



FREEDOM FROM SEXUAL VIOLENCE

Stalking and Sexual Assault

Fact Sheet

What are the facts about stalking?

- Stalking is defined as: **A pattern of behavior directed at a specific person that would cause a reasonable person to feel fear.** However, it is crucial to remember that a perpetrator can threaten someone without using threatening words and can also use non-criminal acts to stalk. Some examples may include: sending an email, giving gifts, texting, or surprise visits.
- **3.4 million people** are stalked annually, with persons aged 18-24 experiencing the highest rates of stalking victimization.¹
- Females are nearly **3 times** more likely to experience stalking than males.²
- **76%** of femicide cases involved at least one episode of stalking within 12 months prior to the murder.³
- In a 2007 survey amongst college women, three-fourths of respondents who experienced stalking-related behaviors experienced other forms of victimization. 11% of survey respondents reported stalking, physical assault, and rape/sexual assault.⁴
- 31% of women stalked by their intimate partner were also sexually assaulted by that partner.⁵

What is the connection between stalking and sexual assault?

- Perpetrators of sexual violence often “groom” victims through voyeurism, surveillance, and information gathering.
- The framework for working with stalking victims includes four components: **Safety, Advocacy, Documentation** and **Support**. An advocate can work with a stalking victim to help determine threat assessment and

safety planning. Allow victims to tell their stories and provide validation that anger, fear, frustration, and guilt can be normal reactions to traumatic

What are the issues specific to stalking victims?

- According to the EAW Project, 85-90% of stalkers use some form of technology to stalk their victims. Rapid technological advances with devices like cameras, listening tools, computers, spyware, assistive technologies, and global positioning systems (GPS) make it easier for perpetrators to stalk victims.
- Because the technologies are so advanced, the victim may not be able to identify all of the tools being used to stalk. Stalking victims may feel that they are “going crazy” or that no one will believe them.
- They may need special assistance from law enforcement to perform a “sweep” of the victim’s house, computer, car, phone, etc. to determine what tools the stalker is using.

Where can I learn more?

National Center For Victims of Crime
(p) 1.800.211.7996
<http://www.ncvc.org/ncvc/Main.aspx>

National Sexual Violence Resource Center
(p) 717.909.0710
resources@nsvrc.org
www.nsvrc.org

References

- 1.. (Stalking Victimization in the U.S., BJS 2009)
2. (EAW Project)
3. Stalking and Intimate Partner Femicide, McFarlane et al. 1999)
4. (Stalking acknowledgment and reporting among college women experiencing intrusive behaviors)
5. (National Violence Against Women Survey, 1998)

For more information, please contact:

1120 Lincoln St., Suite 700 · Denver, CO 80203 · Phone 303.839.9999 · www.ccasa.org

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