



High-Tech Stalking



What is High-Tech Stalking?

Stalkers are increasingly misusing a variety of telephone, surveillance, and computer technologies to harass, terrify, intimidate, coerce, and monitor former and current intimate partners. Perpetrators are also misusing technology to stalk before, during, and after perpetrating sexual violence.

Stalkers may misuse technology to:

- Send multiple emails or text messages a day
- Monitor a victim's computer activity through Spyware
- Track the location of a victim's vehicle using GPS
- Watch the victim through hidden cameras
- Intercept phone calls and messages
- Impersonate the victim

It is not uncommon for a stalker to misuse multiple technologies at once while also using more traditional, non-technology tactics.

Why is High-Tech Stalking Important to Agencies and Partnerships?

As technology has become a major part of our everyday lives, it has also become more common for stalkers to misuse it. It is important for all programs who are working with victims of stalking to understand these technologies, how stalkers misuse them, and what strategies victims can use to increase their safety.

How Will You Know That Technology is Involved?

In most cases, victims know that some technology is being used and will report that the stalker "knows too much" about their computer activity, places they went to, their day-to-day activities, and conversations they had on the phone. It's important that grantees trust a victim's instincts and help explore what technologies the stalker may be using.

What Can Agencies and Partnerships Do?

- They can help victims do ongoing safety planning about technology use. Because a stalker might misuse technology to get a victim's location or other sensitive information, it's crucial that the risks and benefits of using various technologies be discussed as part of ongoing safety and privacy planning.
- In many cases, advocates can work with victims to help get changes made to a victim's account or get information removed from a website. Victims can contact the cell phone or internet service provider, online social networking site or other company themselves. However, a limited information release may be needed if the advocate is being asked to contact a company on the victim's behalf.
- They can also help victims to document what the stalker is doing and the victim is experiencing so that a record of stalking incidents and behaviors is established. If the victim chooses to engage law enforcement, this documentation can be used to help begin a stalking investigation. NNEDV has created Technology Stalking Logs that can be used by survivors to aid them in documentation.

For additional technology tip sheets and handouts, including a Technology Safety Plan in eight languages, visit NNEDV's website at: www.nnedv.org/safetynetdocs.

High-Tech Stalking (version for agencies and partnerships)

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