

Note

Stalking involves harassing or threatening behavior that an individual engages in repeatedly, such as following a person, appearing at a person's home, school, or place of business, making harassing phone calls, leaving written messages or objects, or vandalizing a person's property.

CyberStalking is using the Internet, e-mail, or other electronic communications devices to stalk another person.

References

- 1 Domestic violence and stalking: A comment on the model anti-stalking code proposed by the National Institute of Justice. (1994). Retrieved on June 22, 2005 from <http://www.vaw.umn.edu/documents/bwjp/stalking/stalking.html>
- 2 Fisher, B.S., Cullen, F.T., & Turner, M.G. (2000). *The sexual victimization of college women*. Washington, DC: National Institute of Justice and Bureau of Justice Statistics.
- 3 Tjaden, P., & Thoennes, N. (1998). *Stalking in America: Findings from the National Violence Against Women Survey*. Washington, DC: National Institute of Justice, Center for Disease Control and Prevention.
- 4 Kropp, P.R., Hart, S.D., & Lyon, D. (2002). Risk assessment of stalkers: Some problems and possible solutions. *Criminal Justice and Behavior*, 29, 590-616.
- 5 Coleman, F.L. (1997). Stalking behavior and the cycle of domestic violence. *Journal of Interpersonal Violence*, 12, 420-432.
- 6 Mullen, P.E., Pathe, M., Purcell, R., & Stuart, G. (1999). Study of stalkers. *American Journal of Psychiatry*, 156, 1244-1249.
- 7 Sinclair, H.C., & Frieze, I.H. (2000). Initial courtship behavior and stalking: How should we draw the line? *Violence and Victims*, 15, 23-40.
- 8 Working to Halt Abuse Online. (2001). *CyberStalking facts*. Retrieved on June 7, 2005 from <http://www.abanet.org/domviol/cyberfacts.html>

Stalking

What are the facts?

Occurrence

It is estimated that, currently, there are 200,000 established stalkers and 1.5 million people being stalked. (1)

Thirteen percent of female college students report being stalked in the previous six months. (2)

One woman in 12 (8.2 million) and one man in 45 (2 million) have been stalked at some point in their lives. (3) One million women (1%) and 370,000 (0.4%) men are stalked annually. (3)

Who is at greatest risk?

Adults between 18 and 29 years of age are the primary victims of stalking, comprising 52% of all victims. (3)

Women are more likely to be the victims of stalking than are men. Four out of five stalking victims are women. (3)

Approximately 78% of stalking victims are women and 22% are men. (3)

Who are the offenders?

Ninety-four percent of the stalkers identified by female victims and 60% of the stalkers identified by male victims are men. (3) Overall, 87% of identified stalkers are men. (3)

Forty-two percent of victims report that their stalkers are boyfriends or ex-boyfriends. (2)

Approximately 23% of female stalking victims and 36% of male stalking victims are stalked by strangers. (3)

Men are more likely than women to be stalked by strangers or acquaintances, of whom 90% are male. (3)

Stalking offenders and victims are often engaged in an intimate relationship prior to the stalking incident. (4) Women are twice as likely as men to be the victims of stalking by strangers and eight times as likely to be the victims of stalking by intimate partners. (3)

There is a strong link between stalking and other forms of violence in intimate relationships: 81% of women who are stalked by a current or former husband or co-habiting partner were also physically assaulted by that partner and 31% were sexually assaulted by that partner. (3)

Those who report higher levels of physical and verbal abuse during a relationship are more likely to be stalked by former partners. (5)

Fifty percent of men who stalk their intimate partners do so while the relationship is intact. (3)

Do the police get involved?

Fifty-five percent of female victims and 48% of male victims report their stalking to the police. (3)

One-quarter of the stalking cases reported to the police result in suspect arrests. (3)

Approximately 12% of stalking cases result in criminal prosecution. (3)

One-quarter of female stalking victims and one-tenth of male stalking victims obtained a restraining order against their stalkers. Of all victims with restraining orders, 69% of the women and 81% of the men said their stalkers violated the order. (3)

Stalking related behaviors

The telephone is the most common method used to harass victims. (6)

Forty-eight percent of stalkers send unsolicited gifts to their victims. (6)

Stalkers wait for their victims in a variety of places including outside their classes, schools, homes, and/or places of work. (7)

Cyberstalking

By 2003, it was estimated that there were over 500 million people online. If only 1% of these become CyberStalking victims, that is 5 million people.

It is estimated that 1 person in 1,250 is a CyberStalker and 1 person in 160 is currently being CyberStalked.

Twenty-five percent of stalking incidents among college women are classified as CyberStalking. (2)

CyberStalking is a relatively new phenomenon. Few studies have been conducted to determine the incidence, prevalence, and impact of CyberStalking. Working to Halt Abuse Online conducted a study in 2001 and found the following:

Eighty-four percent of the CyberStalking cases involved female victims and 64% involved male stalkers. (8)

Thirty-five percent of the victims were 18 to 25 years of age, 41% were single, 28% were married, and 57% were white. (8)

Of the 96% of victims who knew their stalkers, 49% had no prior relationship or contact with the stalker. (8)

Forty percent of the incidents began with an e-mail, 16% in a chat room, 13% with Instant Messaging, 9% on Message Boards, and 8.5% in Newsgroups. (8)

Twenty percent of CyberStalking cases escalated to physical world stalking. (8)

Of the CyberStalking cases that were resolved, 49% contacted the stalker's ISP, 17% contacted law enforcement, 5% changed username, and 4% changed e-mail address. (8)