

# ***PRESS RELEASE***



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## ***Stalking: Know It. Name It. Stop It.* Nevada joins the National Stalking Awareness Month observation**

**Nevada**—January is National Stalking Awareness Month, a time to focus on a crime that affects 3.4 million victims a year<sup>i</sup>. Nevada Network Against Domestic Violence (NNADV) echoes the national slogan—*Stalking: Know It. Name It. Stop It.*—challenging Nevadans to fight this dangerous crime by learning more about it.

Stalking is a crime in all 50 states 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<sup>ii</sup>, and stalking is one of the significant risk factors for femicide (homicide of women) in abusive relationships<sup>iii</sup>. 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<sup>iv</sup>.

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<sup>v</sup>.

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 Sue Meuschke, Executive Director of NNADV, “we have a better chance to protect victims and prevent tragedies.” To promote awareness and public education about stalking NNADV has created a Nevada specific packet of information

about stalking. This resource helps professionals in the victim services field to identify acts of stalking, learn more about its prevalence, and support victims as they try to find safety and cope with the trauma.

For more information, please contact NNADV (775.828.1115) or your local domestic violence agency. For additional resources about stalking, please visit [www.stalkingawarenessmonth.org](http://www.stalkingawarenessmonth.org) and [www.ovw.usdoj.gov](http://www.ovw.usdoj.gov).

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### **About NNADV:**

The Nevada Network Against Domestic Violence was founded in 1980 to work toward the elimination of domestic and sexual violence against all persons. As Nevada's statewide coalition, NNADV is an inclusive network which both supports its member programs, and educates the public at large. Our agency is based in Reno, but our member programs span the entire state.

### **Nevada Network Against Domestic Violence**

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<sup>i</sup> Baum et al., *Stalking Victimization in the United States*, Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Justice, Office of Justice Programs, Bureau of Justice Statistics, 2009, <http://www.ojp.usdoj.gov/bjs/pub/pdf/svus.pdf> (accessed September 29, 2009).

<sup>ii</sup> Ibid.

<sup>iii</sup> 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.

<sup>iv</sup> Ibid.

<sup>v</sup> Baum, *Stalking Victimization in the United States*.