

### WHAT IS STALKING?

While legal definitions of stalking vary from one jurisdiction to another, a good working definition of stalking is a *course of conduct directed at a specific person that would cause a reasonable person to feel fear.*

#### STALKING VICTIMIZATION

- 3.4 million people over the age of 18 are stalked each year in the United States.
- 3 in 4 stalking victims are stalked by someone they know.
- 30% of stalking victims are stalked by a current or former intimate partner.
- 10% of stalking victims are stalked by a stranger.
- Persons aged 18-24 years experience the highest rate of stalking.
- 11% of stalking victims have been stalked for 5 years or more.
- 46% of stalking victims experience at least one unwanted contact per week.
- 1 in 4 victims report being stalked through the use of some form of technology (such as e-mail or instant messaging).
- 10% of victims report being monitored with global positioning systems (GPS), and 8% report being monitored through video or digital cameras, or listening devices.

[Katrina Baum et al., "Stalking Victimization in the United States," (Washington, DC: BJS, 2009).]

#### IMPACT OF STALKING ON VICTIMS

- 46% of stalking victims fear not knowing what will happen next. [Baum et al., (2009). "Stalking Victimization in the United States." BJS.]
- 29% of stalking victims fear the stalking will never stop. [Baum et al.]
- 1 in 8 employed stalking victims lose time from work as a result of their victimization and more than half lose 5 days of work or more. [Baum et al.]
- 1 in 7 stalking victims move as a result of their victimization. [Baum et al.]
- The prevalence of anxiety, insomnia, social dysfunction, and severe depression is much higher among stalking victims than the general population, especially if the stalking involves being followed or having one's property destroyed. [Eric Blauuw et al., "The Toll of Stalking," *Journal of Interpersonal Violence*, 17, no. 1 (2002):50-63.]

#### RECON STUDY OF STALKERS

- 2/3 of stalkers pursue their victims at least once per week, many daily, using more than one method.
  - 78% of stalkers use more than one means of approach.
  - Weapons are used to harm or threaten victims in 1 out of 5 cases.
  - Almost 1/3 of stalkers have stalked before.
  - Intimate partner stalkers frequently approach their targets, and their behaviors escalate quickly.
- [Kris Mohandie et al., "The RECON Typology of Stalking: Reliability and Validity Based upon a Large Sample of North American Stalkers," *Journal of Forensic Sciences*, 51, no. 1 (2006).]

#### STALKING AND INTIMATE PARTNER FEMICIDE\*

- 76% of intimate partner femicide victims have been stalked by their intimate partner.
- 67% had been physically abused by their intimate partner.
- 89% of femicide victims who had been physically assaulted had also been stalked in the 12 months before their murder.
- 79% of abused femicide victims reported being stalked during the same period that they were abused.
- 54% of femicide victims reported stalking to police before they were killed by their stalkers.

[Judith McFarlane et al., "Stalking and Intimate Partner Femicide," *Homicide Studies* 3, no. 4 (1999).]

#### STALKING LAWS

- Stalking is a crime under the laws of 50 states, the District of Columbia, the U.S. Territories, and the Federal government.
  - Less than 1/3 of states classify stalking as a felony upon first offense.
  - More than 1/2 of states classify stalking as a felony upon second or subsequent offense or when the crime involves aggravating factors.
  - Aggravating factors may include: possession of a deadly weapon, violation of a court order or condition of probation/parole, victim under 16 years, or same victim as prior occasions.
- For a compilation of state, tribal, and federal laws visit [www.ncvc.org/src](http://www.ncvc.org/src).*

*Last updated March 2011*

#### THE STALKING RESOURCE CENTER

The mission of the Stalking Resource Center is to enhance the ability of professionals, organizations, and systems to effectively respond to stalking. The Stalking Resource Center envisions a future in which the criminal justice system and its many allied community partners will effectively collaborate and respond to stalking, improve victim safety and well-being, and hold offenders accountable. Visit us online at [www.ncvc.org/src](http://www.ncvc.org/src). Contact us at 202-467-8700 or [src@ncvc.org](mailto:src@ncvc.org).

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