SPARC STALKING PREVENTION, AWARENESS, AND RESOURCE CENTER

Solving the Puzzle: Investigating Stalking Cases

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SPARC Website

- URL: www.StalkingAwareness.org
- Available resources include:
  - Practitioner guides
  - Training modules
  - Victim resources
  - Webinar recordings
- Sign up for our newsletter
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  - @FollowUsLegally

Solving the Puzzle: Investigating Stalking

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Significance of Stalking Investigations and Response

- Maintain stalking lens
- Provide case management and support
- Understand escalation

Conducting a Thorough and Effective Stalking Investigation

- Identify stalking behaviors
- Determine context
- Assess for risk

SLII Framework

- Surveillance
  - Watching, following, gathering information
- Life Invasion
  - Showing up in the victim's life
- Intimidation
  - Threatening and/or scaring the victim
- Interference
  - Sabotaging, attacking, or otherwise changing the victim's life

Reference:

Logan, T.K. & Walker, R. (2017). Stalking: A Multidimensional Framework for Assessment and Safety Planning. *Trauma, Violence & Abuse 18*(2): 200-222.

Context is Critical

- Something may be frightening to the victim but not to you
- Stalking behaviors often have specific meanings
- Stalking criminalizes otherwise non-criminal behavior

Context Questions

- What is the nature and history of the relationship?
- How does Victim feel about the relationship?
- How does Victim feel about Offender contacting them?
- How does Offender know where Victim lives?
- What is the impact on Victim?
- Who could corroborate Victim's statements?

What's the Risk?

14 Risk Factors in Stalking Cases

- Big Picture
  - Course of conduct
  - Escalation, triggers
  - Nature and context of threats
  - Threat follow-through, capability
- Stalker History
  - History of abuse to victim
  - History of abuse to others
  - Guns, weapons & training
  - Criminal history, mental health, substance abuse
- Stalker Mindset
  - Resistance & persistence
  - Stalker motive
  - Proxy stalking
- Victim Vulnerability
  - Fear level, life impact
  - Use of technology
  - Victim vulnerability

Reference:

Logan, T.K. & Walker, R. (2017). Stalking: A Multidimensional Framework for Assessment and Safety Planning. *Trauma, Violence & Abuse 18*(2): 200-222.

Case Study

- Details for 2 case studies have been redacted from this presentation at the request of the victim(s).

What Can We Learn?

- Keep in Mind
  - Rate of escalation
  - Gravity of the crime
  - Behaviors serve as warning flags
  - Consider context
  - Requires intensive and robust response
- Practical Tips
  - Important to closely monitor cases
  - Must build a rapport with victims
  - Look beyond the surface of behaviors

Challenges: Stalking Cases

- Contextual crime
- Individual acts may not be criminal
- Victim may not identify what they experience as stalking
- Evidence
- Long, resource-intensive responses required

Stalking Coordinated Community Response

- Victim Services
- Court
- Education
- Community-Specific Resources
- Culturally Relevant Services
- Law Enforcement
- Medical Services

Stalking Resources

- Resources available for judicial officials, prosecutors, community correction officers, and law enforcement
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