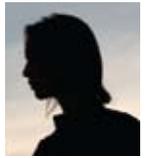


Stalking is on the increase. Stalking by ex-partners accounts for the largest group of stalking victims, with the vast majority of these victims being women. Stalking behaviour can often start before a relationship ends. Today, most stalking includes a 'cyber' or technology aspect. Stalkers who stalk offline will usually assist their activities with some form of technology as a tool, e.g. mobile phones, social networks, computers or geolocation tracking.



Rebecca*

Rebecca was a regular user of eBay. When she left her partner, he was monitoring her account. When she next bought something he contacted the seller claiming it hadn't arrived. He asked the seller to verify the address. The seller gave him Rebecca's new address. He then found her and beat her so severely she was left blind in her left eye.

*Names have been changed to preserve anonymity.



Chandra*

Chandra left her violent husband and fled to a secret location in fear of her life. She was horrified when he began stalking her at her new address. He seemed to know all her movements – even down to what she was wearing and where she'd been. Unbeknown to Chandra, before she left, her husband installed spyware on her mobile phone. He'd been pin-pointing her location; watching her through her camera phone and listening to her on the microphone.

MORE INFORMATION

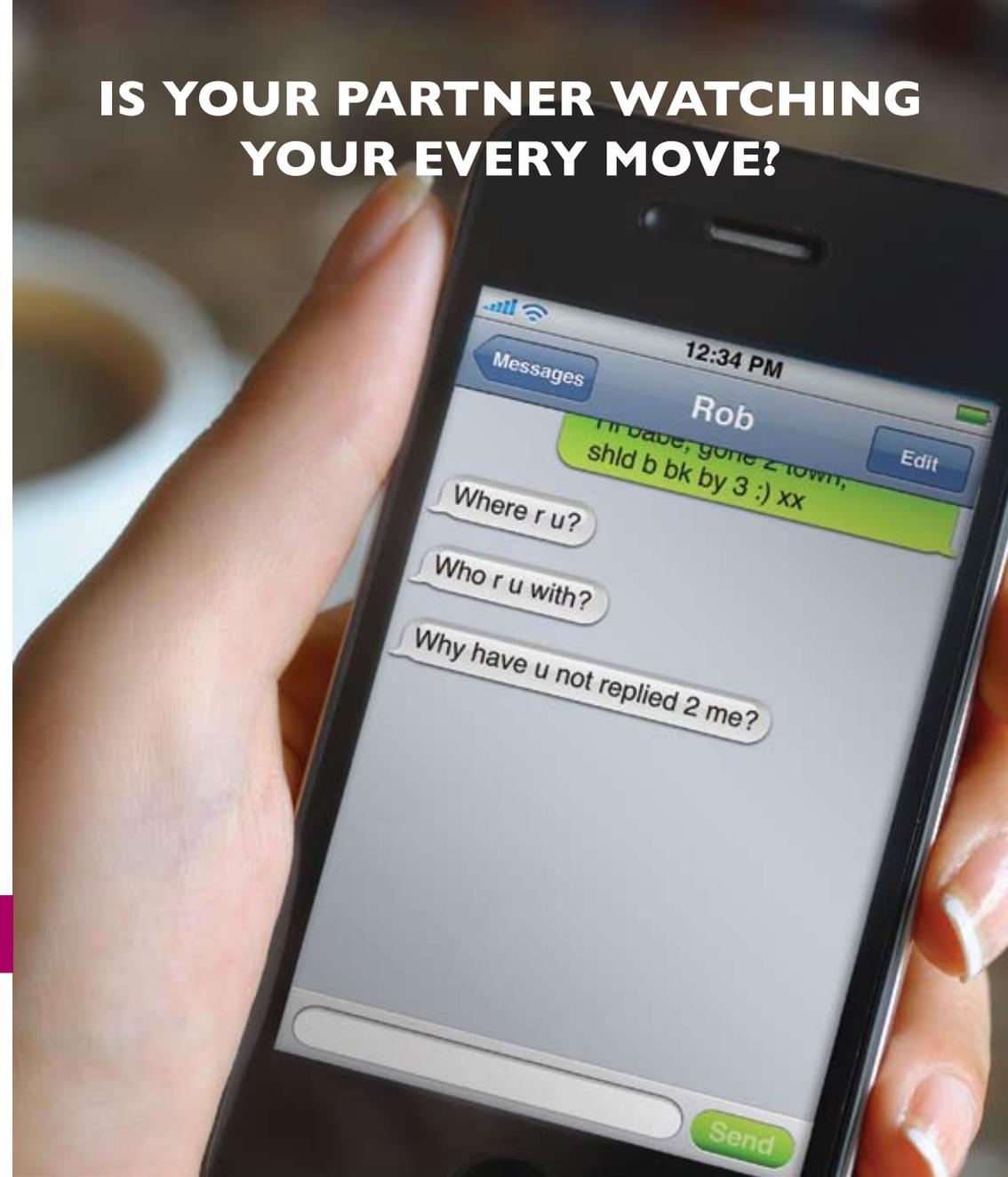
For more information on the above, tips and practical guidance to keep yourself safe digitally and online visit www.womensaid.org.uk/onlinesafety or the NSS website www.nss.org.uk

If you think you may be a victim of domestic abuse call the **Free phone 24 hour National Domestic Violence Helpline** on **0808 2000 247**, run in partnership between Women's Aid & Refuge or visit www.womensaid.org.uk.

If you need help or advice and want to speak to someone directly about stalking and harassment, please contact **The National Stalking Helpline** on **0808 802 0300** or email advice@stalkinghelpline.org

If you are in immediate danger always call 999

IS YOUR PARTNER WATCHING YOUR EVERY MOVE?



STAYING SAFE ONLINE - Easy and practical help

women's aid
until women & children are safe
www.womensaid.org.uk

AVON
The Centre for Women
Surviving Stalking

From mobile phones to social networking sites such as Facebook, technology has become part of the way we live our lives. Although there are many benefits to the way we may choose to communicate with each other and seek information, these changes are increasingly putting people at risk of stalking and abuse.

Whether it is stalking through social networking, harassment through text messages, or humiliation through the posting of pictures or videos, technology is changing how people can abuse, harass and stalk others at the click of a few buttons. Someone does not need to be near you to cause fear and harm.

The use of technology to abuse, harass and stalk people is becoming increasingly common.

You may have been a victim of this type of stalking if:

- You've been sent aggressive and abusive text messages or bombarded with unwanted emails
- Someone's written abusive things about you online
- Someone knows information you've not told them
- Your passwords stop working or keep changing
- Someone's set up fake profiles in your name
- Someone's sent fake emails to people 'from you'
- Someone's ordered things on-line in your name without your permission



18%
of women have experienced stalking since the age of 16

OUR TOP TIPS TO KEEP SAFE DIGITALLY

PASSWORDS

Passwords are the biggest risk; abusers often get access to information because they know or guess a password. Here are some top tips for passwords:

1. Don't use obvious security questions
2. Create different passwords for different accounts
3. Download free 'password manager' software that makes it easy to use multiple secure passwords
4. Don't use Firefox, it can reveal passwords

SPYWARE

Spyware is malicious software that a partner, or anyone who has access to your phone, could install on your computer that collects information on everything you do online as well as recording passwords; all without your knowledge. You won't know it's been installed. Antivirus software won't work against spyware/monitoring products so go to www.safer-networking.org and download and run their free software Spybot 'search and destroy' programme. Once your computer is clean - change your passwords and security questions on all your accounts.

SOCIAL NETWORKS

Social networks are not secure and your friends can easily leak information that can help an abuser track you down. What you post and what others are saying can act as a trigger for a dangerous episode by an abuser. If possible, delete your Facebook account and don't use it. If you want to continue using Facebook then create a new account with an obscure name, use a fake photo and information. Only add your most trusted friends. At the very least make sure that you and your friends have put on the highest privacy and security settings. Go through each option on you profile, privacy and security settings and use the 'friends only' or 'only me' settings', turn off all apps, and finally don't allow people to tag you.

REMOVE SPYWARE ON MOBILE

Turn off all your geo-location services. Sync or back up your phone and do a factory reset. Reinstall your data and apps but be careful not to reinstall any 'find your phone' apps or any apps that you don't recognise. Also make sure you change your password on your mobile phone account and secret pin.