

Safety Planning

24/7 Crisis Line: 541-485-6513 or 1-800-281-2800

Address: 1577 Pearl St. Suite 200 Eugene, Or. 97401

womenspace****
safety, hope and healing for survivors of domestic violence



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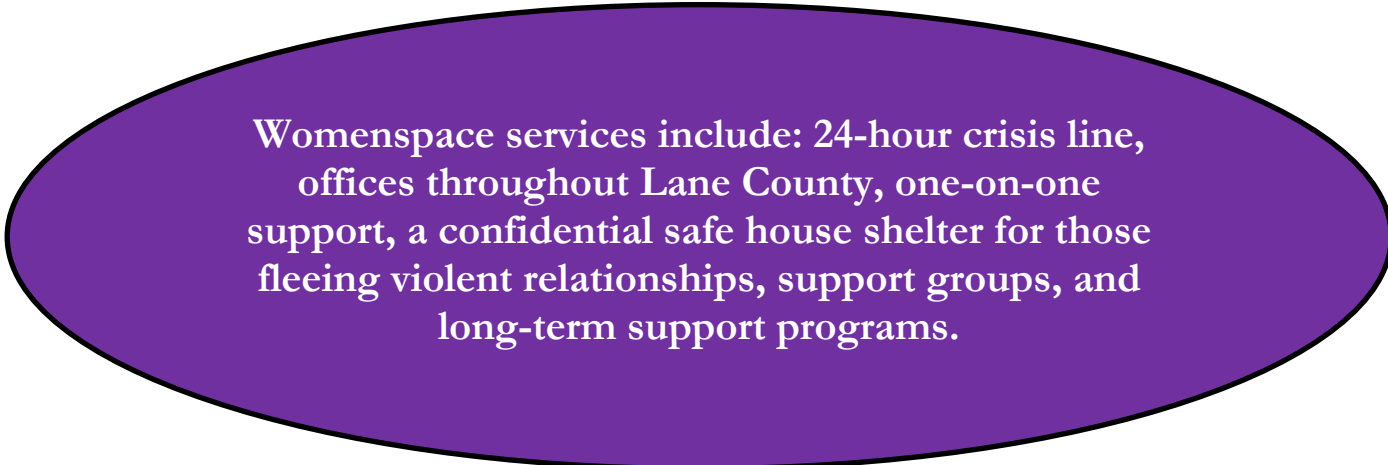
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Safety, hope and healing is possible

Only you know what decisions are the safest for your unique situation. What we know is that every situation is different and will require a different approach to keep every survivor and their children safe from an abuser. Sometimes a survivor may feel the safest thing they can do is stay with an abuser. Other times, they may want to consider some of the ideas in this booklet to be prepared when they are ready to go. The abuse may be in the past and you are still not feeling safe. No matter where you are in the process, talking with an advocate at Womenspace may help you find your answers.

It takes great courage to reach out and get information about abusive relationships. Womenspace advocates will respect and support your choices. This booklet is to provide you with tools to make informed decisions.

You can speak with an advocate at Womenspace 24 hour a day, 7 days a week through the crisis line at 541-485-6513 or 1-800-281-2800. We have offices throughout Lane County where you can meet with someone in person. All our services are confidential.



Womenspace services include: 24-hour crisis line, offices throughout Lane County, one-on-one support, a confidential safe house shelter for those fleeing violent relationships, support groups, and long-term support programs.

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What is Safety Planning?

A safety plan is a personalized, practical plan that includes ways to remain safe while in a relationship, planning to leave, or after you leave. Safety planning involves how to cope with emotions, tell friends and family about the abuse, take legal action and more.

The tools in this booklet are to help you identify things you may want to think of when you are not in a moment of crisis. Some people read through the lists and decide what works for them; others like to write out a detailed plan of action. Many of the suggestions may seem like common sense yet when we are under stress, we don't always think straight. Planning in advance gives us an option to make decisions that will keep us safe.

Although you do not have control over your partner's violence, you do have a choice about how you will respond and how best to get yourself and your children to safety. There are many different situations covered here, choose only the suggestions listed that make sense for your situation. Talking over a safety plan with an advocate at Womenspace can be very helpful.

You have already taken a big step towards your own safety, hope and healing in picking up this booklet.



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Safety during an explosive incident

- Identify your partner's use and level of force so that you can assess the risk of physical danger to you and your children before it occurs.
- Identify safe areas of the house where there are no weapons and there are ways to escape. If arguments occur, try to move to those areas.
- Don't run to where the children are, as your partner may hurt them as well.
- If violence is unavoidable, make yourself a small target. Dive into a corner and curl up into a ball with your face protected and arms around each side of your head, fingers entwined.
- If possible, have a phone accessible at all times and know what numbers to call for help. Know where the nearest public phone is located. Know the phone number to your local shelter. If your life is in danger, call the police.
- Let trusted friends and neighbors know of your situation and develop a plan and visual signal for when you need help.
- Teach your children how to get help. Instruct them not to get involved in the violence between you and your partner. Plan a code word to signal to them that they should get help or leave the house.
- Tell your children that violence is never right, even when someone they love is being violent. Tell them that neither you, nor they, are at fault or are the cause of the violence, and that when anyone is being violent, it is important to stay safe.
- Practice how to get out safely. Practice with your children.
- Plan for what you will do if your children tells your partner of your plan or if your partner otherwise finds out about your plan.
- Keep weapons like guns and knives locked away and as inaccessible as possible.
- Make a habit of backing the car into the driveway and keeping it fueled. Keep the driver's door unlocked and others locked — for a quick escape.
- Try not to wear scarves or long jewelry that could be used to strangle you.
- Create several plausible reasons for leaving the house at different times of the day or night.

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Safety when preparing to leave

Leaving can be the most dangerous time!

- Keep any evidence of physical abuse, such as pictures of injuries.
- Keep a journal of all violent incidences, noting dates, events and threats made, if possible. Keep your journal in a safe place.
- Know where you can go to get help. Tell someone what is happening to you.
- If you are injured, go to a doctor or an emergency room and report what happened to you. Ask that they document your visit.
- Plan with your children and identify a safe place for them, like a room with a lock or a friend's house where they can go for help. Reassure them that their job is to stay safe, not to protect you.
- Contact Womenspace and find out about laws and other resources available to you before you must use them during a crisis. WomensLaw.org has state by state legal information.
- Acquire job skills or take courses at a community college as you can.
- Try to set money aside or ask friends or family members to hold money for you.



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When you leave

Plan for how and where you will escape quickly. You may request a police escort or stand-by when you leave. If you must leave in a hurry, use the following list of items as a guide to what you need to bring with you. Our advocates can help you come up with a personalized safety plan for leaving.

1) Identification

- Driver's license
- Birth certificate and children's birth certificates
- Social security cards
- Financial information
- Money and/or credit cards (in your name)
- Checking and/or savings account books

2) Legal Papers

- Protective order
- Copies of any lease or rental agreements, or the deed to your home
- Car registration and insurance papers
- Health and life insurance papers
- Medical records for you and your children
- School records
- Work permits/green Card/visa
- Passport
- Divorce and custody papers
- Marriage license

3) Emergency Numbers

- Your local police and/or sheriff's department
- Womenspace
- Friends, relatives and family members
- Your local doctor's office and hospital
- Lane County District Attorney

4) Other

- Medications
- Extra set of house and car keys
- Valuable jewelry
- Pay-as-you-go cell phone
- Address book
- Pictures and sentimental items
- Several changes of clothes for you and your children
- Emergency money

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Safety after you leave

- Change your locks and phone number.
- Call the telephone company to request caller ID. Ask that your phone number be blocked so that if you call anyone, neither your partner nor anyone else will be able to get your new, unlisted phone number.
- Change your work hours and the route you take to work.
- Change the route taken to transport children to school or consider changing your children's schools.
- Alert school authorities of the situation.
- If you have a restraining order, keep a certified copy of it with you at all times, and inform friends, neighbors and employers that you have a restraining order in effect.
- Call law enforcement to enforce the order and give copies of the restraining order to employers, neighbors and schools along with a picture of the offender.
- Consider renting a post office box or using the address of a friend for your mail (be aware that addresses are on restraining orders and police reports and be careful to whom you give your new address and phone number).
- Reschedule appointments that the offender is aware of.
- Use different stores and frequent different social spots.
- Alert neighbors and request that they call the police if they feel you may be in danger.
- Replace wooden doors with steel or metal doors. Install security systems if possible.
- Install a motion sensitive lighting system.
- Tell people you work with about the situation and have your calls screened by one receptionist if possible.
- Tell people who take care of your children or drive them/pick them up from school and activities. Explain your situation to them and provide them with a copy of the restraining order.

Safety and your emotional health

Often, emphasis is placed on planning around physical safety, but it's important to consider your emotional safety as well. Emotional safety can look different for different people, but ultimately, it's about developing a personalized plan that helps you feel accepting of your emotions and decisions when dealing with abuse. Below are some ideas for how to create and maintain an emotional safety plan that works for you.

Seek Out Supportive People: A caring presence such as a trusted friend or family member can help create a calm atmosphere to think through difficult situations and allow for you to discuss potential options.

Identify and Work Towards Achievable Goals: An achievable goal might be calling a local resource and seeing what services are available in your area or talking to one of our advocates at Womenspace. Remember that you don't have to do anything you aren't comfortable with right now but taking small steps can help options feel more possible when you are ready.

Create a Peaceful Space for Yourself: Designating a physical place where your mind can relax and feel safe can be good option when working through difficult emotions that can arise when dealing with abuse. This can be a room in your house, a spot under your favorite tree, a comfy chair by a window or in a room with low lights.

Remind Yourself of Your Great Value: You are important and special, and recognizing and reminding yourself of this reality is so beneficial for your emotional health. It is never your fault when someone chooses to be abusive to you, and it has no reflection on the great value you have as a person.

Remember That You Deserve to Be Kind to Yourself: Taking time to practice self-care every day, even if it is only for a few minutes, really creates space for peace and emotional safety. It's healthy to give yourself emotional breaks and step back from your situation sometimes. In the end, this can help you make the decisions that are best for you.

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Protective orders/Restraining orders

If your life is in danger, call 9-1-1

Here are some legal actions you can take to help keep yourself safe from your abusive partner. Womenspace does not give legal advice but there are some great resources available to you in your community.

You can get an application for a protective order at:

- Victim Services through the District Attorney's Office
- Lane County Legal Aid and Advocacy Center/Oregon Law Center
- University of Oregon, Domestic Violence Clinic

A protective order can help protect you immediately by legally keeping your partner from physically coming near you, harming you or harassing you, your children or your family members. This legal documentation to keep your abusive partner away from you can often contain provisions related to custody, finance and more.

While protective orders may be able to put a stop to physical abuse, psychological abuse is still possible — so a protective order should never replace a safety plan.

If you already have a protective order, it should be kept on you always — and copies should be given to your children and anyone they might be with — especially when you're leaving your partner.

Not a US citizen?

Learn more at Casa De Esperanza about your rights as an immigrant. According to the Violence Against Women Act (VAWA), immigrant women who are experiencing domestic violence — and are married to abusers who are US Citizens or Legal Permanent Residents — may qualify to self-petition for legal status under VAWA.

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Pros and Cons of Getting a Protective Order:

Orders of Protection are different for every County and State. In Oregon there are four types of Protective Orders. Age and relationship requirements vary, so it is recommended that you contact your local victim service agency.

Stalking Order: If you or a household member is a victim of repeated, unwanted contact that is causing you fear.

Sexual Assault Protective Order (SAPO): For sexual assault survivors, a SAPO will protect them from their perpetrator.

Restraining Order (FAPA Order): Available if the abuse was by someone in your household, family, or someone you have had a sexual relationship with. Abuse must have been within the last 180 days.

Elder/Disabled Protective Order: If you are 65+, have a documented disability, and are not living in a long-term care facility.

PROS

- A Protective Order can be modified to meet your unique needs. For instance, you have the right to request that there be limited contact through the phone.
- There may be serious consequences for the abuser if a Protective Order is violated. If there is any violation, it is extremely important to report it to the police.
- Temporary physical custody of children and the home may be awarded if you request it in the Protective Order. You cannot get a Protective Order out of fear for your children. You must prove that your abuser has also abused or threatened to harm your children.

CONS:

- With Stalking Orders there is an automatic follow-up court date to determine if the Order will remain in place. For all other Protective Orders, the Respondent (person that has been served with the Protective Order) has 30 days to contest the Protective Order. This means you will need to appear in court again (and usually with short notice) if the abuser wants to contest the Protective Order.
- A Protective Order may not stop some abusers from lashing out or retaliating. Some abusers escalate or get more violent when they are served with a Protective Order. It is important to safety plan before getting a Protective Order.

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- Individuals that work at the courthouse are mandatory reporters. This means that if there are/were children in the home at the time of an abusive incident, Child Welfare may be called to investigate. If you are worried about Child Welfare being involved, you are encouraged to call the Womenspace Crisis Line or come into one of our offices to talk to an advocate.

Safety on the job and in public

- Decide who at work you will inform of your situation, include building security.
- Provide a photo of your abuser for quick identification.
- Screen your telephone calls.
- Devise a safety plan for leaving work.
- Have someone escort you when leaving and wait with you until you are safely en route.
- Use a variety of routes to go home.
- Rehearse what you would do if something happened while going home.
- Create a safety routine when you arrive home: checking your house and property, checking in with someone to let them know you are safe, etc.

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Safety planning with children

If you are in an abusive relationship, a safety plan should include ways that your children can stay safe when violence is happening in your home. It's key to remember that if the violence is escalating, you should avoid running to the children because your partner may hurt them as well.

Planning for Violence in the Home

- Teach your children when and how to call 911.
- Instruct them to leave the home if possible when things begin to escalate, and where they can go.
- Come up with a code word that you can say when they need to leave the home in case of an emergency — make sure that they know not to tell others what the secret word means.
- In the house: identify a room they can go to when they're afraid and something they can think about when they're scared.
- Instruct them to stay out of the kitchen, bathroom and other areas where there are items that could be used as weapons.
- Teach them that although they want to protect their parent, they should never intervene.
- Help them make a list of people that they are comfortable talking with and expressing themselves to.
- Enroll them in a counseling program. Local service providers often have children's programs.

Planning for Unsupervised Visits

If you have separated from an abusive partner and are concerned for your children's safety when they visit your ex, developing a safety plan for while they are visiting can be beneficial.

- Brainstorm with your children (if they are old enough) to come up with ways that they can stay safe using the same model as you would for your own home. Have them identify where they can get to a phone, how they can leave the house, and who they can go to.

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- If it's safe to do, send a cell phone with the children to be used in emergency situations — this can be used to call 911, a neighbor or you if they need aid.

Planning for Safe Custody Exchanges

- Avoid exchanging custody at your home or your partner's home.
- Meet in a safe, public place such as a restaurant, a bank/other area with lots of cameras, or even near a police station.
- Bring a friend or relative with you to the exchanges or have them make the exchange.
- Perhaps plan to have your partner pick the children up from school at the end of the day after you drop them off in the morning – this eliminates the chances of seeing each other.
- Emotional safety plan as well – figure out something to do *before* the exchange to calm any nerves you're feeling, and something *after* to focus on yourself or the kids, such as going to a park or doing a fun activity.

How to Have These Conversations

Let your child know that what's happening is not their fault and that they didn't cause it. Let them know how much you love them and that you support them no matter what. Tell them that you want to protect them and that you want everyone to be safe, so you have to come up with a plan to use *in case of emergencies*. It's important to remember that when you're safety planning with a child, they might tell this information to the abusive partner, which could make the situation more dangerous (ex. "Mom said to do this if you get angry.") When talking about these plans with your child, use phrases such as "We're practicing what to do in an emergency," instead of "We're planning what you can do when dad/mom becomes violent."

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Safety Planning with pets

Statistics show that up to 65% of domestic violence victims are unable to escape their abusive partners because they are concerned about what will happen to their pets when they leave. Fortunately, there are more and more resources in place to assist with this difficult situation.

If you're creating a safety plan of your own to leave an abusive relationship, safety planning for your pets is important as well. Bring extra provisions for them, copies of their medical records and important phone numbers.

If possible, don't leave pets alone with an abusive partner. If you are planning to leave, talk to friends, family or your veterinarian about temporary care for your pet. If that is not an option, contact Womenspace to find out about other options.

If you've had to leave your pet behind with your abusive partner, try to ask for assistance from law enforcement officials or animal control to see if they can intervene.

Take steps to prove ownership of your pet: have them vaccinated and license them with your town, ensuring that these registrations are made in your name (change them if they aren't).

If you've left your partner, ensure the safety of your pet by changing veterinarians and avoid leaving pets outside alone.



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Safety planning during pregnancy

Pregnancy is a time of change. Pregnancy can be full of excitement but also comes with an added need for support. It's natural to need emotional support from a partner, as well as perhaps financial assistance, help to prepare for the baby and more.

If your partner is emotionally or physically abusive toward you, it can make these months of transition especially difficult. Thankfully, there are resources available to help expecting women get the support needed for a safe, healthy pregnancy.

According to the CDC, intimate partner violence affects approximately 1.5 million women each year and affects as many as 324,000 pregnant women each year. Pregnancy can be an especially dangerous time for women in abusive relationships, and abuse can often begin or escalate during the pregnancy.

How can you get help?

- If you're pregnant, there is always a heightened risk during violent situations. If you're in a home with stairs, try to stay on the first floor. Getting into the fetal position around your stomach if you're being attacked is another tactic that can be instrumental in staying safe.
- Doctor's visits can be an opportunity to discuss what is going on in your relationship.
- If your partner goes to these appointments with you, try to find a moment when they're out of the room to ask your care provider (or even the front desk receptionist) about coming up with an excuse to talk to them one-on-one.
- If you've decided to leave your relationship, a health care provider can become an active participant in your plan to leave.
- If possible, see if you can take a women-only prenatal class. This could be a comfortable atmosphere for discussing pregnancy concerns or could allow you to speak to the class instructor one-on-one.

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Technology Safety Planning

Technology is ever changing, and it can be used to jeopardize your safety or to keep you safe. Since power and control issues are a part of intimate partner violence, abusive partners frequently use technology to monitor and control those they abuse. Here are some things to help keep in mind as you use technology.

Do you have a feeling that you are being monitored? Here are some things to make note of.

- Did you know that someone can monitor another person's computer use without the user knowing?
- Did you know that a "history" cannot be completely erased from a computer?
- Did you know that cell phone use can be monitored?
- Did you know that a global positioning system (GPS) can be placed on your car, in your purse or in your cell phone?
- Did you know some court systems are placing court records online and that they may contain personal information?
- Did you know that e-mail is like a postcard and can be intercepted?
- There are ways to ensure your safety. Technology is a powerful tool for someone leaving a domestic violence situation.

Internet Safety:

As you surf the Internet on your computer, the places you visit are stored on the computer you use. Bills you pay and purchases you make are tracked. Instant messages and emails can be retrieved. Keep in mind that as you use a computer, it might be monitored. Safe computers can be found at the local library, Internet café, shelter, work or computer technology center. Always use safe computers when researching things such as travel plans, housing options, legal issues and safety plans.

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Email:

Your abusive partner could have access to your email account. To be safe, open an email account your partner does not know about on a safe computer and use that account for safety planning and sensitive communications. It is a good idea to keep your monitored account active with non-critical emails to maintain appearances.

Cell Phone:

Cell phones can be a beacon—tracking your exact location in real time. An abusive partner can also retrieve your call and text history. Additionally, a location-tracking device (GPS) can be placed on your car or in your purse.

If you have a smart phone, laptop, or tablet device, make sure that GPS is disabled on the device and carrier, and think about removing batteries from the devices before having private conversations. *There are new apps for these devices that allow abusers to listen to conversations, track GPS coordinates, and even take photos from the device cameras, even if the device is off. These apps are meant to be anti-theft protections but can be downloaded wirelessly to any device if someone knows the email and password the device is set up with.*

Consider purchasing a pay as you go phone that you keep in a safe place to allow you to make calls.

Social Media:

Only post things you want the public to see or know. Once it's online, it's no longer under your control. Be protective of your personal information. Your phone numbers and addresses enable people to contact you directly, and things like your birth date, the schools you attended, your employer and photos with landmarks may make it easier for someone to find where you live, hang out or go to school.

Set boundaries and limits. Tell people not to post personal information, negative comments or check-ins about you on social media. Ask people not to post or tag pictures if you're not comfortable with it.

Keep your passwords private—there is no need to share passwords to social media accounts with anyone.

If you have a friend in an abusive relationship DO NOT post information about them without getting their permission. You could jeopardize their safety.

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Resources

Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault

Womenspace Inc. for those abused by an intimate partner

Crisis line: 541-485-6513 or 1-800-281-2800

Address: 1577 Pearl St. Suite 200 Eugene, Or. 97401

www.womenspaceinc.org

Sexual Assault Support Services for sexual trauma or stalking

Crisis line: 541-343-7277 (SASS) or 1-800-788-4727

Business line: 541-484-9791

Address: 591 West 19th Avenue Eugene, Oregon 97401

<http://sass-lane.org/>

Siuslaw Outreach Services (Florence) for domestic violence

Crisis line: 541-997-4444

Business line: 541-997-2816

Address: 1576 12th Street Florence, Or. 97439

www.florencesos.org

National Domestic Violence Hotline

www.thehotline.org

Helplines

White Bird Crisis Center

Crisis Line: 541-343-7277 / 800-422-7558

University of Oregon Crisis Line - for Students

Crisis Line: 541-346-3227

Cahoots (Crisis Assistance Helping Out on The Streets)

Phone Number: 541-682-5111

National Suicide Hotline

Crisis Line: 800-784-2433

Looking Glass

Crisis Line: 541-689-3111

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Resources

Shelters and Day Centers

Eugene Mission - (call for program requirements)

Phone number: 541- 344-3251

Address: 1542 W 1st Ave, Eugene, OR 97402

First Place Family Center - (call for program requirements)

Phone number: 541-342-7728

Shelter Care Family Housing (Eugene)

Phone number: 541-689-7156

Looking Glass Station 7 - (for youth 11-17)

Crisis line: 541-689-3111

Eugene Service Center (St. Vincent de Paul)

Phone number: 541-461-8688

Address: 450 Highway 99 North Eugene, OR. 97402

Lane Community College Student Women's Center

Phone number: 541-463-5353

Address: 4000 East 30th Avenue Eugene, OR. 97405

Building 1, Room 202

<http://www.lanecc.edu/wp/womens-center>

University of Oregon Student Women's Center

Phone number: 541-346-4095

Address: 1228 University Street Eugene, OR. 97403

EMU Suite 3

<http://blogs.uoregon.edu/women/>

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Resources

Victim Services - for orders of protection

Phone number: 541-6824523

Address: 125 E. 8th Ave, Room 400 Eugene, OR. 97401

Lane County Legal Aid/Oregon Law Center

Phone Number: 541-342-6056

Address: 376 E 11th Ave, Eugene, OR 97401

<http://www.lclac.org/>

Lock-Out Crime Project (Springfield Police) - for free home security inspections

Phone number: 541-726-2323

DHS Self-Sufficiency (food stamps, TA-DVS grant, unemployment)

Eugene:

2885 Chad Drive: 541-686-7878

2101 W. 11th Ave: 541-686-7722

Cottage Grove:

305 Coop Court: 541-942-9186

Florence:

3180 Highway 101 N: 541-997-8251

Springfield:

1040 Harlow Road: 541-726-6644

101 30th St: 541-726-3525

DHS Child Welfare

Eugene:

1899 Willamette St: 541-686-7555

2101 W. 11th Ave: 541-686-7722

Springfield:

1040 Harlow Rd: 541-726-6644

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My Notes

women**space**
safety, hope and healing for survivors of domestic violence

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