

## **ARE YOU BEING STALKED?**

Stalking is a series of actions that make you feel afraid or in danger. Stalking is serious, often violent, and can escalate over time.

### **Stalking is a crime**

A stalker can be someone you know well or not at all. Most have dated or been involved with the people they stalk. Most stalking cases involve men stalking women, but men do stalk men, women do stalk women, and women do stalk men.

### **Some things stalkers do:**

- Repeatedly call you, including hang-ups.
- Follow you and show up wherever you are.
- Send unwanted gifts, letters, texts, or e-mails.

- Damage your home, car, or other property.
- Monitor your phone calls or computer use.
- Use technology, like hidden cameras or global positioning systems (GPS), to track where you go.
- Drive by or hang out at your home, school, or work.
- Threaten to hurt you, your family, friends, or pets.
- Find out about you by using public records or online search services, hiring investigators, going through your garbage, or contacting friends, family, neighbors, or co-workers.
- Posting information or spreading rumors about you on the Internet, in a public place, or by word of mouth.
- Other actions that control, track, or frighten you.

**You are not to blame  
for a stalker's behavior.**

## THINGS YOU CAN DO

Stalking is unpredictable and dangerous. No two stalking situations are alike. There are no guarantees that what works for one person will work for another, yet you can take steps to increase your safety.

If you are in **immediate danger**, call 911.

Trust your **instincts**. Don't downplay the danger. If you feel you are unsafe, you probably are.

Take **threats** seriously. Danger generally is higher when the stalker talks about suicide or murder, or when a victim tries to leave or end the relationship.

Contact a crisis hotline, **victim services agency**, or a domestic violence or rape crisis program. They can help you devise a safety plan, give you information about local laws, weigh options such as seeking

a protection order, and refer you to other services.

Develop a **safety plan**, including things like changing your routine, arranging a place to stay, and having a friend or relative go places with you. Also, decide in advance what to do if the stalker shows up at your home, work, school, or somewhere else. Tell people how they can help you.

**Don't communicate** with the stalker or respond to attempts to contact you.

Keep **evidence** of the stalking. When the stalker follows you or contacts you, write down the time, date, and place. Keep emails, text messages, phone messages, letters, or notes. Photograph anything of yours the stalker damages and any injuries the stalker causes. Ask witnesses to write down what they saw.

Contact the **police**. Every state has stalking laws. The stalker may also have broken other laws by doing things like assaulting you or stealing or destroying your property.

Consider getting a **court order** that tells the stalker to stay away from you.

Tell **family, friends, roommates, and co-workers** about the stalking and seek their support. Tell security staff at your job or school. Ask them to help watch out for your safety.

**6.6 million people are stalked every year in the United States.**

**Women stalked at a rate three times higher than men.**

## **IF YOU'RE STALKED**

You might:

- Feel **fear** of what the stalker will do.
- Feel **vulnerable**, unsafe, and not know who to trust.
- Feel **anxious**, irritable, impatient, or on edge.
- Feel **depressed**, hopeless, overwhelmed, tearful, or angry.
- Feel **stressed**, including having trouble concentrating, sleeping, or remembering things.
- Have **eating problems**, such as appetite loss, forgetting to eat, or overeating.
- Have **flashbacks**, disturbing thoughts, feelings, or memories.
- Feel **confused, frustrated, or isolated** because other people don't understand why you are afraid.

**These are common reactions to being stalked.**

**IF SOMEONE YOU KNOW IS  
BEING STALKED, YOU CAN HELP.**

Listen. Show support. Don't blame the victim for the crime. Remember that every situation is different, and allow the person being stalked to make choices about how to handle it. Find someone you can talk to about the situation. Take steps to ensure your own safety.

**We can help.**

**S t a l k i n g**  
resource center

To learn more about stalking, visit the Stalking Resource Center Web site:  
**[www.VictimsOfCrime.org/SRC](http://www.VictimsOfCrime.org/SRC)**

*If you are in immediate danger, call 911.*



---

This document is available in printed version or PDF format and may be reproduced only in its entirety. Any alterations other than the addition of agency contact information in the space provided above must be approved by the Stalking Resource Center. Contact us at (202) 467-8700 or [src@ncvc.org](mailto:src@ncvc.org).

This document was developed under grant number 2008-WT-AX-K050 from the Office on Violence Against Women of the U.S. Department of Justice. The opinions and views expressed are those of the authors and do not necessarily represent the official position or policies of the Office on Violence Against Women, U.S. Department of Justice.