



Stalking Resource Center Training Descriptions

Stalking: Prevalence, Lethality, and Impact

Research indicates that millions of adults are stalked each year, yet stalking is a crime that is often misunderstood, minimized, or missed entirely. This training will focus on the crime of stalking including common stalking dynamics and offender characteristics. We will also discuss the strong links between stalking and other crimes such as intimate partner violence and the increased risk of violence and lethality intimate partner stalking victims face. Participants will have an opportunity to learn about how stalking is “normalized” in our society and about the psychological and emotional effect stalking has on victims. As a result of this training, participants will have an enhanced ability to recognize stalking behaviors experienced by victims or perpetrated by offenders with whom they are working.

Stalking & Sexual Assault

Exploring and understanding the link between stalking and sexual assault is necessary to provide the best support and services to victims of both crimes. Many pre-sexual assault behaviors can be considered stalking and predatory, and many offenders stalk their victims after the assault. Yet, often times both survivors and practitioners do not describe this pre- or post-assault contact as stalking. In this training we will explore the links between stalking and sexual assault and how understanding the intersection can help validate victim experiences, enhance opportunities for interventions and increase offender accountability.

Use of Technology to Stalk

Today, technology is all around us. While technology itself isn't the problem, it can be used by stalkers to track, monitor, and gain information about victims. As technology advances, so will stalkers' abilities to utilize it in their crimes, therefore, those who work with victims of stalking should be familiar with the various ways that technology can be used to stalk. In this interactive training participants will have an opportunity to learn about the common ways in which offenders misuse technologies, such as phones, computers, cameras, and global positioning systems (GPS) to stalk. We will also discuss steps a victim can take to more safely use technology and considerations for documentation and evidence collection.

Stalking on Campus

Research has shown that the rates of stalking on college and university campuses are higher than in the general population. This training will provide participants with information about the dynamics of stalking on campus, including unique considerations for working with campus stalking victims. Participants will also have an opportunity to explore steps their campuses can take to respond to stalking, including increasing awareness, training for officials, and policy development. Federal requirements related to the Clery Act and Title IX and stalking can also be addressed.

Teens and Stalking

Research indicates that many stalking victims report being stalked before the age of 18. Although the dynamics of stalking among teens and stalking among adults—including primarily intimate partner offenders, low reporting rates, and connection to sexual and physical assault—are often similar, practitioners should know how they differ to better serve the populations they work with. In this training, participants will learn about the dynamics of stalking among teens, developmental considerations related to pursuit behavior, the types of technologies that teens use and how they can be misused, and how to work with teen victims of stalking. Participants will learn about the parent/adult knowledge gap in the use of technology, safety interventions, and prevention efforts. A discussion of how stalking intersects with other forms of teen victimization including bullying and dating abuse can also be included.

Working with Victims of Stalking

The effects of stalking on victims are wide-ranging and those that respond to or work with victims need to be prepared to address a variety of issues and needs. In this training we will address a minimum of four essential elements to working with stalking victims: safety, documentation, advocacy, and support. Concepts of risk assessment and safety planning will be covered, including discussing the more dangerous times and more dangerous offenders for stalking victims. Participants will be provided with additional resources, including threat assessment and safety planning tools, they can utilize when working with stalking victims.

Investigating Stalking

The traditional law enforcement paradigm is to investigate crimes as incident-based complaints that exist within their own singular set of circumstances. Stalking cases can present a challenge to this as stalking is a course of conduct crime, often comprised of a series of events that in and of themselves are not illegal. This training will explore the challenges and opportunities for building stalking cases by focusing on investigative strategies, response, and threat assessment. Participants will learn how to show stalking behaviors in the proper context with an emphasis upon gathering corroborating evidence for prosecutable cases. Participants will discuss what necessary evidence should be obtained in stalking cases and how to assist victims in documentation and evidence preservation. Additionally, we will discuss how victim service providers can serve as a resource to law enforcement and victims in stalking cases.

Prosecuting Stalking Cases

This training will address the challenges in prosecuting stalking crimes as well as the benefits to charging stalking in cases where stalking behavior has occurred. Trainers will address the challenges stalking crimes present for prosecutors, including the use of technology to commit and conceal the crime, how to interpret sometimes seemingly benign behaviors as criminal, and how to show stalking behaviors in the proper context. Participants will learn more about common stalking tactics, such as the offender's manipulation of the justice system and their attempts to cast doubt on the victim's credibility. Practical considerations, including pre-trial release, assembling evidence, voir dire, and sentencing considerations can also be addressed.

Supervising Stalkers

Community corrections officers can play a crucial role in addressing and intervening in stalking behaviors among probationers and parolees. This training will enhance participants' understanding of stalking and their ability to supervise offenders and respond to stalking victims. Topics addressed will include screening offenders to identify stalking, suggested conditions of release, and value of victim contact. Participants are encouraged to download a copy of a "Guide for Responding to Stalking," a resource for probation and parole officers developed by the Stalking Resource Center and APPA.

Creating a Collaborative Response to Stalking

Stalking is a complex and dynamic crime. No one agency or organization can address all the needs associated with these cases. In order to better keep stalking victims safe and hold offenders accountable, a collaborative response among many community organizations is necessary. In this training we will examine the steps participants can take to integrate an effective stalking response into either new or existing collaborative community responses to domestic and sexual violence. Using videos, interactive discussions, and examples from communities across the country, participants will leave with practical steps they can use to create and implement a successful collaborative responses to stalking.