



BC Society of
Transition Houses



A guide for Canadian women experiencing
technology-facilitated violence:

Strategies for Enhancing Safety



ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

This guide is adapted for women and anti-violence support workers in British Columbia (BC), Canada, by the BC Society of Transition Houses (BCSTH), with the generous permission of The Women's Services Network (WESNET)'s Safety Net Australia Project. Both the BC and Australian editions include materials developed in cooperation with the National Network to End Domestic Violence's (NNEDV) Safety Net Project, United States. We recommend women and anti-violence workers living in Australia and the United States contact [WESNET's Safety Net Australia](#) and [NNEDV's Safety Net Project](#) for relevant resources and guides.

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INTRODUCTION

Canadian women experiencing violence and British Columbia's anti-violence workers are increasingly identifying perpetrators misuse of technology as a means to carry out violence against women. Technologies such as mobile devices, apps, computers, the internet, social media, location tracking tools, stalkerware and forms of audio and video surveillance can be used to stalk, impersonate, threaten and harass women and girls.

In 2012, with funding from the Office of the Privacy Commissioner of Canada, the BC Society of Transition Houses (BCSTH) surveyed anti-violence workers across Canada about the prevalence of technology misuse and violence against women.¹

- 98% supported women and girls who have been threatened and/intimated via technology.
- 69% supported women and girls who have been impersonated through emailing, online profiles, or other technologies.
- 72% supported women and girls whose accounts have been hacked.

In October 2016, BCSTH distributed the same technology misuse survey to BC's transition housing anti-violence workers and PEACE counsellors. 109 of BC's anti-violence workers reported that:

- 94% supported women and girls who have been threatened and/intimated via technology.
- 66% supported women and girls who have been impersonated through emailing, online profiles, or other technologies.
- 64% supported women and girls whose accounts have been hacked.

From the statistics above, we know that women and anti-violence workers require guidance and resources on how to handle this new form of violence. Like our sisters at NNEDV and WESNET's Safety Net Projects, BCSTH acknowledges that women cannot control, predict nor are they responsible for the actions and behaviour of their perpetrator. However, knowing this, our unique collective technology safety projects can provide women and girls experiencing technology-facilitated violence with enough information to strategically use technology in ways that can enhance their safety and take back some control if they believe they are being stalked, monitored, or abused through a perpetrator's misuse of technology.

¹ <https://bcsth.ca/publications/technology-misuse-survey-infographic/>



The information provided here will help women:

- To recognize common forms of technology-facilitated violence against women.
- Understand practical steps to increase privacy and safety.
- Learn tips on preserving evidence so perpetrators are held accountable.
- Look at an example of a technology stalking log to help track what is happening.
- Know where they can go for more help.

In addition to this guide, BCSTH has developed an online “Technology Safety and Privacy Toolkit for Women Experiencing Technology Facilitated Violence” which provides women with specific in-depth information for a variety of technologies. If you find that you need more information about a specific technology listed here or the technology being misused is not listed here, please refer to our online toolkit at www.bcsth.ca/techsafetytoolkit.

Nevertheless, this safety planning guide is not an exhaustive safety planning checklist that will guarantee women’s safety because the misuse of technology as a means to perpetrate violence against women is constantly changing and sometimes hard to detect and predict. As well, BCSTH recognizes that technology-facilitated violence happens to women and girls of all ages, but this guide is focused on adult women experiencing technology facilitated violence thus we use the language violence against women throughout this document.

For BC resources related to young people and technology facilitated violence see:

<http://www.westcoastleaf.org/our-publications/is-that-legal/>



What is Technology-Facilitated Violence against Women?

Perpetrators are increasingly misusing a variety of telephone, surveillance, computer technologies, apps and social media platforms to harass, terrify, intimidate, coerce, and monitor women and girls.

Perpetrators are also misusing technology to stalk women and girls before, during, and after perpetrating sexual violence.

It is common for a perpetrator to misuse multiple technologies at once while also using more traditional power and control tactics such as withholding access to the couple's children and/or finances.

COMMON FORMS OF TECHNOLOGY-FACILITATED VIOLENCE

Harassment: the misuse of technology by someone to repeatedly contact, threaten or intimidate you when you do not want them to and it makes you feel afraid.

This may be happening to you if you're:

- Being sent abusive, threatening or insistent text messages and/or emails.
- Receiving persistent Facebook, What's App, SnapChats or other online platform messages.
- Continually being tagged on social media such as on Instagram or Facebook.
- Receiving posts of abusive and/or continuous comments and replies to social media posts.

Stalking/Criminal Harassment: misusing technology to knowingly and/or recklessly harass someone that causes that person to reasonably fear for their safety or the safety of someone they know.

In Canada, this includes:

- repeatedly following a person from place to place or anyone known to them;
- repeatedly communicating with, either directly or indirectly, with another person or anyone known to them;
- besetting or watching the dwelling-house, or place where the other person, or anyone known to them, resides, works, carries on business or happens to be; or



- engaging in threatening conduct directed at the other person or any member of their family.²

This may be happening to you if the perpetrator is:

- Using apps, location trackers, stalkerware to learn your whereabouts and follows you from place to place.
- Using technology (apps, social media, texts, instant messaging) to repeatedly communicate with you directly or indirectly.
- Using web cams, hidden cameras, apps to watch you at their home, work, or as you carry on your daily business.

Impersonation: the hiding behind technology to pretend to be someone else as a tactic of further violence and control, for example to damage a woman’s reputation or relationships.

This may be happening to you if you’re:

- Receiving replies from strangers regarding an unknown advertisement that links them to you as the person who posted the ad.
- Receiving angry responses from friends and family in response to messages/emails/communications that you did not write.
- Your employer receives an unauthorized resignation email seemingly from you.
- Receiving communication from a perpetrator impersonating a new partner or friend to “catfish”/ get close to you and connect with you.
- Receiving notifications that your accounts are closed or you’ve changed passwords or cancelled your utility accounts.

Monitoring/Surveillance: the misuse of technology (by either having physical access to the device or remotely) to learn, know about or follow another person’s communications or activities.

This may be happening to you if the perpetrator is:

- Logging onto your smartphone, email or social media accounts to monitor your activities.
- Using apps, spyware or key-stroke loggers to learn your location.
- Inserting a GPS tracker into your car or purchased GPS enabled watches and other accessories.
- Using hidden cameras that have been installed or strategically placed.

² <http://laws-lois.justice.gc.ca/eng/acts/C-46/section-264.html>



- Misusing family and friend location capabilities found on technology enabled devices.

Threats: the use of language threatening to harm, extort or humiliate you through the use of technology.

This may be happening to you if you're:

- Receiving threats to post personal information, photos, videos or other material unless you comply with the perpetrator's demands.
- Being locked out of social media, email or other online accounts including banking.
- Receiving threats through text, email and social media.

Non-Consensual Distribution of Images: the distributing, sharing and posting of private/intimate photos and videos of a person without their consent.

This may have happened to you if:

- Intimate and private images or videos of you have been posted online with the intention to embarrass, humiliate, harass, degrade and/or harm without your consent.
- Private/intimate photos or videos of you have been sent to your friends, family members, employers/coworkers, and strangers without your consent.

Consent Means: an ongoing process of **giving** and **getting** permission.³

Doxing: the publishing of private or identifying information of a particular individual on the Internet without one's consent.

This may have happened to you if:

- Your personally identifying information (name, address, phone number, email address, passport/SIN numbers) was posted on social media or websites without your consent.

³ <http://getconsent.ca/>



What Should You Do If You Are Experiencing Technology-Facilitated Violence? ⁴

1. **Trust your instincts.** If you suspect that the perpetrator of violence is harassing, stalking, or monitoring you using technology, it is possible and likely. Perpetrators can be incredibly persistent and creative in maintaining control, and technology is another tool for them to misuse.
2. **Get more information.** Technology facilitated violence, abuse and stalking can be difficult to identify and is dangerous. Work with your local anti-violence program to discuss your options and to help you plan for your safety. You can call VictimLinkBC (1-800-563-0808) or BCSTH’s Directory of Member Programs and Services to find a program in your area <https://bcsth.ca/directory/>
3. **Look for patterns to identify technology-facilitated violence.** Carefully try to figure out how or which technology is being used to harass, stalk, or monitor you. For example, if you suspect you’re being watched, is it in a particular room in your house? If you suspect you’re being followed, is it just when you’re in your car or wherever you go? Narrowing down the potential source of technology will help you create a more precise safety plan.
4. **Document & Report.** If possible, document the stalking or harassing behavior. Sometimes a harassing or stalking incident by itself may seem minor, but a series of incidences will show a pattern of behavior that can be proved as harassment or criminal stalking. If you feel safe in doing so, report the incidences to the police and ask for a police report. If the harassing behavior is online, report it to the website. Many sites have links where you can report abusive content.
5. **Think about your safety.** Often, women want to stop the violent behavior by getting rid of the technology. However, for some perpetrators of violence, this may escalate their controlling and dangerous behaviour if they feel their control is threatened and you are removing all access. Think about what may happen if you remove a camera or a GPS tracking device, for example. Incorporate that into your safety planning. For example, some women choose to use a safer computer, device or phone, but not disable a monitored device to continue collecting evidence.

⁴ Adapted from National Network to End Domestic Violence, Safety Net Project. “Technology Safety Plan: A Guide for Survivors and Advocates” (2013)



General Technology Safety Planning Tips⁵

If you (and your support worker) have narrowed down that violence facilitated through technology is happening, use the general safety tips below. These general tips are helpful however you must always consider the specific context of your situation and prioritize your safety first. If it seems like the perpetrator knows too much about your activity, it could be from a variety of sources. The perpetrator could be monitoring your computer or smartphone. The perpetrator could be accessing your online accounts or gathering information about you online; or the stalker could be monitoring your location. The following are general tips to consider if you're being abused through technology:

- **Take all threats seriously whether they are verbal or text.**
- **Limit communication with the perpetrator** and restrict responses to messages, calls, and social networking posts to only those required by a court order (e.g. Family Court).
- **Change passwords and usernames.** Change the usernames and passwords of your online accounts on the safe computer. Don't use the new username and password on the computer that is being likely monitored. Consider creating brand new accounts, such as a new email address. Also, consider using a non-identifying username, instead of your actual name, and don't use the same password for your accounts. Use passwords on all devices. Keep them secret and change them often.
- **Keep a separate email account for communication** regarding legal matters, such as child guardianship and visitation communication with the perpetrator.
- **Check your smartphone settings.** Go through your phone's settings to ensure that the User ID is your known and safe ID. Ensure other devices aren't connected to the phone and that Bluetooth and location access is limited or turned off. If your phone allows apps to be downloaded, make sure you know what each of the apps do; if you don't use it or don't know what it is, delete the app. Pay attention to excessive battery or data usage as that may indicate that a program may be in use on your phone constantly. Call your phone carrier to ask about location settings or third-part applications.
- **Get a new smartphone.** If you suspect that your smartphone is being monitored, the safest thing is to get a new phone with an account that the perpetrator doesn't have access to. A pay-

⁵ Adapted from and in cooperation with the WESNET Safety Net Australia project at the Women's Services Network, Australia.



as-you-go phone is an inexpensive alternative. Put a passcode on your phone and ensure that location settings and Bluetooth settings are turned off.

- **If your computer has a webcam,** use tape or a post-it note to cover the camera when you are not using it.
- **Have your car checked.** If the perpetrator knows where you are whenever you are in your car, you may consider having your car checked for hidden location devices. Ask a trusted mechanic or law enforcement officer to check the car thoroughly.
- **Limit the information you give out about yourself.** Most things we do these days asks for personally identifying information—whether it is to make a purchase, sign up for discount card or create an account. Limit the information that you provide since you don't know who else they will share your information.
- **Get a P.O. Box.** If you're concerned about someone knowing your actual address, you can open a private mail box. (Note that this is most helpful if you have recently moved or the perpetrator doesn't already know your address.)
- **Hidden cameras.** If you suspect that there are hidden cameras in your home, figure out where the camera is based on the information shared by the perpetrator. For example, if the abusive person seems to know details of what you're doing when you're in the living room, that might be the location of a camera. Gifts are another way that perpetrators get cameras into your home. Be aware of gifts to you or children. Some camera detectors may be helpful in locating the cameras, but remember that some detectors will only locate wireless cameras or wired cameras. Once you've found the camera, if it's safe to do so, remove the camera or limit what you do in the room that is being monitored. If your computer/tablet has a built-in web camera, consider covering it or disabling the camera when you aren't using it.
- **Use a safer computer/device.** If you suspect that the perpetrator is monitoring your computer activities try using a safer computer, tablet, or device (for example at a library or drop-in centre) to prevent the perpetrator from seeing what you're doing.
- **Keep a copy of any evidence.** Consider keeping a copy of your evidence on a USB and leaving it with someone you trust.

Note: BCSTH has developed an online “Technology Safety and Privacy Toolkit for Canadian Women Experiencing Technology Facilitated Violence” which provides women with specific in-depth information for a variety of technologies. If you find that you need more information about a specific technology listed here or the technology being misused is not listed here, please refer to our online toolkit at www.bcsth.ca/techsafetytoolkit.



Safer Strategies for Technology Use

Narrowing down what technology is being misused can be difficult. Use the following strategies to help you use technology in a safer way.

SMARTPHONES

In Canada, most cell phones are smartphones. A smartphone is a mobile phone that can access the internet, email and has apps, as well as letting you make phone calls and send and receive text messages.

If you are concerned about safer ways to use your smartphone, consider the following safety precautions:

General Smartphone Safety Planning Tips

- **Lock your device:** Use a passcode, pattern, fingerprint and/or facial recognition to avoid malicious tampering.
- **Turn off location/ GPS and Bluetooth options when not required or use airplane mode:** Smartphones can record your location. If your perpetrator keeps finding you, or knowing where you are, it might be through the location settings on your phone.
- **Check all the security and privacy settings on your phone, including apps:** Adjust all the security settings on your phone to ensure safety and privacy. Consider logging out of apps when you aren't using them.
- **Check settings on devices used by children and teens:** Don't forget to check the settings on your kids' phones. *Only do this if it feels safe. Trust your instincts.*
- *If you receive harassing calls, text messages, or voicemails, it is essential to keep the messages and call history as they can serve as evidence in court.*
- **Document abuse or threats:** Print your call history (sometimes called 'recents') and text logs from your smartphone provider's website or request a copy of usage from customer service. Use the screenshot function on your smartphone or take a photo of the screen with another camera to document threats or harassment. There are also apps available that can help you do this.
- **If you choose to take your phone to the police**
 - Save all harassing or threatening text or voice messages from your phone.



- Do not turn off the device. Switch to 'airplane mode' to preserve the call and the text evidence on the device. On this mode, no calls or text messages will be transmitted to or from the device.
- Take the device to the police or your lawyer to have evidence documented in a format admissible in court.
- The Police may:
 - take a photo of the call history, text message or SMS message;
 - transcribe voice mail messages;
 - need to keep your phone as evidence, so back up regularly and be prepared to redirect your phone to another number;
 - use forensic devices and software to make a copy of all the contents on your smartphone and document and analyze ALL the data on your device.

Note: Airplane mode will not prevent incoming voicemail messages.



SMARTPHONE AND COMPUTER SURVEILLANCE

Your smartphone and computer activities may be monitored remotely or by someone with physical access to your devices. If you feel that you are being monitored when using your smartphone or computer, trust your instincts.

Is your perpetrator accessing your smartphone, computer or accounts? Does he know your email and other account passwords?

Stalkerware

Stalkerware can be software, hardware or applications that send all information and communication located on a smartphone, laptop or computer to a third party.

There are many apps that can be used for stalking, monitoring, and finding your location. Some apps are designed for spying and stalking; some are photo sharing, location sharing and communication functions that are misused by perpetrators.

Learn about the apps and features on your phone. This may include Find My Phone or Find my Friends (or similar depending on your phone) applications that come already built into some smartphones.

It's also possible you have spyware on your smartphone or computer. It can be software or hardware like a keyboard or cable.

Spyware records everything happening on your smartphone or computer and can be installed by having physical or remote access to your device. It can download itself on your device through a computer game, an email greeting card or another ploy to trick you into opening an attachment. The spyware is then installed secretly onto your device.

It will operate invisibly and may not be detected by anti-spyware programs. You may only be alerted by the perpetrator's suspicious behaviour.

It can be difficult to detect, delete, erase or uninstall spyware from your smartphone or computer. The safest way to ensure your device is no longer monitored is to buy a new one. Be careful about moving and downloading files (including software, documents, pictures and videos) from the infected device to the new one.



Stalkerware Safety Planning Tips

- Attempting to look for spyware on your computer or smartphone might be dangerous since the perpetrator could be alerted to your searches immediately.
- Use a safer computer or phone.
- For calls, texts, internet searches or emails that you don't want the perpetrator to intercept, use a device that they don't have physical or remote access.

It may be safer to use a phone or computer at a library, drop-in centre, shopping centre or public phone kiosk for things you don't want him to know.

DISTRIBUTION OF NON-CONSENSUAL IMAGES

Perpetrators are sharing intimate images and videos of women online, taken with or without their consent, with the intent to harass, impersonate, humiliate, and cause harm.

Many of these images/videos are sexually explicit and are often posted and shared online with identifying information of the individual, such as their full name, address, phone number, and place of employment or school.

The effects of this violence, often referred to as 'revenge porn' can be devastating, impacting every part of a woman's life.

Another problem is the significant amount of victim blaming in some of cases, suggesting that women should not have shared the images in the first place. This is false! ***It is never a woman's fault for any violence that is perpetrated against her including the posting and distribution of intimate images.***

Distribution of Non-Consensual Images Safety Planning Tips

- **Document** any content found online.
- **Keep a record** of any other harassing or unwanted contact to you or anyone you know. Make sure to save all original emails or messages.
- **Create different content online.** By creating new content, you can gradually bury the information that you don't want to immediately come up in a search engine.
- **Look for options to report content and/or users.** If the content violates the terms of service of the host then it may be taken down if reported to the site.



- **Set Alerts.** Setting a Google Alert for your name can provide you with a notification if someone uploads information to the internet with your name.
- **Get support and legal advice.** The distribution of non-consensual images is a criminal offense in Canada. Criminal code Section 162.1 (1)

LOCATION TRACKING

Many tools exist for tracking a person's location, this includes stalkerware. If you think you are being followed or tracked, or your perpetrator keeps finding you, trust your instincts. Look for patterns and behaviours that may tell you how it could be happening.

Location Tracking Safety Planning Tips

- **Are your devices connected or do you share smartphone accounts?**
Perhaps your perpetrator set up a new smartphone for you in your relationship. It's also common for families to share smartphone accounts such as "Apple ID's" so that you only have to pay one fee for apps, music, or video downloads. This means that products of the same brand have the capability to track the other devices with the same account such as multiple iPhones, MacBooks, or iPads etc. Check your account user ID under settings.
- **Are you using location-based apps on your phone?**
With many location-based social media apps, you could be inadvertently sharing your location. Check to make sure that you don't have apps running that are publishing your location online. Many phones also come with tracking apps, such as Find My Phone for when they are lost or stolen, that can be used to check location.
- **Adjust your smartphone's privacy GPS or location settings**
Consider turning off the "Location" setting on your phone under settings. Check the list of apps under the privacy/location settings to ensure that you are in control of that information.
- **Are your friends or family using social media and sharing your location?**
Some applications allow friends to "tag you" or "check you in" to a certain location, showing exactly where you are. Other times, someone may mention you by name in an online post/update/message while also referring to being at a specific location.



- **Does the perpetrator find you via geotagging?**

Geotagging is marking media files such as video, photo, or social networking updates with a location. Certain formats like JPEG allow for geographical data to be embedded within the image and then read by picture viewers.

This allows the exact location of where a picture was taken to be saved with a photograph. The pics you post to Flickr can be mapped using this technology.

Turn off features on your smartphone and digital cameras that “geotag”.

- **Does the perpetrator find you in places where you have taken your car?**

Check your car for objects that may have a GPS tracking unit attached or installed, such as a smartphone, computer, dog collar, smartwatch, tile, small tag or device with GPS capability. Ask the police or a trusted mechanic to search the car for a GPS tracking device, if it’s safe to do so.

- **Does the perpetrator find you when you have the kids?**

Has the perpetrator given your child a device that has location tracking abilities? This could include: an iPod, tablet or game console.

- **Did the perpetrator give you or your child a gift that could contain a tracking device?**

Be cautious of any gifts from the perpetrator.

- **Does the perpetrator use other devices to find you?**

GPS chips can be hidden in nearly anything and tracked using computer software or phone applications.

Be mindful when identifying or removing a GPS device

Some perpetrators may escalate their abusive behavior if they think they are losing control and access.

Trust your instincts.

It may be safer to leave the device behind when you don’t want to be tracked.



SOCIAL MEDIA

Social media are web-based networks connecting users for purposes including communication and sharing of personal and professional information and interests; examples include: Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn, Google+, Instagram, YouTube, Flickr, and Pinterest. Common forms of abuse through social media are:

- threats, abusive posts or harassing messages through private message features;
- posting information or photos without the person's consent in order to cause harm or distress;
- accessing a person's account without permission by obtaining login and password details;
- pretending to be someone else on social media to cause harm.

Social Media Safety Planning Tips

Using safety measures may help reduce risk.

- **Communicate via private or instant message** rather than publicly through Twitter feed or your Facebook wall.
- **Consider creating a new profile** using non-identifying information and an image such as a flower, a sports team logo, or other image as your profile picture.
- **Save all threats and harassment** and submit them to the police and your legal advocate if you are working with one.
- **Talk to your kids** about their use of social media and gaming networks such as, whom to friend, how to adjust their privacy settings, and be aware of their online activities.
- **Keep all records**, if you are harassed, impersonated or threatened online. This documentation can serve as evidence in court.

Use the printscreen function or print directly from a website to document evidence of threats or harassment.

On Facebook, you can use the Download Your Info (DYI) tool to download the content and privacy settings of your account. This tool is one of the best ways for you to preserve evidence of abuse.



- **You may deactivate your Facebook account temporarily** without deleting your data. This strategy prevents users from viewing your information, tagging you in posts or pictures and sending you a private or instant message.
- **Unfriending or blocking** are two other options for dealing with someone who is bothering you. This means that the perpetrator won't have access to your profiles. *This does not prevent them from posting about you on their own or other people's pages.*

Most reputable social media sites also allow you to report abuse and have it removed. Don't forget to document the abuse BEFORE you report it, otherwise you may lose valuable evidence you need later.

The National Network to End Domestic Violence has developed privacy and safety guides for women experiencing technology-facilitated violence on Facebook and Twitter. Check them out here:

<https://nnedv.org/mdocs-posts/privacy-safety-on-facebook-a-guide-for-survivors/>

<https://www.techsafety.org/blog/2016/7/26/safety-privacy-on-twitter-a-guide-for-victims-of-harassment-and-abuse>

Explore privacy and security settings when available

- Check your privacy settings and make sure they are set to the level of privacy you want. Keep in mind that even if you set your social network page to private, it doesn't guarantee that your information is completely private.
- Don't forget that your friends may be able to see your other friends' posts and pages even if they are not friends with each other.
- Be thoughtful about who's on your friends list when you post or link to certain things.



- Check your active sessions if you are worried someone else might be logged into your account.
- Change your password and email address to something your perpetrator doesn't know.
- Use security questions your perpetrator doesn't know the answers to and consider setting up login approvals or two-step authentication on your accounts if it's available.

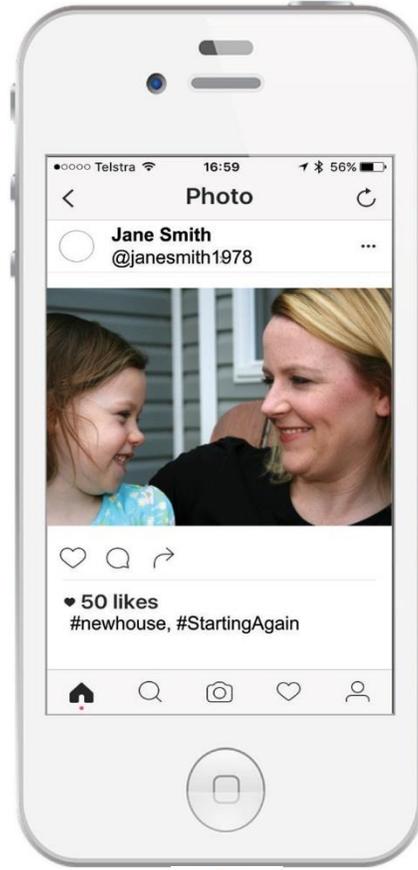
Questions to ask before “friending” someone on social media apps

- Do I know this person's true identity? If not, consider ignoring or declining the friendship request.
- Does this person have a relationship with the person stalking or abusing me? If so, consider declining or limiting the friendship request. The perpetrator may be able to access your information or whereabouts through this person.
- If you are already friends with the person, ask them if they created a new profile. In some cases perpetrators create fake profiles pretending to be a friend of their victim.

SAFE versus UNSAFE social media posts

Are your social media posts revealing too much about your activities or your location? Consider each post on your social networking site.

1. Does this post reveal my location?
2. Does this post reveal my activities?





Technology-Facilitated Violence Log

Sometimes it's helpful to keep track of the technology-facilitated violent incidents that are happening to you. A single event may seem small or not too serious, but recording all of the events that are happening can help to establish a series or pattern of events and provide a more detailed picture of the violence taking place.

KEEP A LOG OR JOURNAL

Use a log to record and document all experiences of violence, including harassing phone calls, letters, email messages, acts of vandalism, and threats communicated through third parties. Keep this along with any other evidence you are keeping.

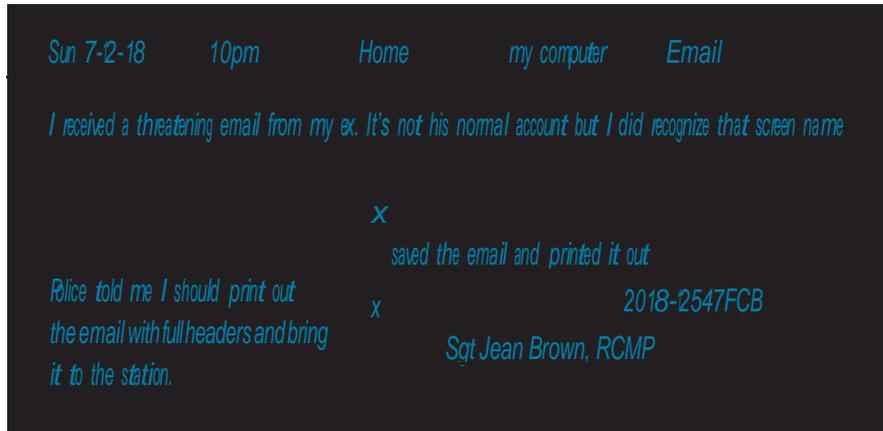
Recording this information may help to document behaviours to support applications for Peace Bonds, Family Court Protection Orders and other court orders and the investigation of child protection matters or criminal prosecutions. Taking notes at the time things happen is considered better evidence than your memory at a later time. Always record how it makes you feel.

It's a good idea to report every incident to the police if you can. Request a copy of your report for your records. Remember to write down the officer's name and badge number for your records. If the police do not make an arrest, ask for a written report anyway.

Since your log or journal could potentially be introduced as evidence or inadvertently shared with your perpetrator at a future time, do not include any information that you do not want the perpetrator to see.



Example:



| Date: | Time: (am/pm) | Location: | Witnesses: (if any) | Technologies (if used) |
|---|---------------|---|---------------------|------------------------|
| Description of Event: | | | | |
| Response, check as many boxes as appropriate and describe police or other response below: | | <input type="checkbox"/> Saved paper & electronic evidence by doing: _____ <input type="checkbox"/> Called police (report number _____) and officer's name _____ <input type="checkbox"/> Went to the hospital or doctor's office (name: _____) | | |
| | | | | |
| Date: | Time: (am/pm) | Location: | Witnesses: (if any) | Technologies (if used) |
| Description of Event: | | | | |
| Response, check as many boxes as appropriate and describe police or other response below: | | <input type="checkbox"/> Saved paper & electronic evidence by doing: _____ <input type="checkbox"/> Called police (report number _____) and officer's name _____ <input type="checkbox"/> Went to the hospital or doctor's office (name: _____) | | |
| | | | | |
| Date: | Time: (am/pm) | Location: | Witnesses: (if any) | Technologies (if used) |



| | |
|---|--|
| Description of Event: | |
| Response, check as many boxes as appropriate and describe police or other response below: | <input type="checkbox"/> Saved paper & electronic evidence by doing: _____ <input type="checkbox"/> Called police (report number _____) and officer's name _____ <input type="checkbox"/> Went to the hospital or doctor's office (name: _____) |

Technology-Facilitated Violence and the Law

Sometimes it's hard to determine what is legal and what is illegal when it comes to technology-facilitated violence. In fact, often the selling of harmful technology/software or apps is not illegal in Canada, however how one chooses to use the technology can be illegal.

For example, in Canada, cyber-stalking is the use of technology to criminally harass.⁶ "Cyberstalking" and "online harassment" are terms used to refer to three types of activities: direct communication through e-mail or text messaging; Internet harassment, where the offender publishes offensive or threatening information about the victim on the Internet; and unauthorized use, control or sabotage of the victim's computer.⁷

If you are considering contacting law enforcement, in some cyber-stalking situations, criminal harassment charges may be appropriate; however, depending on the activity involved, charges under the following sections of the *Criminal Code* should also be considered:⁸

- 162 (voyeurism)
- 163.1 (distribution of child pornography)
- 172.1 (Internet luring)
- 241 (counselling suicide)
- 298-302 (defamation)

⁶ Government of Canada, Department of Justice. "A Handbook for Police and Crown Prosecutors on Criminal Harassment" <http://www.justice.gc.ca/eng/rp-pr/cj-jp/fv-vf/har/part1.html>

⁷ Louise Ellison & Yaman Akdeniz, "Cyber-Stalking: The Regulation of Harassment on the Internet" (December 1998) *Criminal Law Review* at 29.

⁸ Government of Canada, Department of Justice. "A Handbook for Police and Crown Prosecutors on Criminal Harassment" <http://www.justice.gc.ca/eng/rp-pr/cj-jp/fv-vf/har/part1.html>



- 319(2) (willful promotion of hatred)
- 346 (extortion)
- 342.1 (unauthorized use of a computer)
- 372(1) (conveying false messages)
- 423 (intimidation)
- 430(1.1) (mischief in relation to data)
- 402.2(1) (identify theft)
- 403(1) (identity fraud)

BCSTH has developed legal remedy tip sheets for women experiencing technology-facilitated violence. For more information about technology-facilitated violence and defamation, the distribution of non-consensual images and cyber-stalking, please see the BCSTH website at <https://bcsth.ca/projects/technology-safety/> for a more detailed tip sheets.

You're Not Alone, There is Help Available

If you, or someone you know is in danger, call the police using your local community number or call 9-1-1.

- The police, your lawyer or a legal advocate can assist with reporting crimes and evidence collection.
- Ask your smartphone provider to help you adjust your phone settings and show you how to access the various menus and settings on your phone, if it's safe to do so.
- Anti-violence workers are experts in planning for safety. Find your nearest service by contacting Victim Link BC at 1-800-563-0808 or find a program through the BCSTH member directory <https://bcsth.ca/directory/>.

Women cannot control, predict nor are they responsible for the actions and behaviour of their perpetrators. This Safety Planning Guide is designed to provide women experiencing technology-facilitated violence with information to use technology strategically in ways that enhance their safety and take protective steps if they are being stalked, monitored, or abused through a perpetrator's misuse of technology. Remember, you are not alone and there is help available.