

For Immediate Release

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## January is National Stalking Awareness Month

TOPEKA, KS – January is National Stalking Awareness Month, a time to focus on a crime that affects 7.5 million victims a year.<sup>1</sup> This year’s theme—“Stalking: Know It. Name It. Stop It” — challenges the nation to fight this dangerous crime by learning more about it.

The Kansas Coalition Against Sexual & Domestic Violence will be starting a month long campaign on social media to bring awareness to stalking and invite you to follow us on Twitter, Facebook and Instagram to learn statistics, read news stories and pass on other important information about Stalking Awareness.

Stalking is a crime in all 50 states, the U.S. Territories, and the District of Columbia, yet many victims and criminal justice professionals underestimate its seriousness and impact. In one out of five cases, stalkers use weapons to harm or threaten victims<sup>2</sup>, and stalking is one of the significant risk factors for femicide (homicide of women) in abusive relationships.<sup>3</sup> Victims suffer anxiety, social dysfunction, and severe depression at much higher rates than the general population, and many lose time from work or have to move as a result of their victimization.<sup>4</sup>

Stalking may take many forms, such as the stalker showing up in places the victim does not want their stalker to be, sending unwanted voice or text messages, watching or following the victim from a distance, or spying on the victim with a listening device, camera, or global positioning system.<sup>5</sup> In Kansas, requests for Protection from Stalking Orders continue to rise in 2015 with 4,842 filings across the state.<sup>6</sup>

Stalking is difficult to recognize, investigate, and prosecute. Stalkers fit no standard psychological profile, and many stalkers follow their victims from one place to another, making it difficult for authorities to investigate and prosecute their crimes.

“It is so important for us not to minimize the terror and anxiety caused by stalking,” said Joyce Grover, Executive Director of KCSDV, “This crime disrupts thousands of lives and can continue for years. Stalkers are known to kill or seriously injure their targeted victim.”

For additional resources or to learn more about stalking please visit: [www.kcsdv.org](http://www.kcsdv.org), [www.stalkingawarenessmonth.org](http://www.stalkingawarenessmonth.org), or [www.victimsofcrime.org/our-programs/stalking-resource-center](http://www.victimsofcrime.org/our-programs/stalking-resource-center).

Founded in 1982, the purpose of KCSDV is the prevention and elimination of sexual and domestic violence through a statewide network of programs providing support and safety for all victims of sexual and domestic violence and stalking, with primary focus on women and their children; direct services; public awareness and education; advocacy for victims; comprehensive prevention; and, social change efforts. Learn more at [www.kcsdv.org](http://www.kcsdv.org).

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- 1 "Stalking Fact Sheet." Stalking Resource Center, 2015; Matthew J. Breiding et al., "Prevalence and Characteristics of Sexual Violence, Stalking, and Intimate Partner Violence Victimization— National Intimate Partner and Sexual Violence Survey, United States, 2011," Centers for Disease Control and Prevention Morbidity and Mortality Weekly Report, Vol. 63, No. 8 (2014): 7.
- 2 Ibid.; Katrina Baum et al., "Stalking Victimization in the United States," (Washington, DC: Bureau of Justice Statistics, 2009).
- 3 Jacquelyn C. Campbell et al., "Risk Factors for Femicide in Abusive Relationships: Results from a Multi-site Case Control Study," American Journal of Public Health 93 (2003): 7.
- 4 Ibid.
- 5 "Stalking Fact Sheet." Stalking Resource Center, 2015. Katrina Baum et al., "Stalking Victimization in the United States," (Washington, DC: Bureau of Justice Statistics, 2009).
- 6 "Domestic Violence, Stalking and Rape in Kansas As Reported by Law Enforcement Agencies 2013" (2014). Kansas Bureau of Investigation.