

## STALKING: ONE MINUTE GUIDE FOR PROFESSIONALS



### DO

- Record the extent of the victim's perception of risk of harm
- Take allegations of threats to kill very seriously
- Complete a DASH risk assessment & 11 stalking screening questions and refer it on for action
- Seek specialist advice from your local police force, National Stalking or other units if required such as the Public Protection Unit.

### Risk Considerations

The context and detail of the behaviours are crucial. Research shows that those who are at highest risk of assault are ex-intimates who have been threatened. Use the full DASH assessment in these cases and then these 11 screening questions.

1. Is the victim very frightened?
2. Is there previous domestic abuse or harassment/stalking history?
3. Have they vandalised or destroyed property?
4. Have they turned up unannounced more than three times a week?
5. Have they followed the victim or loitered near their home or workplace?
6. Have they made threats of physical or sexual violence?
7. Have they harassed any third party since the harassment began?
8. Have they acted violently to anyone else during the stalking incident?
9. Have they engaged other people to help him/her?
10. Have they had problems in the past year with drugs (prescription or other), alcohol or mental health leading to problems in leading a normal life?
11. Have they ever been in trouble with the police or has a criminal history for violence or anything else?

### contact:

#### Paladin National Stalking Advocacy Service

(T): 0207 8408960

(E): [info@paladinservice.co.uk](mailto:info@paladinservice.co.uk)

(W): [www.paladinservice.co.uk](http://www.paladinservice.co.uk)

(T): @paladinservice

#### National Stalking Helpline

(T): 0808 802 0300

(W): [www.stalkinghelpline.org](http://www.stalkinghelpline.org)

(E): [advice@stalkinghelpline.org](mailto:advice@stalkinghelpline.org)

(T): @talkingstalking

### DO NOT

- Send the victim away believing that it is not a serious matter or say that they are lucky to receive this level of attention.
- Think it any less serious if there has been no physical violence.
- Suggest that the victim talk/meet with the stalker to resolve issues.
- Tell the victim to change their phone number. This will not stop the behaviour – they will find another means of contact.

#### What is stalking?

*'A pattern of fixated and obsessive behaviour which is repeated, persistent, intrusive and causes fear of violence or engenders alarm and distress in the victim.'*

Stalking can consist of any type of behaviour such as regularly sending flowers or gifts, making unwanted or malicious communication, damaging property and physical or sexual assault. If the behaviour is persistent and clearly unwanted, causing you fear, distress or anxiety then it is stalking and you should not have to live with it.

#### Who stalks?

When many people hear the word stalking they still think of a stranger lurking in the shadows or a delusional fan following a celebrity. Whilst these cover some stalking scenarios they are by no means the majority. About 45% of people who contact the Helpline are being stalked by ex-intimates (i.e. ex partners) and a further third have had some sort of prior acquaintance with their stalker; you may have dated, married or been a friend with your stalker. Just because you know/knew the stalker does not mean that the situation is your fault - it is still stalking and it is wrong.

#### Can stalking without violence cause harm?

Yes. The absence of violence in a stalking case doesn't mean the victim is unaffected. Stalking can cause severe psychological distress to a victim. Depression, anxiety, sleep disturbance, paranoia, agoraphobia and post-traumatic stress disorder are all common side effects of stalking.

If you need more information about stalking contact the National Stalking Helpline

Call it stalking. REPORT to the police. Refer victims for specialist advocacy and support.