

Nonconsensual Contact, Repeated Nonconsensual Contact, and Fear

MARCH 2024

FINDINGS FROM THE 2020 ALASKA VICTIMIZATION SURVEY



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Executive Summary

Using data from the 2020 Alaska Victimization Survey (AVS), this report examines nonconsensual contact, repeated nonconsensual contact, and the fear felt by those who experience nonconsensual and repeated nonconsensual contact. All percentages included in the report are weighted. Hence, the data is representative of population estimates, namely noninstitutionalized English-speaking adult women residing in Alaska.

Nonconsensual contact refers to instances of being contacted, followed, or harassed by another person.

Repeated nonconsensual contact refers to a *pattern of experience* with these nonconsensual contact behaviors – singly (repeated exposure to one type of nonconsensual behavior), or in combination (repeated exposure to multiple nonconsensual behavior types).

Fear refers to the negative emotional response that results when someone believes that someone (or something) is threatening, dangerous, or likely to produce physical or emotional pain. Fear commonly produces additional feelings of unease, anxiety, or apprehension. Fear is a common response to nonconsensual contacts, as well as other types of uninvited behaviors a person might be subjected to. In addition to its *psychological and emotional* impact, fear has specific relevance for crime and criminal justice policy due to its inclusion in the statutory definition of stalking in Alaska and other jurisdictions. Thus, this study's focus on fear provides additional insight into the extent to which the nonconsensual contact experiences of Alaska women may qualify as *criminal victimizations*, subject to the actions of criminal justice policymakers and practitioners.

KEY FINDINGS

- Experiences of nonconsensual contact are common among women in Alaska. On average, women in Alaska experience 3 different types of nonconsensual contact and are victimized by 4 different perpetrators in their lifetime.
- Receiving unwanted phone calls (49.9%), unwanted text messages/voicemails (43.5%), and being approached in public (39.3%) were the top 3 common types of nonconsensual contact.

- 82% of women who experienced nonconsensual contact experienced REPEATED nonconsensual contact.
- Not all women felt fearful of repeated nonconsensual contact. An estimated 64.5% of women who experienced repeated nonconsensual contact felt fearful while 35.5% did not.
- A higher prevalence rate of feeling fear was associated with certain contact types such as finding strange/threatening items that were left behind or having someone sneak into their home or car, compared to other contact types such as receiving unwanted messages via social media. Such findings suggests that there may be meaningful differences between nonconsensual contact types.

Introduction

Using data from the 2020 Alaska Victimization Survey (AVS), this report examines nonconsensual contact, repeated nonconsensual contact, and the fear felt by those who experience nonconsensual and repeated nonconsensual contact. **Nonconsensual contact** refers to instances of being contacted, followed, or harassed by another person. The AVS included eight measures of nonconsensual contact. AVS respondents were asked if, in their lifetime:

- A person watched or followed them from a distance, or used a listening device, camera, or GPS to spy on them.
- A person approached or showed-up uninvited to places such as the respondent's home, workplace, or school.
- A person left strange or potentially threatening items for the respondent to find.
- A person sneaked into their home or car and did things to let them know they had been there.
- A person left them unwanted text or voice messages.
- A person made unwanted phone calls to them.
- A person sent the respondent unwanted emails or sent messages via social media platforms.
- A person left the respondent cards, letters, flowers, or presents knowing they didn't want them to send such things.

Repeated nonconsensual contact refers to a *pattern of experience* with these nonconsensual contact behaviors – singly, or in combination. For example, an AVS participant might have experienced a single type of nonconsensual contact described above (such as receiving unwanted text or voicemail messages), on multiple occasions. Conversely, an AVS participant might have experienced multiple types of nonconsensual contact (for example, receiving unwanted gifts and receiving unwanted text or voice messages), but experienced each type of nonconsensual contact only once or multiple times. Both scenarios would be instances of repeated nonconsensual contact because, in both cases, a *pattern of experience* with nonconsensual contact behaviors was established.

Finally, **fear** is a common response to nonconsensual contacts, as well as other types of uninvited behaviors a person might be subjected to, but emotional reactions can also vary. For example, some may feel fearful, others may feel angry and irritated, while some may have no emotional reaction at all. In addition, fear has specific relevance for crime and criminal justice policy due to its inclusion in the statutory definition of stalking in Alaska and other jurisdictions. Thus, this study's focus on fear provides important insights into the *psychological and emotional harms* resulting from nonconsensual contact experiences, as well as an understanding of the extent to which the nonconsensual contact experiences of Alaska women may qualify as *criminal victimizations*, subject to the actions of criminal justice policymakers and practitioners.

All percentages included in the report are weighted. Hence, the data is representative of population estimates, namely noninstitutionalized English-speaking adult women residing in Alaska. For more details on survey methods see the, "2020 Statewide Alaska Victimization Survey Final Report."

The link to the 2020 Statewide Alaska Victimization Survey Final Report is this:

<https://scholarworks.alaska.edu/handle/11122/12259>

Overall, the aim of this work is to contribute high quality empirical data and analyses to inform public policy, to improve program development, and to enhance professional and clinical practices. Our hope is that this report will serve as important resource for all those in Alaska who are committed to addressing nonconsensual contact and the harms it produces.

Nonconsensual Contact - Prevalence and Type

WHAT TYPES OF NONCONSENSUAL CONTACTS HAVE WOMEN IN ALASKA EXPERIENCED IN THEIR LIFETIMES?

Table 1 presents point prevalence estimates for each of the eight nonconsensual contact types measured by the AVS. The most common types of nonconsensual contact were receiving unwanted phone calls and unwanted texts or voice messages. An estimated 49.9 percent of Alaskan women have received unwanted phone calls in their lifetimes, and an estimated 43.5 percent have received unwanted text or voice messages. Slightly less than 40 percent of women in Alaska have been approached by someone or had someone show up in places such as their home, their workplace, or their school when they did not want that person to be there. More than a third (36.6%) of Alaskan women have received unwanted social media messages, and just under a third (32.8%) reported that someone watched or followed them from a distance or spied on them using audio/video recording devices and/or digital tracking technologies. An estimated 1 of every 4 adult women in Alaska (24.6%) have had at least one person knowingly send them unwanted cards, flowers, or gifts. Finally, an estimated 14.0 percent of Alaskan women have had someone sneak into their car or home where the perpetrator did things to ensure the victim knew they had been there, and an estimated 13.8 percent of Alaskan women have had someone leave strange or potentially threatening items for them to find. **Overall, an estimated 68.5 percent of Alaskan women – that is, more than 2 out of every 3 Alaskan women – experienced at least one of the nonconsensual contact types listed in Table 1 in their lifetime.** Notably, each of these findings from the 2020 AVS align with prior AVS analysesⁱ, and with national trends.ⁱⁱ

Table 1: Estimated percentage of adult women in Alaska who have experienced nonconsensual contact in their lifetime, by nonconsensual contact type

Nonconsensual contact types ^b	NONCONSENSUAL CONTACT (LIFETIME)	
	AT LEAST ONCE, ANY PERPETRATOR	CONFIDENCE INTERVAL
Unwanted phone calls	49.9	[.47, .53]
Unwanted text or voice messages	43.5	[.42, .47]
Approached in public	39.3	[.37, .43]
Unwanted messages on social media	36.6	[.34, .40]
Watched, followed, or spied on	32.8	[.31, .36]
Unwanted presents	24.6	[.22, .27]
Sneaked into home or car	14.0	[.12, .16]
Left strange/threatening items	13.8	[.12, .16]
ANY nonconsensual contact	68.5	 [.66, .71]

Notes

- a. Data source: Alaska Victimization Survey.
- b. Full text of survey questionnaire items available in Appendix A.

Repeated Nonconsensual Contact

EXPLORING VARIABILITY AND REOCCURENCE OF ALASKA WOMEN'S NONCONSENSUAL CONTACT EXPERIENCES

While the data in Table 1 show the estimated percentage of Alaska women who experienced each specific type of nonconsensual contact, as well as an overall estimate of the percentage of Alaska women who experienced any of the nonconsensual contact types measured, it is important to note that many women have experienced *multiple types* of nonconsensual contact in their lifetimes. **Repeated nonconsensual contact** is a *repeated pattern of experience* with these nonconsensual contact behaviors – singly, or in combination. For example, an AVS participant might have experienced a *single* type of nonconsensual contact described above (such as receiving unwanted texts over and over again), on multiple occasions. Conversely, an AVS participant might have experienced multiple types of nonconsensual contact (for example, receiving unwanted gifts and receiving unwanted text or voice messages), but experienced each type of nonconsensual contact only once. Both scenarios would be instances of repeated nonconsensual contact because, in both cases, a repeated *pattern of experience* with nonconsensual contact behaviors was established.

THE NUMBER OF DIFFERENT NONCONSENSUAL CONTACT TYPES EXPERIENCED BY WOMEN IN ALASKA

Table 2, below, presents the estimated percentage of Alaska women who experienced *one, two, three, four, and 5 or more* types of nonconsensual contact in their lifetime, as well as the estimated percentage of women who did not report experiencing any of the eight forms of nonconsensual contact measured by the AVS.

Similar percentages of Alaska women have experienced one (12.0%), two (11.5%), three (10.8%), or four (9.1%) types of nonconsensual contact in their lifetimes. Notably, approximately 1 in 4 Alaskan women (25.1%) have experienced five or more types of nonconsensual contact in their lifetimes. Put another way, the data presented in Table 2 reveal that among Alaskan women who have experienced nonconsensual contact in their lifetimes, the vast majority have been subjected to multiple types of nonconsensual contact.

Taken together, the data presented in Table 1 and Table 2 highlight two important aspects of Alaskan women’s nonconsensual contact experiences: (1) more than two-thirds of adult women in Alaska have experienced nonconsensual contact, and (2) nearly all of the women who have endured such treatment have had to deal with multiple forms of nonconsensual contact. On average, Alaskan women have experienced between 2 and 3 different types of nonconsensual contact (average=2.6) in their lifetimes.

Table 2: Estimated percentage of adult women in Alaska who have experienced nonconsensual contact in their lifetime, by number of nonconsensual contact types reported

Number of nonconsensual contact types	NONCONSENSUAL CONTACT (LIFETIME)	
	PERCENTAGE	CONFIDENCE INTERVAL
No nonconsensual contacts reported	31.5	[.29, .34]
One nonconsensual contact type reported	12.0	[.10, .14]
Two nonconsensual contact types reported	11.5	[.10, .14]
Three nonconsensual contact types reported	10.8	[.09, .13]
Four nonconsensual contact types reported	9.1	[.08, .11]
Five or more nonconsensual contact types reported	25.1	[.23, .28]
	Average (Mean)	Confidence Interval
Number of nonconsensual contact types	2.6	[2.4, 2.7]

Notes

- a. Data source: Alaska Victimization Survey.
- b. Full text of survey questionnaire items available in Appendix A.

THE NUMBER OF DIFFERENT PEOPLE WOMEN IN ALASKA WERE VICTIMIZED BY

It was also common for women who experienced nonconsensual contact to be victimized by more than one person. AVS participants who reported experiencing any of the nonconsensual contact items listed in Table 1 were asked two additional questions: *How many people altogether did these [nonconsensual] things to you?* and *How many of these people did more than one of these [nonconsensual] things to you?* Results for these two AVS items are shown in Table 3, below. On average, Alaska women report being subjected to nonconsensual contact by 3 to 4 different individuals (average=3.6) in their lifetimes and had 1 or 2 individuals commit multiple types of nonconsensual contact against them (average=1.5).

Table 3: Average number of perpetrators who engaged in nonconsensual behaviors, as reported by adult women in Alaska

	AVERAGE	CONFIDENCE INTERVAL
Number of perpetrators ^b	3.6	[2.4, 2.7]
Perpetrators who engaged in multiple nonconsensual behavior types	1.5	[1.3, 1.7]

Notes

- a. Data source: Alaska Victimization Survey.
- b. Full text of survey questionnaire items available in Appendix A.

THE PREVALENCE RATE OF REPEATED NONCONSENSUAL CONTACT AMONG WOMEN IN ALASKA WHO EXPERIENCED NONCONSENSUAL CONTACT

Altogether, an estimated 82.7% of Alaska women who experienced nonconsensual contact experienced one type of nonconsensual contact repeatedly by a single perpetrator or multiple forms of nonconsensual contact by one or more perpetrators in their lifetime. In other words, **82.7% of Alaska women who experienced nonconsensual contact specifically experienced REPEATED nonconsensual contact.**

Table 4: *Estimated percentage of repeated nonconsensual contact among adult women in Alaska who experienced nonconsensual contact in their lifetime*

	PERCENTAGE	CONFIDENCE INTERVAL
Repeated nonconsensual contact composite	82.7	[.80, .85]

Notes

- a. Data source: Alaska Victimization Survey.
- b. Full text of survey questionnaire items available in Appendix A.

Fear Response to Repeated Nonconsensual Contact

EXAMINING THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN NONCONSENSUAL CONTACT AND FEAR

Fear is a common response to repeated nonconsensual contact, but emotional reactions may vary. While nonconsensual contact may make some people feel fearful, others may feel angry and irritated, and others may have no emotional reaction at all. This report examines fear for two reasons. First, for those who experience fear it is a powerful and impactful emotional response that may resonate for years; it may prompt individuals to take immediate action (some of which may be unhealthy or dangerous) or it may gravely affect how individuals trust and relate to others affecting their quality of interpersonal relationships. Secondly, fear has criminological and potential crime policy implications. As we discuss in more detail later in this report, fear has specific relevance for crime and criminal justice policy due to its inclusion in the statutory definition of stalking in Alaska and other jurisdictions. Fear was measured in the AVS with this question: *Were you ever fearful when this person did these things to you?* (0=No; 1=Yes). This survey item was only asked of AVS respondents who had experienced repeated nonconsensual contact.

Overall, an estimated 64.5 percent of Alaska women who experienced repeated nonconsensual contact felt fearful (see Table 5).

Table 5: *Estimated percentage of fear among adult women in Alaska who experienced repeated nonconsensual contact*

	FELT FEARFUL	
	YES	NO
Repeated nonconsensual contact composite	64.5*	35.5

Notes

- a. Data source: Alaska Victimization Survey.
 - b. Full text of survey questionnaire items available in Appendix A.
- (*) = Statistically significant difference in prevalence between Fear(Yes) and Fear (No) at p<0.05

Additional analyses also show that the *specific type* of repeated nonconsensual contact behaviors also significantly impacted the likelihood of a fear response (see Table 6). For example, an estimated 91 percent of Alaska women who discovered strange/threatening items that were intentionally left for them to find reported feeling fearful. Nearly 85 percent (84.6%) of women who had someone sneak into their home or car and intentionally did things to let the victim know they had been there felt fear, and more than 80 percent (81.6%) of Alaska women felt fear when watched, followed, or spied on by a perpetrator.

Other forms of nonconsensual contact were associated with slightly lower – but still high – rates of fear. More than 7 out of 10 Alaska women who: received unwanted gifts when perpetrators knew they didn't want them (77.3%); were approached by a perpetrator at their home, workplace or school when the perpetrator knew the victim did not want them there (74.0%); and, received unwanted text or voicemail messages (70.9%) felt fear. Alaska women who were the recipients of unwanted social media messages or unwanted phone calls were the least likely to report fear (67.8% and 67.0%, respectively). Notably, however, more than two-thirds of women who received unwanted social media messages and unwanted phone calls felt fearful.

Table 6: Estimated percentage of adult women who felt fear from repeated nonconsensual contact, by specific repeated nonconsensual contact behaviors

Nonconsensual contact types ^b	FEAR RESPONSE	
	FEAR - YES	CONFIDENCE INTERVAL
Watched, followed, or spied on	81.6	[.76,.86]
Approached in public	74.0	[.69,.78]
Left strange/threatening items	91.0	[.86,.94]
Sneaked into home or car	84.2	[.76,.90]
Unwanted text or voice messages	70.9	[.66,.75]
Unwanted phone calls	67.8	[.63,.72]
Unwanted messages on social media	67.0	[.61,.72]
Unwanted presents	77.3	[.72,.82]

Notes

- a. Data source: Alaska Victimization Survey.
- b. Full text of survey questionnaire items available in Appendix A.

Summary of Findings

Experiences of nonconsensual contact were common. On average, women in Alaska experienced three different types of nonconsensual contact and were victimized by four different perpetrators in their lifetime. Furthermore, receiving unwanted phone calls (49.9%), unwanted text messages/voicemails (43.5%), and being approached in public (39.3%) were the top three common types of nonconsensual contact. 82.7% of women who experienced nonconsensual contact experienced repeated nonconsensual behaviors in their lifetime.

There were also notable variations in fear. Not all women felt fearful of repeated nonconsensual contact. An estimated 64.5% of women felt fearful of repeated nonconsensual contact while 35.5% did not. Fear responses were also higher among certain nonconsensual contact types. Specifically, the prevalence of fear was higher among those who experienced being watched, followed, or spied on, finding strange/threatening items that were left behind, and having someone sneak into the home or car. Hence, some contact types such as finding strange/threatening items that were left behind or having someone sneak in the home or car may be qualitatively different from contact types with lower prevalence rates of fear such as receiving unwanted messages on social media.

Implications for Policy and Practice

This report highlights prevalence rates of nonconsensual contact types, repeated nonconsensual contact, and variations in feelings of fear among Alaska women who experience these uninvited and unwanted behaviors. The relationship between repeated nonconsensual contacts, in particular, and fear has criminal justice policy, programming, and practice implications because a fear response is one of the conditions that can determine whether repeated nonconsensual contact can be addressed as a criminal offense, namely stalking.

REPEATED NONCONSENSUAL CONTACT IN CRIMINAL LEGAL CONTEXT: STALKING

Stalking is a serious issue and is criminalized in all 50 states, the District of Columbia, and the US Territories. Approximately 13.5 million individuals per year experience stalking behaviors, which equates to a prevalence rate of 1 in 3 women and 1 in 6 men.^{iii,iv} Stalking is also a significant issue in Alaska, with lifetime prevalence rates higher than the national average.^v

In contrast to the cultural or societal definition of stalking, which may include any repeated nonconsensual contact that causes harm, the legal definition of stalking is narrow and specific. Alaska statute (AS 11.41.270) defines the crime of stalking to require three main components: (1) a repeated pattern of behavior(s) over time, (2) the individual knowingly engaging in behaviors that are nonconsensual placing the victim in fear of imminent harm, and (3) victims' fear for themselves or their family members' safety. Hence, in Alaska, repetitive patterns of behavior, intent, and fear (imminent threat of death or physical injury) are key requirements to establish repeated nonconsensual behaviors as a crime.

Stalking statutes intentionally define the crime of stalking in specific and narrow ways to prevent the criminalization of repeated behaviors over time that may be irritating but not necessarily rising to the level of "stalking" in the criminal sense. For example, a landlord may repeatedly contact an unresponsive tenant about safety issues related to property damage, causing the tenant and their family members to feel annoyed. Additionally, a demanding boss may repeatedly contact an employee before an important deadline, making the employee feel stressed. Still, such behaviors would not constitute stalking, as being unpleasant is not a crime. Therefore, while the prevalence rate of repeated nonconsensual contact in this report was 82.7 percent, cases may not qualify

as “stalking” in the criminal legal sense without meeting the requirements set forth in statute.

Moreover, the victims’ fear (or an understanding of a threat of death or physical injury to self or family) must meet “the reasonable person” standard, where the victim’s fear or threat of imminent danger is one that any reasonable person may feel in the given situation and context. Therefore, the “reasonable person” standard also prevents individuals from claiming any behavior to have caused fear. As a result, the stalking statutes are formulated to capture stalking defined in particular ways to prevent false prosecution of any repeated nonconsensual behaviors.

When the harmful nonconsensual behaviors do not meet the definition of stalking as a crime, the victims can pursue civil procedures to sue for damages or obtain protective orders. Individuals may also have other criminal legal options depending on the incident (e.g., harassment or violations of privacy charges). These other legal options would not hold the individual accountable for “stalking” *per se* but would still allow victims to hold individuals accountable via the criminal justice system for a different charge.^{vi}

THE NOTION OF “FEAR” AND FEAR DEFINED IN THE CRIMINAL LEGAL SYSTEM

There are nuanced differences between the cultural definition of stalking and the legal definition of stalking as a crime. Similarly, there are definitional differences between fear as an emotion and fear as defined in statute. For example, prosecution is not required to prove the victim’s emotional state in Alaska. Instead, “fear” is established when the victim reasonably understands or perceives a threat of death or physical injury to themselves or their family, which can be qualitatively different from feeling fearful.^{vii}

Hence, the term “fear” utilized in statute, may be misleading if understood in the lay sense, especially for victims who may be independently searching for legal avenues to address repeated nonconsensual contact.

Furthermore, many victims may describe nonconsensual contact without using the term “stalking,” leading to missed opportunities to identify stalking that is indeed occurring.^{viii} Many victims may also report feeling distressed but not fearful. Hence, depending on how fear described in statute is interpreted, some victims (especially those without legal counsel) may preclude themselves from holding the individual accountable for stalking through criminal legal procedures in Alaska.

Consequently, it is important for professionals who engage with those impacted by nonconsensual contact behaviors to ensure that they are not only asking about emotive

responses as focusing on feelings of fear may not comprehensively capture “fear” (or imminent threat of death or physical injury) that is required to establish stalking as a crime. A national resource center on stalking, Stalking Prevention, Awareness & Resource Center (SPARC), therefore, recommends asking individuals/potential victims about whether they have changed their behavior or routine in response to repeated nonconsensual contact, especially if feelings of fear are not expressed. For example, 35 percent of women in this report did not feel fear in response to repeated nonconsensual contact. However, it is possible that among those 35 percent, there were indeed women who did not feel fear but changed their usual route to work due to the repeated nonconsensual behavior they were experiencing. A change in their regular routine may not be described as a fear response but such changes in behavior could indicate avoidance of risk or harm of some kind. Such examples may describe an understanding of imminent threat of death or physical injury, or “fear” as described in statute. Hence, it is important to ensure that individuals who did not *feel* fear (i.e., those 35 percent who did not feel fear in this study) understand how “fear” is defined in the statute so they do not categorically exclude themselves from pursuing criminal legal avenues because they did not have a specific emotional response.

Overall, conversational strategies such as the one recommended by SPARC, focusing on the victims’ behavioral change in response to the nonconsensual contact, could help establish “fear” as defined in statute by identifying behaviors that demonstrate the victim’s understanding or automatic responses to an imminent threat of physical harm. Engaging in these strategic conversations can also be helpful for victims as it acknowledges and legitimizes coping strategies that are unique to each individual.

UNDERSTANDING POTENTIAL SUBCATEGORIES WITHIN NONCONSENSUAL CONTACT TYPES

Alaska Statute Definition of Nonconsensual Contact

AS 11.41.270(b)(4)

“nonconsensual contact” means any contact with another person that is initiated or continued without that person’s consent, that is beyond the scope of the consent provided by that person, or that is in disregard of that person’s ex-pressed desire that the contact be avoided or discontinued;

“nonconsensual contact” includes

- (A) following or appearing within the sight of that person;
- (B) approaching or confronting that person in a public place or on private property;
- (C) appearing at the workplace or residence of that person;
- (D) entering onto or remaining on property owned, leased, or occupied by that person;
- (E) contacting that person by telephone;
- (F) sending mail or electronic communications to that person;
- (G) placing an object on, or delivering an object to, property owned, leased, or occupied by that person;
- (H) following or monitoring that person with a global positioning device or similar technological means;
- (I) using, installing, or attempting to use or install a device for observing, recording, or photographing events occurring in the residence, vehicle, or workplace used by that person, or on the personal telephone or computer used by that person;

The Alaska statute definition of nonconsensual contact presented above is similar to the definition utilized in AVS. Notably, fear responses were higher among those who experienced being watched, followed, or spied on; finding strange/threatening items left behind; and, having someone sneak into their home or car. While “nonconsensual contact” as defined in Alaska statute may treat contacting the person by telephone repeatedly and appearing at the workplace or residence in the same way under the umbrella of the stalking statute, there may be some notable qualitative differences between these contact types based on the variations in fear that emerged in this study. Such findings beg the question of whether such differences should be addressed in policies and whether contact types that induce less fear such as receiving unwanted phone calls get dismissed or placated more often if they are considered less threatening. Furthermore, while there are established stalking assessments such as the Stalking Harassment Assessment and Risk Profile (SHARP), the Stalking Assessment Indices (SAI), and others in development, there are no psychometric measures that specifically assess stalking severity based on an empirical study of fear responses and exposure to various kinds of repeated nonconsensual contact. Findings from this report could provide a basis for developing an assessment in the Alaskan context utilizing AVS data.

THE LEGAL UTILITY OF STALKING CHARGES

Repeated nonconsensual contact is known to be underreported, under-charged, and under-prosecuted. For example, while stalking can be the primary and only charge for some clients, stalking behaviors may not be an immediate concern depending on the context, especially in intimate partner violence (IPV) cases or in cases where other behaviors with immediate safety risks are co-occurring. However, SPARC highlights the benefits of strategically utilizing stalking charges when possible as it allows the prosecutor to provide a broader context, especially as stalking charges require demonstrating a pattern of behaviors over time. In other words, prosecutors can use the stalking charge to paint a fuller picture of relational dynamics rather than focusing on the one incident that led to the arrest or criminal justice involvement. Additionally, addressing stalking when it is the only or primary charge is important, especially should incidents occur again, to ensure that there is an official track record of similar behaviors or a pattern of violence. Furthermore, SPARC highlights ways in which stalking can be utilized to impose protection orders, bail restrictions, and other conditions to help secure victim safety.

Conclusion

Examining the variation in repeated nonconsensual contact and fear responses among noninstitutionalized adult women in Alaska provides a holistic understanding of how nonconsensual contacts may be occurring. The data also provides opportunities to engage in dialogue about bridging the practice-policy gap to prevent stalking, improve victim engagement, and to address the overall high rates of repeated nonconsensual contact occurring in Alaska.

Stakeholder Resources

- **The Stalking and Harassment and Risk Profile (SHARP)** is a publicly available online assessment developed by researchers at the University of Kentucky Department of Behavioral Science. The assessment takes 15 minutes, measures fear and discomfort using multiple indicators, and can be completed by anybody. The assessment provides two detailed reports: (1) A risk profile of the situation at hand and the person causing harm and (2) A list of suggestions on how to enhance safety, collect evidence, and plan for potential risk factors.
- **Stalking Prevention, Awareness & Resource Center (SPARC)** provides training and technical assistance to US Department of Justice Office on Violence Against Women grantees and potential grantees including victim services, criminal justice stakeholders such as law enforcement, judicial officers, probation, prosecution well as campus staff in educational settings.

SHARP and SPARC provide informational fact sheets for a variety of criminal justice stakeholders including victims and their informal supports.

Appendix

ALASKA VICTIMIZATION SURVEY

This study makes use of data collected for the **2020 Alaska Victimization Survey (AVS)**. The AVS is designed to provide population prevalence estimates of intimate partner violence, sexual violence and stalking, and is modeled after the National Intimate Partner and Sexual Violence Survey, which is administered by the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. The AVS is an Alaska-specific general population survey of adult (18 years of age and older), non-institutionalized, English-speaking women residing in Alaska. AVS participants are randomly selected and contacted via landlines and cell phones. Data collection for the 2020 iteration of the AVS occurred between July and December 2020. A total of 2,100 women participated in the survey.

The AVS is funded by the Council on Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault, and its data is collected, analyzed, and managed by the UAA Justice Center. Detailed information regarding the methodology of the AVS is provided in the 2020 Statewide Alaska Victimization Survey Final Report. Additional AVS data resources and tools can be accessed on the AVS website, as well as the AVS ScholarWorks page.

NONCONSENSUAL CONTACT MEASURES

Exhibit A1.

Nonconsensual contact (lifetime) item text, 2020 Alaska Victimization Survey (AVS).

Introductory text: I'm going to ask you some detailed questions about times when you may have been contacted, followed or harassed. When answering, please think about anyone who may have done these things to you, including romantic or sexual partners, other people you knew, or strangers. Please do not include bill collectors, telephone solicitors, or other sales people....

In your lifetime, how many people have ever watched or followed you from a distance, or spied on you with a listening device, camera, GPS, or global positioning system? [S1_EVER]

In your lifetime, how many people have ever approached you or showed up in places, such as your home, workplace, or school when you didn't want them to be there? [S2_EVER]

In your lifetime, how many people have ever left strange or potentially threatening items for you to find? [S3_EVER]

In your lifetime, how many people have ever sneaked into your home or car and did things to scare you by letting you know they had been there? [S4_EVER]

In your lifetime, how many people have ever left you unwanted messages? This includes text or voice messages. [S5_EVER]

In your lifetime, how many people have ever made unwanted phone calls to you? This includes hang-up calls. [S6_EVER]

In your lifetime, how many people have ever sent you unwanted emails, instant messages, or sent messages through websites like MySpace, Facebook, or Snapchat? [S7_EVER]

In your lifetime, how many people have ever left you cards, letters, flowers, or presents when they know you didn't want them to? [S8_EVER]

Notes

a. Source: Alaska Victimization Survey.

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- ⁱⁱ Smith, S.G., Basile, K.C., & Kresnow, M. (2022). *The National Intimate Partner and Sexual Violence Survey: 2016/2017 Report on Stalking – Updated Release*. National Center for Injury Prevention and Control, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. <https://www.cdc.gov/violenceprevention/pdf/nisvs/nisvsstalkingreport.pdf>
- ⁱⁱⁱ Center on Disease Control and Prevention (2023) *Fast Facts: Preventing Stalking*. <https://www.cdc.gov/violenceprevention/intimatepartnerviolence/stalking/fastfact.html>
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- ^v Smith, S.G., Chen, J., Basile, K.C., Gilbert, L.K., Merrick, M.T., Patel, N., Walling, M., & Jain, A. (2017). *The National Intimate Partner and Sexual Violence Survey (NISVS): 2010-2012 State Report*. National Center for Injury Prevention and Control, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. <https://www.cdc.gov/violenceprevention/pdf/nisvs-stareportbook.pdf>
- ^{vi} Henderson, R. (2021). *Stalking. Alaska Criminal Law- 2022 Edition*. <https://pressbooks.pub/alaskacriminallaw2022/chapter/stalking/>
- ^{vii} Stalking Prevention, Awareness, and Resource Center [SPARC]. (2022) *Stalking, Harassment, & Related Offenses*. <https://www.stalkingawareness.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/06/2022-01-Stalking-Laws-Compilation.pdf>
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- ^{ix} SPARC (2017) *Identifying Stalking: SLII Strategies*. <https://www.stalkingawareness.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/04/Identifying-Stalking-as-SLII-Strategies.pdf>
- ^x Stalking Prevention, Awareness, and Resource Center (n.d.) *Prosecutor’s Guide to Stalking*. <https://www.stalkingawareness.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/01/SPA-19.005-Prosecutors-Guide-to-Stalking-00000002.pdf>



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