



Stalking

Stalking is a pattern of behavior that makes the person being targeted feel afraid or in danger. Stalking is serious, often violent, and can escalate over time. A stalker can be someone the survivor knows well or a complete stranger. Most perpetrators have dated or been romantically involved with the people they stalk. Most stalking cases involve men stalking women, but stalking can occur regardless of gender identity. 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. Because stalking is often misunderstood, minimized, or underestimated, the dangers can, and often do, lead to violence without early intervention.

The CARE Office takes all forms of interpersonal violence seriously; Contact our Campus Advocate for information if you or someone you know might experience these behaviors.

Common Stalking Behaviors:

- ▶ Repeatedly calling, including hang-ups.
- ▶ Following the survivor and showing up wherever they are.
- ▶ Sending unwanted gifts, letters, texts, or e-mails.
- ▶ Damaging the survivor's home, car, or other property.
- ▶ Monitor the survivor's phone calls or computer use.
- ▶ Using technology, like hidden cameras or GPS to track where the survivor goes.
- ▶ Driving by or hanging out at the survivor's home, school, or work.
- ▶ Threatening to hurt the survivor, their family, friends, or pets.
- ▶ Finding out information about the survivor by using public records or online search services, hiring investigators, going through their garbage, or contacting friends, family, neighbors, or co-workers.
- ▶ Other actions that control, track, or frighten the survivor.

Common Reactions to Stalking:

- Fear of what the stalker will do.
- Feeling vulnerable, unsafe, and not know who to trust.
- Feeling anxious, irritable, impatient, or on edge.
- Feeling depressed, hopeless, overwhelmed, fearful, or angry.
- Feeling stressed, including having trouble concentrating, sleeping, or remembering things.
- Feeling confused, frustrated, or isolated because others don't understand why the survivor is afraid.
- Eating problems including appetite loss, forgetting to eat, or overeating.
- Flashbacks, disturbing thoughts, feelings, or memories.

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).]

Things you can do if you are being stalked

- Trust your instincts. Don't downplay the danger. If you feel you are unsafe, take it seriously.
- Take threats seriously. Danger is generally higher when the stalker talks about a form of violence, or when a survivors tries to distance themselves.
- Contact the Campus Advocate in the CARE Office KL107 or Valley Crisis Center, 24 Hour Crisis Line - 209-722-HELP (4357).
- Develop a safety plan, including things like changing your routine, arranging a place to stay, and having a relative or friend go places with you. Also, decide in advance what to do if the stalker shows up at your home, work, school or somewhere else.
- 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, phone messages, letters, or notes. Photograph anything of yours the stalker damages and any injuries the stalker causes.
- Contact the police. Every state has stalking laws.
- Get a court order—there are emergency protective orders available as well.
- Tell family, friends, roommates, and coworkers about the stalking and seek their support.

Resources: <http://victimsofcrime.org/our-programs/stalking-resource-center/stalking-information#vic>