

Safety Planning – High – Tech Stalking – Agency Information

What is High-Tech Stalking

Stalkers increasingly misuse a variety of telephone, surveillance, and computer technologies to harass, terrify, intimidate, coerce, and monitor former and current intimate partners.

Stalkers may misuse technology to:

- Send multiple emails or text messages a day
- Monitor a victim's computer activity through Spyware
- Track the location of a victim's vehicle using GPS
- Watch the victim through hidden cameras
- Intercept phone calls and messages
- Impersonate the victim to cause harm

In most cases, a stalker will misuse multiple technologies at once while also using more traditional, non-technology tactics.

Why is High-Tech Stalking Important When Working with Individuals Experiencing Violence

As technology has become a major part of our everyday lives, it has also become more common for stalkers to misuse these new resources. It is important for all services and agencies who are working with victims of stalking to understand these technologies, how stalkers misuse them, and what strategies victims can use to increase their safety.

How Will You Know That Technology is Involved

In most cases, victims know that some technology is being used and will report that the stalker "knows too much" about their computer activity, places they went to, their day-to-day activities, and conversations they had on the phone. It is important that agencies and services trust a victim's instincts and help explore what technologies the stalker may be using.

What Can Agencies and Services Do

- Agencies will be in a position to help victim's safety plan around the misuse of technology. Because high-tech stalking can provide the stalker with sensitive information and the victim's location, it's crucial that technology be included in safety plans to decrease risks.
- In many cases, agencies can also advocate with or for victims with mobile phone carriers and other companies, like online social networking sites, to help make changes to the victim's account or remove information from a website.
- Agencies and services can also help victims document the tactics that the stalker is using and the events the victim is experiencing so that a record is made. If the victim chooses to report the stalking to the police, this documentation can be used to help begin a stalking investigation.

For additional technology tip sheets and handouts, visit the website awesnet.org.au/safetynetdocs