

Nami Migizi Nangwiihgan

Domestic Violence, Sexual Assault & Stalking Services



January 2016



Women's Support Group

The 3rd Tuesday of
every month at
Behavioral Health
5:30-7pm

-Dinner Provided
Transportation &
childcare provided upon
request.

Contact Us:
(989) 775-4400

Inside This Issue:

| | |
|---|---|
| Stories from Survivors..... | 2 |
| Victims with Disabilities... | 2 |
| Safety Planning for Victims with Disabilities... | 2 |
| What To Do..... | 3 |
| Importance of Documentation..... | 3 |
| Impact of Stalking..... | 4 |
| Taking Stalking Seriously.. | 5 |
| Words from a Survivor..... | 5 |
| Editors Picks..... | 6 |
| Craft Corner..... | 6 |

**JANUARY
Is Stalking
Awareness Month**

Stalking Awareness Month

Stalking is a pattern of repeated and unwanted attention, harassment, contact, or any other course of conduct directed at a specific person that would cause a reasonable person to feel fear.

More than one million women in the United States are stalked each year (Victimsofcrime.org).

Stalking can include:

- ♦ Repeated, unwanted, intrusive, and frightening communications from the perpetrator by phone, mail, and/or email.
- ♦ Repeatedly leaving or sending victim unwanted items, presents, or flowers.
- ♦ Following or waiting for the victim at places such as home, school, work, or a recreation place.
- ♦ Making direct or indirect threats to harm the victim, the victim's children, relatives, friends, or pets.
- ♦ Damaging or threatening to damage the victim's property.
- ♦ Harassing the victim through the internet.
- ♦ Posting information or spreading rumors about the victim on the internet, in a public place, or by word of mouth.
- ♦ Obtaining personal information about the victim by accessing public records, using internet search services, hiring private investigators, going through the victim's garbage, following the victim, contacting victim's friends, family work, or neighbors, etc.

American Indian/Alaska Native women are stalked at a rate at least twice that of any other race (Victimsofcrime.org).

Did You Know?

- ♦ Stalking is a dangerous crime that affects an estimated 6.6 million women and men each year.
- ♦ Stalking is a crime under the laws of all 50 states, the District of Columbia, the U.S. territories, and the federal government.
- ♦ As many as 1 in 6 women and 1 in 19 men have experienced stalking victimization at some point during their lifetime and most often the stalker is someone the victim knows—an acquaintance, a relative, or a current or former intimate partner.
- ♦ Stalking is unpredictable and dangerous. No two stalking situations are alike.

Stories from Survivors: Victims with Disabilities

Women with disabilities experience the highest rate of personal violence—violence at the hands of spouses, partners, family members, caregivers, and strangers.

“After Anita left her abusive husband Ed, she soon realized the abuse was far from over. Anita moved into an apartment with her children and sought advice from professionals on how to start a new life. She obtained an order of protection, a divorce, and was granted full custody of the children, but just as she was obtaining her independence, Ed began stalking her. To protect herself, she changed her name and moved to a new city, but even these extreme efforts did not stop Ed from finding her.

It is not uncommon for abusers to also be stalkers, yet Anita’s story is somewhat different than many other abused women because she has a disability; she is deaf. To locate Anita, Ed simply contacted the Social Security Administration to ask about his children’s checks, and the agency gave him Anita’s new address. Anita’s difficulties reflect the complex challenges victims with disabilities often face. **Stalkers may target these victims because of their disabilities**” (Stalking Resource Center).

Women with disabilities experience the highest rates of personal violence.

Victims with Disabilities Face Unique Challenges

People with disabilities suffer alarming rates of victimization.

Offender Manipulation

People with disabilities are particularly vulnerable to stalking because they are sometimes perceived to be easier to control than other victims. Abusers of people with disabilities often control victims’ access to basic necessities such as food and transportation to increase their dependence. Abusers have access to a significant amount of personal information, they are familiar with the victim’s work arrangements, and any special transportation systems victims use.

Protection Problems

For stalking victims with disabilities, the very systems they rely on for support—transportation, financial support, or services— may increase their vulnerabilities.

Barriers to Reporting & Receiving Services

Stalking victims with disabilities confront the same barriers to reporting the crime that most victims face. In addition, victims with disabilities have to contend with physical or social isolation, impediments to communication or mobility, or dependence on the caregiver who may be the perpetrator. Victims are also vulnerable to stalkers’ exploiting their disabilities to avoid criminal justice intervention. For example, a stalker may pose as a concerned friend or claim a mental disability is influencing the victim’s story.

Identifying Needs & Providing Effective Services

For all stalking victims, recognizing the problem is half the battle. Victim advocates, criminal justice agencies, and disability rights workers need to take a closer look at the complex challenges that victims with disabilities face.

Approximately **1 in 6 women** and **1 in 19 men** in the United States has experienced stalking victimization at some point during her/his lifetime (NIJ.gov).

Strategic Safety Planning for Stalking Victims with Disabilities

Standard safety planning advice for stalking victims, such as varying daily travel routes— may not be helpful for victims with disabilities who rely on public transportation. Special considerations need to be made when working with these stalking victims, including:

- ♦ Collecting donations so victims can afford private service transportation.
- ♦ Helping victims maintain stalking incident and behavior logs.
- ♦ Teaching victims about the importance of informing friends, family and neighbors about the stalker and asking that they call the police if the stalker appears.
- ♦ Safeguarding e-mails by establishing a code word to use in the first sentence of every email to verify that the victim, not the stalker, is responsible for the message.

**NATIONAL STALKING
AWARENESS MONTH
JANUARY**

What To Do If You Are Being Stalked

1. Trust your instincts. Victims of stalking often feel pressured by friends or family to downplay the stalker's behavior, but stalking poses a real threat of harm. Your safety is paramount.
2. Call the police if you feel you are in any immediate danger. Explain why even some actions that seem harmless—like leaving you a gift—are causing you fear.
3. Keep a record or log of each contact with the stalker. Be sure to also document any police reports.
4. Stalkers often use technology to contact their victims. Save all e-mails, text messages, photos, and postings on social networking sites as evidence of the stalking behavior.
5. Get connected with a local victim advocate to talk through your options and discuss safety planning.
6. Call the National Domestic Violence Hotline at **1-800-799-SAFE.**



The Importance of Documentation: Harassment Log

If you are a victim of stalking, it can be critical to maintain a log of stalking-related incidents and behavior, especially if you choose to engage with the criminal or civil justice systems. Recording this information will help to document the behavior for protection order applications, divorce and child custody cases, or criminal prosecution. It can also help preserve your memory of individual incidents about which you might later report or testify. The stalking log should be used to record and document all stalking-related behavior, including harassing phone calls, text messages, letters, e-mail messages, acts of vandalism, and threats communicated through third parties. When reporting the incidents to law enforcement, always write down the officer's name and badge number for your own records. Even if the officers do not make an arrest, you can ask them to make a written report and request a copy for your records. ***Important note: Since this information could potentially be introduced as evidence or inadvertently shared with the stalker at a future time, do not include any information that you do not want the offender to see.*** Attach a photograph of the stalker, photocopies of restraining orders, police reports, and other relevant documents. **Keep the log in a safe place and tell only someone you trust where you keep your log.** Documenting stalking behavior can be a difficult and emotionally exhausting task. A local advocate in your community can provide support, information about the options available to you, and assistance with safety planning.

Nami Migizi Nangwiihgan staff are trained to assist victims in completing harassment logs, if you or someone you love is being stalked, contact us for assistance in ensuring your safety at: 989-775-4400.

The Impact of Stalking on Victims

No two stalkers, nor two victims are the same, therefore the impact of stalking may vary according to the victim's characteristics, past experience, current circumstances, and what they know, or don't know, about the stalker. However, it is known how others respond to the victim's situation, including how the stalking is managed by authorities, can influence the overall effect that the stalking episode has on the victim. Despite the complexities that may vary an individual's experience and reaction to being stalked, research has demonstrated common patterns of response. Although female victims usually report greater levels of fear, studies have found that males subjected to stalking experience similar symptoms to those reported by their female counterparts.

Although the impact stalking has on victims will be different for each victim, the following are some of the more common effects that victims of stalking experience:

Effects on Mental Health

- Denial, confusion, self-doubt, questioning if what is happening is unreasonable, wondering if they are over-reacting
- Frustration
- Guilt, embarrassment, self-blame
- Apprehension, fear, terror of being alone or that they, others or pets will be harmed
- Feeling isolated and helpless to stop the harassment
- Depression
- Anxiety, panic attacks, agoraphobia
- Difficulty concentrating, attending and remembering things
- Inability to sleep – nightmares, ruminating
- Irritability, anger, homicidal thoughts
- Emotional numbing
- Symptoms of Post-traumatic Stress disorder e.g. hypervigilance (always on the lookout), flashbacks of frightening incidents, easily startled
- Insecurity and inability to trust others, problems with intimacy
- Personality changes due to becoming more suspicious, introverted or aggressive
- Self-medication alcohol/ drugs or using prescribed medications
- Suicide thoughts and/or suicide attempt

Effects on Physical Health

- Fatigue from difficulty sleeping, being constantly on guard, symptoms of depression
- Effects of chronic stress including headaches, hypertension
- Gastrointestinal problems
- Fluctuations in weight due to not eating or comfort eating
- Development or exacerbation of pre-existing conditions e.g. asthma, gastric ulcers and psoriasis
- Dizziness
- Shortness of breath
- Impact on health of increased use of alcohol, cigarettes or drugs
- Sexual dysfunction
- Physical injury due to not concentrating or being under the influence of substances
- Heart palpitations and sweating

Effects on Work & School

- Deteriorating school/work performance
- Increased sick leave
- Leaving job or being sacked
- Changing career
- Dropping out of school – poorer education and career opportunities

Effects on Finances

- Loss of wages due to sick leave, leaving job, or changing career
- Costs incurred through legal fees
- Expense of increasing home and personal security
- Cost involved in repairing property damage
- Seeking psychological counseling and medical treatment
- Cost involved in breaking leases on rented properties
- Expense of relocation

Effects on Social Life

- Insecurity and inability to trust others impacting on current and future relationships and friendships,
- Problems with physical and emotional intimacy
- Avoidance of usual activities e.g., going to the gym, going out.
- Isolation through trying to protect others, feeling misunderstood or psychological symptoms
- Others withdrawing from the victim because they don't believe the victim, they are unable to cope with the victim's mental state or as a direct consequence of third-party victimization
- Victim moving to a new area, changing their phone number, name or even their appearance

Taking Stalking Seriously

We know stalking can cause intense fear, so why don't people take stalking seriously? We've all heard people joke that friends who they keep running into have been "stalking" them. We joke about "stalking" potential love interests and "Facebook Stalking" has become a regularly used term. Some popular movies even romanticize or find humor in stalking. If you go to a popular search engine and look at the images that appear after searching "stalking" you will find numerous caricatures that mock stalking. If we stop to think about how stalking victims really feel, **there is nothing romantic or funny about it.** For a stalking victim, no place is safe, not even their home. Experts know to take stalking seriously. Domestic violence fatality review teams know that killers often stalk their victims before they murder them. **More than 3 of 4 women murdered by an intimate partner has been stalked by that partner.** Stalking is no laughing matter and we need to respect that.

**Stalking is a
felony.
Just sayin'**

IT'S **not** A JOKE.
IT'S **not** ROMANTIC.
IT'S **not** OK.

**stop
STALKING**

www.ncvc.org/src

Wise Words From a Survivor

Society wants to know all of the answers to all of the questions. How could someone like you end up in a relationship like that? What did you do to make him mad?

Why don't you just leave?

Trust me: I didn't do anything to make anyone so mad that I feared for my life.

And neither did you.

If you or someone you love has been a victim of sexual assault, domestic violence, or stalking, you know how much they have been hurt. As a loved one you suffer too. Help is available for victims and their families. Please Call:

Nami Migizi Nangwiihgan:
989-775-4400

Behavioral Health Programs:
989-775-4850

National Sexual Assault Hotline:
1-800-656-4673

National Domestic Violence Hotline:
1-800-799-7233 (SAFE)



Individual Counseling
Case Management
Support Group
Group Counseling
Transportation
Cultural Sensitivity
Confidentiality/Privacy
Batter's Intervention
989-775-4400

Slow Cooker Butter Herb Mashed Potatoes

Ingredients:

- 2 pounds of red potatoes,
- 4 tablespoons of butter
- ½ cup sour cream (or plain greek yogurt)
- 1 tablespoon minced garlic
- 1 tablespoon finely chopped fresh parsley (or 2 teaspoons dried parsley flakes)
- ½ teaspoon dried or fresh basil
- ¼ teaspoon dried oregano
- 2 teaspoons salt
- 1 teaspoon pepper
- ¼ cup milk

Directions:

1. Wash potatoes and chop them into 2 inch pieces.
2. Add chopped potatoes to a greased slow cooker. Cover and cook on high for 2-3 hours or on low or 5-6 hours on low.
3. When potatoes are cooked and fork-tender, add all remaining ingredients (let the butter melt for a couple of minutes).
4. Use a hand mixer or a masher to mash the potatoes.

Editor's Picks

Page 6



DIY - BLANKET LADDER - lovegrowswild.com



Craft Corner

DIY Blanket Ladder

Materials Needed:

- 2— 6ft 1X4 boards
- 1— 6 ft dowel rod
- Sand Paper
- Marker
- Drill
- 3/4" bit
- Long Screws

Instructions:

1. Sand down all edges of the boards.
2. Cut dowel rod into 4—18" pieces.
3. Lay out all materials to determine desired spacing for dowels, mark the board where the dowels will be secured. In the picture, the dowels are 14.5" apart.
4. Using a 3/4" paddle bit, drill a shallow hole in the 1X4 boards for the dowel rods to sit in.
5. Drill long screws into one of the boards, securing dowel rods.
6. Line up the second board and screw the other side of each dowel rod in place.
7. Enjoy!