

# Understanding Stalking

# Defining Stalking



**BEHAVIORAL**



**LEGAL/STATUTORY**

# **STALKING DEFINITION: BEHAVIORAL**

**Stalking is a pattern of behavior directed at a specific person that would cause a reasonable person to feel fear.**





**CONTEXT IS CRITICAL**  
**in stalking cases.**

# Context



- \* Something may be frightening to the victim but not to you
- \* Stalking behaviors often have specific meanings
- \* Stalking criminalizes otherwise non-criminal behavior

# Context





# CRIMINAL

FEDERAL LEVEL

ALL 50 STATES, D.C.,  
& U.S. TERRITORIES

TRIBAL CODES

UNIFORM CODE OF MILITARY JUSTICE

# Stalking Prevalence and Behavior

# PREVALENCE OF STALKING

**WOMEN**



1 year period:  
more than 5  
million

**MEN**



1 year period:  
more than 2  
million

**6- 7.5 million people are stalked in a one year period in the United States**

# Stalking Prevalence

More than

**1 in 6 women**



&

More than

**1 in 17 men**



experience **stalking** in their lifetimes.

Smith, S.G., Zhang, X., Basile, K.C., Merrick, M.T., Wang, J., Kresnow, M., & Chen, J. (2018). The National Intimate Partner and Sexual Violence Survey (NISVS): 2015 Data Brief. Atlanta, GA: National Center for Injury Prevention and Control, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

# Stalking Dynamics

**Women are more likely than men to experience stalking.**

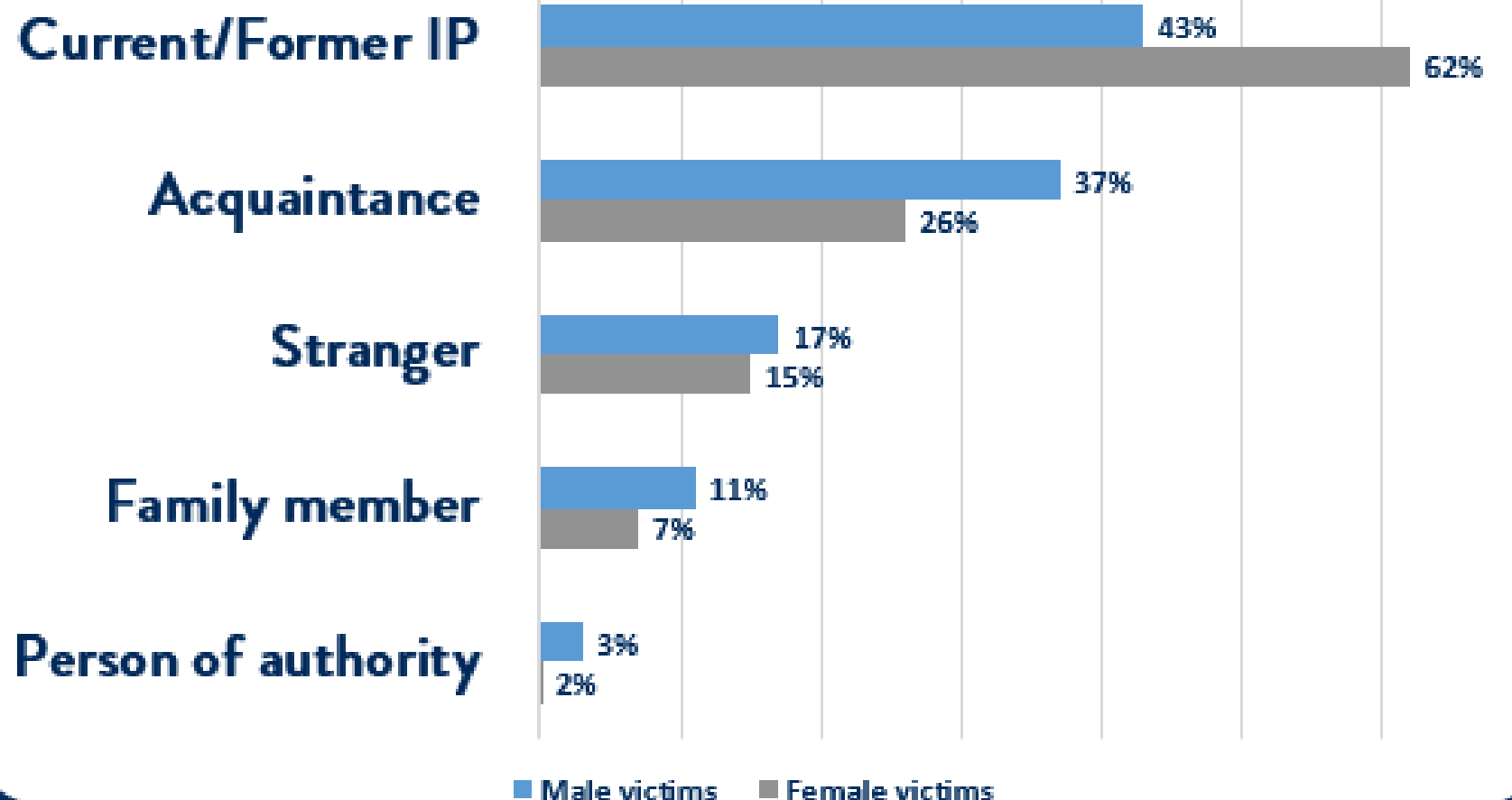
**The majority of victims report that the offender is male.**

**The majority of victims know the offender.**

**18-24 year olds experience the highest rates of stalking (among adults).**



# Victim and Offender Relationships



# Understanding Stalking: Stalking Behaviors

# Why Do They Stalk?

Seeking affection

Power & control

Rejection

Obsession

Planning to commit a crime

Because they can

# SLII Framework





# **SURVEILLANCE**

- **Follow**
- **Watch**
- **Wait**
- **Show up**
- **Tracking software**
- **Obtain information about victim**
- **Proxy stalking**

# LIFE INVASION



- **Unwanted contact at home, work, etc.**
- **Showing up**
- **Phone calls**
- **Property invasion**
- **Public humiliation**
- **Harass friends/family**



# INTERFERENCE

- Financial and work sabotage
- Ruining reputation
- Custody interference
- Keep from leaving
- Road rage
- Attack family/friends/pets
- Physical/sexual attack

# INTIMIDATION



- **Threats**
- **Property damage**
- **Symbolic violence**
- **Forced confrontations**
- **Threaten or actually harm self**
- **Threats to victim about harming others**

# Pattern of Behavior

2/3 of stalkers pursue their victim at least once per week

78% of stalkers use more than one means of approach

Weapons are used to harm or threaten victims in about 20% of cases

Kris Mohandie, et al., *The RECON Typology of Stalking: Reliability and Validity Based Upon a Large Sample of North American Stalkers*, 51(1) J FORENSIC SCI 147-55 (2006)

# Impact on Victims

# What are Victims Afraid of?

**46%** not knowing what will happen next

**30%** bodily harm

**29%** behavior will never stop

**13%** harm or kidnap a child

**10%** loss of freedom

**9%** death

**4%** losing one's mind



# Safety

# STALKING INCIDENT LOG

Date	Time	Description of Incident	Location of Incident	Witness Name(s) (Attach Address and Phone #)	Police Called (Report #)	Officer Name (Badge #)

# Basic Considerations

Trust victim's instincts



Safety plans should evolve



Consider stalkers next tactic



Anticipate stalker reaction



Balance safety and freedom



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**SPARC** STALKING  
PREVENTION,  
AWARENESS,  
AND RESOURCE  
CENTER



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