
National Stalking Awareness Month 2021



#NSAM2021

#NSAMcle

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Journey Center for Safety and Healing provides services that foster safety and healing for those affected by child abuse and domestic violence; and prevents abuse through education, advocacy, and systemic change. Formerly known as Domestic Violence & Child Advocacy Center, Journey Center carries on the same mission, vision, and values.

National Stalking Awareness Month (NSAM) is held throughout the month of January as a call to action to recognize and respond to the series crime of stalking. We are excited to take this Journey with you throughout the month of January as we create awareness about stalking and learn ways that we can help those we care about.

What is Stalking?

Stalking is defined as a pattern of behavior directed at a specific person that would cause a reasonable person to feel fear. In Ohio, a pattern is considered two or more incidents closely related in time.

Stalking is typically directed at a specific person- the victim and most victims of stalking are stalked by someone they know- a current or former intimate partner, acquaintance, or family member. Intimate partner stalkers are the most dangerous offenders.

Some important statistics to know:

- **81% of women** who were stalked by a current or former husband or cohabiting partner were also physically assaulted by that partner.
- The average duration of intimate partner stalking is **2 years**.
- Intimate partner stalkers are **more likely to physically approach** the victim, use weapons, **escalate** behaviors quickly, **follow through** on threats, and **re-offend**.
- Stalking often precedes intimate partner homicide- in **85% of completed and 75% of attempted femicides**, there was **at least one episode** of stalking the year prior.

The definition of stalking includes that a reasonable person would feel fear. It is important to note that fear is often masked by other emotions: anger, frustration, hopelessness or despair.

Fear is contextual. What's scary to one person may not be scary to another. In stalking cases, many of the behaviors are only scary to a victim because of their relationship with the stalker. Many stalkers' behaviors seem innocuous or even desirable to outsiders – for example, sending expensive gifts. The stalker's actions don't seem scary and are hard to explain.

Stalking Tactics

Stalkers use a variety of tactics against the person that they are stalking. Stalking may include unwanted contact by phone, texts, social media, unwanted gifts, showing up or approaching the individual or their family and friends, monitoring or surveillance, watching or following the victim from a distance, spying, property damage, and threats.

- 78% of stalkers use more than one method
- Repeatedly receiving unwanted calls, voice or text messages is the most commonly experienced stalking tactic
- About 70% of stalking victims were threatened with physical harm
- 2/3 of stalkers pursue their victim at least once per week, many daily, using more than one method
- 46% of stalking victims experience at least one unwanted contact per week
- Weapons are used to harm or threaten victims in about 20% of cases
- Among stalking cases, other crimes are often committed: 24% involve property damage, 21% involve a direct attack on the victim, and 15% involve an attack on another person or pet
- Identity theft is another crime commonly occurring in stalking. Over half of victims had money taken from their account, had accounts opened or closed, and 30% had items charged to their credit card

Impact of Stalking

Victims may change their behaviors or patterns to cope with the stalking- this is an indicator that the victim is afraid. Fear may often be masked by feelings of anger, frustration, hopelessness or despair.

- Victims often display hypervigilance/feelings of always being on guard
- Victims commonly experience fear and anxiety or depression
- Victims may isolate themselves or disconnect from people- 10% of victims were afraid of losing their freedom
- 1 in 8 employed stalking victims lose time from work as a result of their victimization
- 1 in 7 stalking victims move as a result of their victimization
- Victims may also experience difficulties with concentration or attention, difficulty at work or school or accomplishing daily tasks, suffer from PTSD, sleep disturbances, nightmares and fatigue, use self-medication, or have suicidal thoughts
- 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

Social Media Images

Share these images, and other Journey Center social media posts, to start conversations and promote awareness and education. *Click each image to download and share.*

WHAT IS STALKING?

STALKING IS A PATTERN OF BEHAVIOR TARGETED AT A SPECIFIC PERSON THAT WOULD CAUSE A REASONABLE PERSON TO FEEL FEAR. IN OHIO, A PATTERN IS CONSIDERED 2 OR MORE INCIDENTS CLOSELY RELATED IN TIME.

STALKING IS TYPICALLY DIRECTED AT A SPECIFIC PERSON – THE VICTIM. HOWEVER, STALKERS OFTEN CONTACT THE VICTIM'S FAMILY, FRIENDS AND/OR COWORKERS AS PART OF THEIR PATTERN OF BEHAVIOR.

ANYONE CAN BE A VICTIM OF STALKING. A MAJORITY OF STALKING VICTIMS ARE STALKED BY SOMEONE THEY KNOW - A CURRENT OR FORMER INTIMATE PARTNER, ACQUAINTANCE, OR FAMILY MEMBER.



216.391.4357 (HELP)

Intimate Partner Stalking

- Intimate partner stalkers are the most dangerous offenders
- Physical abuse coupled with stalking is a greater indicator of potential lethality than either behavior alone
- Domestic violence re-abuse occurs in 24-60% of cases
- There is often 3rd party stalking involved 50-60% of partner stalking victims say others were involved in the stalking

216.391.4357 (HELP)



STALKING & TECHNOLOGY

Stalker
The most common use of technology to stalk is making unwanted telephone calls or hang-ups and leaving the victim unwanted messages by text or voicemail.

Stalker
Technology doesn't cause stalking, criminals exploit the technology to create an advantage for themselves.

Stalker
Most technologies used by stalkers have legal and legitimate functions.

216.391.4357 (HELP)

DID YOU KNOW?

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Everyone deserves to feel safe on their Journey to safety and healing. You are not alone.
#NSAMcle #NSAM2021

Responding to Stalking

Those experiencing stalking are facing added and unique barriers during this time. They may have limited options for accessing support services and networks and may feel uncertain about what the future holds. We can all do our part to help those we care about.

How to Support a Loved One

- Believe and Validate
 - Don't question or minimize what they tell you
- Focus on the offender's actions, not the victim's responses
 - Don't ask questions such as "why did you respond to that text message?"
 - Nothing the victim did justifies the stalker's behavior
- Support them and encourage them to seek help
 - Thank them for trusting you enough to have the conversation
 - Help the victim think through options
 - Respect their choices
- Respect their privacy
 - Do not share any information about the victim with the stalker, or anyone without the victim's approval
- Encourage them to document the stalking
- Check in
 - Stalking cases can last a long time, and your loved one's reactions, wants, needs, and feelings might change over time
 - Continue to check in and be a source of support
- Refer to Journey Center

Stalking Safety Strategies

- Trust your instincts
- Your safety plan should evolve, change, and adapt as the stalking situation changes.
- Cease any further communication with the stalker
- Keep a log of every stalking incident
- Varying your daily routine
- Tell your friends, family, and neighbors what is occurring – tell them what they should do if they are contacted or see something
- Call Journey Center to create a specific, detailed safety plan

Call or text: 216.391.4357 (HELP)
Chat: [Journeyneo.org](https://www.journeyneo.org)

NSAM Events

- **Webinar**
 - **January 15: Intimate Partner Stalking**
 - Join Journey Center for this 30 minute webinar where we will talk about the connection between stalking and domestic violence. *Registration is required.*
- **Let's Talk Tuesday**
 - Follow us on social media to join the conversation. Every Tuesday through the month of January we will post a video talking about one aspect of stalking.
- **Friday Facts**
 - Join us **every Friday** in January on Instagram where we answer *your* questions about staking, ways to help, and the connection between stalking and domestic violence!

Get Involved

- Use the social media hashtags: #NSAM2021, #NSAMcle
- Organize a collection of needed items on [Journey Center's Wish List](#)
- Share Journey Center's posts and videos
 - Facebook: [JourneyCenterNEO](#)
 - Twitter: [Journey_NEO](#)
 - Instagram: [JourneyCenterNEO](#)
- Celebrate and promote safe and healthy relationships
- [Donate directly](#) to Journey Center
- Host a Facebook fundraiser to support Journey Center
- Have a conversation at the dinner table with your family about what a healthy relationship is and is not
- Hold a cell phone drive to collect old phones for Journey Center
- Call or text our 24-Hour Helpline if you are someone you know is in an unsafe or abusive relationship: **216.391.4357 (HELP)** or live chat at: [Journeyneo.org](#)

Journey Center for Safety and Healing provides services that foster safety and healing to those affected by domestic violence and child abuse and prevents abuse through education, advocacy, and systemic change.

We envision a community where safety and well-being are achieved by empowering people to find a path toward healthy, thriving relationships.