Sexual assault and domestic violence programs may be able to provide you with additional help and information (see list). The Stalking Resource Center can also provide you with information on stalking. The web address is www.ncvc.org/src/ or you may call 1-800-FYI-CALL (394-2255).

If you are in danger, call 911.

For support, call the sexual and domestic violence program nearest you (see "Kansas Sexual and Domestic Violence Program Numbers"), the Kansas Statewide Hotline at 1-888-END ABUSE (1-888-363-2287), or the National Domestic Violence Hotline at 1-800-799-SAFE (1-800-799-7233) TTY 1-800-787-3224.

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What is Stalking?

Generally, stalking is thought of as a pattern of behavior directed at a specific person that would cause a person to feel fear for her/his safety. It does not necessarily involve physical contact but can escalate to such behavior. Stalkers can be strangers, acquaintances, friends, family members, or intimate partners. Stalking can be defined in several ways: by its general meaning; by the criminal statute; and by the Protection from Stalking Act. In Kansas, as in most other states, stalking is a crime. Criminal stalking is engaging in “a course of conduct targeted at a specific person which would cause a reasonable person to fear for such person’s safety or the safety of a member of such person’s immediate family and the targeted person is actually placed in such fear.”

What Can You Do If Someone You Know Is Being Stalked?

Listen and be supportive. Don’t blame the victim for the crime or for the stalker’s behavior. Remember that every situation is different, and allow the person being stalked to make choices about how to handle it. It might also be helpful for you to find a trusted person to talk to about the situation. Additionally, you may consider taking steps to increase your own safety.

What Can You Do If You Are Being Stalked?

There are no easy answers to this question. First and foremost, you should think about your safety. Here are some other things to consider:

- Report the stalking to your local law enforcement agency. While officers may not have enough evidence to arrest the stalker, it is important to develop this “official” record of the stalking behavior. If a law enforcement report is made, the information may become public.
- Trust your instincts and take threats seriously. Don’t downplay the danger. If you feel you are unsafe, you probably are.
- Don’t communicate with the stalker or respond to attempts to contact you. Instead, let the “system” communicate with him through your attorney, a law enforcement officer, a probation officer, or through a protection order.
- A protection from stalking order may or may not be effective in ending the stalking. These orders may be most effective if issued when the stalking behavior first begins. They also appear to be most effective in communities where violations of the order are taken very seriously by law enforcement, prosecutors, and judges. If these situations do not apply to you, you may want to consider whether a protection order will help or hurt your situation. Call your local domestic violence/sexual assault program in Kansas (see list) for further information and for a brochure explaining how to get a protection from stalking order.
- Keep evidence of all stalking behaviors, including the following:
  - Letters or notes
  - Photographs of anything of yours the stalker damaged or injuries caused by the stalker
- If you believe you may be in danger, develop a safety plan, taking the following into consideration:
  - Contact a advocate. Advocates at sexual and domestic violence programs (see list) can assist you with a safety plan.
  - Think about changing your routine.
  - Keep critical phone numbers and contact information in a safe place.
  - Keep critical documents (such as immigration documents) in a safe place.
  - Have a friend or relative go places with you.
  - Decide in advance what to do if the stalker shows up at your home, work, school or somewhere else.

Impact of Stalking Victimization

Stalking victims respond to the stalking in a variety of ways. Some of the common reactions to being stalked include the following:

- Feeling fear of what the stalker will do.
- Feeling vulnerable, unsafe, and not knowing who to trust.
- Feeling anxious, irritable, impatient, or on edge.
- Feeling stressed, including having trouble concentrating, sleeping or remembering things.
- Feeling confused, frustrated or isolated because other people don’t understand why you are afraid.

Stalking Facts

According to the Stalking Resource Center and recent statistics on stalking occurrences:

- 3.4 million people over the age of 18 are stalked each year in the United States.
- 3 in 4 stalking victims are stalked by someone they know.
- Persons aged 18-24 years experience the highest rate of stalking.
- 11% of stalking victims have been stalked for 5 years or more.
- 46% of stalking victims experience at least one unwanted contact per week.
- 1 in 4 victims report being stalked through the use of some form of technology (such as email or instant messaging).

Stalking Resource Center (2010).