

STALKING AMONG ADOLESCENTS:

FACT SHEET

Stalking impacts people of all ages. While research on stalking among adolescents is limited, estimates generally show that adolescents are stalked at higher rates than adults. Consistent with facts about adult stalking victims, adolescent girls are more likely to be stalked than boys, while adolescent boys perpetrate stalking at higher rates than girls, and adolescents tend to stalk and be stalked by someone they know.



What is stalking? Stalking is crime under the laws of the 50 states, District of Columbia, U.S. Territories, Federal government, and Uniform Code of Military Justice, as well as many tribal codes. While legal definitions of stalking vary between jurisdictions, a good working definition of stalking is: *a pattern of behavior directed at a specific person that would cause a reasonable person to fear for their safety or the safety of others, or suffer substantial emotional distress.*

STALKING VICTIMIZATION

- Among high school students in the past 12 months, stalking victims accounted for:ⁱ
 - 19% of female and 14% of male students.
 - 20% of students of color and 16% of white students.
 - 27% of lesbian, gay, and bisexual, and 15% of heterosexual students.
 - 26% of students exposed to parental violence during their childhood versus 13% of those who had not.
- Among youths aged 16-18 in the past 12 months:ⁱⁱ
 - Those with disabilities were nine times more likely to experience stalking compared to youths without.
 - Those with learning disabilities were 13 times as likely and youths with mobility issues were three times as likely to experience stalking than those who did not have these disabilities.
- Among youths aged 12-18 with dating experience, 48% experienced stalking at some point in their life.ⁱⁱⁱ

IMPACT OF STALKING

- Adolescent stalking victims were more likely than youths who had not been stalked to experience post-traumatic stress, depression, and hopelessness.^{iv}
- Among youths aged 16-18 who experienced stalking in the past 12 months:
 - 52% reported they were fearful for the safety of themselves or others.
 - 52% experienced incidents that would cause a reasonable person to experience fear.
 - 43% experienced substantial emotional distress.^v

STALKING OFFENDERS

- Boys and girls who engaged in stalking were more violent than their peers who did not.^{vi}
- Among high school students in the past 12 months:^{vii}
 - 4% of females and 7% of males perpetrated stalking.
 - The most common perpetrators were a former boy/girlfriend (33%), someone known but not from school (24%), someone known from school (23%), friends (12%), or a current partner (8%).
 - 4% of males versus 2% of females were both victims and perpetrators of stalking.
- Among youths aged 12-18 with dating experience, 49% perpetrated stalking at some point in their life and 1 in 3 had been both a perpetrator and a victim of stalking.^{viii}

STALKING TACTICS

- Among high school students who were stalked in the past 12 months:^{ix}
 - 89% received unwanted communication.
 - 50% had someone show up when unwanted.
 - 37% were followed, spied on, or monitored using a device.
- Among youths aged 16-18 who were stalked in the past 12 months:^x
 - 41% were stalked using both in-person and technology-facilitated tactics.
 - 34% were stalked using only technology-facilitated tactics.
 - 25% were stalked using only in-person tactics.
 - 32% were stalked for less than one month, 47% for 1-12 months, and 17% for 1-2 years.

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Citations

- ⁱ Fisher, B. S., Coker, A. L., Garcia, L. S., Williams, C. M., Clear, E. R., & Cook-Craig, P. G. (2014). Statewide estimates of stalking among high school students in Kentucky: Demographic profile and sex differences. *Violence against women*, 20(10), 1258-1279.
- ⁱⁱ National Crime Victimization Survey. (2016). Bureau of Justice Statistics. <https://bjs.ojp.gov/data-collection/ncvs>
- ⁱⁱⁱ Rothman, E. F., Bahrami, E., Okeke, N., & Mumford, E. (2020). Prevalence of and Risk Markers for Dating Abuse–Related Stalking and Harassment Victimization and Perpetration in a Nationally Representative Sample of US Adolescents. *Youth & society*, 53(6), 955-978.
- ^{iv} Reidy, D. E., Smith-Darden, J. P., & Kernsmith, P. D. (2016). Behavioral and mental health correlates of youth stalking victimization: A latent class approach. *American journal of preventive medicine*, 51(6), 1007-1014.
- ^v National Crime Victimization Survey. (2016). Bureau of Justice Statistics. <https://bjs.ojp.gov/data-collection/ncvs>
- ^{vi} Smith-Darden, J. P., Reidy, D. E., & Kernsmith, P. D. (2016). Adolescent stalking and risk of violence. *Journal of adolescence*, 52, 191-200.
- ^{vii} Fisher, B. S., Coker, A. L., Garcia, L. S., Williams, C. M., Clear, E. R., & Cook-Craig, P. G. (2014). Statewide estimates of stalking among high school students in Kentucky: Demographic profile and sex differences. *Violence against women*, 20(10), 1258-1279.
- ^{viii} Rothman, E. F., Bahrami, E., Okeke, N., & Mumford, E. (2020). Prevalence of and Risk Markers for Dating Abuse–Related Stalking and Harassment Victimization and Perpetration in a Nationally Representative Sample of US Adolescents. *Youth & society*, 53(6), 955-978.
- ^{ix} Fisher, B. S., Coker, A. L., Garcia, L. S., Williams, C. M., Clear, E. R., & Cook-Craig, P. G. (2014). Statewide estimates of stalking among high school students in Kentucky: Demographic profile and sex differences. *Violence against women*, 20(10), 1258-1279.
- ^x National Crime Victimization Survey. (2016). Bureau of Justice Statistics. <https://bjs.ojp.gov/data-collection/ncvs>