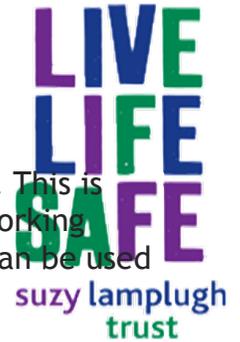


Cyber stalking¹

Harassment can take place on the Internet and through the misuse of email. This is sometimes known as 'cyber stalking'. This can include the use of social networking sites, chat rooms and other forums facilitated by technology. The Internet can be used for a range of purposes relating to harassment, for example:



- to locate personal information about a victim;
- to communicate with the victim;
- as a means of surveillance of the victim;
- identity theft such as subscribing the victim to services, purchasing goods and services in their name;
- damaging the reputation of the victim;
- electronic sabotage such as spamming and sending viruses; or
- tricking other Internet users into harassing or threatening a victim.

Stalking has existed in many forms but with the onset and growth of the Internet, it is now much easier for the stalker to remain anonymous.

As with other stalkers the cyber stalker can be someone known to the victim or a complete stranger and there can be many motives. Cyber stalkers most commonly obtain personal information about their victim through online personal and financial details, relationships, social and work life and where the victim lives.

Typical risks are:

- Identify theft: having credentials controlled
- Having online accounts taken over
- Having contact details used
- Location and tracking of GPS on mobiles, tracker devices or spyware on phones
- Having false profiles posted on social networking and other sites
- Having malicious websites, blogs and social networking sites created
- Impersonation of the victim being used to stalk others, positioning the victim as the guilty person

¹ www.getsafeonline.org accessed February 2014



- Being discredited in social media and other online communities
- Being discredited in the victim's workplace
- Receiving direct threats through email/instant messaging
- Stalking or harassing of the victim's relatives, friends or colleagues (a stalker will contact 21 people connected to the victim)
- Use of the victim's image
- Others being provoked to attack the victim
- Escalation to physical violence
- Having online accounts taken over
- Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder

How to protect against Cyber stalking

- Reviewing online information and keep to a minimum
- Regularly check email and passwords for key online accounts and keep them safe
- Review all privacy and security settings
- Avoid public forums
- Ensure that computer and mobile devices have updated antispyware software installed and turned on
- Ensure wireless hub/router has security turned on
- Unless using secure a web page, do not send or receive private information when using public WiFi
- Limit the personal and financial information shared on or offline
- Educate friends, family and work colleagues about the risks