STALKING: What Are My Rights?

A KNOW YOUR RIGHTS GUIDE

LOVE SHOULD ALWAYS BE SAFE
**STALKING** is a pattern of behavior directed at a specific person that is likely to make that person fear that they will be harmed or that someone or something they care about will be harmed. The person who is stalking someone could be a current or former partner or a casual acquaintance.

The person being stalked might not even know who is stalking them.

In New York, stalking is a crime. It is serious. Stalking may go on for a number of years, and it can occur in person and online. It can also escalate and become very dangerous. Young people are at high risk of being stalked.

Day One uses the pronoun “they” in place of “he” or “she” in order to respect people of all genders reading these guides.

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**WHAT DOES STALKING LOOK LIKE?**

If someone...

- **Follows you** or has others follow you
- **Constantly calls, texts or emails** you when you don’t want them to
- **Seems to know what you’re doing** or where you are at all times, even if you haven’t told them
- **Shows up without warning**
- **Hangs out near** your home, school or work
- **Gathers information about you** by talking to your friends and family members
- **Goes through your personal belongings** like your backpack, purse, journal or mail
- **Sends you unwanted gifts, letters or cards**
- **Uses technology to watch you** or get information about you
- **Threatens to hurt** you, your family, your pet or themselves
- ** DAMAGES YOUR HOME OR BELONGINGS...**
- **They may be stalking you.**

Call Day One at 800.214.4150 to talk about options, text us at 646.535.DAY1 (3291) or email us at info@dayoneny.org. It’s free and confidential.
THE TERM 'STALKING'
IS FREQUENTLY USED IN A JOCKING MANNER OR SHOWN AS NOT SERIOUS,' OR EVEN SOMETIMES AS 'ROMANTIC.'
These attitudes minimize and normalize stalking, making it harder to recognize or respond appropriately. STALKING HAS THE INTENT OF CREATING FEAR.
Joking about stalking minimizes the reality that stalking is a threat.

ABOUT HALF OF THE 7.5 MILLION PEOPLE THAT ARE STALKED EACH YEAR INDICATE THAT THEY WERE STALKED BEFORE THE AGE OF 25.

IS STALKING A BIG DEAL?

YES! 3 OUT OF 4 WOMEN KILLED BY AN INTIMATE PARTNER WERE STALKED WITHIN A YEAR OF THEIR DEATH. DANGER OFTEN SPIKES WHEN A RELATIONSHIP ENDS OR IS ABOUT TO END.

WHAT ARE THE SIGNS?

THE STALKER’S BEHAVIOR MAY ESCALATE WHEN YOU TRY TO STOP THE STALKING
SOME SIGNS THAT MAY INDICATE HIGHER RISK FOR INJURY ARE:

• THE STALKER’S BEHAVIOR BECOMES MORE FREQUENT OR ESCALATES,

• THE STALKER HAS PHYSICALLY ASSAULTED YOU IN THE PAST,

• THE STALKER’S BEHAVIOR SUDDENLY STOPS WITHOUT APPARENT REASON. (THIS COULD BE ANOTHER TACTIC TO TRY TO SCARE YOU), OR,

• THE STALKER TALKS ABOUT SUICIDE, MURDER OR OTHER VIOLENCE.

IF YOU ARE 24 YEARS OLD OR YOUNGER, CALL DAY ONE TO SPEAK CONFIDENTIALLY WITH A COUNSELOR OR LAWYER ABOUT YOUR OPTIONS.
HERE'S A TIP
CALL THE POLICE IF YOU ARE IN DANGER.  WHAT YOU CAN DO...

- Clearly tell the stalker once to LEAVE YOU ALONE, then stop communicating with them.
- DON'T TRY TO NEGOTIATE WITH THE STALKER.
- Keep a “STALKING LOG.” There are also apps that can help you track and back up this information.
- Keep unwanted gifts, cards and letters.
- ASK TRUSTED FRIENDS TO ALERT YOU if they see the stalker by your home or other important location.
- Tell people you trust about the stalking. TELL THEM NOT TO TALK to the stalker or give information about you.
- CHANGE YOUR TRAVEL ROUTES and travel with a friend whenever possible.

HERE'S A TIP
CARRY A COPY OF YOUR O.P. WITH YOU.

- CARRY A CELL PHONE, even if it only dials 911. Consider blocking unknown numbers.
- CARRY ENOUGH MONEY FOR A PHONE CALL (if you don’t have a cell) and a taxi if you need to get out of an area quickly.
- If you have an ORDER OF PROTECTION (O.P.), carry a copy with you. If you don’t have an O.P., see Day One’s guide on Orders of Protection.
- KNOW SAFE PLACES YOU CAN GO IN YOUR SCHOOL AND NEIGHBORHOOD.
- CALL THE POLICE IF THE STALKER THREATENS, HARASSES, ASSAULTS OR PUTS YOU IN DANGER.

HERE’S A TIP
KEEP A STALKING LOG.

A STALKING LOG is just a journal or notebook where you write down information about incidents of stalking. ALWAYS INCLUDE:
- Date, time and location of incident
- What happened
- Who else was there
- What kinds of technology were used? Texts or messages should be saved and printed out, and should include the phone number or email address that they came from.

HERE’S A TIP
ALWAYS CARRY A CELL PHONE.
• If you’re being harassed over email, get a new email account but consider keeping the old one too.

Canceling your old email account may alert the stalker that you have a new email address. Give the new address to close friends and family only and ask them to keep it private.

• Regularly change your password on email and social networking sites (e.g. Facebook and Twitter) and set high privacy levels on those sites.

• Be mindful of websites and apps that track your location and turn off or privatize location features.

• Remember if you share a phone plan with someone, they might be able to find you using installed apps or services like “Find My Phone.”

• Don’t leave detailed away messages or status updates stating where you’re going or when you’ll be back.

• Don’t post personal information online, such as your last name, telephone number, address, age, school, neighborhood, etc.

• Don’t open emails or email attachments from people you don’t know. This is one way a stalker can install spyware on your computer or phone.

• Do an internet search of yourself to see what it reveals, and delete any information that you don’t want to share. Visit www.dayone.org for resources on how to remove your information from ‘data mining’ sites like spokeo.com or peoplefinder.com.

• Assume that your activities online cannot be 100% secure, and that you can take steps to balance your presence while understanding safety and the risks.
Day One helps young people recognize the signs of abusive relationships, so they can make healthier choices from day one of dating.

We provide legal and social services, educational workshops and organizing opportunities to teens and young adults aged 24 and under who are experiencing intimate partner abuse. You do not need the permission of a parent or adult for any of the services that we offer. Everything you discuss with Day One will be kept confidential. If you or someone you know needs help, call us toll free at 800.214.4150, check us out online at www.dayoneny.org, text us at 646.535.DAY1 (3291) or email us at info@dayoneny.org.