

Stalking is a complex crime that is often misunderstood and under-reported. Although the first stalking law was not passed until 1990, all 50 states and the District of Columbia currently have stalking laws. The statutes vary widely, however, and lack a common definition of stalking. Unlike other crimes that are defined as an incident, stalking is a course of conduct that may comprise individual acts that may—in isolation—seem benign or noncriminal. Knowledge about stalking has developed significantly, and research continues to yield important insights about the crime. Yet only three major national studies of crime have looked at stalking. The most recent, the newly published National Intimate Partner and Sexual Violence Survey (NISVS), provides data on the national scope and magnitude of the crime. This study supports earlier findings about its seriousness, expands our awareness of its prevalence, and underscores that more women than men are victimized by stalking.

- During a one-year period, 6.6 million people ages 18 or older in the United States were stalked.¹
- At some point in their lives, 16 percent of women and 5 percent of men have experienced stalking victimization in which they felt fearful or believed that that they or someone close to them would be harmed or killed. Of stalking victims, 76 percent were female and 24 percent were male.²

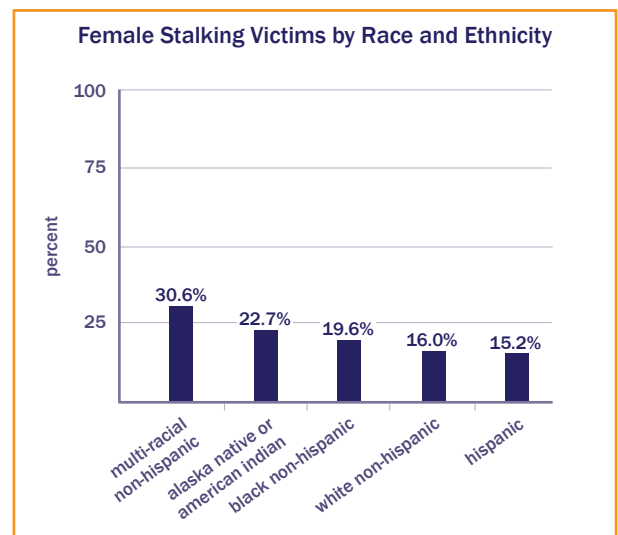


- At least 53 percent of female and 35 percent of male victims were stalked before the age of 25.³
- Twenty percent of female and 7 percent of male victims reported having experienced stalking as a minor (between the ages of 11 and 17).⁴

- Of female stalking victims, 83 percent reported having been stalked by a male perpetrator, and 9 percent by another female. For male victims, however, 44 percent reported having been stalked by a male, and 47 percent by a female.⁵



- Of women who reported having been stalked during their lifetime, 31 percent are multiracial non-Hispanic women, 23 percent are American Indian or Alaska Native women, 20 percent are black non-Hispanic women, 16 percent are white non-Hispanic women and 15 percent are Hispanic women.⁶



- In the lifetime reports of stalking among female victims, 66 percent were stalked by an intimate partner, while 13 percent were stalked by a stranger.⁷

¹ Michelle Black et al., *The National Intimate Partner and Sexual Violence Survey: 2010 Summary Report*, (Atlanta, GA: National Center for Injury Prevention and Control, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, 2011), 29, 31, accessed August 30, 2012, http://www.cdc.gov/ViolencePrevention/pdf/NISVS_Report2010-a.pdf.

² Ibid., calculated from data on p. 2.

³ Ibid., 34.

⁴ Ibid.

⁵ Ibid., 33.

⁶ Ibid., 30.

⁷ Ibid., 32.

- Women who are victimized by an intimate partner are more likely to experience a combination of stalking, physical violence, and rape (13 percent of such victims), or stalking and physical violence (14 percent of such victims), than stalking alone (3 percent of such victims).⁸
- Of male stalking victims, 41 percent were stalked by an intimate partner while 19 percent were stalked by a stranger during their lifetime.⁹
- Stalking victims took a variety of protective actions, including changing their day-to-day activities (22 percent), staying with family (18 percent), installing call blocking or caller ID (18 percent), changing their phone number (17 percent), and changing their e-mail address (7 percent).¹⁰



- Thirty-seven percent of male and 41 percent of female stalking victimizations were reported to the police by the victim or someone else aware of the crime.¹¹
- Of stalking victims, 16 percent obtained a restraining, protection, or stay-away order.¹²
- Forty-six percent of stalking victims experienced at least one unwanted contact per week.¹³
- Seventy-six percent of intimate partner femicide (homicide of women) victims had been stalked by their intimate partner in the year prior to the femicide.¹⁴

- When asked to name their worst fear related to the stalking, 46 percent of stalking victims reported not knowing what would happen next, and 29 percent reported fearing the stalking would never stop.¹⁵



- One in 8 employed stalking victims lost time from work as a result of the victimization, and of those victims, more than one-half lost 5 days of work or more.¹⁶
- One in 7 stalking victims moved as a result of the victimization.¹⁷
- Of the victims in one state who experienced violations of their domestic violence orders (DVO), 59 percent experienced stalking 6 months before their DVO, while 49 percent experienced stalking 6 months after their DVO.¹⁸
- In one state, 45 percent of rural and 26 percent of urban women reported that stalking occurred during or around the time an emergency protective order (EPO) was filed.¹⁹
- In one state, 79 percent of protection order violators in urban areas were charged with stalking in addition to other crimes, compared to 26 percent in rural areas.²⁰ ★

⁸ Ibid., 41, Figure 4.1.

⁹ Ibid., 32.

¹⁰ Katrina Baum et al., *Stalking Victimization in the United States*, (Washington, DC: Bureau of Justice Statistics, U.S. Department of Justice, 2009), 6, Table 8, accessed August 31, 2012, <http://www.ovw.usdoj.gov/docs/stalking-victimization.pdf>.

¹¹ Ibid., 8.

¹² Ibid., 6, Table 9.

¹³ Ibid., 1.

¹⁴ Judith McFarlane et al., "Stalking and Intimate Partner Femicide," *Homicide Studies* 3, no. 4 (1999): 311, accessed August 31, 2012, <http://www.markwynn.net/stalking/stalking-and-intimate-partner-femicide-1999.pdf>.

¹⁵ Baum, *Stalking Victimization in the United States*, 7.

¹⁶ Ibid.

¹⁷ Ibid., 6.

¹⁸ T.K. Logan et al., *The Kentucky Civil Protective Order Study: A Rural and Urban Multiple Perspective Study of Protective Order Violation Consequences, Responses, and Costs*, (Lexington, KY: University of Kentucky, Department of Behavioral Science, 2009): 99, Table 36, accessed September 5, 2012, <https://www.ncjrs.gov/pdffiles1/nij/grants/228350.pdf>.

¹⁹ Ibid., 92, Table 29.

²⁰ Ibid.