Stalking and Teens

11th National Indian Nations Conference:
Justice for Victims of Crime

Strengthening the Heartbeat of all our Relations

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Stalking
resource center

Beyond Common Usage

"Stalking" is popularly used to describe following or harassing behavior

- What is non-adult stalking?
- Available statistics and qualitative research
- Using Technology to Stalk
- General Teen Victimization
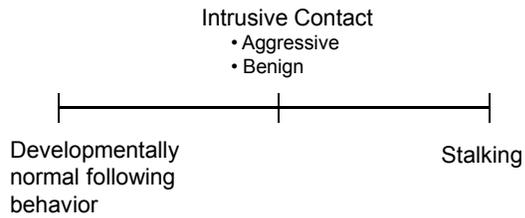- Interventions

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What is Stalking?

Pattern of behavior directed at a specific person that would put a reasonable person in *fear.*

Context is critical!

Understanding Stalking

"Sometimes I unlock my car and find a rose on the seat—no note, just the rose. Somehow he got into my car and left it there; it's all he needs to do to terrorize me."

Non-adult behaviors

Intrusive Contact
• Aggressive
• Benign

Developmentally normal following behavior

Stalking

Developmentally Appropriate Behaviors

• Crushes on teachers
  – Write notes
  – Present small gifts
• Idolizing celebrity figures
  – Letter writing/email/social network sites postings
  – Attending concerts

- Juvenile Aspects of Stalking

Developmentally Appropriate Behaviors

- Intense romantic feelings toward peers
  – Following around school
  – Repetitive calling
  – Writing multiple notes
  – Waiting in locations where the person is likely to come

These behaviors are rarely experienced as threatening

- Juvenile Aspects of Stalking

Intrusive Contact

- Behaviors that are unwelcome intrusions into another person's life

- Broad range of behaviors

- Does not suggest that the behaviors involve an obsession by those initiating them

- Some behaviors that are intrusive when initiated by a stranger may not be intrusive when initiated by a former dating partner, because the behaviors might be viewed as a reasonable attempt to reconcile

- Haugaard & Seri (2003).
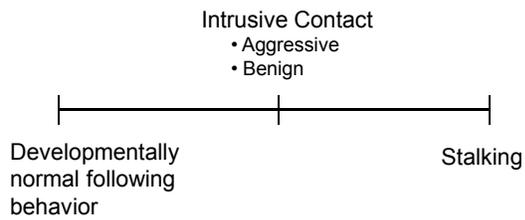
Intrusive Contacts

- Phoning
- Calling (repeatedly, at inappropriate times, hanging up)
- Stopping by residence
- Refusing to leave residence
- Creating disturbance at residence
- Leaving note on door/window
- Driving by residence
- Watching residence
- Waiting to meet other outside residence, class, work
- Following other
- Appearing near other at restaurants, clubs
- Threatening physical harm
- Threatening to say negative things about other

- Haugaard & Seri (2003).

Teen Stalking Behaviors

- Verbal threats
- Intimidation
- Following the victim
- Sending unwanted notes, pictures and gifts
- Spreading rumors
- Repeated telephone calls
- Waiting outside of residence, school or work
- Using technology
  - o Emails
  - o Text messages
  - o Computer monitoring

When Does It Become Criminal?

Intrusive Contact
- Aggressive
- Benign

Developmentally normal following behavior

Stalking

What We Know

Prevalence

o 12% of stalking victims report being stalked before the age of 18

o Undergraduate Students who report being the target of *intrusive contact*:
  o 22% of Females
  o 15% of Males

Gender of Teen Stalkers

- Female Victims
  o ***95% Male offenders***
  o 5% Female offenders
- Male Victims
  o 15% Male offenders
  o ***85% Female offenders***

Relationship Between Victim and Stalker

- 71% of intrusive contact victims being 'stalked' by current or previous dating partners

- Average age at which relationships began:
  o Females: 16.56
  o Males: 15.79

Relationship Between Victim and Stalker

80.3% of campus stalking victims knew their stalkers:

- 42.5%   Current/former boyfriend
- 24.5%   Classmate
- 10.3%   Acquaintance
- 5.6%   Friend
- 5.6%   Co-worker

Connection to Physical Violence

27% of female 'intrusive contact' victims also reported sexual assault during the relationship

Teen Stalkers & Teen Victims

From Victim's Perspective:

- Normalization
  - All my friends are experiencing this too.
  - It's flattering.
  - Isn't he supposed to call 40 times per day?
- Little experience distinguishing appropriate from inappropriate behavior when relationships end.
- Minimization

Impact on Teen Stalking Victims

- Feared for their safety during the intrusive contact:
  - 23% of females
  - 7% of males

- 3 in 10 college women reported being injured emotionally or psychologically from being stalked.

Impact on Teen Stalking Victims

- Sleep disturbances
- Guilt and self-blame
- Fearful
- Stressed
- Less sociable
- Anxiety

- More cautious
- Confused
- Withdrawal
- Easily startled
- PTSD
- Depressed

Teens & Technology

Technology & Stalking

• Technology facilitates teen stalking
Makes it easier for offenders to monitor, track and follow victims

• Increases the gap between teens and adults
o Adults don't understand the technology
o Reporting becomes even less likely

Technology Usage

From 10:00pm to 12:00am:

1 in 3 teens communicated with their partners (via cell phone or texting) **10 to 30 times per hour**

Technology Usage

From 12:00am to 5:00am:
o 1 in 4 teens talked or texted their partners **hourly**

o 1 in 6 teens report texting or talking **10 or more times per hour**

Stalking via Technology

- 1 in 3 teens report being texted 10 – 30 times per hour by a partner asking where they are, what they are doing, or who they are with

- 1 in 4 teens have been called names, harassed or put down by partner via technology

Stalking via Technology

- 1 in 5 teens report that partner has used the internet or a cell phone to spread rumors about them.

- 1 in 5 teens report being asked by cell or internet to engage in sexual activity when they did not want to

Stalking via Technology

- 1 in 5 teens report partner has used networking site to harass or put them down

- 1 in 10 teens report partner has shared private or embarrassing photos or videos of them

- 1 in 10 teens claim they have been physically threatened via communication technology

Stalking via Technology

- 17% of teens say their partner has made them AFRAID not to respond to their communication

- 16% of teens claim their partner has bought them a cell phone or minutes for them

Teens and Social Networking Sites

> "It's just sort of another way of communicating. There's like [ways to] say 'What's going on?' …and you can post funny things…and if you have friends who live in a different state or something and you don't see them all the time, you can sort of use your MySpace as a way to keep in touch with them, or read what they're doing."
>
> *– Girl, Middle School*

Teen and Technology Use

- Approximately 93% of teens use the Internet

- 55% of online teens have a profile on a social network site

- Amanda Lenhart, et. al., 2007; Lenhart, Madden Hitlin, 2005

Social Networking Sites

- Creating an online community for friends & family members or meeting new friends (examples: My Space, Facebook, BeBo)

- Computers can bring people together in various ways
  – Message boards/pursuits of specific interests
  – School extracurricular activities
  – Community activism/volunteering

Demographics

Sex	
Girls	58%
Boys	51%
Age	
12 – 14	45%
15 – 17	64%
Age by Sex	
Girls aged 12 – 14	44%
Boys aged 12 – 14	46%
Girls aged 15 – 17	70%
Boys aged 15 - 17	57%

- Pew Internet & American life Project Teens and Parents Survey (2006)
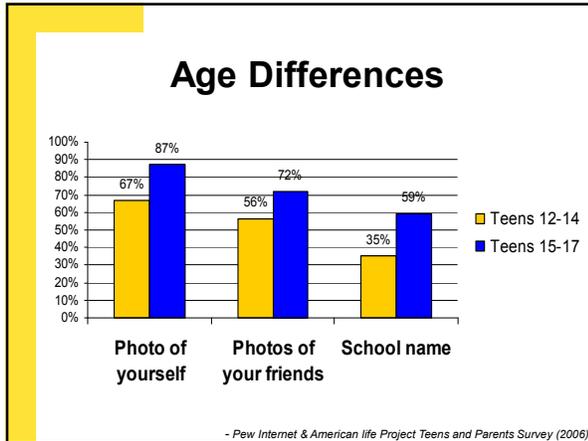
Social Networking Site Usage

- Most teens are using the networks to stay in touch with people they already know
  - friends that they see a lot - 91%
  - friends that they rarely see in person - 82%
- 49% of social network users say they use the networks to make new friends

- Lenhart & Madden, 2007

"It's like there's a sense of like you can put your interests and stuff out there and people can be like 'well, yes I like that too' and stuff and you can start talking to someone and eventually it's like you get friends from it. Like you start meeting more people that have the same interests and you're part of a group now."
– Boy, Early High School

Gender Differences

- Pew Internet & American life Project Teens and Parents Survey (2006)

Age Differences

	Photo of yourself	Photos of your friends	School name
Teens 12-14	67%	56%	35%
Teens 15-17	87%	72%	59%

- Pew Internet & American life Project Teens and Parents Survey (2006)

"i try to post as little information as possible. there is no way of knowing who is going to see the information posted and i'm really stingy. i don't think it's okay to share last names, date of birth, where i live, anything that will help people identify me. Pictures are OK because it's really difficult to find someone if the only thing you know about them is what they look like."

- Girl, Early High School

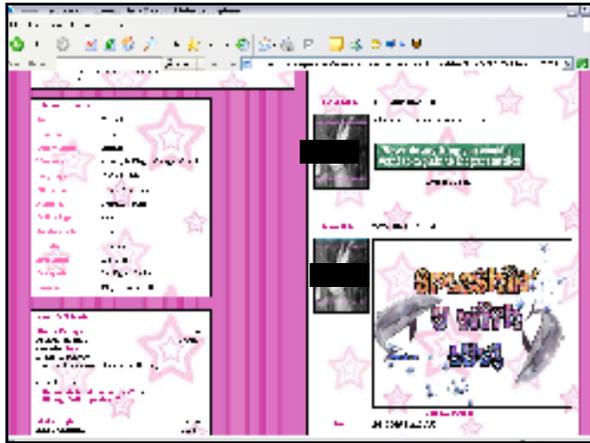| Information That Teens Feel Should or Should Not Be Shared Online		
Info That Is Almost **Never** Okay to Share	Info That **Might Be Okay** To Share under some circumstances (because it wouldn't be *that* easy to locate the discloser in person)	Info That Is Generally **Okay** To Share Online
• Information that might allow someone to easily find them such as: address, home phone number, parent's names • Passwords or combinations • Personal identification information such as social security numbers, medical information	• Cell phone number • School name and location • Town/City where you live • Zip code	• Age • Boyfriend or girlfriend status • Email address • Gender • Gossip (although the boys didn't think it was a good idea) • IM Screen name • Parents' profession • Personal preferences (movies, food, etc.) • Pet information • Physical appearance • Pictures & photos • Religious affiliation • State

Self Protection

- 66% of teens say that their profile is not visible to all Internet users. They limit access to their profiles in some way

- Among those whose profiles can be accessed by anyone online, 46% say they give at least a little and sometimes a good deal of false information on their profiles
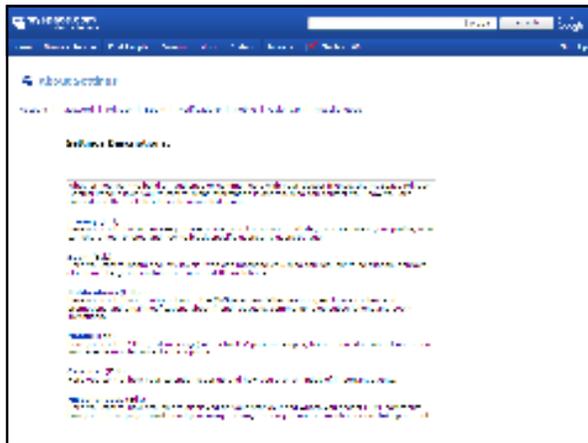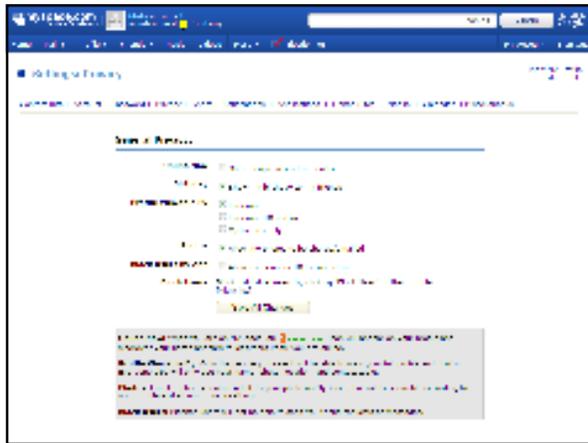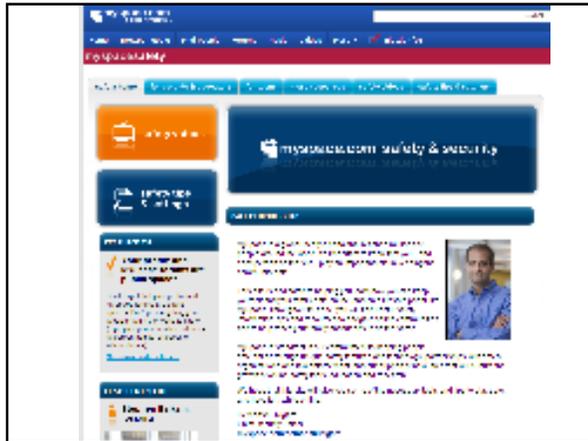
- Lenhart & Madden, 2007

When set to private, users who are not on your friend list to only see your name, default photo, location and contact table.
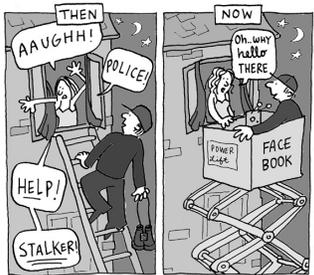
Strangers and Friends

- 43% of social-networking teens have been contacted online by complete strangers
- 31% of social networking teens have "friends" on their social network profile who they have never personally met
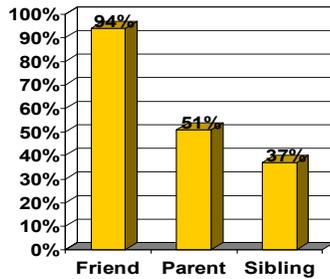
Context

Some behaviors that are intrusive when initiated by a stranger may not be intrusive when initiated by a former dating partner, because the behaviors might be viewed as a reasonable attempt to reconcile.

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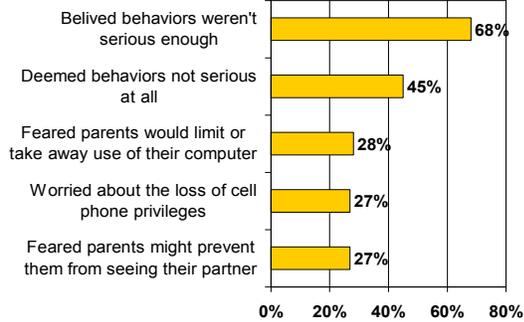
Teens Reporting Stalking

94% of victims told *someone* about the intrusive contact

	94%	51%	37%
	Friend	Parent	Sibling

Reporting to Parents

- 78% of teens harassed and embarrassed on networking sites *didn't* tell their parents

- 72% of teens who have been checked on 10 times per hour by email or texting *didn't* tell their parents

- 82% of teens asked to engage in sexual activity *didn't* tell their parents

Why Teens Didn't Report

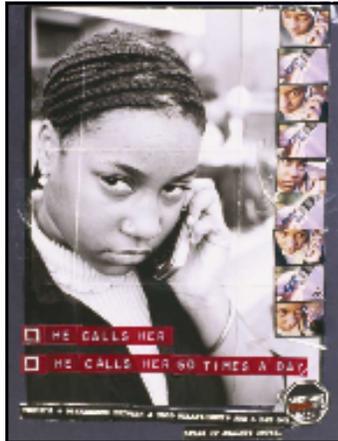| Reason	Percentage
Belived behaviors weren't serious enough	68%
Deemed behaviors not serious at all	45%
Feared parents would limit or take away use of their computer	28%
Worried about the loss of cell phone privileges	27%
Feared parents might prevent them from seeing their partner	27%

The Parent "Knowledge Gap"

When parents are asked the same incidence and prevalence questions about the use of technology to stalk teens, they dramatically UNDERESTIMATE the frequency and types of abuse and stalking happening to teens.

The Parent "Knowledge Gap"

- Don't understand the technologies used
- Don't believe it's happening to teens
- Don't monitor the use of technologies by their teens
- Don't limit the amount or times of tech usage

Teens Speak Out

- http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=i91ybJtW-h8

- http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=aRjfvX-oDtM&feature=related

Working with Teen Victims

www.seeitandstopit.org

Teen Victimization

Under reporting

Age Group	Personal Crimes Reported to Police
12-19	35.4%
20-34	53.3%
35-49	54.9%
50-64	61.1%
65+	65.6%

Teen Victimization

Lack of Age-Appropriate Services

• Availability of Services

• Access to Services

Teen Victimization

• Privacy and confidentiality issues
    • Legal representation issues
    • Is anything truly confidential from parents/guardians?

• Mandatory Reporting issues

• Pervasive paternalism

Teen Victimization

• Lack of Criminal or Civil Justice Resources
    • Can a teen file a police report?
    • Availability of Protective Orders

• Is our Juvenile Justice system addressing either teen victimization or offense adequately?

Interventions for Teen Stalking Victims

Interventions

- Victim Services for Teens
  - Safety Planning
  - Advocacy – DOCUMENTATION
  - Support Groups
  - Counseling – Individual, Group, Peer

- Prevention Programs
  - Modeling Healthy Relationships

- Peer Education Programs

Intervention Partners

- Schools

- Criminal Justice System

- Social Services

- Mental Health Professionals

- Parents

- Others?

Resources for Online Safety

- **Web Wise Kids –** www.webwisekids.org

- **Internet Keep Safe Coalition -** www.ikeepsafe.org

- **The Safe Space -** www.thesafespace.org

- **Connect Safely -** www.connectsafely.org

- **Incredible Internet - Smarter Surfing Starts Here**
  www.incredibleinternet.com

- **Imbee – www.imbee.com**
  Imbee is a social networking site with safety in mind for kids ages 8-14. It is designed to offer kids a fun and dynamic user experience and parents easy-to use controls.

References

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- Buss & Duntley. University of Texas, Austin. www.stalkinghelp.org.
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- Vaidya, Chalboub, and Newing. (2005). "Stalking in Adolescence: A Case Report." *Child and Adolescent Mental Health*, 10, pp. 23-25.
- Tjaden and Thoennes. (1998). "Stalking in America: Findings from the National Violence Against Women Survey." U.S. Department of Justice, National Institute of Justice, Washington, DC.

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202-467-8700

www.ncvc.org/src

Victims of Crime

1-800-FYI-CALL