

Stalking victimization in the united states



**ASSIGN
BUSTER**

Running head: Stalking Victimization Stalking Victimization in the United s
Institution:

Abstract.

Stalking Victimization in the United States is widely prevalent. It is behavior which causes harassment and fear and poses a threat to the security of victims and others. The diverse nature of stalkers and their crimes make it difficult to contain. The threat has further been heightened through the stalkers abuse of technology to track victims. The need of the hour is for stronger legislation to arrest and prosecute stalkers and the generation of public awareness about the nature of this crime.

Stalking Victimization in the United States

Stalking may be defined as any unwanted contact which constitutes a threat or harassment, and induces fear in the victim. Stalking behavior includes unsolicited phone calls, letters, e-mails and gifts; following the victim; turning up unnecessarily at the victim's residence or workplace; spreading information or rumors about the victim. (BJS web site). Contrary to popular perception, Stalking Victimization is not confined to celebrities, but is widely prevalent in American society today, with 1 in 12 women and 1 in 45 men likely to encounter this crime. The majority of stalkers are known, even intimately, to their victims. In addition to the generation of fear and the disruption of lives, stalking is often the precursor to lethal violence. In this context, stalking has rightly been classified as a crime in all the States of America, although legal definitions may vary across jurisdictions. (COPS web site).

The distinct characteristics of the crime make stalking " hard to identify, investigate, and prosecute" (The Police Chief, January 2009). As stalking

<https://assignbuster.com/stalking-victimization-in-the-united-states/>

behaviors do not conform to any norm, there can be no fixed response. Stalkers defy any standard psychological profiling, as their motives and backgrounds vary considerably. When stalking is linked to domestic violence, as it often is, the stalking aspect of the crime tends to be overlooked. Investigators are frequently hindered by the blurring of jurisdictions, as stalkers pursue victims across state borders. It is difficult to protect the victims, as stalkers are largely persistent, even in the face of punitive action. (The Police Chief, January 2009).

Another contemporary facet of Stalking Victimization is the abuse of technology by stalkers to harass their victims. Social networking sites, such as Facebook, encourage the sharing of personal information. These sites are mined by stalkers to keep track of the victim's activities. Tracking devices, such as Global positioning systems and cell phones, lend themselves to use by stalkers through the monitoring of radio signals. Caller ID spoofing makes it particularly difficult for victims to block stalkers from access to their cell phones. Video surveillance through high-tech cameras makes video voyeurism a tool for stalkers. Similarly, wireless communication devices, such as cordless phones, can be used to invade privacy through eavesdropping. Computer spy ware enables stalkers to follow their victims' activities on the internet. Cyber stalkers can send harassing e-mails from several accounts, hack into the victim's account, impersonate the victim on social sites, establish contact through a false persona, and post online information about the victim. Victims need to become tech-savvy, and conversant with anti-spy software, to combat this menace. (Stalking Resource Center web site).

Victims of stalking have recourse to several help lines. The first step is for <https://assignbuster.com/stalking-victimization-in-the-united-states/>

the victim to accept that he is not at fault in the situation and acknowledge the severe emotional trauma that stalking engenders. A detailed record of all the incidents of stalking, including photographs, letters, phone-answering messages and eyewitness depositions, can facilitate subsequent legal action against the stalker. Support groups and counseling services are available. A restraining order, or a 'no-contact order,' can be obtained from the court, with violations leading to arrests. Victim compensation programs reimburse victims for the expenses incurred. (Office for Victims of Crime Resource Center web site).

There can be no doubt that Stalking Victimization in the United States constitutes a serious threat to social security. To combat this crime, law enforcement and community agencies should coordinate responses to the victims needs, in terms of security, counseling, and legal aid. Stronger legislation, which unambiguously classifies stalking as a felony, is needed to facilitate the rapid arrest and prosecution of stalkers. Finally, a greater public awareness about the definition of stalking and the recourses available to victims must be created to form a wall of defense against this heinous crime. (Stalking Resource Center). Only a proactive partnership between law enforcement agencies and the community can combat Stalking Victimization.

References.

Stalking Resource Center. " Stalking Victimization in the United States" Largest-ever National Study on Stalking a Wake-up Call, Says National Victim Advocacy Group.

Retrieved 24 January 2010 from

<http://www.ncvc.org/src/AGP.Net/Components/DocumentViewer/Download>.

<https://assignbuster.com/stalking-victimization-in-the-united-states/>

aspxnz? DocumentID= 45874

Stalking Victimization. OVC web site. What are the facts about stalking?

Retrieved 24 January 2010 from

[www. rainn. org/pdf-files-and-other.../Public.../stalkingvictimization1. pdf](http://www.rainn.org/pdf-files-and-other.../Public.../stalkingvictimization1.pdf)

Stalking Resource Center. How technology can be used by stalkers.

Retrieved

24 January 2010 from

[http://www. ncvc. org/src/main. aspx? dbID= DB_StalkingTechnology139](http://www.ncvc.org/src/main.aspx?dbID=DB_StalkingTechnology139)

Bureau of Justice Statistics. Stalking/Intimidation. Retrieved 24 January 2010

from

[http://bjs. ojp. usdoj. gov/index. cfm? ty= tp&tid= 314](http://bjs.ojp.usdoj.gov/index.cfm?ty=tp&tid=314)

US Department of Justice. Office of Community Oriented Policing Services.

Stalking.

Retrieved 24 January 2010 from

[http://www. cops. usdoj. gov/Default. asp? Item= 1073](http://www.cops.usdoj.gov/Default.asp?Item=1073)

Sonia E. Velazquez et al. The Police Chief, vol. LXXVI, no. 1, January 2009.

Mobilizing a Community Response to Stalking: The Philadelphia Story.

Retrieved 24 January 2010

[http://policechiefmagazine. org/magazine/index. cfm? fuseaction=](http://policechiefmagazine.org/magazine/index.cfm?fuseaction=display&article_id=1702&issue_id=12009)

[display&article_id= 1702&issue_id= 12009](http://policechiefmagazine.org/magazine/index.cfm?fuseaction=display&article_id=1702&issue_id=12009)