



CRIME PREVENTION TIP SHEET



Stalking Awareness

This month's crime prevention tip deals with stalking. Stalking affects 1,006,970 women and 370,990 men every year. By the time you realize a stalker has you in his sights, he has already built a relationship and will not be easy to deter. Safeguard your personal information. Keep an eye out for the overly friendly co-worker or the neighbor that seems to go to the mailbox the same time as you every day. Be aware that anyone can be a target and let someone know if you suspect a problem.

The definition of stalking is a course of conduct directed at a specific person that involves repeated visual or physical proximity, nonconsensual communications or verbal, written or implied threats that would cause a reasonable person fear. Plainly stated someone is following you or showing up outside your house repeatedly without your permission and you are worried about it.

Stalking is more prevalent than originally thought 8% of women report that they have been stalked and 2% of men. Those numbers compute to roughly 1,006,970 women and 370,990 men annually. This activity can occur in the workplace but also occurs at apartment complexes, health clubs, night clubs anywhere people are in close proximity. Stalking may start out innocent enough and escalate to something far more sinister.

Being aware of your surroundings is extremely important to avoid this type of behavior. Your next best prevention is to make sure that anyone who has your personal information keeps it secure, Doctors, dentists, banks everyone who has your info needs to insure it is kept private. Find out what steps they take to ensure your privacy. Most stalking involves perpetrators and victims who know each other so make sure that you are careful who you give your personal information to. Make sure your employer has a good Workplace Violence Policy in place at work and if not tell them about the free model policy available through the Florida Attorney General's Office. Also make sure that you report any stalking incidents to the police to document that these acts are occurring.

The typical stalking incident lasts 1.8 years and normally results with the victim moving away to avoid the stalker. Make sure that you take steps to avoid this activity. For more information on stalking or workplace violence contact your Crime Prevention Unit at 305-466-8962

Have a great safe and crime free month,

Ernie Long

Crime Prevention Officer