

# STALKING AND SEXUAL VIOLENCE: FACT SHEET

People experience **STALKING<sup>A</sup>** and contact **SEXUAL VIOLENCE<sup>B</sup>** at similar rates over their lifetimes: about 1 in 3 women and 1 in 6 men.

## INTERSECTIONS

- Fear of sexual assault is covered under most stalking statutes.
- Among stalking victims 18-24 years old, 16% said their stalker shared nude, semi-nude, and/or sexually explicit photos/videos of them.<sup>C</sup>
- In the vast majority of both stalking<sup>D</sup> and sexual violence<sup>E</sup> cases, the victim and perpetrator know each other.

**STALKING** and **SEXUAL VIOLENCE** are prevalent, traumatic, misunderstood, and under-reported crimes covered by the Violence Against Women Act.

## INTIMATE PARTNER VIOLENCE

- Women stalked by abusive partners experienced sexual abuse at significantly higher rates compared with women not stalked by abusive partners, including:<sup>F</sup>
  - Sexual degradation (61% stalked vs. 45% not)
  - Sexual coercion (78% stalked vs. 49 not)
  - Implicit threats & force (48% stalked vs. 21% not)
  - Sexual penetration while the victim was sleeping (15 stalked vs. 11% not)
  - Verbal pressure for sex (68% stalked vs. 34% not)
- 31% of women stalked by an intimate partner were also sexually assaulted by that partner.<sup>G</sup>
- Women stalked by a violent partner after obtaining a protective order were 9.3 times more likely to experience sexual assault than women with protective orders who were not stalked.<sup>H</sup>

## SEXUALLY VIOLENT STALKING BEHAVIORS

Sexual violence may be part of a stalker's pattern of behavior. Sexually violent behaviors may include:

- **SURVEILLANCE:**
  - Following, monitoring, and/or surveilling a victim while planning or after committing a sexual assault.
  - Watching a victim when they are naked or engaging in sexual activity without consent.
- **LIFE INVASION:**
  - Repeated unwanted contact/communication of a sexual nature or about a sexual assault.
  - Sending unwanted items or photos of a sexual nature or about a sexual assault.
  - Spreading sexual rumors or publicly humiliating with information about sexual activity or assault.
  - Impersonating the victim online to discuss or share information about sexual activity.
  - Forcing the victim to touch them sexually.
  - Repeated unwanted attempts to engage in sexual activity after the victim has said no.
  - Secretly taking sexual photos or videos.
- **INTIMIDATION:**
  - Threatening sexual assault.
  - Threatening to share sexual images or information, or to spread sexual rumors.
  - Blackmailing the victim in exchange for sexual activity, photos, or videos.
  - Nonconsensual creation of sexual images (photoshop, deepfake).
  - Threatening the victim to withdraw a complaint or keep them from reporting sexual violence.
- **INTERFERENCE** through sabotage or attack:
  - Sexual assault, trafficking, exploitation, or harassment.
  - Stealing and/or sharing sexual photos/videos without consent.
  - Indecent exposure (in-person or photos/video).
  - Posing as the victim to solicit sexual activity.

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## Citations

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- <sup>A</sup> Smith, S.G., Basile, K.C., & Kresnow, M. (2022). The National Intimate Partner and Sexual Violence Survey (NISVS): 2016/2017 Report on Stalking. Atlanta, GA: National Center for Injury Prevention and Control, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.
- <sup>B</sup> Smith, S.G., Chen, J., Basile, K.C., Gilbert, L.K., Merrick, M.T., Patel, N., Walling, M., & Jain, A. (2017). The National Intimate Partner and Sexual Violence Survey (NISVS): 2010-2012 State Report. Atlanta, GA: National Center for Injury Prevention and Control, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.
- <sup>C</sup> Brady, P. Q. & Woodward Griffin, V. (2019). The Intersection of Stalking and Sexual Assault Among Emerging Adults: Unpublished Preliminary Results, mTurk Findings, 2018.
- <sup>D</sup> Smith, S.G., Basile, K.C., & Kresnow, M. (2022). The National Intimate Partner and Sexual Violence Survey (NISVS): 2016/2017 Report on Stalking. Atlanta, GA: National Center for Injury Prevention and Control, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.
- <sup>E</sup> Smith, S.G., Chen, J., Basile, K.C., Gilbert, L.K., Merrick, M.T., Patel, N., Walling, M., & Jain, A. (2017). The National Intimate Partner and Sexual Violence Survey (NISVS): 2010-2012 State Report. Atlanta, GA: National Center for Injury Prevention and Control, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.
- <sup>F</sup> Logan, T.K., & Cole, J. (2011). Exploring the Intersection of Partner Stalking and Sexual Abuse. *Violence Against Women* 17(7), 904-924.
- <sup>G</sup> Tjaden, P. & Thoennes, N. (1998). Stalking in America: Findings from the national violence against women survey (NCJ#169592). Washington, DC: NIJ CDC.
- <sup>H</sup> Logan, T. & Walker, R. (2009). Civil protective order outcomes: Violations and perceptions of effectiveness. *Journal of Interpersonal Violence*, 24(4) 675-692.