

GENEQ **stalking**

What is Stalking?

Stalking is repeated following and/or harassment of another person with the intent to threaten or place in fear the person being harassed. Stalking is prolonged criminal behavior that endangers the person being stalked, their family, their friends, and the community, and also poses the threat of other types of violence. Behavior requires repetition to qualify under most state statutes as stalking, which is usually 2 or more incidents. People can be stalked by strangers, former dating partners, relatives, acquaintances, siblings, former friends, teachers, etc. People of all genders, sexualities, races, ages, abilities, marital statuses, etc. can be survivors or perpetrators of stalking.

How Common is Stalking?

Stalking is much more common than many people think. According to the U.S. Department of Justice, 1 in 12 women and 1 in 45 men are stalked at some point in their life.

Stalking and Violence:

Stalkers often have a previous relationship with those whom they stalk that may or may not have been violent. 77% of female targets and 64% of male targets know their stalker (US Department of Justice). Stalking can lead to violence, so it is important to take every safety precaution if you are being stalked and to report the behavior to the police. Stalking is also used as a way to control people and terrorize them.

What is Stalking?

- Persistent phone calls, despite the stalker having been told not to contact you
- Waiting at or following you to your workplace, school, or other places you frequent
- Explicit or implied threats (ie: "I'll kill/hurt you or your family/friends," dead animals left at your home, etc.)
- Manipulative behavior (ie: threatening to commit suicide in order to get contact with you)
- Sending persistent written messages after being told not to contact you (ie: letters, emails, chat messages, graffiti, etc.)
- Sending gifts from the seemingly "romantic" (ie: flowers, candy) to the bizarre (ie: bloody items, etc.)
- Defamation: the stalker often lies to others about the person they are stalking
- Watching you from a distance, "accidentally" running into you repeatedly, driving by your home/office/school/etc.
- Contacting, following, or threatening you or your family/friends/acquaintances/children

What can you do if you are being stalked?

(From the Stalking Resource Center)

- If you are in immediate danger, call 911.
- Trust your instincts - don't downplay the danger. If you feel you are unsafe, you probably are.

- **Take threats seriously.** Danger generally is higher when the stalker talks about suicide or murder, or when a target tries to leave or end the relationship.
- **Contact a crisis hotline, victim services agency, or a domestic violence or rape crisis program.** They can help you devise a safety plan, give you information about local laws, refer you to other services, and weigh options.
- **Develop a safety plan.** This should include things like changing your routine, arranging a place to stay, and having a friend/relative go places with you. Also, decide in advance what to do if the stalker shows up where you are. Tell people how they can help you.
- **Don't communicate with the stalker or respond to attempts to talk to you.**
- **Keep evidence of the stalking.** When the stalker follows you or contacts you, write down the time, date and place. Keep e-mails, phone messages, letters or notes. Photograph anything of yours the stalker damages and any injuries the stalker causes. Ask witnesses to write down what they saw.
- **Contact the police.** California and the University of California, Berkeley have stalking laws.
- **Consider getting a restraining order** that tells the stalker to stay away from you. On campus, there are other stay away orders you can get.
- **Tell friends, family, roommates, and co-workers about the stalking** and seek their support. In addition, tell them not release any personal information about you to anyone with your permission and ask them to inform you of suspicious behaviors.
- **Carry some type of personal safety device** with you at all times (ie: pepper spray, flashlight, kubaton, etc.).
- **Never open the door to anyone whose I.D. you have not seen** (including repair people, police, etc.).

For information on how to help a friend, see GenEq's "How To Help A Friend" resource sheet.

Resources:

UC Berkeley Police Department
Threat Management Unit: 510/642-6760
1 Sproul Plaza
<http://police.berkeley.edu>

Gender Equity Resource Center
Resource Specialist: 510/643-5727
202 Cesar Chavez
<http://geneq.berkeley.edu>

University Health Services
Social Services: 510/642-6074
CARE Services: 510/643-7754
Tang Center, 2222 Bancroft Way

Campus Night Escort Service
Uniformed escort will walk you where you need to go - USE THEM!
510/642-WALK (9255)

Campus Climate & Compliance Office
Title IX/VI
510/643-7985
<http://ccac.berkeley.edu>

Stalking Resource Center
The National Center for Victims of Crime
800/FYI-CALL (394-2255)
www.ncvc.org

California Legislative Information
www.leginfo.ca.gov

Impact Bay Area (Self-defense)
www.impactbayarea.org

Women Defending Ourselves
www.wdo.org