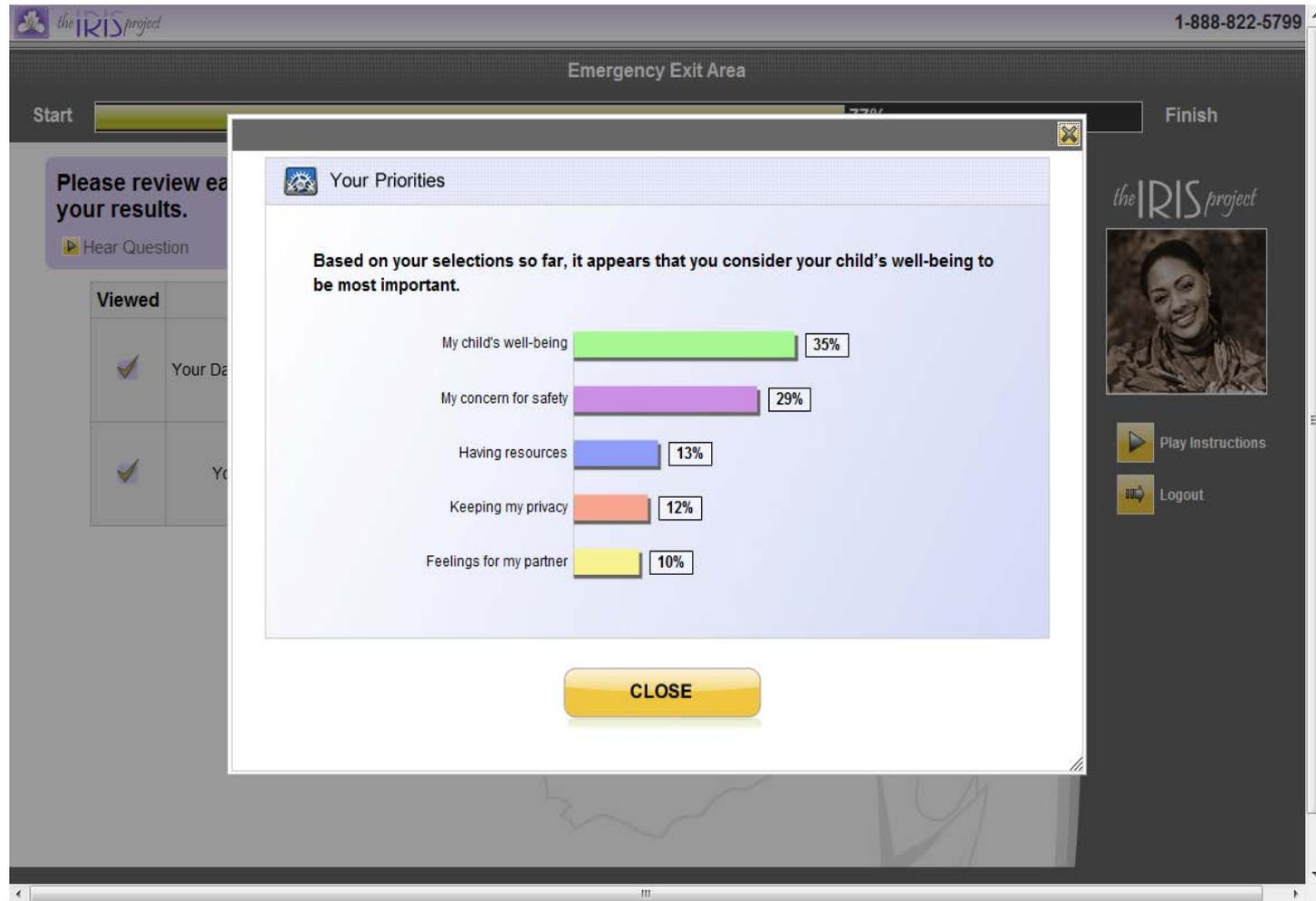
Example Priority Setting Question

Thinking about your relationship, which of these two factors is more important to you?

 Hear Question



Feedback on Priorities for Safety



Feedback on Danger (Intervention Only)



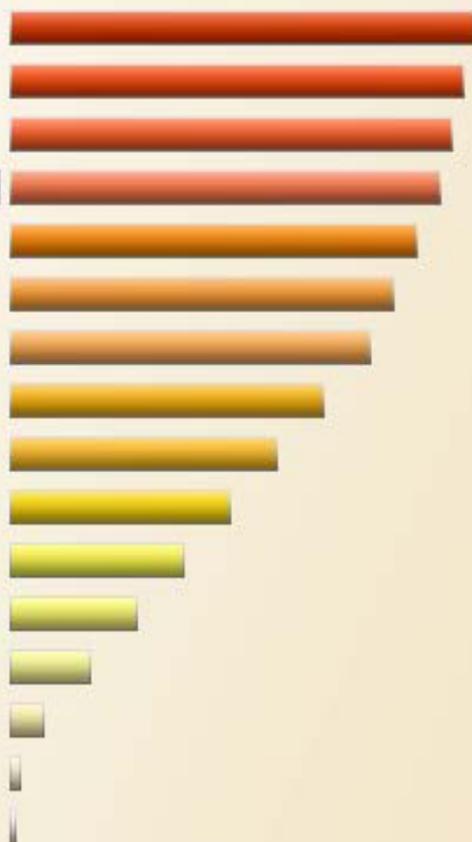
Your Level of Danger

Your Score: 19

Extreme Danger

You are in extreme danger. It is now critical that you talk and ask for help for your safety from a domestic violence advocate, lawyer and/or police.

YOU →



Extreme Danger Zone
18 or higher

Severe Danger Zone
14 to 17

Increased Danger Zone
8 to 13

Variable Danger Zone
Less than 8

Emergency Safety Plan



Your Emergency Safety Plan Contents

1. [Identify a safe place you can go if your partner becomes dangerous.](#)
- ✓ 2. [Pack an emergency escape bag with basic necessities.](#)
3. [Put aside a copy of important papers, phone numbers, extra house and car keys, and cash.](#)
4. [Develop a code word or signal to share with others to let them know when you are in danger.](#)
5. [Discuss your emergency plan with a trusted family member or friend.](#)
6. [Remove or hide weapons, such as a gun or ammunition for a gun, from your home.](#)
- ✓ 7. [If you choose or are forced to leave your partner, do not tell your partner that you are planning to leave](#)
8. [If you are thinking about hurting yourself, talk with someone at a confidential suicide hotline.](#)
- ✓ 9. [Learn more about confidential resources for women in unsafe relationships.](#)

A ✓ indicates that you have completed this strategy.

CLOSE

PRINT

Emergency Safety Plan Strategy Example

3 of 9 Put aside a copy of important papers, phone numbers, extra house and car keys, and cash.

 Hear Strategy

➔ There are things you may want to put in a place that will be easy for you to get to if you need to leave quickly. These should include important papers like:

- birth certificates
- social security cards
- driver's license
- lease agreements or mortgage papers
- car title and insurance information
- school and health records
- welfare or immigration papers
- protective or restraining orders
- prescriptions
- marriage license and divorce papers.

➔ You also may want to keep in a safe place you can get to quickly, things like:

- cash
- your bank account number and savings account information
- credit/ATM cards



Other things to include are important phone numbers and addresses for family, friends, and service providers, extra keys, and things that mean a lot to you like photos.

Tailored Safety Plan (Intervention Only)

Action Plan



Your answers to many of the questions in the previous sections were used to provide a list of safety suggestions unique to your situation to create your Action Plan.



TURN
AUDIO
ON



Action Plan



To add a suggested topic to your Action Plan, simply check the box next to the topic. This will move it to your Action Plan. You can also remove it from your Action Plan by unchecking the box.

The screenshot displays two side-by-side panels, each with a purple header and a 'Hear Question' icon. The left panel, titled 'Suggested Items', contains a list of seven topics, each with an unchecked checkbox. The right panel, titled 'Selected Items', is currently empty. A red arrow points from the checkbox of the topic 'Go to a healthcare professional for a well-woman check-up' in the 'Suggested Items' panel to the 'Selected Items' panel. Another red arrow points from the 'Suggested Items' panel to the 'Selected Items' panel, indicating the movement of the selected item.

Suggested Items

- Talk to someone at a confidential suicide hotline.
- Get suggestions about how to protect yourself from your partner when using the Internet or your cell phone.
- Talk with someone at a confidential domestic violence hotline.
- Go to a healthcare professional for a well-woman check-up.
- Talk with a trusted coworker.
- Find support in your church or faith community.
- Get suggestions on what to do in an emergency if you don't have a phone.
- Get suggestions on what to do in an emergency if you don't have a car.

Selected Items

Suggested Items

- Get suggestions about how to protect yourself from your partner when using the Internet or your cell phone.
- Talk with someone at a confidential domestic violence hotline.
- Get suggestions on what to do in an emergency if you don't have a phone.
- Get suggestions on what to do in an emergency if you don't have a car.

Selected Items

- Talk to someone at a confidential suicide hotline.
- Go to a healthcare professional for a well-woman check up.
- Talk with a trusted coworker.
- Find support in your church or faith community.

TURN
AUDIO
ON



Suggested Items

▶ Hear Question

- ▶ Learn more about how leaving your partner affects your safety.
- ▶ Learn more about how your partner avoiding arrest for domestic violence affects your safety.
- ▶ Learn more about stalking
- ▶ Find out how to protect yourself from your partner when using the Internet or your cell phone.
- ▶ Talk with a counselor or therapist in a confidential setting.
- ▶ Learn more about protecting yourself at work.
- ▶ Talk with other women who have been in abusive relationships.
- ▶ Learn about calling the police if you think you are in danger from your partner.

Selected Items

▶ Hear Question

- ▶ Learn more about how your partner's gun ownership affects your safety.
- ▶ Learn more about how your partner's threats affect your safety.
- ▶ Find somewhere to send your kids if your partner becomes abusive.
- ▶ Get information about safe and affordable housing.
- ▶ Learn about birth control and family planning options.
- ▶ Go to a health care provider for a well-woman check up.
- ▶ Get more job training or education

Tailored Safety Plan



Your Tailored Action Plan Contents

1. [Talk with someone at a confidential domestic violence hotline.](#)
2. [Get suggestions on what to do in an emergency if you don't have a car.](#)
3. [Get information about safe and affordable housing.](#)
4. [Get help looking for work.](#)
5. [Learn more about stalking](#)
6. [Learn more about how your partner's unemployment affects your safety.](#)
7. [Get help for drug use.](#)
8. [Learn more about how your partner's threats affect your safety.](#)

CLOSE

CHANGE ANSWERS

PRINT

Tailored Plan Strategy Example Based on Danger Level

Learn more about how your partner's gun ownership affects your safety.

 **Hear Strategy**

 **Based on your answers in this program, you are in the highest risk category for severe or deadly violence. We want you to know that your partner's gun puts you in danger of being killed.**

- Women who live with an abusive partner are more likely to be killed with a gun than with any other weapon
- If your partner has a gun (handgun, rifle, shotgun, hunting weapon), this puts you in danger
- In most states a restraining order or order of protection can order a gun to be removed
- Please talk to a domestic violence hotline for more information about getting a protective order
- If you don't think that is a safe option for you, it is important to at least take steps to remove the bullets or lock them up if you know how to do this safely
- If you have a child or children who visit your home, you can use a gun safety pamphlet to talk to your partner about why it's important to lock up guns and bullets

Tailored Plan Strategy Example with Local Resources

Learn about shelters in your area.

Hear Strategy

 Leaving your partner can be dangerous, even if you are only leaving for a little while. Shelters can provide a safe and confidential location for you to stay temporarily.

- Shelters are often full, and you may have to call many times over several days before a space opens up.
- If you live in a small town, you may be safer if you leave the area and stay in a shelter in another community.



LINKS

To learn more about shelters in your area, please visit the following:

Oregon Guide to Domestic Violence Services
<https://apps.state.or.us/cf1/DomesticViolence/>
1-800-622-3782

Oregon Resource

To take a virtual tour of a shelter, visit the following:

Virtual Shelter Tour
<http://web.multco.us/dv/shelter-information>

Multnomah County Resource

Child Safety Plan



Your Child Safety Plan Contents

1. Introduction
2. Plan to get children to a safe place.
3. Planning how to call for help.
4. Other safety steps to consider with children.

NEXT

Example of Child Safety Plan Strategy

3 of 4 Planning how to call for help.

Hear Strategy

Teach your children that 9-1-1 is the number to call to get help in a police, fire, or medical emergency.

- Some domestic violence agencies will give out emergency 911 phones for you and your children to have in a secret place.
- If calling the police is not a safe option for you, tell your children who to call in an emergency. This could be a trusted friend or family member. Write down the telephone number and put it in your safe place. Help your children memorize the phone number if they can.

Practice what your children will say when they call for help.

- Explain that they will need to tell the person they talk to their full names, the full names of their parents, their phone number (including area code), and address.
- Children in rural areas may also need to know and share Concession and Lot Number.

Teach your children that they should never use a phone to call for help in front of your partner. This puts them at risk.

- If possible, they should use the phone in their "safe room."
- If they can't use a phone at home, teach them to go to a pay phone or a neighbor's house.
- Teach your children a secret word to use when calling a friend or family member to tell them that you are in danger and need help. Be sure to tell this person what the secret word is and what you want them to do.
- Tell your children to leave the phone off the hook after they are done talking. If they hang up, the police may call back which could put you and your children in more danger.

Help younger children become familiar with talking on the phone by allowing them to speak with friends or relatives. You can make practicing fun by asking them to dial phone numbers whenever you need to call someone.

Online Summary

Your Schedule and Summary

 Hear Question

Done	Interview	Incentive	Date Window
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Baseline	\$20	Dec 22 - Jan 19
Earned		Remaining	
\$20		\$0	

Click to View, Edit, or Print



or
[Print All](#)

EXIT

“The info from the survey has given me the courage, will, and resources I needed to get out of that abusive relationship with my husband.”

“Very empowering questions that raise awareness - did for me”

“The website may have saved my life, I never thought of putting together a safety plan before”

“I used a lot of the resources from the site”

“Once I finally understood exactly how deadly the situation actually was; I left. Had I not gotten the info from your study we would likely still be living in fear at the house”

Questions?

Contact Jonel Thaller, MSW

480-263-0974

jonel@theirisproject.org