

Praxis International audio conference training  
January 21, 2010

**Jodi B. Rafkin**

Jodi joined the National Center for Victims of Crime in June, 2008 and works as the Program Attorney for the Stalking Resource Center. The mission of the Stalking Resource Center is to raise national awareness about stalking and to encourage the development and implementation of multidisciplinary responses to stalking in local communities across the country.

Prior to joining the National Center, Jodi was a Deputy District Attorney in Los Angeles County, an Assistant U.S. Attorney in the Eastern District of California, and a consultant for the American Bar Association, where she worked in Bulgaria, Belarus and Central Asia to promote criminal justice reform and the rule of law. She has over 20 years experience working with victims of crime, prosecuting cases involving sexual assault and domestic violence at the state and federal levels, and was the Violence Against Women Act Coordinator for the Eastern District of California. Jodi has trained on various topics, including stalking, domestic violence, sexual assault, international assistance, and counter terrorism. She is a member of the Association of Threat Assessment Professionals. Jodi received her Juris Doctor from the University of Santa Clara School of Law and her Bachelor of Arts degree in Sociology and Government from Simmons College.

# Working with Stalking Victims

Praxis Audio Conference

January 21, 2010



Jodi Rafkin, [jrafkin@ncvc.org](mailto:jrafkin@ncvc.org)

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## Stalking

A pattern of behavior directed at a specific person that would cause a reasonable person to feel fear.

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## Context

- Can you threaten someone without using any threatening words?
- Can non-criminal acts be stalking?

***Context is critical!***

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## Prevalence of Stalking

### 3.4 million people stalked annually

- Women nearly 3 times greater risk of being stalked than men
- Persons aged 18-24 experienced the highest rates of stalking victimization
- Nearly half experienced at least 1 unwanted contact per week
- 11% had been stalked for five or more years

— Stalking Victimization in the United States, BJS (2009)

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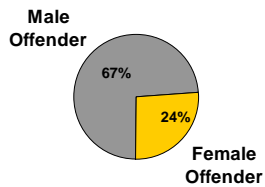
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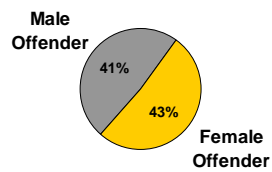
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## Gender of Offenders

### Female Victims



### Male Victims



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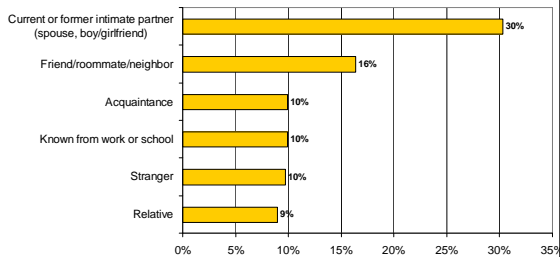
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## Relationship Between Victim and Offender



— Stalking Victimization in the United States, BJS (2009)

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## Stalking and Intimate Partner Violence



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- 81% of stalking victims who were stalked by an intimate partner reported that they had also been physically assaulted by that partner.

- National Violence Against Women Survey (1998)

- 3/4 of women who experienced stalking-related behaviors experienced other forms of victimization (sexual, physical, or both)
  - Stalking and physical assault only 8%
  - Stalking, physical and rape/sexual assault 11%

- Stalking acknowledgement and reporting among college women experiencing intrusive behaviors (2007)

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## Intersection of Stalking & Sexual Assault



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## Stalking and Sexual Assault

- 2% of stalking victims were raped/sexually assaulted by their stalker

- Stalking Victimization in the United States, BJS (2009)

- 31% of women stalked by her intimate partner were also sexually assaulted by that partner

- National Violence Against Women Survey, Tjaden & Thoennes (1998)

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## Stalking Behavior



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## Stalking Behaviors

- Following/Surveillance
- Sending gifts
- Vandalism
- Stealing items
- PO Violations
- Threats
- Targets third parties
- Proxy stalking
- Physical/Sexual assault
- Workplace stalking
- Harasses via legal system
- Use of children to harass/monitor
- Using Technology
  - Telephone
  - GPS
  - Spyware
  - Cameras
  - Email & IM
  - Social Networking Sites

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## Use of Technology to Stalk

More than 1 in 4 victims reported some form of technology used

- 83% email
- 35% instant messaging (IM)
- 7% electronic monitoring of some kind



— Stalking Victimization in the United States, BJS (2009)

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## Pattern of Behavior

- 2/3 of stalkers pursue their victim at least once per week
- 78% of stalkers use more than one means of approach
- Weapons used to harm or threaten victims in about 20% of cases

— The RECON Typology of Stalking (2006)

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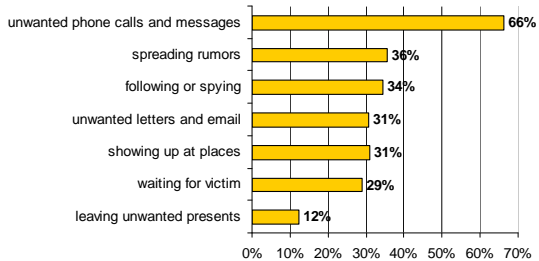
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## Stalking Behaviors



— Stalking Victimization in the United States, BJS (2009)

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## Recidivism Rates

- Occurred in 60% of cases
- Time between intervention and recidivism was about 2 months
  - Ranged from 1 day to 6 years

- The RECON Typology of Stalking (2006)

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## Reporting to Law Enforcement

- 37% of male stalking victims
- 41% of female stalking victims

- Stalking Victimization in the United States, BJS (2009)

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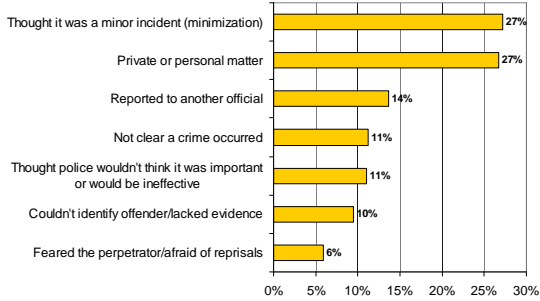
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## Reasons For Not Reporting



- Stalking Victimization in the United States, BJS (2009)

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## Impact on Victims



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## Impact of Stalking

- Minimization; Self-blame
- Guilt, shame or embarrassment
- Frustration, Irritability, Anger
- Shock and confusion
- Fear and anxiety
- Depression
- Emotional numbness
- Flashbacks
- Isolation/disconnection from other people
- Difficulties with concentration or attention
- Feeling suicidal
- Decreased ability to perform at work or school, or accomplish daily tasks
- Post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD)
- Sleep disturbances, nightmares
- Sexual dysfunction
- Fatigue
- Fluctuations in weight
- Self-medication with alcohol/drugs
- Feeling on guard most of the time - hypervigilance

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## Victim Impact

### Mental/Emotional Impact

- 80% of victims reported increased anxiety
- 30% of female & 20% of male victims sought psychological counseling
- 30% of victims developed PTSD
- 25% of victims considered or attempted suicide

### Financial Impact

- 74% reported that the stalking partner interfered with employment
- 59% experience work disruption or a diminished ability to obtain or maintain employment because of work interference by stalking partner.

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## Impact on Victims

- Afraid of:
  - 46% not knowing what would happen next
  - 29% behavior would never stop
  - 9% death
- 1 in 8 of employed victims lost time from work
  - More than half lost 5 days or more

— Stalking Victimization in the United States, BJS (2009)

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## Questions?

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## What Can We Do?



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# Safety Planning And Threat Assessment

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## What Is Safety Planning?

An individualized plan that identifies specific strategies and interventions that may increase a survivor's safety.

- Strategies should:
  - Respond to the stalking
  - Meet victim's basic human needs
  - Adapt to the victim's broader life plan

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## Why Do We Safety Plan?

- Can empower victims.
- Provides practical ways to decrease risk.
- Puts victims in contact with a variety of services, agencies, and individuals who can help.
- Is not a guarantee of safety, but can assist in improving safety.
- Stalkers/abusers continually change tactics.
- Safety planning works.

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## Survivor-Centered Advocacy

### Framework

“...starts from the [survivor’s] perspective, integrates the advocate’s knowledge and resources ... and ultimately values her [the survivor’s] thoughts, feelings, opinions, and dreams – so that she [the survivor] is the decision maker, the one who knows best, the one with the power.”

(Jill Davies, Eleanor Lyon, and Diane Monti-Catania in "Safety Planning with Battered Women")

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## Safety Planning with Stalking Victims

- Safety
- Documentation
- Advocacy
- Support

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ARE YOU SAFE?

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## Safety

- Defining our roles
- Privacy and confidentiality

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## Important Issues to Consider

- Victim's life situation
- Stalker-generated risks
- Systemic barriers
- Confidentiality
- Use of Technology

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## Safety

### Disengage/No Contact

- Intermittent Reinforcement
- Negotiation
- Minimizing Harm
  - "Just one last lunch..."
- Challenges

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## Safety

- Threat Assessment & Safety Planning
- "No contact" letters
- Offender picture or flyer

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## Steps of Safety Planning

- Listen and ask questions
- Identify the victim's specific needs and goals
- Discuss risks
- Explore strategies and resources
- Provide education without judgment
- Identify individuals and service providers who can help

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## Questions to Consider

- What safety strategies can stalking survivors use that don't involve the legal system?
- What can you do when law enforcement doesn't know how to proceed or the system is not responsive?
- What can you or the survivor do if the stalker has access to or works in the system?
- What potential safety risks exist during evidence collection or legal system involvement?

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## Support without Solutions

- "I don't want to go to the police, but I want him in jail"
- Collecting evidence & documentation
- When no laws are broken
- Mitigating the CSI effect
- When additional services are needed

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## Pulling on Outside Expertise

- National TA providers
- Law enforcement
- Attorneys/Prosecutors
- Specialized services

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## Other Factors to Discuss with Victim

- How to balance freedom and safety
- Next steps in case something does happen
- How often to reassess safety plan
- Risk reduction vs. absolute safety

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# Questions?

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## Advocacy

### Allow victims to tell their story

- Telling the story allows survivor to remember more details and put all the pieces in place
- Telling the story facilitates the transition from traumatic memory to day-to-day memory

### Provide validation

- Validation is the process by which service providers teach victims that most reactions to traumatic events are normal
- Validation should reinforce that most reactions of anger, fear, frustration, guilt, and grief are natural and common

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## Advocacy

### Prediction & Preparation

- Victims need **information**
  - Practical information
  - Emotional responses
- Can help the victim regain control

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**Documentation**

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STALKING INCIDENT LOG

Date	Time	Description of Incident	Location of Incident	Witness Name(s) <small>(Attach Address and Phone #)</small>	Police Called <small>(Report #)</small>	Officer Name <small>(Badge #)</small>

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**Documentation**

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**Stalking sacks**

- Cell phone (not same one you had during relationship!)
- Personal alarms, whistles, pepper spray
- Cameras
- Log
- Watch with date
- Tape recorder (check laws in your state)

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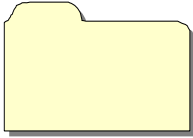
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**Documentation**

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**Victim & Offender Folders**



- Courtesy of Sacramento Area Stalking Survivors, Inc.

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## Victim & Offender Folders

Dear Law Enforcement Officer:

This folder contains descriptive information regarding the victim and possible offender related to your current call. The information contained herein was compiled because the described victim has experienced on-going domestic violence and/or stalking behaviors. As such, the victim should be considered at high risk and this call should be handled accordingly.

Thank you for your prompt and professional response.

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## Victim Information:

- Full Name: \_\_\_\_\_
- Nickname: \_\_\_\_\_
- Home Address: \_\_\_\_\_
- Home Phone: \_\_\_\_\_
- Cell #/Beeper #: \_\_\_\_\_
- Employer Name/Address: \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
- Work Phone: \_\_\_\_\_ Work Hours: \_\_\_\_\_
- Name and Phone of Supervisor: \_\_\_\_\_
- Date of Birth: \_\_\_\_\_ Sex: \_\_\_\_\_ Race: \_\_\_\_\_
- Social Security #: \_\_\_\_\_ Drivers License #: \_\_\_\_\_
- Height: \_\_\_\_\_ Weight: \_\_\_\_\_ Hair Color/Length: \_\_\_\_\_
- Eye Color: \_\_\_\_\_ Corrective Lenses: \_\_\_\_\_ Shoe Size: \_\_\_\_\_
- Medical Doctor: \_\_\_\_\_
- Address/Phone: \_\_\_\_\_
- Dentist: \_\_\_\_\_
- Address/Phone: \_\_\_\_\_
- Previous injuries/congenital deformities: \_\_\_\_\_
- Identifying Marks: \_\_\_\_\_
- Dentures, partials, implants: \_\_\_\_\_
- Mental Health Provider: \_\_\_\_\_
- Address/Phone: \_\_\_\_\_
- Attorney: \_\_\_\_\_
- Address/Phone: \_\_\_\_\_
- Favorite Hang-Outs: \_\_\_\_\_
- Location of Diary/Journal: \_\_\_\_\_

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## Offender Information

- Full Name: \_\_\_\_\_
- Nickname: \_\_\_\_\_
- Home Address: \_\_\_\_\_
- Home Phone: \_\_\_\_\_
- Cell #/Beeper #: \_\_\_\_\_
- Employer Name/Address: \_\_\_\_\_
- Work Phone: \_\_\_\_\_ Work Hours: \_\_\_\_\_
- Name and Phone of Supervisor: \_\_\_\_\_
- Date of Birth: \_\_\_\_\_ Sex: \_\_\_\_\_ Race: \_\_\_\_\_
- Social Security #: \_\_\_\_\_ Drivers License #: \_\_\_\_\_
- Height: \_\_\_\_\_ Weight: \_\_\_\_\_ Hair Color/Length: \_\_\_\_\_
- Eye Color: \_\_\_\_\_ Corrective Lenses: \_\_\_\_\_ Shoe Size: \_\_\_\_\_
- Previous injuries/deformities: \_\_\_\_\_
- Identifying Marks/tattoos: \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
- Medications: \_\_\_\_\_
- Substance Abuse: \_\_\_\_\_
- Probation Status: \_\_\_\_\_ Parole Status: \_\_\_\_\_
- Name of P/O: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone: \_\_\_\_\_
- Dates of Arrest: \_\_\_\_\_
- Dates and Locations of Incarceration: \_\_\_\_\_
- Describe Prior Arrests and/or Convictions: \_\_\_\_\_
- Names of Detectives and/or District Attorneys who handled prior cases: \_\_\_\_\_
- Jail ID # (X-Ref): \_\_\_\_\_ Case #: \_\_\_\_\_
- Currently incarcerated: \_\_\_\_\_ Inmate #: \_\_\_\_\_
- Where incarcerated: \_\_\_\_\_ Release Date: \_\_\_\_\_

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## Offender Information

Offender Photograph

Offender Vehicle Information:

Vehicle Description: \_\_\_\_\_

Year: \_\_\_\_\_ Make: \_\_\_\_\_ Model: \_\_\_\_\_

Color: \_\_\_\_\_ License #: \_\_\_\_\_ Expiration: \_\_\_\_\_

Is there any other vehicle the offender might use (make, model, license, color) or any other travel methods?:

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

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## Offender Family and Friends

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_ Relationship: \_\_\_\_\_

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_ Relationship: \_\_\_\_\_

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_ Relationship: \_\_\_\_\_

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## Offender Information

Briefly describe the offender's recent pattern of behavior (vandalism, telephone calls, letters, etc.):

List all police report numbers and jurisdictions:

Number:

Jurisdiction:

Agency:

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## Protective Orders

- Attach copies of any protective or restraining order and other orders of the court

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## Support



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## Threat Assessment

- Analysis of situation that tells us **which** individuals pose **what** risk at what times
- Threat level NEVER fixed—can change over time
- Constant assessment of threat is a MUST

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## Threat Assessment

### How to do it?

#### Victim-Centered Approach (Subjective)

- Victim's perception of risk is most important
- Scale of fear
  - Explanation
  - Consider minimization
- History of violence
  - Triggers
  - Time patterns in prior abuse?

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## Threat Assessment

### More dangerous times for stalking victims

- Separation
- Protective order served/Criminal Arrest
- Offender's loss of job, other life events
- Multiple incidents in short period of time - increase in quantity of contacts as well as escalation in behaviors

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## Threat Assessment

### More dangerous offenders:

- History of substance abuse
- History of mental illness (narcissistic personality disorders—you hurt me bad, you will fix it)
- History of violence, esp. towards victim
- Threats of murder/murder-suicide

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## Threat Assessment

More dangerous offenders:

- Actual pursuit
- Possession and/or fascination with weapons
- Vandalism, arson
- Tendency towards emotional outbursts and rage
- History of violating POs

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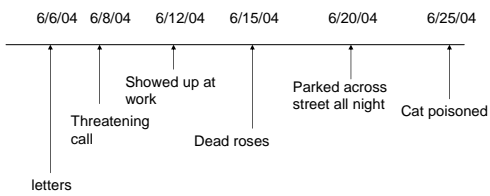
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## Threat Assessment

- Develop timeline of stalking events
- Look for escalation of threats



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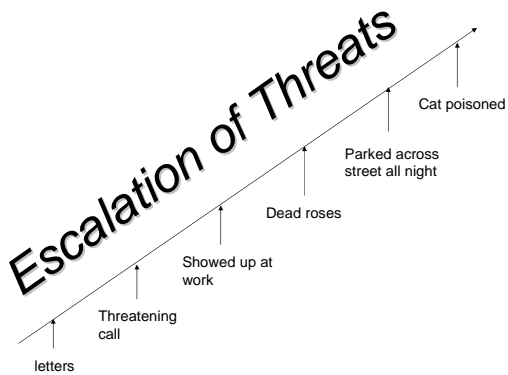
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One way to enhance safety:



## Coordinated Community Response

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## Why a CCR?



- Criminal justice intervention doesn't stop stalking
- Stalking can last a long time
- Few dedicated resources

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## Developing a CCR to Stalking



- Benefits of a CCR:
  - Early Identification of Stalking Crimes
  - Early Intervention
  - Shared Responsibility for Data Collection
  - Collaborative Problem Solving
  - Coordination of Law Enforcement and Victim Services
  - Community Trust

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## Developing a CCR to Stalking

- Design of CCR should reflect your community
  
- Foundation of any design should be:
  - Victim safety
  - Perpetrator accountability

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## Developing a CCR to Stalking

- **What already exists in your community?**
  - Build on existing community networks, taskforces, work groups, etc.
  - Who else needs to be invited?
- **Identify what collective knowledge and experience on stalking exists**
  - Is more training and education on stalking needed?
- **Obstacles**
  - What are the obstacles?
  - How can you overcome obstacles?

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## Links in the Chain

- Two different approaches in video
  - Look for how they share information.
  - What roles do victims have in the CCR?
  - What roles do “non-traditional” partners have? (Parole, probation, defense lawyers, etc.?)
  - How do they overcome obstacles?
  - You Tube – type into search window: National Center for Victims of Crime Links in the Chain. The video will come up in two parts

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## Commitment to a CCR

- Membership “buy-in”
- Establish objectives and goals (long and short-term)
- Developing procedures, protocols
- Writing MOUs
- Be creative in approaches
- Anticipate challenges
- Evaluate and refine

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## Resources

- Brochure for Victims (Are You Being Stalked?)
- Stalking Fact Sheet
- Stalking Questions and Answers
- Ten Things You Should Know About Stalking
- Stalking Incident Behavior Log
- Sample MOU - Stalking CCR
- Safety Plan Guidelines
- Stalking Support Group Guide
- Cyberstalking: Dangers on the Information Superhighway

[www.ncvc.org/src](http://www.ncvc.org/src)

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## Sample Forms

Contact the Stalking Resource Center for forms and additional resources

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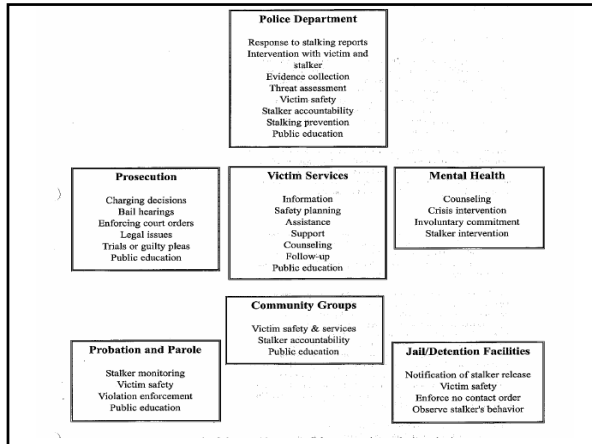
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and the New York Anti-Stalking Task Force

**MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING**

**STATEMENT OF PURPOSE:**  
 It is the shared goal of the New York Anti-Stalking Task Force and its participants to promote victim safety and offender accountability in domestic violence and stalking. This MOU has been developed to better coordinate the efforts of the New York Anti-Stalking Task Force and its participants so that stalking and domestic violence victims are best served by these agencies.

**GOALS:**

1. Provide assistance and information to stalking and domestic violence victims.
2. Increase offender accountability and increase victim safety.
3. Train other professionals on stalking.
4. Receive ongoing training on stalking.

**NEW YORK ANTI-STALKING TASK FORCE AGREES TO:**

1. Be a resource for participants.
2. Screen cases prior to having cases presented at a monthly meeting.
3. Provide advocates and other members with information necessary to assist victims.
4. Hold monthly meetings.

**TASK FORCE PARTICIPANTS AGREE TO:**

1. Host a monthly meeting on a rotating site basis.
2. Commit to send a representative to the meetings.
3. Assist in the creation and evaluation of creative responses to victim cases that are forwarded to the Task Force.

**NEW YORK ANTI-STALKING TASK FORCE AND ITS PARTICIPANTS JOINTLY AGREE TO:**

1. Collaborate to promote the goals of victim safety and offender accountability.
2. Work in collaboration to provide training to other professionals.
3. Ensure that each agency or organization's confidentiality policies have been complied with prior to bringing a case to the Task Force.

*This Memorandum of Understanding shall be reviewed and updated every three years.*

Task Force co-chair \_\_\_\_\_ Name/Title of Program Representative \_\_\_\_\_

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Organization/Affiliation	Contact Person (fill in name of potential member)
Batterer Intervention Program	
Corrections Office	
Child Protection Office	
Crimes Court	
County Court	
District Court	
Domestic Violence Service Provider	
Health Care Provider	
Legal Aid	
Local Business	
Mental Health/Social Services	
Police Department	
Parole	
Probation	
Prosecutor's Office	
Prosecutor's Office/Victim Witness	
Religious Organization	
Victims/Burtonson	
Other	
Other	
Other	

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# VictimLaw



Your Source for Crime Victim Rights and Protections

- ❑ **Free!** and easy to use for advocates, victims, professors, and students
- ❑ Over 15,000 legal provisions describing nine core victims' rights
- ❑ Save unlimited searches
- ❑ Downloadable step-by-step tutorial

[www.VictimLaw.info](http://www.VictimLaw.info)

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## NNEVDV SafetyNet Project [www.nnedv.org](http://www.nnedv.org)

### Technology Safety Planning with Survivors

This handout provides 12 tips about technology use to discuss if someone you know is in danger.



**Survivors & Technology**  
An interactive safety planning tool

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# Stalking

resource center

Practitioners: 202-467-8700

Victims: 1-800-FYI-CALL



[www.ncvc.org/src](http://www.ncvc.org/src)

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Questions?

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