

## **What is cyberstalking?**

Cyberstalking involves using the internet, cell phone, and/or any other electronic communication device to stalk another person. Cyberstalking may involve false accusations, threats, identity theft, damage to data or equipment, solicitation of minors for sexual purposes, and any other form of repeated offensive behavior. It may include 'creeping,' in which a person acquires the personal information about another through the internet, typically social networking sites.

## **Where does cyberstalking occur?**

Cyberstalking can happen anywhere, including at home, work, and even school. Cyberstalking can occur in chat rooms, message boards, discussion forums, emails, text messages, and on social networking sites; basically anywhere there is access to electronic communication devices.

## **Who are the typical cyberstalkers?**

- Co-workers
- Former spouses
- Friends
- Boyfriends
- Girlfriends
- Ex-partner
- Online acquaintances

The majority of the time the cyberstalker is someone the victim knows. However, at times there are cyberstalkers who will find their victims by using a search engine and become obsessed with finding information about the victim. This may be done without the victim even knowing someone is obtaining information about them.

## **Who are the victims of cyberstalking?**

Although both males and females can be victims of cyberstalking, females between the ages of 18-30 are most likely to become victims.

## **What do you do if you become the victim of cyberstalking?**

- Anxiety
- Changes in eating and sleeping patterns
- Fear for safety
- Nightmares
- Paranoia
- Stress

## What are possible effects of being a victim of cyberstalking?

- If the person is only harassing you in instant messaging or in a chat room, change your identity on that website
- If you do not want any further contact, make it clear to the cyberstalker to not contact you again
- Save all communications of any kind between you and the cyberstalker
- Record dates and times of the communications
- Do NOT reply to anything else the cyberstalker writes to you
- Block all messages from the cyberstalker
- Contact your internet service provider
- Contact the cyberstalker's internet service provider
- Contact local law enforcement to see what can be done
- **NEVER** agree to meet the cyberstalker to work it out or talk