



Stalking Victimization, 2016

SUMMARY | NCJ 253526

APRIL 2021

In 2016, an estimated 1.5% of all U.S. residents age 16 or older (3.8 million persons) were victims of stalking. Stalking is repeated unwanted contacts or behaviors that either cause the victim to experience fear or substantial emotional distress or that would cause a reasonable person to experience fear or substantial emotional distress.

Types of stalking

An estimated 703,000 persons (0.3%) experienced traditional stalking only, and 1.3 million (0.5%) experienced stalking with technology only. About 1.8 million persons (0.7%) experienced both types of stalking.

The most frequently reported traditional stalking behaviors included the offender following and watching the victim (59%) or showing up at, riding by, or driving by places where the offender had no business being (52%). Sixty-seven percent of victims of stalking with technology received unwanted phone calls, voice messages, or text messages (67%), while 50% received unwanted emails or messages via the internet.

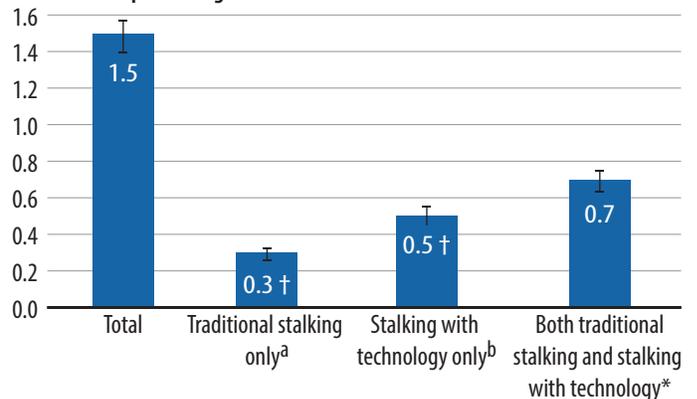
Characteristics of victims

Females were stalked more than twice as often (2.0%) as males (0.9%). The overall prevalence of stalking did not vary significantly by race or ethnicity. Persons ages 20 to 24 (2.3%) were stalked more often than persons age 35 or older. Divorced (2.8%) or separated (3.7%) persons were stalked more often than persons of all other marital statuses. Persons in households with annual incomes of less than \$10,000 (2.8%) were stalked more often than persons in households with annual incomes of \$10,000 or more.

Most victims of stalking (69%) knew their offender in some capacity. Victims were three times as likely to be stalked by ex-intimate partners (21%) as by current intimate partners (7%).

Prevalence of stalking, by type of stalking, 2016

Percent of all persons age 16 or older



Note: Estimates include 95% confidence intervals.

*Comparison group.

†Difference with comparison group is significant at the 95% confidence level.

^aIncludes victims who only experienced the following types of unwanted behaviors: following; sneaking into, waiting at, or showing up at a place; leaving or sending unwanted items; or harassing friends or family about the victim's whereabouts.

^bIncludes victims who only experienced the following types of unwanted behaviors: making unwanted phone calls, leaving voice mail messages, or sending text messages; spying using technology; tracking the victim's whereabouts with an electronic tracking device or application; posting or threatening to post unwanted information on the internet; sending emails or messages using the internet; or monitoring activities using social media.

Source: Bureau of Justice Statistics, National Crime Victimization Survey, Supplemental Victimization Survey, 2016.

Stalking duration and frequency

Twenty-four percent of stalking victims said the stalking behaviors lasted 2 years or more. Stalking behaviors were still ongoing at the time of the interview for more than a quarter all interviewed victims. About 1 in 10 victims said it happened too many times to count.

The full report (*Stalking Victimization, 2016*, NCJ 253526), related documents, and additional information about the Bureau of Justice Statistics are available on the BJS website at www.bjs.gov.