

TECH SAFETY TIPS

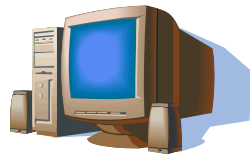


These tips will help you keep information private! Trust your instincts. If you feel your abuser knows too much about you, someone may be tracking you.

COMPUTERS AND SAFETY:

1. Computers save information about what you look at on the internet.

- ✧ You cannot totally get rid of this information.
- ✧ You can try to get rid of this information by going to “Tools” and following your computer’s instructions.



2. Wireless networks are not always private.

- ✧ Computer programs let people follow what you are doing.
- ✧ People can find out your passwords.
- ✧ This can happen without your knowing.

3. If you think someone is following what you are doing on the computer, you can keep yourself safe by taking these steps:

- ✧ Use a safer computer.
 - For example, use a computer at a public library, community center, or internet café when doing something you don’t want someone else to know.
- ✧ Do not open attachments from people you don’t know or people who you are afraid of.
- ✧ Make sure that you have a program that checks for computer viruses and keep it updated. Do not let a dangerous person give you a new keyboard or any computer programs.
- ✧ Do not let a dangerous person fix your computer.
- ✧ Talk to an expert to check your computer for unsafe programs that can track what you are doing on the computer.

WHAT YOU SHOULD KNOW ABOUT E-MAIL:

Email is not a safe or private way to talk to someone about things you don’t want anyone else to know. Dangerous people can look at your emails or steal your passwords. If you think someone is looking at your emails, you can take these precautions:

1. Create a new email account from a safer computer. Only go into that account from safer computers. This will make it harder for someone dangerous to see your emails.
2. Create an account name that is not tied to your identity.
 - ✧ DON'T use account names with your own real name. For example, if your name were Jane Doe, you should NOT use janedoe@yahoo.com.
3. Make sure you get rid of emails from BOTH the sent folder and the deleted folder.
4. Do not communicate private information in an email or from computers you think may be monitored.
5. Change passwords and PIN numbers often.
 - ✧ Don't use passwords that are easy to guess.
 - ✧ Disable the "remember me" or "auto log-in" feature on your computer

WHAT YOU SHOULD KNOW ABOUT PHONES:

A dangerous person can listen to your calls on a cell or home phone. Calls on a cordless phone can be listened to through scanners, CB radios, and baby monitors. Cell phones that have caller ID, text messaging, call history, voicemail, Global Positioning Systems (GPS), and/or Bluetooth can be followed. Also, a family or shared plan can give an abuser a way into your phone account and/or track how much you use that phone. If you think your phone is being tracked, consider doing the following:



1. Cell phone:
 - ✧ Use a donated cell phone.
 - ✧ Use a new cell phone with a different carrier (Verizon, AT&T, Cingular, and others).
 - ✧ Use a calling card already paid for with CASH.
 - ✧ Whenever you can, think about turning off your cell phone. This will keep you safer.
 - ✧ Set Bluetooth to "hidden" and GPS to "911 only."
 - ✧ Contact your cell phone provider to make sure that GPS is not turned on.

2. Home phone:

- ✧ Use cordless phones as little as possible.

3. Your voicemail:

- ✧ If you think someone knows information left on your voicemail, change your voicemail password.

4. Phone records:

- ✧ Ask your local phone company to lock down your records and not to give out your information to anyone except persons who have a specific password that only you and others you trust know.

5. Keep your phone number secret:

- ✧ Stop your number from showing up on a caller ID by dialing *67 before you make a call.
- ✧ Ask your phone company to permanently block your number from showing up on a caller ID.
- ✧ Keep your phone number unlisted.
- ✧ Give out fake phone numbers for grocery, video store, and other business discount cards so that businesses don't

share your information. (You can also do the same with addresses to keep your address private).

WHERE YOU ARE:



GPS systems and/or cameras can track where you are and can be hidden without your knowing. If you think someone is tracking you, make yourself

safe by doing the following:

1. Look for patterns in the information your stalker/abuser seems to know.

- ✧ For example, knowing what time you leave work or when you visit a friend. Patterns may help you identify what your abuser is using to follow what you are doing.

2. Ask a policeman or mechanic to check your car for a GPS.

- ✧ Keep in mind that immediately taking out this GPS can get rid of evidence you might want OR let the abuser know that you took it out, making the abuse worse. Talk to a victims advocate about how to safely deal with a GPS if you find one.

3. Check around your home or ask the police to search for small holes, unusual or unsafe wiring, and small wireless cameras.
 - ✧ When possible, hold meetings or talk to people only in places you know are safe or private.
4. Get a private mailbox address to give out only to trusted businesses, doctors, and other people you know are safe.
 - ✧ Do not give out your real address.

GATHERING EVIDENCE:

If you are being harassed or stalked, take steps to record it. The records can be used as evidence against your abuser.

1. Keep a log. Write down exact dates, times, locations, and descriptions of the harassment.
2. Keep any threatening or harassing emails, Instant Messages, or phone messages to use as evidence of abuse.
3. If you get repeat hang-ups or harassing calls, contact the phone company and/or police to find out how to best

document these calls for evidence. Ask for a log of these calls from the phone company.

4. Most voicemails only keep messages for small amounts of time. If you would like to keep messages as evidence of harassment, contact your voicemail provider or local police to find out how to keep these messages longer.

For more information on how someone may be able to follow your computer activity, go to:

<http://www.nnedv.org/resources/safetynetdocs.html>