



Nevada Network Against Domestic Violence

PRESS RELEASE

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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STALKING: KNOW IT. NAME IT. STOP IT.

Reno, NV—Communities across the country will observe National Stalking Awareness Month during the month of January 2009, providing a time to focus on a crime that affects 1.4 million individuals each year. The Nevada Network Against Domestic Violence continues to raise awareness of this dangerous crime and appeals to all Nevadans to learn more about stalking.

Stalking is a crime in all 50 states and the District of Columbia. One in 12 women and one in 45 men will be stalked in their lifetime, for an average duration of almost two years, and most victims are ordinary Americans.¹ Victims may experience psychological trauma, financial hardship, and even death as a result of being stalked.² Eighty-one percent of victims stalked by an intimate partner were also physically assaulted by that partner,³ showing a high correlation between domestic violence and stalking; and, seventy-six percent of female homicide victims were stalked prior to their death.⁴

Despite these alarming statistics, many stalking victims underestimate the seriousness and impact of the crime. At first, they may view stalking as “creepy” but not dangerous. They may think that ignoring or confronting stalkers will stop them. But stalkers almost never stop, and confronting a stalker may cause the violence to escalate. Even when victims see the danger and report the crime, stalking may be hard for authorities to recognize, investigate, and prosecute. Unlike other crimes, stalking is not a single incident, making for an easily identifiable crime, but is rather a series of acts—a course of conduct directed at a specific person that would cause that person fear.

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¹ Tjaden and Thoennes, “Stalking in America,” (Washington, DC: National Institute of Justice, U.S. Department of Justice, 1998).

² Mullen, Pathe, and Purcell, *Stalkers and Their Victims*, (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2000).

³ Tjaden and Thoennes, “Stalking in America,” (Washington, DC: National Institute of Justice, U.S. Department of Justice, 1998).

⁴ MacFarlane et al., “Stalking and Intimate Partner Femicide,” *Homicide Studies* 3, no. 4 (1998): 300-16.

Stalking behavior may take many forms—assaults, threats, vandalism, burglary, or animal abuse; as well as unwanted cards, calls, gifts, or visits. Stalkers may use a range of devices—such as computers, Global Position System devices, or hidden cameras—to track their victims’ daily activities. Stalkers do not fit any standard psychological profile, and many have been known to follow their victims from one jurisdiction to another, making apprehension by the authorities even more difficult.

By learning more about stalking, communities can support victims and combat the crime. “If more people can recognize stalking as a crime,” said Katy Hanson, Education and Outreach Manager for the Nevada Network Against Domestic Violence, “we have a better chance to hold offenders accountable. Knowledge can help communities support victims and prevent tragedies.”

In response to a study that found college students at greater risk of stalking than any other population group⁵, NNADV has engaged in a statewide outreach campaign canvassing Nevada’s university and college campuses and on-campus residential services with outreach materials. From these resources, students can learn about healthy relationships, how to recognize warning signs of potentially dangerous partners, and how to reach confidential help and support services in their local area. As an effort to raise further awareness about this crime, NNADV has created a Stalking Information Packet—providing intervention tools for advocates and victims alike—which is available free of charge for all community members.

For more information about **National Stalking Awareness Month**, please visit <http://stalkingawarenessmonth.org>.

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About [NNADV](#):

The Nevada Network Against Domestic Violence was founded in 1980 to work toward the elimination of domestic and sexual violence against all persons. As Nevada’s statewide domestic violence coalition, NNADV is an inclusive network that supports its member programs, and educates the public at large. Our agency is based in Reno, but our member programs span the entire state. Affiliated agencies include: Advocates to End Domestic Violence of Hawthorne, ALIVE of Yerington, Committee Against Domestic Violence of Elko, Committee to Aid Abused Women of Reno, Domestic Violence Intervention of Fallon, Domestic Violence Intervention of Lovelock, Safe Embrace of Reno, S.A.F.E. House of Henderson, Safe Nest of Las Vegas, Tahoe Women’s Services of Incline Village, and Winnemucca Domestic Violence Shelter, Inc. Provisional members include: Family Support Council of Minden, and NO TO ABUSE of Pahrump.

⁵ Fisher, Cullen & Turner, (2000). *Sexual Victimization of College Women Survey*. U.S. Department of Justice, National Institute of Justice, Washington, DC.