STALKING FACT SHEET

WHAT IS STALKING?
While legal definitions of stalking vary between jurisdictions, a good working definition of stalking is: a pattern of behavior directed at a specific person that would cause a reasonable person to fear for their safety or the safety of others, or suffer substantial emotional distress.

STALKING VICTIMIZATION

- An estimated 13.5 million people are stalked in a one-year period in the United States.\(^\text{A}\)
- Nearly 1 in 3 women and 1 in 6 men have experienced stalking victimization at some point in their lifetime.\(^\text{B}\)
- More than half of all victims of stalking indicated that they were stalked before the age of 25, and nearly 1 in 4 were stalked before the age of 18.\(^\text{C}\)
- The vast majority of stalking victims are stalked by someone they know: 40% by a current/former intimate partner, 42% by an acquaintance.
- 69% of female and 80% of male stalking victims were threatened with physical harm.\(^\text{D}\)
- People aged 18–24 experience the highest rate of stalking victimization (among adults).\(^\text{E}\)
- Stalkers use many tactics, including: Making unwanted phone calls.
  - Approaching the victim or showing up in places when the victim does not want them to.
  - Following and watching the victim.
  - Sending unwanted texts, photos, emails, and messages through social media.
  - Sending unwanted gifts.
  - Using technology to monitor, track, and/or spy on the victim.
- Almost half of stalking victims experience at least one unwanted contact per week.\(^\text{F}\)
- 11% of stalking victims have been stalked for 5 years or more.\(^\text{G}\)
- More than twice as many victims are stalked with technology than without.\(^\text{H}\)

IMPACT OF STALKING ON VICTIMS

- 46% of stalking victims fear not knowing what will happen next.\(^\text{I}\)
- 29% of stalking victims fear it will never stop.\(^\text{J}\)
- 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.\(^\text{K}\)
- 1 in 7 stalking victims move as a result of their victimization.\(^\text{L}\)
- Stalking victims suffer much higher rates of depression, anxiety, insomnia, and social dysfunction than people in the general population.\(^\text{M}\)

STALKING OFFENDERS

- 2 in 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 tactic.
- Weapons are used to harm or threaten victims in 1 out of 5 cases.
- Almost 1 in 3 of stalkers have stalked before.
- Intimate partner stalkers are the most likely stalkers to approach, threaten, and harm their victims.

STALKING LAWS

- Stalking is a crime under the laws of the 50 states, District of Columbia, U.S. Territories, and Federal government.
- Fewer than 1/3 of states classify stalking as a felony in all circumstances, including on the first offense.
- More than 1/2 of states classify stalking as a felony upon the 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.

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Citations


B Ibid.

C Ibid.

D Ibid.

E Ibid.


I Ibid.


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M Ibid.

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