

HOW TO SUPPORT A FRIEND THROUGH STALKING SITUATIONS

What is stalking?

- Stalking is an unwanted pursuit. Many victims are stalked by current or former intimate partners such as dating partners, spouses, or cohabitating partners. What was viewed initially as positive and/or romantic attention, may turn into the repeated unwanted attention, harassment, and contact that characterizes stalking. However, it is important to remember that a stalker can also be an acquaintance or someone you do not know.

Law

- A stalker can be legally defined as "any person who willfully, maliciously, and repeatedly follows or harasses another person with the intent to cause that person reasonable fear for their safety or the safety of their immediate family." There are federal laws against interstate stalking and interstate threats. Laws and codes can be found at www.ncvc.org/src

Signs

- Show up wherever you are
- Follow you
- Repeatedly call you, including hangups
- Drive by or hangout at your home, school, or work
- Send unwanted gifts, letters, cards, or emails
- Monitor your phone calls or computer use
- Use technology like hidden cameras, spyware, or global positioning systems to track where you go
- 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
- Threaten to hurt you, family, friends, or pets
- Damage home, car, or other property
- Any other actions that control, track, or frighten you



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Security Measures

- Trust your instincts. Do not downplay the danger. If you feel you are unsafe you probably are.
- Tell family, friends, roommates, RAs, professors, and coworkers. Seek their support. Ask them to help watch out for your safety and to not give out any information about you.
- Consult with a victim advocate on campus or in the community to talk about your options.
- Change your email address, phone numbers, and internet screen names. Be selective about giving those to others. Change passwords and clear your computer of all spyware.
- Be aware of what personal information the public and your friends can see on social networking sites. Do not list your home address or phone number. Be weary of updating your whereabouts.
- Decide in advance what to do if the stalker shows up at your home, work, or school.
- Do not communicate with the stalker or respond to attempts to contact you.
- Change the keys to all your locks and install deadbolts or security systems
- Contact the police. Every state has stalking laws. The stalker may have also broken other laws if they assault you, steal property, or destroy property.
- Document the stalking. Write down each incident including date, time, place, and witnesses. Detail what happened and include your response. Keep a copy at home. This information will be useful if you consider getting a court order that requires the stalker to stay away from you.

Resources

- National Center for Victims of Crime Stalking Resource Center | www.ncvc.org/src

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