

Press Release

State of Maryland
Department of Public Safety and Correctional Services



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MD Dept. of Public Safety and Correctional Services Hosts Community Stalking Awareness Event

TOWSON, Md. (January 24, 2011) – January is National Stalking Awareness Month, a time to focus on a crime that affects millions of victims a year. This year's theme is "Stalking: Know It. Name It. Stop It." The focus on this life-altering crime challenges the nation to fight stalking by learning more about it.

The Maryland Department of Public Safety and Correctional Services (DPSCS) will hold a [stalking awareness event](#) to promote awareness and public education about stalking on *January 28, 2011 from 1 – 3pm in the DPSCS Centralized Hiring Unit Conference Room, at 6776 Reisterstown Road, Baltimore, MD 21215.*

Confirmed speakers include Sandy Bromley, J.D., Director of Victim Services for the National Center for Victims of Crime, who will discuss the importance of addressing stalking from a criminal justice perspective; and Ricardo Wiggs, a stalking survivor, who will share his very personal story.

DPSCS is committed to victims' rights and awareness. Over the past year, we have seen a complete overhaul of the Criminal Injuries Compensation Board, which awards compensation to victims of crime in Maryland; increased victim issues training for staff; and better utilized technology to enhance victim services. The stalking awareness event is also a result of our efforts to provide more effective victim outreach and education/prevention.

For more information or to RSVP to this event, please contact Nikki Charles at 410-585-3458 or by e-mail at nscharles@dpscs.state.md.us.

Below is a stalking fact sheet.

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Facts About Stalking

- Stalking is a crime in all 50 states and the District of Columbia and impacts 3.4 million victims a year,¹ yet many victims and criminal justice professionals underestimate its seriousness and impact.
- In one of five cases, stalkers use weapons to harm or threaten victims,² and stalking is one of the significant risk factors for femicide (homicide of women) in abusive relationships.³
- Victims suffer anxiety, social dysfunction, and severe depression at much higher rates than the general population, and many lose time from work or have to move as a result of their victimization.⁴
- Stalking is difficult to recognize, investigate, and prosecute. Unlike other crimes, stalking is not a single, easily identifiable crime but a series of acts, a course of conduct directed at a specific person that would cause that person fear.
- Stalking may take many forms, such as assaults, threats, vandalism, burglary, or animal abuse, as well as unwanted cards, calls, gifts, or visits.
- One in four victims reports that the stalker uses technology, such as computers, global positioning system devices, or hidden cameras, to track the victim's daily activities.⁵
- Stalkers fit no standard psychological profile, and many stalkers follow their victims from one jurisdiction to another, making it difficult for authorities to investigate and prosecute their crimes.

For additional resources to help promote National Stalking Awareness Month, please visit <http://stalkingawarenessmonth.org> and www.ovw.usdoj.gov.

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¹ Baum et al., Stalking Victimization in the United States, Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Justice, Office of Justice Programs, Bureau of Justice Statistics, 2009, <http://www.ojp.usdoj.gov/bjs/pub/pdf/svus.pdf> (accessed September 29, 2009).

² Ibid.

³ Jacquelyn C. Campbell et al., "Risk Factors for Femicide in Abusive Relationships: Results from a Multi-site Case Control Study," American Journal of Public Health 93 (2003): 7.

⁴ Ibid.

⁵ Baum, Stalking Victimization in the United States.

The Maryland Department of Public Safety and Correctional Services protects the public, its employees and the detainees and offenders under its supervision.

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