WHAT IS STALKING?

Stalking is the act of willfully and repeatedly following another person without their consent and/or continual unwanted contact. Stalking is a repeated pattern of behavior that often escalates over time. Stalking can be both physical/in person as well as digital. Stalking can be perpetrated by a domestic partner or previous partner, strangers, family members, or friends. Like with all acts of violence, stalking can look different in different situations.

HOW TO RECOGNIZE STALKING

Victims of stalking may experience:

- Repeated phone calls or texts (including hang-ups)
- Being followed in person or having the stalker show up wherever you are
- Receiving unwanted gifts, letters, or messages
- Having property vandalized or damaged
- Having your technology monitored
- Being tracked through technology use
- A person repeatedly driving by or lingering near your home, school or work
- Receiving threats towards yourself, your family, friends, or pets

WHAT ARE THE EFFECTS OF EXPERIENCING STALKING?

People who experience stalking may become fearful of the stalker as well as others, feel vulnerable, unsure, untrusting, out-of-control, may experience depression, anxiety, panic attacks, irritability, hypervigilance, acute stress or PTSD, confusion, isolation, missing daily activities (such as school or work), or changes to daily habits (including social media habits).

WHO CAN EXPERIENCE STALKING?

Anyone can experience (or perpetrate) stalking, regardless of relationship status, age, gender identity, sexual orientation, sexual activity, race, ethnicity, religion, ability, citizenship status or economic status. Often times, the stalker is a person that the survivor knows.

HOW DO I HELP TO PREVENT STALKING IN MY COMMUNITY?

Learn about stalking and discuss it with those around you, advocate for healthy relationship education in schools and organizations, support local organizations doing the work, pressure legislation for protective laws, interrupt jokes about stalking and abuse, and learn how to support a friend in a situation by educating yourself on the signs and researching various resources.
WHAT DO I DO IF I, OR SOMEONE I KNOW, HAS EXPERIENCED STALKING?

Talk to law enforcement, if you feel comfortable doing so, and call 911 if immediately in danger. Confide in a trusted friend/family member and alert friends/family/co-workers/building managers of the situation so they may help watch for the perpetrator. End contact with the stalker and connect with an advocate or trusted organization (such as a BRAVO advocate). Document all incidents with evidence, create a safety plan with an advocate, prepare your family in case of emergency, and be aware of the ways social media can be used to monitor you. Always take threats of harm seriously and trust your instincts.

HOW DOES STALKING AFFECT THE LGBTQ COMMUNITY?

LGBTQ+ individuals may experience threats of outing by their stalker. Stalking may co-occur with hate violence and/or domestic violence or IPV. LGBTQ+ individuals may experience barriers to services or lack of education about resources specific to them due to their status within the LGBTQ+ community. These reasons are why BRAVO is here – we work specifically with LGBTQ+ individuals and understand the unique needs of the community. If you or someone you know is experiencing stalking, please reach out to a BRAVO advocate.

RESOURCES:

BRAVO (Buckeye Region Anti-Violence Organization)

Cyberstalking
Women’s Law
www.womenslaw.org/about-abuse/forms-abuse/cyberstalking

Stalking: Don’t Confuse the Signs with Love
One Love
www.joinonelove.org/learn/stalking-dont-confuse-the-signs-with-love/

Stalking Resource Center
National Center for Victims of Crime (NCVC)
victimsofcrime.org/stalking-resource-center/

Victim Connect Resource Center
1-855-4-VICTIM / 484-2846

What is Stalking?
Love is Respect
www.loveisrespect.org/is-this-abuse/types-of-abuse/is-this-abusetypes-of-abusewhat-is-stalking/

*This is not a comprehensive list of all available resources, but rather resources we have chosen to highlight for distribution. If you would like additional resources, additional information, or a resource sheet on another topic please let a BRAVO advocate know.