

## Stalking Fact Sheet

### What is stalking?

While legal definitions of stalking vary from one jurisdiction to another, a good working definition of stalking is *a course of conduct directed at a specific person that would cause a reasonable person to feel fear.*

### Stalking Victimization

- 6.6 million people are stalked in one year in the United States.
- 1 in 6 women and 1 in 19 men have experienced stalking victimization at some point during their lifetime in which they felt very fearful or believed that they or someone close to them would be harmed or killed.

Using a less conservative definition of stalking, which considers any amount of fear (i.e., a little fearful, somewhat fearful, or very fearful), 1 in 4 women and 1 in 13 men reported being a victim of stalking in their lifetime.

- The majority of stalking victims are stalked by someone they know. 66% of female victims and 41% of male victims of stalking are stalked by a current or former intimate partner.

- More than half of female victims and more than 1/3 of male victims of stalking indicated that they were stalked before the age of 25.

About 1 in 5 female victims and 1 in 14 male victims experienced stalking between the ages of 11 and 17.

- Repeatedly receiving unwanted telephone calls, voice, or text messages was the most commonly experienced stalking tactic for both female and male victims of stalking.

(Black et al., 2011: The National Intimate Partner and Sexual Violence Survey (NISVS): 2010 Summary Report)

- 46% of stalking victims experience at least one unwanted contact per week.
- 11% of stalking victims have been stalked for 5 years or more.

[Katrina Baum et al., (2009). "Stalking Victimization in the United States," (Washington, DC: BJS, 2009).]

### **Impact of Stalking on Victims**

- 46% of stalking victims fear not knowing what will happen next. [Baum et al., (2009). "Stalking Victimization in the United States." BJS.]
- 29% of stalking victims fear the stalking will never stop. [Baum et al.]

- 1 in 8 employed stalking victims lose time from work as a result of their victimization and more than half lose 5 days of work or more. [Baum et al.]
- 1 in 7 stalking victims move as a result of their victimization. [Baum et al.]
- The prevalence of anxiety, insomnia, social dysfunction, and severe depression is much higher among stalking victims than the general population, especially if the stalking involves being followed or having one's property destroyed. [Eric Blauuw et al. "The Toll of Stalking," *Journal of Interpersonal Violence* 17, no. 1(2002):50-63.]

### **RECON Study of Stalkers**

- 2/3 of stalkers pursue their victims at least once per week, many daily, using more than one method.
- 78% of stalkers use more than one means of approach.
- Weapons are used to harm or threaten victims in 1 out of 5 cases.
- Almost 1/3 of stalkers have stalked before.
- Intimate partner stalkers frequently approach their targets, and their behaviors escalate quickly.

[Kris Mohandie et al., "The RECON Typology of Stalking: Reliability and Validity Based upon a Large Sample of North American Stalkers," *Journal of Forensic Sciences* 51, no. 1 (2006).]

## **Stalking and Intimate Partner Femicide\***

- 76% of intimate partner femicide victims have been stalked by their intimate partner.
- 67% had been physically abused by their intimate partner.
- 89% of femicide victims who had been physically assaulted had also been stalked in the 12 months before their murder.
- 79% of abused femicide victims reported being stalked during the same period that they were abused.
- 54% of femicide victims reported stalking to police before they were killed by their stalkers.

*\*The murder of a woman.*

[Judith McFarlane et al., “Stalking and Intimate Partner Femicide,” *Homicide Studies* 3, no. 4 (1999).]

## **Stalking Laws**

- Stalking is a crime under the laws of all 50 states, the District of Columbia, the U.S. Territories, and the Federal government.
- Less than 1/3 of states classify stalking as a felony upon first offense.
- More than 1/2 of states classify stalking as a felony upon second offense or subsequent offense or when the crime involves aggravating factors.
- Aggravating factors may include: possession of a deadly weapon, violation of a court order or condition

of probation/parole, victim under 16 years, or same victim as prior occasions.

*For a compilation of state, territory, tribal, and federal laws, visit: [www.VictimsOfCrime/src](http://www.VictimsOfCrime/src).*

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### **The Stalking Resource Center**

The Stalking Resource Center (SRC) works to raise national awareness of stalking and to encourage the development and implementation of multidisciplinary responses to stalking in local communities across the country. The SRC provides training, technical assistance, and resource materials for professionals working with and responding to stalking victims so that communities are more aware of and better equipped to respond to the crime of stalking.

Contact us at 202-467-8700 or [src@ncvc.org](mailto:src@ncvc.org).

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