



KNOW THE DIFFERENCE

NLA-I DVP INFORMATION PACKET

(Please feel free to distribute or provide a link to this document)

Table of Contents

Table of Contents	2
Thank You	3
NLA-I DVP Vision	4
NLA-I DVP Mission Statement	4
NLA-I DVP History	4
What Does NLA-I DVP do for the BDSM/Kink/Leather Community?	5
NLA-I DVP Donations.....	6
What does Money Raised Help NLA-I DVP do?	7
Other Ways You Can Help NLA-I DVP (<i>further information on the NLA-I DVP website</i>)	7
Domestic Violence in the Community	7
We Can Reduce Domestic Violence	8
Holding Group Discussions about Domestic Violence Awareness	9
Topics for Discussion	9
Email Safety & Precautions	10
Clearing your Browser History.....	10
Internet Explorer.....	11
Netscape Navigator 4.7	11
Netscape Communicator 6 and 7	11
Netscape Navigator 8.X.....	11
Mozilla Firefox.....	11
Mozilla	11
Opera	11
Phone Use Precautions in Domestic Violence Situations.....	11
Telephone Privacy & Safety	12
Stalking and Harassment: How to Lower Your Risk.....	13
Important Contacts and Information	14

Thank You

On behalf of the National Leather Association- International Domestic Violence Project I would like to thank you for taking the time to review the NLA-I DVP information packet. Within this packet you will find out more about NLA-I DVP, important safety information and information for victims of intimate partner abuse.

NLA-I DVP has been undergoing a series of vital changes in the last few months. The NLA-I DVP and all of its volunteers are striving to innovatively strengthen the NLA-I DVP and support our mission statement.

During the last few months the NLA-I DVP has:

- ✓ Began obtaining Regional Coordinators.
- ✓ Established an online resource directory.
- ✓ Started updating the NLA-I DVP Pamphlets with current resources, contacts, and information. The NLA-I DVP is also in the process of translating the pamphlets into Spanish and French.
- ✓ Began working with National/State/International agencies and services to establish resources for domestic abuse victims/abusers.
- ✓ Started a quarterly newsletter for NLA-I DVP.
- ✓ Implemented a plan for Advisory Committee Members and appointed Dossie Easton, Dr. Gloria G. Brame and Dr. Charles Moser as NLA-I DVP ACM's for direct support of the NLA-I DVP's volunteers.
- ✓ Created a list of goals for NLA-I DVP. The project has already fulfilled several of its goals including the development and distribution of a volunteer manual for all NLA-I DVP volunteers.
- ✓ Designed NLA-I DVP postcards and distributed 5,000-5,500 postcards to BDSM/Kink/Leather individuals, events, and groups across the US and Canada. In addition, postcards have been sent to various mainstream agencies and services for distribution.
- ✓ Increased the publicity of the NLA-I DVP. Visibility has been raised through the projects volunteer's efforts such as having a vendor table at IMsL 2006 (International Ms Leather) and presenting workshops at events like Tribal Fire in Oklahoma City, Okalahoma and CAPEX in North Carolina.

We hope that you will find the information in this packet useful. If after reading the NLA-I DVP information packet you still have questions please feel free to review the NLA-I DVP website more in depth at: <http://www.nlaidvproject.us> or contact a representative with NLA-I DVP.

Thank you for your support,



Seraphina
NLA-I DVP Chair

NLA-I DVP Vision

The vision of the NLA-I Domestic Violence Project is to create a national and international network to provide information, appropriate referrals, resources, and safe shelters for those in the world community who have been subjected to abusive and violent BDSM relationships and who are seeking a way out of those relationships or who require a more extensive support network than is otherwise available to them.

With the information compiled by our Regional Coordinators and their assistants, we hope to better gauge the climate relative to these issues in each community.

NLA-I DVP Mission Statement

The National Leather Association-International (NLA-I) calls on the leather/SM/Fetish community to take the lead in reducing domestic violence through education.

No group is free of domestic violence, assault, or abuse; but fear, denial and lack of knowledge have slowed public response to this serious social problem. The NLA-I is committed to reducing this violence by attempting:

1. To show that community action can reduce violence.
2. To hold offenders/abusers accountable for choosing to be violent. To encourage victims to take legal action against the offender/abuser. To use drugs or alcohol as an excuse for domestic violence, assault, or abuse, is unacceptable. To encourage the offender/abuser to seek treatment and the victim to seek support.
3. To listen and support those who have the courage to tell us... to help them end their shame and isolation.
4. To educate the legal and social service system about the difference between consensual SM and domestic violence, assault, and abuse, and to encourage their appropriate intervention.
5. To take the responsibility of educating our community about the forms of domestic violence, assault, and abuse, its extent and severity.
6. To promote information about where to go for help. Domestic violence takes many forms: physical violence, assault, isolation, out right or subtle psychological and emotional abuse, economic control, sexual assault, and abuse as well as the destruction of personal property. Non-consensual manipulation and assault are not part of SM. The NLA-I advocates relationships based in personal responsibility, honesty and integrity...in which power and pleasure is derived from mutual respect.

NLA-I DVP History

National Leather Association- International was the first SM organization to tackle domestic violence directly. The NLA-I Organization created the National Leather Association International Domestic Violence Project in **1998** and is one of many projects within the NLA-I organization. During its history NLA-I DVP has made it one of their primary objectives to distinguish the differences between SM and domestic violence.

NLA-I DVP has played an instrumental part in providing educational workshops to BDSM groups and mainstream domestic violence programs, shelters, social workers, and law enforcement. One of NLA-I DVP's tasks during its earlier days was to transcribe their workshops, audiotape them, and send their materials to **all** of the national mainstream domestic violence groups in the country. As a result many mainstream domestic violence groups started making use of the NLA-I DVP's materials within their own programs. You can still find these materials in use today.

In **1998**, Jan Hall became the first Domestic Violence Chairperson. One of her biggest accomplishments while residing as the NLA-I DVP Chairperson was to draft and gain wide-spread approval on what has now become known as, "NLA-I's Statement on Domestic Violence."

In **1999**, Lady Victoria Knight became the second NLA-I Domestic Violence Chairperson. In an effort to continue Jan Hall's work, Victoria Knight created and published a number of small pamphlets intended to help make the distinctions between SM and abuse. By the end of **2001** a total of 12 pamphlets were created and distributed widely throughout the BDSM/Kink/Leather and mainstream communities.

In **February 2003**, boy Joey and Keith Pollanen were appointed as Co-Chairs of NLA-I DVP. Boy Joey resigned as the NLA-I DVP Chair in **May 2006**. It is unknown when Keith Pollanen resigned. Some of the many accomplishments during Boy Joey's term was the creation of the NLA-I Domestic Violence Project website launched in **2003** and the creation of NLA-I Domestic Violence Project pins and banner in **2004**.

Many groups, individuals, projects, coalitions, and law enforcement officials have helped NLA-I DVP flourish over the years. It is the hopes of NLA-I DVP to continue it's work to help individuals **KNOW THE DIFFERENCE**.

At a Glance: NLA-I DVP Chair History

- **1998-1999**- Jan Hall
- **1999-2003**- Victoria Knight
- **February 2003** boy Joey, and Keith Pollanen were appointed as Co-Chairs of NLA-I DVP. boy Joey resigned in **May 2006**. It is unknown when Keith Pollanen resigned.

The current NLA-I Domestic Violence Chair is seraphina.

What Does NLA-I DVP do for the BDSM/Kink/Leather Community?

The NLA-I DVP is continually striving to make the project a vital part of the BDSM/Kink/Leather communities. Some of the activities NLA-I DVP participates in include:

- ✓ NLA-I DVP offers workshops for individuals in the BDSM/Kink/Leather communities.
- ✓ NLA-I DVP provides safety plans for victims to get out of abusive intimate partner relationships.
- ✓ NLA-I DVP provides pamphlets for individuals, groups, and events. These pamphlets help individuals distinguish the differences between a healthy relationship and an abusive relationship.

- ✓ NLA-I DVP distributes postcards for individuals, groups, and events. These postcards supply individuals with information on how to get help, distinguishing the difference between abuse and a healthy relationship, and where to go if they need additional information or help.
- ✓ NLA-I DVP publishes a quarterly newsletter with information on resources, NLA-I DVP updates, and other related domestic violence information. The newsletters are free and subscriptions are open to anyone who wants to receive the NLA-I DVP's newsletter.
- ✓ NLA-I DVP maintains a resource directory for individuals to browse and find agencies and services that are empathetic and willing to work with individuals in the BDSM/Kink/Leather communities. If a resource is not available for a particular area a NLA-I DVP Regional Coordinator or the NLA-I DVP chair will work with individuals to find the resources or help they need.
- ✓ NLA-I DVP provides training, NLA-I DVP pamphlets, or other NLA-I DVP related materials to domestic violence agencies and services at the state, national, and international levels when it is necessary to improve or educate services and agencies about the BDSM/Kink/Leather communities.
- ✓ NLA-I DVP actively investigates and works with domestic violence agencies and services to discern their level of acceptance and willingness to work with individuals in the BDSM/Kink/Leather communities.

NLA-I DVP Donations

1. Individuals can sign up to become sponsors of NLA-I DVP. For more information please contact the [NLA-I DVP Chair](#)
2. The NLA-I DVP has vest pins. These pins are sold by the NLA-I DVP for a donation of \$3.00 or more. The vest pins can be obtained by making an online donation to NLA-I DVP, by contacting the NLA-I DVP Regional Coordinator for your region/states, or by contacting the NLA-I Domestic Violence Chair or through the NLA-I DVP website. **Bulk orders are accepted.**
3. Individuals can choose to donate money to NLA-I DVP when joining or renewing their membership with the National Leather Association-International.
4. Individuals can choose to donate through the NLA-I DVP website at: <http://www.nlaidvproject.us> Simply click the "Make a Donation" button on the upper hand left side of every webpage within the projects website.
5. Individuals can make a donation to NLA-I DVP by postal mail at any time. When sending money for NLA-I DVP simply write a check or money order and put "NLA-I DVP" in the memo section so NLA-I knows where the money goes. All donations should be mailed to:

National Leather Association—International
 P.O. Box 423
 Blacklick, Ohio 43004-0423.

Note: In-Kind services and donations are also accepted. Please contact the [NLA-I DVP Chair](#) if you would like to donate services or goods to NLA-I DVP.

What does Money Raised Help NLA-I DVP do?

All individuals within NLA-I DVP are volunteers and serve without any compensation. Money donated to NLA-I DVP helps the project continue its efforts to educate the BDSM/Kink/Leather communities, money helps the project print and distribute promotional and informational materials, and helps Regional Coordinators provide in-house training for mainstream domestic violence agencies and services at the state, national, and international levels.

Other Ways You Can Help NLA-I DVP *(further information on the NLA-I DVP website)*

1. Provide a link or banner to NLA-I DVP on your website and/or mailing list.
2. Become a NLA-I DVP Sponsor.
3. Invite a NLA-I DVP Regional Coordinator to talk with your group or at your events.
4. Distribute NLA-I DVP postcards at your meetings, events, or within your community.
5. Distribute NLA-I DVP safety plans or pamphlets at your meetings or events.
6. Become a volunteer for NLA-I DVP.
7. Subscribe to the NLA-I DVP Newsletter or submit domestic violence related information or resources to the NLA-I DVP Newsletter Editor.
8. Help NLA-I DVP spread the word about what it is doing on your mailing lists or within your groups.
9. Inform NLA-I DVP of any agencies or resources that you know are not currently listed in the NLA-I DVP resource directory.

The following information is being provided for further information on domestic violence. If you need information that is not provided in this packet please contact the NLA-I DVP Regional Coordinator for your area or the NLA-I DVP Chair.

Domestic Violence in the Community, by Jan Hall

Domestic violence is not the same as consensual s/m. Yet, abusive relationships do exist within the leather-s/m community, as with all groups. Unfortunately, due to our lifestyle choices and sexual orientation, abused persons who are into s/m may suffer additional isolation and may hesitate to turn to available resources for fear of rejection or of giving credence to stereotypes. No group is free of domestic battering; but fear, denial, and lack of knowledge have slowed public response to this serious social problem.

Domestic violence is not restricted to one particular group within the s/m community. A person's size, gender, or particular sex role (top-bottom, butch-femme) is irrelevant; anyone can be subject to abuse.

Abuse tends to be cyclical in nature and escalates over time. It is a pattern of intentional intimidation for the purpose of dominating, coercing, or isolating another without her or his consent. Because of the intimidation factor, where there is abuse in any part of the relationship, there can be no consent.

Defining the Problem: The following questions can help a person to define the problem, which can have characteristics that are physical, sexual, economic, and psychological.

- Does your partner ever hit, choke, or otherwise physically hurt you outside of a scene?
- Has she or he ever restrained you against your will, locked you in a room, or used a weapon of any kind?
- Are you afraid of your partner?
- Are you confused about when a scene begins and ends? Rape and forced sexual acts are not part of consensual s/m. Battering is not something that can be "agreed" upon; there is an absence of safe words or understandings.
- Has she or he ever violated your limits?
- Do you feel trapped in a specific role as either the top or bottom?
- Does your partner constantly criticize your performance, withhold sex as a means of control, or ridicule you for the limits you set?
- Do you feel obligated to have sex?
- Does your partner use sex to make up after a violent incident?
- Does your partner isolate you from friends, family, or groups?
- Has your partner ever destroyed objects or threatened pets?
- Has your partner abused or threatened your children?
- Does your partner limit access to work or material resources?
- Has he or she ever stolen from you or run up debts?
- Are you or your partner emotionally dependent on one another?
- Does your relationship swing back and forth between a lot of emotional distance and being very close?
- Is your partner constantly criticizing you, humiliating you, and generally undermining your self-esteem?
- Does your partner use scenes to express/cover up anger and frustration?
- Do you feel that you can't discuss with your partner what is bothering you?

No one has the right to abuse you. You are not responsible for the violence. You are not alone; connect with other survivors. There are many reasons a victims may stay in an abusive relationship: fear of (or feelings for) the abuser, and lack of economic or emotional resources. If you stay, help is still available. Find out about shelters, support groups, counselors, anti-violence programs, and crisis lines in your area; ask a friend to help you make these calls. Plan a strategy if you have to leave quickly. Line up friends and family in case of an emergency.

Battering is a crime. Find out about your legal rights and options. One of your options to help keep an abuser away from you and to help stop the instances of abuse is to ask a court to issue an Order for Protection or Harassment Restraining Order. You do not need a lawyer. There should be free services in your area to assist you in filling out the necessary paperwork. An Order of Protection or Harassment Restraining Order is one way to ensure your abuser leaves you alone, but you should not let your guard down. Occasionally it may take awhile for these legal documents to make their way into the computer system so be sure to carry the paperwork with you at all times. In addition, keep records of any instances of an abuser breaching the protection orders.

We Can Reduce Domestic Violence, by Jan Hall

Domestic violence does exist in the s/m-leather-fetish community. We can make it clear that we will listen to those who have the courage to speak out. Understand that leaving is difficult. Let the person make his or her own choices. Keep all information confidential. Encourage survivors to take legal action and seek support. Help find safe housing and legal advocacy. Hold batterers accountable and urge them to seek

treatment. Deny that drug or alcohol use can excuse battering. Support changes in that person's behavior.

Leather groups in our community are crucial to reducing domestic violence. Invite knowledgeable speakers; lead discussions; print up a list for members of what resources in your area are s/m-supportive. Educate your local legal and social service system about our lifestyle; encourage their appropriate intervention.

Holding Group Discussions about Domestic Violence Awareness, by Jan Hall

In planning a group discussion about domestic violence awareness, first consider the facilitator. The ideal situation is one in which someone trained in this field, who is SM, or SM supportive, can be brought in to facilitate. If no such person is available, select a facilitator who is knowledgeable about this issue and who is comfortable leading a discussion about it.

Here are the main subjects for a discussion. You will want to discuss recognizing the signs of abuse, the cycle of abuse (build-up, confrontation, and honeymoon), and local resources. Stress that anyone can be subject to abuse; a person's size, gender, or specific sex role (e.g., top-bottom, butch-femme) is irrelevant.

Domestic violence awareness is a very wide topic and your group won't be able to cover everything about such a complex issue in one meeting. What is important is to raise consciousness that domestic violence is a community problem, not just a personal problem, and that real action can be taken to reduce domestic violence. Make sure that the group knows about local resources--where to go for help and support.

The tone of the discussion needs to be accepting of the survivor, rather than accusatory. Realize that being abused is not an easy topic to deal with. It is a subject that can bring up a lot of complicated emotions in all of us--pain, shame, betrayal, guilt, or fear. It is a particularly sensitive topic for SM people because it is what we're usually accused of by people who cannot distinguish violence from consensual SM. Thus be aware of "blaming the victim." Explore any responses further that sound like blaming the victim, such as "I wouldn't let this happen to me" or "Why doesn't the abused person just leave!"

Topics for Discussion, by Jan Hall

- What is abuse? Is it only physical? How can we tell if we are being abused?
- What differentiates abuse from safe, sane, consensual SM?
- Why would someone resort to abuse?
- What keeps us in abusive relationships?
- What particular problems do we face within the SM community where domestic violence is concerned?
- How do we deal with abuse within our community? How can we offer support and safety to survivors?
- How can the community make clear to the abuser that he or she must take responsibility for his or her actions--and at the same time, how can we support changes in that person's behavior?
- What local resources are available for both abusers and the abused? How can we best work with local domestic violence programs and shelters to enable them to support members of our community?

Email Safety & Precautions

Computer technology can put your privacy and safety at risk. Computer hard drives are capable of recording every action taken on the computer and the Internet. It is virtually impossible to completely delete or clear all computer "footprints." Even if your abuser is not a computer expert, he/she may be able to trace what you have done on the computer.

If an abusive partner uses your computer, you may be increasing your danger by visiting sites about domestic violence. The safest practice is to use computers that are located in a public library, community technology center, Internet cafe or at a trusted friend's house.

Computers can also be a useful tool in accessing information about what you are going through and what you can do to seek help. However, keep in mind that some domestic violence websites are not legitimate and may give you misleading information. Your local domestic violence advocate can help sort out any information that may be confusing. Finally, e-mails from your abuser can provide excellent evidence in a court case. You may want to consider saving his/her e-mails even if you don't have a case pending, so they are available if you ever need them.

Other precautions you can take include the following:

- ✓ Never share your e-mail password(s). However, if you believe your abuser knows your password consider whether changing your password may cause more danger to your well-being and safety.
- ✓ When creating passwords they should be difficult to figure out and should contain both numbers and letters. Never use birth dates, street addresses, names, a favorite pet or place, and so forth.
- ✓ Consider having more than one e-mail account so that you have an alternative if your abuser forces you to close an account.
- ✓ Ask friends and family to not share your any new e-mail addresses you create.
- ✓ Never register your personal information such as your real address or phone number when you sign up for web e-mail accounts such as Yahoo or Hotmail.
- ✓ Use web-based e-mail services. Many of these services are free and they allow you to access e-mail from any computer that has Internet access, and your e-mail will NOT be stored on your local computer. Some good web-based e-mail services are Yahoo Mail, Hotmail, and Excite Mail. Remember, e-mail corresponded is not a completely safe or confidential way to talk to someone about the danger or abuse in your relationship. The best way to get help is to call domestic violence hotline numbers.
- ✓ Be sure not to store important or private documents on a computer an abuser has access to. You can use various internet services to store these documents including many of the free web-based e-mail services. If you use a floppy disk or CD to store your documents in a safe place or with a trusted individual.

Clearing your Browser History, by Jan Hall

These are instructions to clear your browser history. However, in the case if Internet Explorer, following these instructions will not completely clear your history. It will be much more difficult but NOT impossible to find where you have visited. There are applications you can purchase that will completely clear your history but you might have to explain why you bought them.

Internet Explorer

1. Click on Tools at the top of the page
2. Click on Internet Options
3. You will see History and the button Clear History, Click on that and you're done

Netscape Navigator 4.7

1. Click on Edit at the top of the page
2. Click on Preferences
3. When the Preferences Window opens up Click on Navigator. You will see the Clear History button, click on that and you're done.

Netscape Communicator 6 and 7

1. Click on Edit at the top of the page
2. Click on Preferences
3. When the Preferences window opens up, Click on the Grey triangle next to Navigator.
4. Click on History. You will see the Clear History button, click on that and you're done.

Netscape Navigator 8.X

1. Go to "Tools" menu and select "Options".
2. Select "Privacy".
3. Click the "Clear" button in the Page History area to clear a list of web site visited during a certain time period.
Click the "Clear" button in the Search History area to clear all records from the search history.

Mozilla Firefox

1. Click "Tools" - "Options"
2. With the "Options" dialog box appears, click "Privacy."
3. Click the "History" tab.
4. Click "Clear Browsing History Now".
5. Press "OK" to close the dialog box.

Mozilla

1. Go to "Edit" menu and select "Preferences".
2. Select "Navigator" under the "Category" listing.
3. Select "Clear History" in the "History" area.
4. Click "OK" to erase history.

Opera

1. Go to "Edit" menu and select "Preferences".
2. Select "Navigator" under the "Category" listing.
3. Select "Clear History" in the "History" area.
4. Click "OK" to erase history.

Phone Use Precautions in Domestic Violence Situations, by Jan Hall

Here are five tips for use of the phone if you are trying to get out of an abusive situation. If your children are old enough to use the phone, teach them these precautions also.

1. **To out-fox Caller ID:** Before dialing any number, **dial *67** (or **1167** from a

rotary phone). Then dial the number that you want to call. Even if they have caller ID, they will not see your number. (This will not work with a pay phone.) You can also buy line-blocking service for your home. Blocking service costs a dollar per month and keeps the number from appearing on caller ID boxes. What shows up instead is a "p" or "private" on their caller ID box.

2. To get around automatic callback: There's unfortunately no easy way to block this service. When your abuser has access to your phone (and you have automatic callback service), he or she can call back the last person who called you, simply by dialing ***69**. So if you get a call and it would be dangerous for your abuser to have that number (such as your lawyer's number), have someone else, like a family member or friend, call you second. This ensures the abuser does not have access to the first caller and would not discover that you are seeking help.

3. To keep from being found: After leaving an abuser, if you have to call where you left to discuss children or finances, remember that where you call from can be traced by these services. Do not put yourself or those assisting you in danger (like the Shelter, family, friends, counselors, or clergy). If you don't want where you are to be known, call from a pay phone or from your lawyer's office. Another option is to get a prepaid cell phone.

Many domestic violence agencies and service now use cell phones from the Wireless Foundation through a program called "Called to Protect." In addition, if you need assistance with erasing call history on a cellular phone go to the Wireless Foundation website, <http://www.wirelessfoundation.org> , for more information on how to erase call history from your particular cell phone.

4. Finding a phone: Remember that not all pay phones accept calls. Some only allow outgoing calls. If you live in a rural area you may need help getting to a phone booth.

5. To out-fox the phone's Redial feature: If the abuser has access to your phone, he or she can call back the last number dialed from your phone, if your phone has a redial feature. To avoid that happening, after you call someone you want to conceal, immediately call the weather number for your area or some other "safe number."

Telephone Privacy & Safety

1. **Call Return Service (*69)** allows you to call back the last number that called you, whether or not you answered the call. In some areas, a recording will give you the number you are attempting to call back, even long distance numbers. However, if the last call you received was from someone you don't want your abuser to know about, you can press ***89** after you end the call. This will prevent Call Return from working.
2. **Call Trace Service** traces the number of an annoying, obscene or harassing call by dialing ***57**. If your trace is successful, your telephone company will provide the number to the police. You must file a complaint with the police and call your telephone company to request an investigation.

There is a fee for purchasing the Caller ID service and a fee for using the Call Return and Call Trace. More complete information about these and other services

is available in the front of your telephone book or by calling your local telephone company.

3. An answering machine is another good way to make sure the caller is someone you want to speak to, before answering the telephone. If your abuser leaves a threatening message on the answering machine, be sure to remove the tape and save it (do not record over it). Such recordings can be used as evidence of threats and stalking.
4. If you use a cell phone, be aware there are numerous ways an abuser can use cell phone technology to overhear your calls or locate you. Use a cell phone only if you do not have access to a regular phone, and make sure that you do not give any identifying details on a cell phone. If your abuser works for a phone company or law enforcement agency, use extreme precaution, and discuss cell phone safety with a domestic violence advocate.
5. A cellular phone in "silent mode" or "auto answer" can serve as a tracking device. Some recent models of cellular phones have GPS (Global Positioning System), which is a location-finding feature. You can check with your phone company to learn if your cell phone has this feature. If you are fleeing from your abuser, either turn off your cell phone or leave it behind.

Stalking and Harassment: How to Lower Your Risk, by Jan Hall

How can we protect ourselves from these situations, often involving domestic violence? In this article we will discuss the behaviors behind stalking and harassment, and how you can lower your risk.

Harassment is unwanted attention, including phone calls, gifts, or letters. It may include vandalism.

Stalking is persistent unwanted pursuit. It includes pursuit by mail, email, fax, or the phone. It includes someone following you, approaching you, or waiting in ambush for you.

For example, someone may try to stalk you at your workplace, damage your property, steal from you, kill your pet, or threaten your loved ones.

To gain access to you, the stalker may pose as a legitimate caller or visitor. Or a stalker may obtain a job close to you, to allow approach.

There are more stalkers of ordinary citizens than of the rich and famous.

Stalkers and their victims are both men and women.

Cultural or national boundaries do not deter stalkers.

Sometimes stalkers pursue people who have helped them---or who stalkers want to help them.

What motivates stalkers?

Reasons include reconciliation of broken love relationships; destruction of former partners; self-destruction; or a desire for a relationship with someone who is

disinterested.

Stalkers may also have grievances against an employer or work partner. They may want retribution against a person, institution, or culture for a real, exaggerated, or imagined harm. They may seek retaliation against whomever they blame for ruining their lives or what they value.

How can you lower your risk?

Choose lovers, friends, and employees with care. Treat others fairly; be responsible in relationships.

Sadly, we must sometimes think twice before being kind to someone we do not know well who seems lonely. Even innocuous actions, such as smiling, have ignited some stalking situations. Do listen to your instincts.

Say no early and clearly to unwanted relationships.

Keep your personal life private.

Avoid appearing to fit someone's fantasy ideal.
Assume a low profile.

What if you are being pursued?

Almost all states have anti-stalking laws. However, you should discuss these options carefully with the police. Commonly, the methods used are arrest, restraining orders, or referral for psychiatric treatment. Discuss with the police the personality and means of the stalker. The police's methods need to be applied correctly and matched well to the deluded pursuer to avoid further danger.

Important Contacts and Information

NLA-I Website: <http://www.nla-i.com>

NLA-I DVP Website: <http://www.nlaidvproject.us>

NLA- I DVP Project Chair: dvchair@nla-i.com

Please see the NLA-I DVP website for the most current listing of [NLA-I DVP Regional Coordinator](#) and volunteer contact information.

National Domestic Violence Hotline: 1-800-799-SAFE **OR** 1-800-787-3224 TTY
Emergencies: 911

National Crime Victim Bar Association: NCVBA provides victim referrals to local attorneys specializing in victim-related litigation. NCVBA can be reached by phone at: (202) 467-8753 between 8:30 AM thru 5:30 PM (EST) Monday through Friday. Their website can be found at: <http://www.victimbar.org>