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Tech Abuse: Information from the Field

Survey Findings from the Conference on Crimes Against Women

Survey Conducted: March 2018

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We surveyed over 300 conference attendees on what types of technology misuse survivors are reporting, the number of cases their agency sees of technology misuse, and their agency's ability to respond to survivors' technology concerns.

Technology misuse is often intertwined with other forms of abuse survivors are facing in their daily life. 51% of respondents answered that they have seen at least 1-15 cases involving technology-facilitated abuse. These findings indicate that technology-facilitated abuse is prevalent in many of the cases advocates work with.

How many cases that involve misuse of technology have you seen during the past year?

Total # of Survey Results Submitted = 359

Number of Cases	Survey Results (# of people who checked off this option)	Percentage of Answers
0 cases	40	11%
1-5 cases	107	30%
6-15 cases	74	21%
16-30 cases	56	16%
31-50 cases	32	9%
Over 50 cases	44	12%

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Survivors come to service providers with a host of different technology concerns, ranging from texting harassment, spying with hidden cameras, unwanted or abusive social media messages, and more. Unwanted or abusive text messages were reported the most with 53% of respondents saying they are seeing that type of misuse. Providers also reported (39%) that intimidation and threats via technology was also prevalent in many cases. The data indicates that the misuse of technology through harassment, intimidation and threats is a top concern of survivors.

What kind of technology misuse have you seen used against victims of abuse?

Total # of Survey Results Submitted = 354

Kind of Technology Misuse	Survey Results	Percentage of Answers
Location or GPS Tracking in Car	58	16%
Unwanted or Abusive Text Messages	187	53%
Monitoring Phone Activity	69	19%
Intimidation + Threats via Technology	139	39%
Spoofing or Faking Calls, Texts, Other Messages	79	22%
Unwanted or Abusive Social Media Messages/Images	111	31%
Impersonation Using Technology	35	10%
Intentional Damage/Destruction of Technology	56	16%
Sharing or Threatening to Share Nude or Sexual Images w/o Consent (aka "revenge porn")	84	24%
Online Accounts Accessed w/o Consent	63	18%
Using Online Data to Track or Locate a Victim	35	10%
Using the Children's Technology to Monitor, Stalk, or Track the Family	21	6%
Spying with Hidden Cameras	20	6%
Doxxing (Releasing Private Information about someone – address, number – w/o consent)	22	6%
Swatting (Prank Calling Emergency Services to Swarm a Person's Address with a SWAT Team)	6	2%

Location or GPS Tracking on Phone or Other Device	47	13%
Unwanted or Abusive E-mail Messages	77	22%
Monitoring Computer Activity `	37	10%
Other Types of Tech Abuse (please explain): - Recording device placed inside personal item - Beating with electric cord - Posting online sex ads w/ rape fantasies causing people to come to the house - Threatening to release private info/photos if they don't comply w/ demands		

The survey also asked respondents how confident they were in responding to survivors' technology needs. Only 13% reported they were totally confident, 42% reported they were somewhat confident in responding to needs, while 39% percent noted that they had more to learn. This shows that more training, technical assistance, and resources are needed for professionals to have the tools needed to better assist survivors of technology misuse.

How confident are you in your agency's ability to respond to survivors' technology concerns?

Total # of Survey Results Submitted = 353

Level of Confidence	Survey Results	Percentage of Answers
Totally Confident	46	13%
Somewhat Confident	148	42%
We Have A Lot to Learn	137	39%
Not Sure Where to Start	18	5%

Safety Net a project of The National Network to End Domestic Violence

Communicating with survivors is an important part of service provision. With technology playing an integral role in how advocates and providers connect with survivors, 36% of respondents reported that they text with survivors, while 47% reported that they email regularly with survivors. These numbers show that being able to communicate safely with survivors through technology is an important component to the work that they do. Providers must ensure that this communication is done in a way that is safe for survivors and also respects the legal obligations providers have to protecting survivor data.

What types of technology, if any, does your agency use to communicate with survivors or provide services?

Total # of Survey Results Submitted = 353

Types of Technology	Survey Results	Percentage of Answers
Texting	126	36%
App we Developed	2	.6%
Screen Readers	2	.6%
Social Media Platform	35	10%
Online Chat	7	2%
Video Calls	8	2%
Online Forum	4	1%
I Don't Know	55	16%
E-mail	166	47%
TTY/TDD	20	6%
Remote Video Interpreter Services	2	.6%
Other: • All wrote in "phone calls"	8	2%

We conducted this survey as it was an opportunity to hear from professionals working with survivors. This feedback will be used to enhance our training and technical assistance efforts to the field.