

Understanding Vulnerability

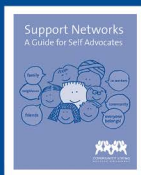
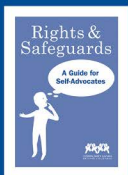
A Guide for Self Advocates



COMMUNITY LIVING
BRITISH COLUMBIA

This booklet is part of a plain language series.
Others in the series include:

- *Rights & Safeguards*
A Guide for Self Advocates
- *Support Networks*
A Guide for Self Advocates



This booklet belongs to:



This booklet is about understanding vulnerability so you can plan ahead and have a good life in community.

If you want, you can write notes in this booklet to make it your own.

If there is something you don't understand, ask someone you trust to help you.

What does vulnerability mean?



Vulnerability means:

Being at risk of PHYSICAL harms like:

- Living somewhere that isn't safe
- People not knowing you have a serious allergy
- Being afraid to “tell” if someone is hurting you

*How did you
get hurt?*



Vulnerability means:

Being at risk of EMOTIONAL harms like:

- Being teased or bullied
- Being ignored
- Not being listened to
- Not having someone you trust to talk to
- Not being included

I feel left out again!



Vulnerability means:

Being at risk of FINANCIAL harms like:

- Not having enough money to pay your rent
- Having others control your money
- Being at risk of others stealing from you



What are some ways *you*
feel vulnerable?

Why is it
important to
know about
vulnerability?



Knowing about vulnerability is important because:

You can plan ahead



Knowing about vulnerability
is important because:

Everyone is vulnerable,
in different ways

*When I'm
alone I'm
afraid*

*I need to
have snacks
every few
hours*

*I need help
sometimes but
not always*



*I need time
to decide*

*I need help
with my
money*

Knowing about vulnerability is important because:

You might be MORE vulnerable if:

- You don't know your rights
- You don't have a support network
- You don't get to make decisions for yourself

Dan used to get a ride home from work, but when his hours changed he had to take the bus alone after dark. This made him feel more vulnerable.



Knowing about vulnerability is important because:

Your vulnerabilities can change over time:

- As you get older
- During transitions like:
 - moving
 - a change in your health
 - changing jobs

*Can I handle
this change?*

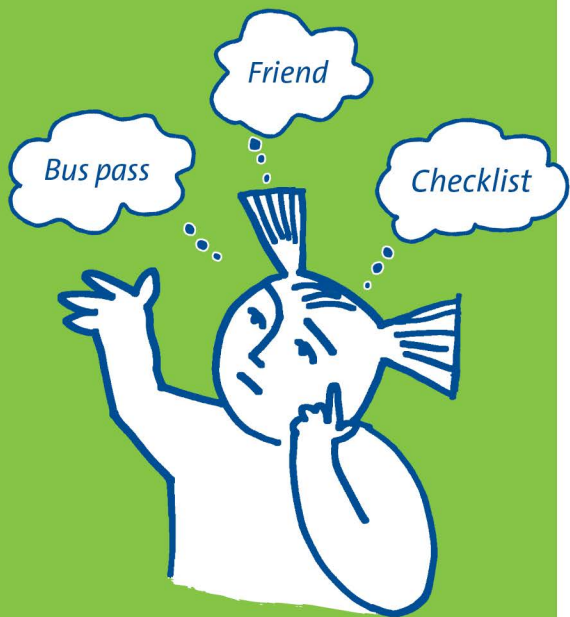


Knowing about vulnerability
is important because:

You can begin to plan your
“safeguards”



What are safeguards?



Safeguards are:

- Things that will reduce your vulnerability
- Things you do on purpose to stay safe



Safeguards are:

Things that increase the chance of good things happening like:

- Family and friends
- Belonging to a group
- Having a job



Safeguards are:

Things that prevent bad things from happening like:

- Having regular check-ups with your doctor
- Knowing your rights
- Planning ahead – being prepared!

Lisa loves to dance but feels vulnerable going by herself. So she plans ahead and goes with friends.



Safeguards are:

Things you do on purpose to stay safe like:

- Carrying an emergency contact card
- Taking your medications
- Walking with friends at night
- Telling people where you are going



DO I HAVE MY

✓ KEYS

✓ PHONE

✓ _____

✓ _____

✓ _____

What are some safeguards *you* use?

How can planning make you less vulnerable?

KNOW YOUR RIGHTS



BE AWARE, BE PREPARED

KNOW HOW TO SPEAK UP
FOR YOURSELF

Good planning can make you less vulnerable by:

- Understanding the risks that you may face
- Planning ways to reduce those risks
- Creating your path to reach your goals



Good planning can make you less vulnerable by:

- Helping you reach your goals AND stay safe
- Letting everyone know what's important to you



Sometimes there are risks. How can I reduce them?



You can reduce your risk by:

Talking to friends and family
who know you best



You can reduce your risk by:

Being aware and prepared like:

- Understanding the risks
- Deciding if the risk is worth having the experience



You can reduce your risk by:

Making good decisions to be safe but still enjoy yourself



You can reduce your risk by:

- Being aware of risks
- Following your plan
- Being prepared



You can reduce your risk by:

Being emotionally prepared like:

- Staying positive
- Asking for help if you need it
- Knowing how you'll cope with things you're afraid of

I can do this!



You can reduce your risk by:

Finding a balance between
too much risk and no risk



You can reduce your risk by:

Learning from your mistakes!

- Everyone makes mistakes
- What would you do differently next time?
- Talk it over with someone you trust



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Based on the CLBC Addressing Vulnerability
Through Planning Booklet

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without the input and support of:
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DECEMBER 2013