



# HOW TO HELP A FRIEND *in a* STALKING SITUATION

## WHAT IS STALKING?

Unwanted pursuit. Most victims are stalked by current or former intimate partners such as dating partners, spouses, or cohabiting partners. What was viewed initially as positive, romantic attention, may turn into the repeated unwanted attention, harassment, and contact that characterizes stalking. But it's important to remember that a stalker can be someone you do not know at all.

## THE LAW

A stalker can be legally defined as "any person who willfully, maliciously, and repeatedly follows or harasses another person with the intent to cause that person reasonable fear for their safety, or the safety of their immediate family."

California Penal Code Section 646.9 and California Civil Code 1708.7 provide for victims to file a lawsuit against stalkers, and there are federal laws against interstate stalking and interstate threats. You can find all these laws and codes at [www.ncvc.org/src](http://www.ncvc.org/src)

## SOME THINGS STALKERS DO

- Show up wherever you are
- Follow you
- Repeatedly call you, including hang-ups
- Drive by or hang out at your home, school, or work
- Send unwanted gifts, letters, cards, or e-mails
- Monitor your phone calls or computer use
- Use technology, like hidden cameras, spyware, or global positioning systems, to track where you go
- Find out about you by using public records or on-line search services, hiring investigators, going through your garbage, or contacting friends, family, neighbors, or co-workers
- Threaten to hurt you, your family, friends, or pets
- Damage your home, car, or other property
- Any other actions that control, track, or frighten you

There are two main reasons students don't report stalking: they think the police won't take it seriously, or they are unaware that the unwanted behavior was a crime.

**IF YOU FEEL AFRAID OR THREATENED, IT'S TIME TO TAKE ACTION AND GET HELP**

## SOME SECURITY MEASURES YOU CAN TAKE

**Stalking is unpredictable and dangerous, but you can increase your safety by taking the following steps:**

- Trust your instincts. Don't downplay the danger. If you feel you are unsafe, you probably are.
- Tell family, friends, roommates, RA's, professors, and co-workers and seek their support. Ask them to help watch out for your safety, and not to give out any information about you.
- Consult with a victim advocate on campus or in the community to talk about your options.
- Change your email address, phone numbers, and internet screen names and be selective about giving those to others. Change passwords and clear your computer of all spyware.
- Use an unlisted phone number.
- Decide in advance what to do if the stalker shows up at your home, work, or school.
- Don't communicate with the stalker or respond to attempts to contact you.
- Change the keys to all your locks, and install deadbolts or security systems, and make sure all your windows and doors have working locks.
- Contact the police. Every state has stalking laws, and the stalker may also have broken other laws if they assault you or steal or destroy your property.
- Consider getting a court order that requires the stalker to stay away from you.

## EVIDENCE IS KEY TO PROSECUTION

By documenting stalking activity, you can help law enforcement build a strong case. Write down everything that happens. Include dates, times, locations, witnesses, and any exact words that you can remember. Keep voice mails, emails, notes, gifts, and any objects or writings given to you. Also print chat room scripts or web pages. Be sure to include how each of the incidents made you feel as well as the specifics of the incident.

## RESOURCES

- **Women's Resources and Research Center**  
752-3372 | [wrrc.ucdavis.edu](http://wrrc.ucdavis.edu)
- **The Campus Violence Prevention Program & Self Defense Education**  
Victim Advocate 24-hour pager: (916) 523-2419  
office: 754-6387 | [cvpp.ucdavis.edu](http://cvpp.ucdavis.edu)
- **Sexual Assault & Domestic Violence Center**  
(530) 662-1133 | <http://www.sadvc.org/>
- **Lesbian Gay Bisexual Transgender Resource Center**  
752-2452 | [lgbtcenter.ucdavis.edu](http://lgbtcenter.ucdavis.edu)
- **The National Center for Victims of Crime Stalking Resource Center**  
[www.ncvc.org/src](http://www.ncvc.org/src) | 1-800-FYI-CALL (daytime)



Women's Resources & Research Center  
North Hall, One Shields Ave. Davis, CA 95616  
530.752.3372 | <http://wrrc.ucdavis.edu>