Most of what is known about stalking pertains to situations in which both the stalker and victim are adults. Relatively little is known about the involvement of children (those 12 and under) and adolescents (those 13 through 18) in stalking situations. Children and adolescents can be involved in stalking situations in two ways: as stalkers (of other children and/or adults) or as victims (of child or adult stalkers).
Research in Related Areas

Bullying

Stalking

Dating Abuse

Bullying

In 2011, about 28% of 12-to-18-year-old students reported being bullied at school during the school year.

- Indicators of School Crime and Safety, 2012

Bullying

Little change in the percentage of students ages 12 to 18 who reported being bullied at school

Percent

- Indicators of School Crime and Safety, 2012

Dating Violence

1.5 million high school students nationwide have experienced physical dating violence

- Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (2006)

32% of teens reported emotional abuse or physical violence in a relationship over an 18 month period

- Partner violence among adolescents in opposite-sex romantic relationships: Findings from the National Longitudinal Study of Adolescent Health (2001)

Dating Violence

Of 11-14 year olds who have been in a dating relationship, 62% say they know peers who have been verbally abused by a dating partner


Teens & Technology

Teens identifying as lesbian, gay, and bisexual are as likely to experience violence in same-sex dating relationships as youths involved in opposite-sex dating

Teen Technology Use

- 77% of youth ages 12–17 have cell phones
- Three-quarters of all teens text
  - 2/3 report they do so every day
  - The median number of texts sent by 12- to 17-year-old teens per day is 60
- 95% of youth ages 12–17 are online

- Teens, Smartphones, and Texting (2012)
- Media habits of teens and twenty-somethings (2012)

Technology and Relationships

- From 10:00pm to 12:00am:
  - 1 in 3 teens communicated with their partners (via cell phone or texting) 10 to 30 times per hour
- From 12:00am to 5:00am:
  - 1 in 4 teens talked or texted their partners hourly
  - 1 in 6 teens report texting or talking 10 or more times per hour

- Teen Abuse in Teen Relationship Study (2007)

Teens, Technology, & Stalking

- Technology facilitates teen abuse & stalking
  - Makes it easier for offenders to monitor, track and follow victims
- Increases the gap between teens and adults
  - Adults don’t understand the technology
  - Reporting becomes even less likely

Technology Abuse

26% of youth in a relationship said they experienced some form of cyber dating abuse victimization in the prior year
- 84% of cyber dating abuse victims also reported psychological dating abuse victimizations
- 52% reported physical dating violence victimization
- 33% reported sexual coercion

- Technology, Teen Dating Violence and Abuse, and Bullying (2013)
- Teen Dating Abuse and Harassment in the Digital World (2013)
- Indicators of School Crime and Safety, 2012
1 in 10 Teens…
- report partner has shared private or embarrassing photos or videos of them
- claim they have been physically threatened via communication technology

1 in 5 Teens…
- Report that partner has used the Internet or a cell phone to spread rumors about them
- Report being asked by cell or Internet to engage in sexual activity when they did not want to
- 20% of teens report their partner has used a social networking site to harass or put them down

Digital Abuse
- 1 in 4 teens have been called names, harassed or put down by a partner via technology
- 1 in 3 teens report being texted 10 – 30 times per hour by a partner asking where they are, what they are doing, or who they are with

Stalking via Technology
- 17% of teens say their partner has made them AFRAID not to respond to their communication
- 16% of teens claim their partner has bought them a cell phone or minutes for them

Spillover
Teen Experiences with Social Networking
- incident led to physical fight: 8%
- incident made them feel nervous about going to school: 13%
- incident led to argument or face to face confrontation: 25%

Different Than Adults

- Teens, Kindness and Cruelty on Social Network Sites (2011)
Youth

- Differences in levels of social maturity and cognitive development
- Limited relationship experience
- Strongly influenced by peers
- More influenced by media?

Non-adult behaviors

- Developmentally normal pursuit behavior
- Stalking

Developmentally Appropriate Behaviors

- Crushes on teachers
  - Write notes
  - Present small gifts
- Idolizing celebrity figures
  - Letter writing/email/social network sites postings
  - Attending concerts

These behaviors are rarely experienced as threatening

Teen Stalking Behaviors

- Sending unwanted notes, pictures, videos, gifts
- Spreading rumors
- Waiting outside of residence, school or work
- Following the victim
- Using technology
  - Repeated texts, calls, emails
  - Posts to social networking sites
  - Computer monitoring
- Intimidation
- Verbal threats
- Physical assaults
When is it Intrusive & Unreasonable

- repeated unwanted contact
- threats
- attempted reconciliation
- bullying
- harassment

Developmentally normal pursuit behavior

Stalking

When is it Criminal?

- Every state, U.S. Territory, and the District of Columbia have a stalking law
- Most states have harassment laws
- Several states have bullying statutes

Effect on Victims

- Sleep disturbances
- Guilt and self-blame
- Fearful
- Stressed
- Less sociable
- Anxiety
- Difficulty concentrating
- More cautious
- Confused
- Withdrawal
- Easily startled
- PTSD
- Depression
- Hyper-vigilance

Impact on Teen Stalking Victims

“"The telephone calls, the following, the spying... it's all driving me crazy. I wish that he would just leave me alone. He threatens me anytime he finds out that I've been with someone new. I'm scared 99 percent of the time. I'm constantly watching out for him at school. If I see him coming down the hall towards me, my heart starts beating really hard and I turn or something to avoid him. I feel like I'm completely paranoid. I watch for him at work all the time because he came there twice and just stood in the corner and acted like he was interested in buying something. As soon as my boss left the front of the store, X came over and started calling me a whore and stuff. Now I always am nervous at work and stuff. I hate being home alone. I can hardly get to sleep at night. When I finally do, I'm tossing and turning all night. I'm afraid to start dating new guys because I think that X'll really do something then.""

Children and Stalking (2013)

Victim Responses

From victim's perspective:
- Normalization
  - All my friends are experiencing this too
  - It's flattering
  - Isn't he supposed to call 40 times per day?
- Little experience distinguishing appropriate from inappropriate behavior when relationships end
- Minimization of risk
Reporting

Less than 10% of victims of dating abuse reported seeking help

- half as many male victims as female victims seeking help

- Technology, Teen Dating Violence and Abuse, and Bullying (2013)

Reporting to Parents

- 78% of teens harassed and embarrassed on networking sites didn’t tell their parents
- 72% of teens who have been checked on 10 times per hour by email or texting didn’t tell their parents
- 82% of teens asked to engage in sexual activity didn’t tell their parents

- Tech Abuse in Teen Relationship Study (2007)

Why Teens Didn’t Report

Believed behaviors weren’t serious enough: 68%
Deemed behaviors not serious at all: 45%
Feared parents would limit or take away use of their computer: 28%
Worried about the loss of cell phone privileges: 27%
Feared parents might prevent them from seeing their partner: 27%

- Tech Abuse in Teen Relationship Study (2007)

The Parent “Knowledge Gap”

When parents are asked the same incidence and prevalence questions about dating abuse and the use of technology to stalk teens, they dramatically UNDERESTIMATE the frequency and types of abuse and stalking happening to teens.

Minimization

“When I told my parents that [my ex-boyfriend] was scaring me, and that I wanted to switch schools because he was scary, they told me not to be ridiculous. My parents had no idea how scared I really was. They said I was being melodramatic.” That’s my mom’s favorite word. They totally didn’t listen to me. They kept saying, “X still likes you. He can’t help it.” Stuff like that. And they’d laugh like it was cute or funny or something. It was like they were on his side or something. They didn’t realize what a psycho he was until they caught him sneaking around our backyard late at night. They thought he was a burglar. They were about to call the police. That night, I think they finally understood why I was so scared of him.”

- Children and Stalking (2013)

Interventions for Teen Stalking Victims
Challenges

- May have difficulty changing classes or schools
  - Unable to move

- Privacy and confidentiality issues
  - Mandated reporting

- Lack of age-appropriate services
  - Availability of services
  - Access to services

Challenges

- Limited or no access to legal remedies
  - Can a teen file a police report?
  - Petition for an order or protection?
    - Without parental/guardian involvement

- Is our Juvenile Justice system addressing either teen victimization or offense adequately?

Response

- Training for school personnel
- Educational programming
- Services for victims
- Implement and enforce stalking policies/protocol

Interventions

Victim services for teens
  - Safety planning
  - Advocacy & support
  - Counseling – individual, group, peer

Awareness & prevention programs
  - Healthy relationships
  - Bystander intervention
  - Peer education programs

Interventions with perpetrators

- Safety planning
- Advocacy & support
- Counseling

IT'S NOT A JOKE. IT'S NOT ROMANTIC. IT'S NOT OK.
stop STALKING
www.ncvc.org/src

STALKING: KNOW IT. NAME IT. STOP IT.
NATIONAL STALKING AWARENESS MONTH
JANUARY
http://stalkingawarenessmonth.org

MES NACIONAL DE CONCIENCIZACIÓN SOBRE EL ACECHO
ENERO 2014
StalkingAwarenessMonth.org
Partners in Intervention and Prevention

- Schools
- Faith based organizations
- Parents
- Criminal & civil justice systems
- Mental health professionals
- Youth
- Victim service providers
- Social services
- Others?

Resources

- CDC’s Dating Matters: Strategies to Promote Healthy Teen Relationships
  [www.cdc.gov/violenceprevention/datingmatters](http://www.cdc.gov/violenceprevention/datingmatters)
- National Dating Abuse Helpline
  - Text “loveis” to 22522
  - Call 1-866-331-9474

Break the Cycle

Founded in 1996, Break the Cycle is still the only agency to provide comprehensive dating abuse prevention programs exclusively to young people.

We provide:
- Education and Outreach
- Legal Services
- Training
- Policy

Love is not abuse.com
knowtheredflags.com
safeandrespectful.org

Love is respect.org
a thin line.org
Loveisrespect’s National Youth Advisory Board

Meet the National Youth Advisory Board

• Advocates for healthy relationships
• Thanks to mark., a division of Avon
• 25 hardworking and dedicated individuals, ranging in age from 13 to 24
• Work together to represent youth of all ages, backgrounds and communities
• We’re recruiting new board members this February. Apply at loveisrespect.org, by February 28th.

February - teenDVmonth

February is Teen Dating Violence Awareness and Prevention Month (teenDVmonth or TDVAM).

• It’s Time to Talk Day – 38 events held nationally

Respect Week (2/11-2/14)
• Wear Orange Day: 4,000 RSVPs
• Twitter: over 740,000 people
• National Respect Announcement:
  – 400,000 people
  – 80 schools and orgs
For more info, visit teendvmonth.org

Contact Us

www.breakthecycle.org
www.loveisrespect.org

Christina-Marie Santillan
National Community Organizer
csantillan@breakthecycle.org

Stalking resource center

Training
• In person training
• Webinars

Technical Assistance
• Individual & organizational assistance
• Fact sheets, brochures, manuals, guides

Resources
• Policy/protocol development & consultation
• Videos
• Online resources
• Stalking Awareness Month materials

www.victimsofcrime.org/src

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