

# Internet Safety & Cyber Stalking:



## Technology: Good or Bad?

- Technology is a great innovation. It serves as tool to keep us connected to our friends and family, helps us gain access to global news, and carry out daily tasks such as bill paying. However, technology can also be misused by abusers as a weapon to threaten, cause fear, and harass another. Knowing this, it is important to take measures to use technology safely and be aware of the ways in which violence can take place through technology.

## What is cyber stalking?

- Cyberstalking is defined as “the use of Internet, e-mail, or other electronic communications devices to stalk another person.”<sup>i</sup> This is a more recent means utilized to maintain power and control over a person. Stalkers use technology such as: telephones, global positioning systems, hidden cameras, email, instant messaging, and websites.<sup>ii</sup> Cyberstalking can happen in chat rooms, social networking sites (e.g. Facebook, Myspace, Orkut), and message boards.

## How can abuse through technology affect me?

- The fact that it happens online does not reduce its negative impact on your health nor lessen the seriousness of the matter. This type of abuse can hurt the way you feel about yourself and your image. It can make you feel insecure and afraid about your activities, surroundings, and people. You deserve to live a life without violence—in person and online. If you suspect that you are a victim of stalking, our domestic violence counselors are available to speak with you 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. Call 1-800-636-6738.

## What are the laws regarding stalking?

- Stalking is never acceptable; it is a crime. California law prohibits stalking and punishes this crime by either imprisonment up to a year and/or a fine of up to \$1,000.

## How can I practice internet safety?

- Your safety is very important. The following links provide key tips and information for protecting yourself.
  - **12 Tips To Protect Yourself From Cyberstalking, Take the Time To Implement These Key Self-Defense Moves, by Alexis A. Moore**  
<http://womensissues.about.com/od/violenceagainstwomen/a/CyberPrevention.htm>
  - **Online Privacy & Safety Tips, by the National Network to End Domestic Violence**  
[http://nnedv.org/docs/SafetyNet/NNEDV\\_OnlinePrivacyandSafetyTips.pdf](http://nnedv.org/docs/SafetyNet/NNEDV_OnlinePrivacyandSafetyTips.pdf)
  - **Technology Safety Planning with Survivors, by the National Network to End Domestic Violence**

<http://nnedv.org/resources/safetynetdocs/93-technology-safety-planning-with-survivors.html>

### Where can I find more information?

- Educate yourself about your rights and resources by visiting the following:
  - **Privacy Rights Clearing House**  
<http://www.privacyrights.org/>
  - **National Center for Victims of Crime**  
[www.ncvc.org](http://www.ncvc.org)
  - **National Domestic Violence Hotline**  
[www.ndvh.org](http://www.ndvh.org)

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<sup>i</sup> Violence Against Women Online Resources. (2005). "A High-Tech Twist on Abuse: Technology, Intimate Partner Stalking, and Advocacy." Cindy Southworth, Shawndell Dawson, Cynthia Fraser, and Sarah Tucker, Safety Net Project at the National Network to End Domestic Violence Fund.

[www.mincava.umn.edu/documents/.../stalkingandtech/stalkingandtech.html](http://www.mincava.umn.edu/documents/.../stalkingandtech/stalkingandtech.html)

<sup>ii</sup> Violence Against Women Online Resources.