

## NATIONAL STALKING AWARENESS MONTH

January is National Stalking Awareness Month, and Sexual Assault Services, along with Student Counseling Services, are using this month as an opportunity to educate Mississippi State University about the pervasive crime that affects nearly 1.4 million Americans a year.

Stalking—typically defined as a course of conduct directed at a specific person that would cause a reasonable person to feel fear—is a criminal offense under the laws of all 50 states, the District of Columbia, and the federal government. Although its prevalence is high, public awareness that stalking is a crime remains dangerously low. Stalking is often invisible to everyone except the victim.

Our hope is that National Stalking Awareness Month will serve to bring stalking to the attention of the MSU campus so that when stalking victims need help, we will all respond appropriately—doing everything we can to keep them safe and hold offenders accountable for their actions.

Sexual Assault Services is encouraging all students, staff, and faculty members to promote awareness and public education about stalking during the month of January and throughout the year. For more information, please contact Dr. Beatrice Tatem, Coordinator of Sexual Assault Services at (662)325-2091.

### **\*\*FACTS\*\***

- National Stalking Awareness Month was motivated by the death of Peggy Klinke, a stalking victim who was murdered by an ex-boyfriend after repeatedly seeking law enforcement intervention.
- One in 12 women and one in 45 men will be stalked in their lifetime, for an average duration of almost two years.
- Seventy-six percent of female homicide victims were also stalked prior to their death, and more than half of these victims reported stalking to the police before being murdered by their stalkers.
- 1,006,970 women and 370,990 men are stalked annually in the United States.
- 77 percent of female and 64 percent of male victims know their stalker.
- 87 percent of stalkers are men.
- 61 percent of stalkers made unwanted phone calls; 33 percent sent or left unwanted letters or items; 29 percent vandalized property; and 9 percent killed or threatened to kill a family pet.
- 73 percent of intimate partner stalkers verbally threatened the victims with physical violence, and almost 46 percent of victims experienced one or more violent incidents by the stalker.
- 81 percent of women stalked by a current or former intimate partner are also physically assaulted by that partner.