

# CONNECTING THE DOTS: RECOGNIZING AND RESPONDING TO STALKING

## ROLL CALL/IN-SERVICE TRAINING VIDEO FOR LAW ENFORCEMENT FACILITATOR'S GUIDE

### Introduction

The Stalking Resource Center at the National Center for Victims of Crime and the U.S. Department of Justice Office on Violence Against Women produced this video to enhance the ability of law enforcement first responders to recognize and effectively respond to stalking. The video is designed so that it can either be shown in its entirety (approximately 18 minutes) or as individual chapters.

### Using the Video

While the video can stand alone as a training tool, we strongly recommend that an opportunity for follow-up discussion be provided. The following suggested questions will help you guide the discussion for each chapter. The numbers listed after each chapter heading denote the length of time of each chapter in minutes and seconds.

### Featured in This Video (in order):

- > **Paul Schnell** – Chief of Police, Maplewood Police Department, Maplewood, Minnesota
- > **Jennifer Long** – Director, AEquitas: The Prosecutors' Resource on Violence Against Women and former prosecutor
- > **Deirdri Fishel** – Detective, State College Police Department, State College, Pennsylvania
- > **Chris Storey** – Sergeant, Clayton County Sheriff's Office Stalking Unit, Jonesboro, Georgia

### INTRODUCTION (2:20)

- > Research shows that 7.5 million people are stalked each year in the United States, but less than half of all victims of stalking report to law enforcement. How many stalking calls have you responded to? Did the victim identify what they were experiencing as stalking?
- > There is a high rate of recidivism among stalkers and typically they will continue to stalk even after the victim has reported to law enforcement. Given this, and the fact that reporting could escalate the offender's behavior, what do think is critical to convey to victims?

## UNDERSTANDING STALKING BEHAVIORS IN CONTEXT (3:10)

- > This video lists some of the most common stalking behaviors. Which of these have you encountered in your calls? What other behaviors have victims reported to you?
- > Frequently, when a stalking victim reports to law enforcement, they may call in response to a specific incident (e.g. slashed tires). What types of questions might you ask in order to determine if this incident is part of a stalking course of conduct?

## TAKING EFFECTIVE STALKING REPORTS (2:01)

- > Sometimes a victim may not admit that the stalking is causing them to feel fear or substantial emotional distress, but their actions might reflect this. What are some things a victim might do that demonstrates fear or substantial distress?
- > How might you gather this type of information from a victim and reflect it in your report?

## ASSESSING RISK IN STALKING CASES (3:06)

- > Several factors that increase the risk of violence or lethality for victims were discussed. Did any of these surprise you?
- > How is conducting a risk assessment beneficial to you? How is it beneficial to the victim?

## RESPONDING TO STALKING VICTIMS (2:16)

- > What are some ways you can preserve evidence of stalking while on scene?
- > It is recommended that stalking victims disengage from the stalker, however, many victims will maintain contact as a safety strategy (e.g. if I respond to the text messages, he/she won't show up at my home). If a victim is maintaining contact, what strategies could you explore with them to make any contact as safe as possible?

## COLLABORATION AND PRIORITIZATION OF STALKING CASES (4:28)

- > What do our prosecutors need in our stalking reports to help build a successful prosecution?
- > Who are the local victim service providers that you could refer a stalking victim to?

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### Resources

For training, assistance, and additional resources on stalking, contact:

#### STALKING RESOURCE CENTER

National Center for Victims of Crime  
[www.VictimsofCrime.org/src](http://www.VictimsofCrime.org/src)  
202-467-8700  
[src@ncvc.org](mailto:src@ncvc.org)

### Additional Resources

#### The International Association of Chiefs of Police

[www.theiacp.org/Violence-Against-Women](http://www.theiacp.org/Violence-Against-Women)  
1-800-THE-IACP

Find your local **domestic violence** program through your state domestic violence coalition:

- > [www.nnedv.org/resources/coalitions.html](http://www.nnedv.org/resources/coalitions.html)

Find your local **sexual assault** program through your state sexual assault coalition:

- > [www.nsvrc.org/organizations](http://www.nsvrc.org/organizations)

For assistance in locating **additional resources** for victims, visit the Online Directory of Crime Victim Services:

- > <http://ovc.ncjrs.gov/findvictimservices>

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January is

**NATIONAL STALKING  
AWARENESS MONTH**

For free materials to use in your outreach, visit [www.StalkingAwarenessMonth.org](http://www.StalkingAwarenessMonth.org).