



CONTACT THE
FAMILY GUIDANCE
CENTER AT
828-322-1400

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HICKORY, NC 28602
FGCSERVICES.COM



Spotlight On Domestic Violence

First Step Newsletter

A Program of

The Family Guidance Center

THE MISSION OF FAMILY GUIDANCE CENTER'S FIRST STEP DOMESTIC VIOLENCE PROGRAM IS TO PROVIDE NEEDED SERVICES TO VICTIMS OF DOMESTIC VIOLENCE AND TO INCREASE THE COMMUNITY'S AWARENESS ABOUT THE PROBLEM.



THINGS STALKERS DO :

- Repeatedly call and text you, including hang-ups.
- Follow you and show up wherever you are.
- Send unwanted gifts, letters, cards, or emails.
- Damage your home, car, or other property.
- Monitor your phone calls or computer use.
- Use technology, like hidden cameras or global positioning systems (GPS) to track where you go.
- Drive by or hang out at your home, school, or work.
- Threaten to hurt you by using public records or online search services, hiring investigators, going through your garbage, or contacting friends, family, neighbors, or co-workers.
- Posting information or spreading rumors about you on the internet, in a public place, or by word of mouth.
- Other actions that control, track, or frighten you.

You are not to blame for a stalker's behavior.

WHAT IS STALKING?

It is a pattern of repeated and unwanted attention, harassment, contact, or any other course of conduct directed at a specific person that would cause a reasonable person to feel fear.

7.5 million people are stalked in one year in the United States. It can happen to anyone. It's dangerous. It's a crime!

WHO IS STALKED?

- About 1 in 5 stalking victims are stalked by a stranger
- 61% of female victims and 44% of male victims are stalked by a current or former intimate partner.
- 25% of female victims and 32% of male victims are stalked by an acquaintance.
- Persons aged 18-24 years experience the highest rate of stalking.
- 11% of stalking victims have been stalked 5 years or more.

ON THE INSIDE

**Domestic Violence Stalking
What You Can Do
You Made a Difference**

DOMESTIC VIOLENCE STALKING

Just because you leave a domestic violence situation, you may not be safe. Domestic violence stalking is a long term reality for many victims. This is an issue that victims should take very seriously for the next few years. If you are being stalked, be careful who you talk to in public and where you go— you could be putting your life, or the lives of others in danger.



WHAT YOU CAN DO

- **Have NO contact with the stalker.**
- **Tell others, family friends, employer.**
- **Increase personal protection.**
- **Change your daily routines, i.e. The route or times you go to work or school.**
- **Know the location of the closest police station.**
- **Regularly check for tracking devices .**
- **Improve home security.**
- **Collect evidence, keep a journal of dates and times of stalking events, save emails, telephone messages and take pictures, when safe, including pictures of gifts, damaged property, etc....**

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The most **DANGEROUS** and most common stalkers are **FORMER INTIMATE PARTNERS.**

- **76% of DV homicide victims had been stalked by their intimate partner.**
- **54% of DV homicide victims reported stalking to police before they were killed by their stalkers.**

Mistakes Victims Make

- Providing too much information about themselves to people they don't know.
- Not giving a clear calm message that they are not interested in a relationship.
- Ignoring the early warning signs.
- Not taking the situation seriously.
- Responding to a stalker in any way, shape, or form.
- Trying to reason or bargain with a stalker.
- Blaming themselves.
- Not taking adequate privacy and safety precautions.
- Seeking a restraining or protective order without thinking of the potential consequences.
- Failing to obtain support from others either personally or professionally, including family, friends, co-workers, and police.
- Expecting police to solve the problem- not taking responsibility for their own safety.
- Ignoring their emotional needs during and after a stalking.

Welcome



Laurel Hager is our new DV Therapist. She has over 20 years of experience in the human services field. She received her Masters Degree in Counseling from West Virginia University. She and her husband moved to this area from West Virginia in 2014. We're happy to have her with us.

Next month we'll introduce our new DV educator, Danielle Cisney.

YOU MADE A DIFFERENCE

Thank you to all the generous people in our community who were so generous to our agency and those in our Shelter. You gave them a memorable Christmas.

THANK YOU—

St. Joseph's Catholic Church-Newton

New Horizon Ministries

Transportation Insight

Mathis Chapel Baptist Church

Madison Shultz

Maritza Rafael



Congratulations

Our Consumer Credit Counselor, Tom McNeely, recently passed the national exam to become a **Certified Student Loan Counselor**. Student loan debt has become a growing problem. Once out of college, people are finding it difficult to pay off their student loan(s).

“Tom’s certification makes it possible for us to serve a population who may never have thought about financial counseling in the past,” said **Ann Peele, Executive Director**. “We’re proud to offer this service and congratulate Tom on his achievement.”