

Crime Victims' Institute



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Our Mission

The mission of the Crime Victims' Institute is to :

- Conduct research to examine the impact of crime on victims of all ages in order to promote a better understanding of victimization
- Improve services to victims
- Assist victims of crime by giving them a voice
- Inform victim-related policymaking at the state and local levels.

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January is National Stalking Awareness Month

Stalking is a crime in all 50 states, the U.S. Territories and the District of Columbia, yet many victims and criminal justice professionals underestimate its seriousness and impact. In one of five cases, stalkers use weapons to harm or threaten victims,¹ and stalking is one of the significant risk factors for femicide (homicide of women) in abusive relationships.² Victims suffer anxiety, social dysfunction, and severe depression at much higher rates than the general population, and many lose time from work or have to move as a result of their victimization.³

Stalking is difficult to recognize, investigate, and prosecute. Unlike other crimes, stalking is not a single, easily identifiable crime but a series of acts, a course of conduct directed at a specific person that would cause that person fear. Stalking may take many forms, such as assaults, threats, vandalism, burglary, or animal abuse, as well as unwanted cards, calls, gifts, or visits. One in four victims reports that the stalker uses technology, such as computers, global positioning system devices, or hidden cameras, to track the victim's daily activities.⁴ Stalkers fit no standard psychological profile, and many stalkers follow their victims from one jurisdiction to another, making it difficult for authorities to investigate and prosecute their crimes.

Communities that understand stalking, however, can support victims and combat the crime. "If more people learn to recognize stalking," said Leana Bouffard, CVI Executive Director, "we have a better chance to protect victims and prevent tragedies."

Later this month, CVI will be releasing a report on stalking in Texas which will further explore issues of stalking in the state. Also, for additional resources to help promote National Stalking Awareness Month, please visit:

<http://stalkingawarenessmonth.org>.

1 Katrina Baum et al., "Stalking Victimization in the United States," (Washington, DC: Bureau of Justice Statistics, 2009).

2 Jacquelyn C. Campbell et al., "Risk Factors for Femicide in Abusive Relationships: Results from a Multi-site Case Control Study," *American Journal of Public Health* 93 (2003): 7.

3 Ibid.

4 Baum, Stalking Victimization in the United States.



Focus on:
Nicole Wilkes
CVI Research Associate

Nicole is the Research Associate for the Crime Victims' Institute. She earned her Bachelor of Science degree in Sociology and Master of Public Health. Nicole served as a victim advocate at a community-based agency in Minnesota providing assistance to victims of domestic violence, sexual assault, and child abuse. During her time at CVI Nicole has worked on a number of projects including: college sexual assault, domestic violence courts, sex offender registry use, and stalking.



Examining the Issues

Teen Dating Violence

February is nationally designated as Teen Dating Violence Awareness Month (TDVAM). Psychological and physical violence amongst teens in a dating relationship is common; approximately 20% of teens have experienced psychological victimization and 9% physical and psychological victimization, with the perpetrator of the violence being their dating partner.¹ Adolescents also experience sexual violence within a dating relationship; however, prevalence of adolescent sexual violence committed by a dating partner is unknown at this time. Teen dating violence victimization is associated with suicidality, substance abuse, depression, and post traumatic stress symptoms.²

TDVAM is a national effort to end teen dating abuse. Local and national campaigns work to educate adolescents about dating violence, as well as healthy relationships during February and throughout the year. Breakthecycle.org shares the following list of warning signs regarding dating violence and/or abuse:

1. Checking their partner's cell phone or email without permission
2. Constant put-downs
3. Extreme jealousy or insecurity
4. Explosive temper
5. Isolation from family or friends
6. Making false accusations
7. Mood swings
8. Physically hurting their partner in any way
9. Possessiveness
10. Telling their partner what to do

It is important for adolescents and adults to be aware of the warning signs of teen dating violence and its prevalence. For more information and/or assistance, please use the following resources:

- Love is respect
<http://www.loveisrespect.org>
- Break the Cycle
<http://www.breakthecycle.org>

live chat peer advocates are available to chat at www.loveisrespect.org

sms text "loveis" to 22522

call 1.866.331.9474 (1.866.331.8453 TTY)

- 1 Halpern, Carolyn Tucker et al., "Partner violence among adolescents in opposite-sex romantic relationships: Findings from the National Longitudinal Study of Adolescent Health." *American Journal of Public Health* 91, no. 10 (2001): 1679-1685.
- 2 Wolitzky-Taylor et al., "Prevalence and correlates of dating violence in a national sample of adolescents." *Journal of the American Academy of Child & Adolescent Psychiatry* 8¹, no. 7 (2008): 755-762.

February is Teen Dating Violence Awareness and Prevention Month. Visit <http://www.teenDVmonth.org> for more information!





In the Works....

Look for upcoming publications from the Crime Victims' Institute on:

- Crime Victims Compensation Fund
- Sexual Assault on College Campuses: Perceptions and Approaches of Campus Law Enforcement Officers
- Stalking Update
- Evaluation of an Expedited Domestic Violence Court

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Let's discuss it:

In March of 2014 the Campus Sexual Violence Elimination Act (Campus SaVE Act) will begin for colleges and universities across the country. The Campus SaVE Act was a part of the reauthorization of the Violence Against Women Act in 2013. Under this act, colleges and universities will be required to conduct ongoing prevention programming for staff and students on sexual assault and intimate partner violence. The act also requires campuses to provide information about procedures and resources to employees and students who report an incident of sexual assault or intimate partner violence.

Please contact us at:

crimevictims@shsu.edu to share your thoughts about what states, colleges, universities, and students should be doing to prevent or respond to college sexual assault.



Upcoming Events

Share your ideas:

We welcome your input. Please send issues or topics you would like to see CVI conduct research on to : crimevictims@shsu.edu



Academy of Criminal Justice Sciences Philadelphia, PA	02/18-21/14
Prevention of Child Abuse Conference San Antonio, TX	03/03-04/14
TAASA Annual Conference Irving, TX	03/9-13/14
Crimes Against Women Conference Dallas, TX	03/31-04/02/14
January - Stalking Awareness Month	
February - Dating Violence Awareness & Prevention Month	



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