STALKING IN OHIO – 2013 & PRELIMINARY 2014 DATA

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STALKING IN OHIO

What is stalking?

Similar to other states' laws, the Ohio Revised Code (ORC) statute 2903.211, Menacing by Stalking, characterizes stalking as engaging in a pattern of conduct that knowingly causes a person to believe that he or she will be physically harmed or will endure mental distress. Stalking in and of itself is considered a crime. The victim and the offender do not have to have a relationship or even know each other in order for stalking to occur. It is important to note however that stalking can be masked and charged as other crimes such as criminal trespass, burglary, or domestic violence, especially if the pattern of behavior has not been established for law enforcement. This report details the characteristics of stalking specific to ORC 2903.211.

OIBRS data on stalking

One tool that can be used to examine stalking in Ohio is the Ohio Incident-Based Reporting System (OIBRS). OIBRS is a voluntary crime reporting program in which Ohio law enforcement agencies can submit crime statistics directly to the state and federal government in an automated format. At the end of 2013, 560 agencies covering approximately 75 percent of the Ohio population were reporting OIBRS data. The use of OIBRS data allows for detailed information to be obtained on the nature of the offense, the victim, the suspect/arrestee, weapon use, and property involved.

OIBRS data are used in this report on stalking. However, some limitations must be noted.

- Because reporting for Ohio is incomplete, caution should be used in interpreting the findings reported in this paper, as the data may reflect more the composition of the OIBRS-reporting jurisdictions than the composition of the state as a whole.

- Because the number of agencies submitting OIBRS data increases yearly, no annual comparisons can be made with the data.

- Not all victims choose to report incidents of stalking to law enforcement. Thus, what is reflected in this document are only those incidents that have been reported to police.

- Incidents are often reported that contain missing information (e.g., demographic information) on the victim, the suspect, the victim-suspect relationship, or the particular circumstances of the incident. In this report, statistics are only provided for those instances in which complete information is available.
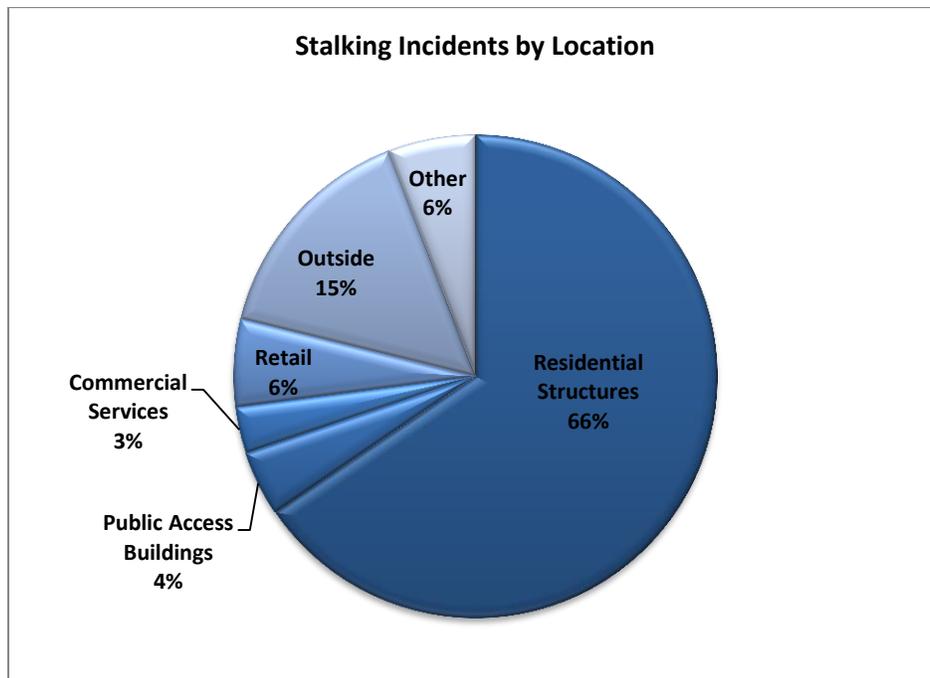
Readers are cautioned against using the statistics contained in this report as a basis of comparison with other states or other years of data.

Characteristics of Stalking

In 2013, the Ohio Incident-Based Reporting System agencies reported 1,342 incidents of stalking. The late summer and fall months in 2013 made up almost one-third of reported stalking incidents.

Stalking Incidents per Month

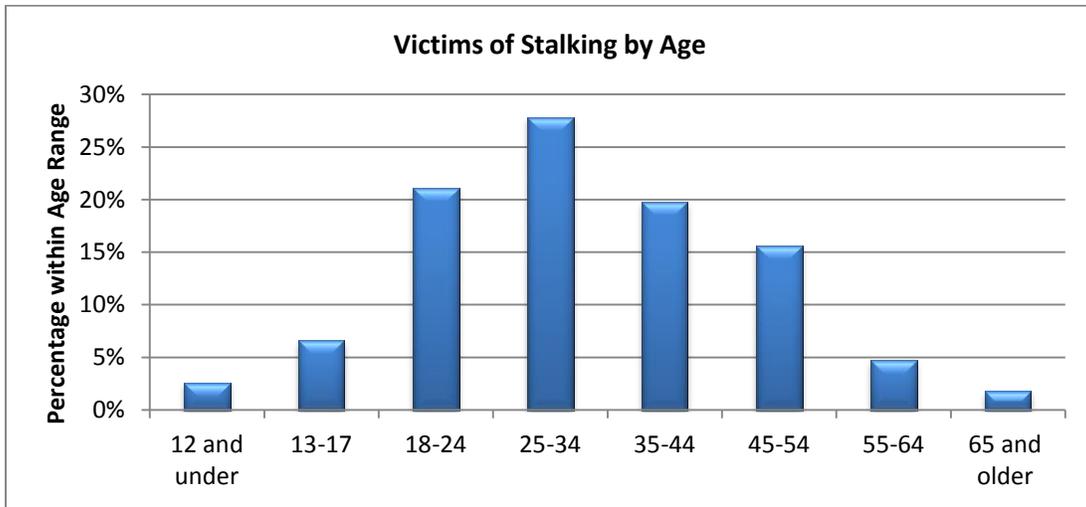The majority of stalking incidents were reported as occurring at a person's residence; however incidents were reported in numerous public areas as well. Forty-four percent of stalking incidents were reported to have occurred in single-family homes, 11 percent on the street, and two percent of all stalking incidents occurred specifically at schools or colleges.
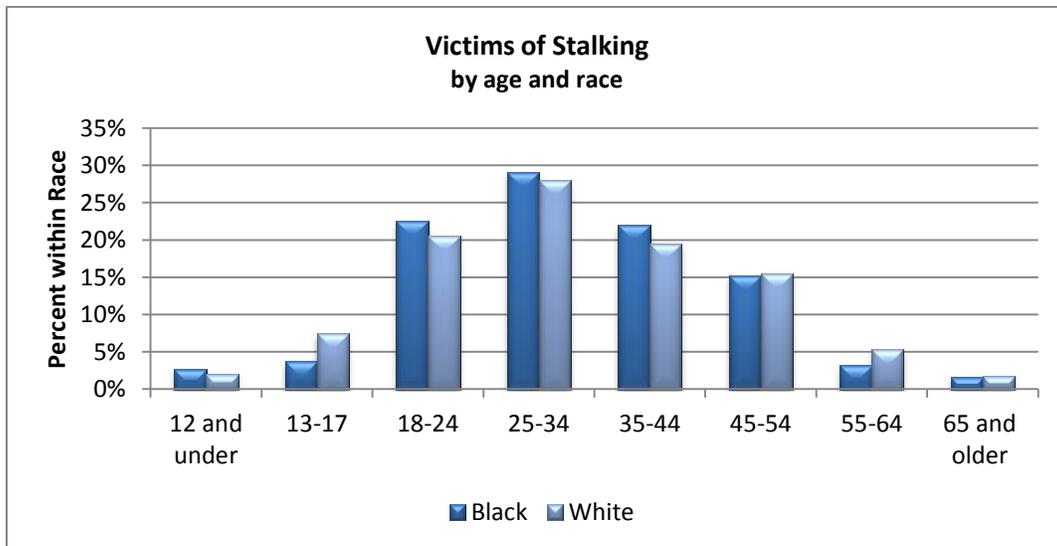
Stalking Incidents by Location

Generally, stalkers did not use or display any sort of weapon. Of those incidents where weapon information was reported, 83 percent involved no weapon and eight percent reported the use of a personal weapon (hands, fists, feet, etc.).

Characteristics of Victims[1]

Ninety-five percent of stalking incidents involved a single victim. The average age of stalking victims was 33.2 years and approximately 49 percent of victims were between the ages of 18 and 34 years.

Victims of Stalking by Age

Percentage within Age Range

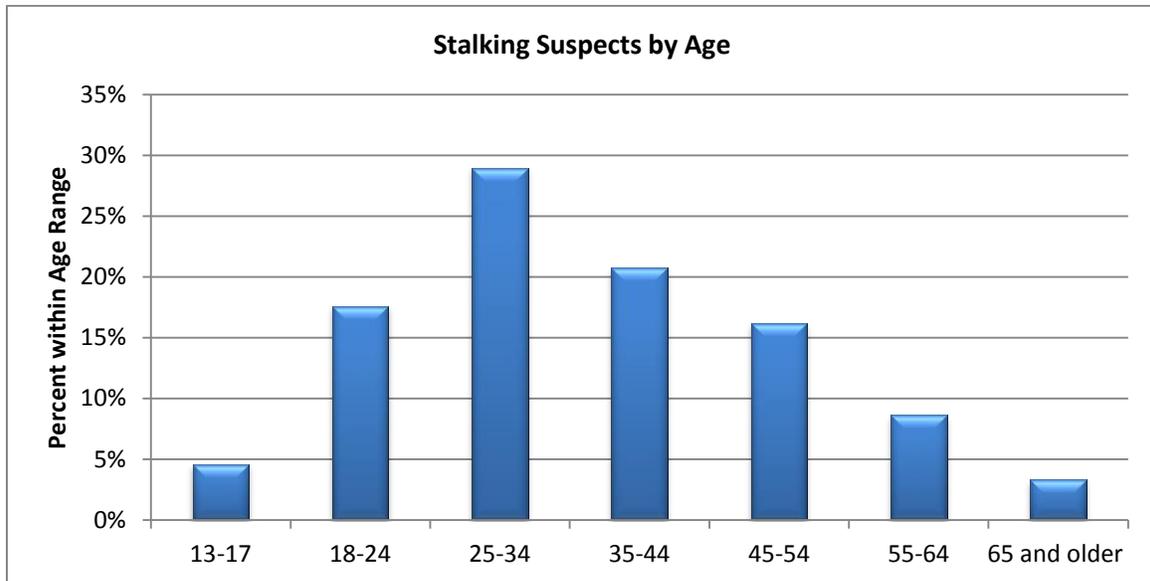| Age Range	Percentage
12 and under	~2.5%
13-17	~6.5%
18-24	~21%
25-34	~28%
35-44	~19.7%
45-54	~15.5%
55-64	~4.7%
65 and older	~1.8%

Eighty-three percent of victims were female. About 73 percent of victims were White, 27 percent were Black and less than one percent fell within the 'Other' category. White females made up 73 percent of all female stalking victims and White males made up 71 percent of all male stalking victims.

Victims of Stalking
by age and race

Percent within Race

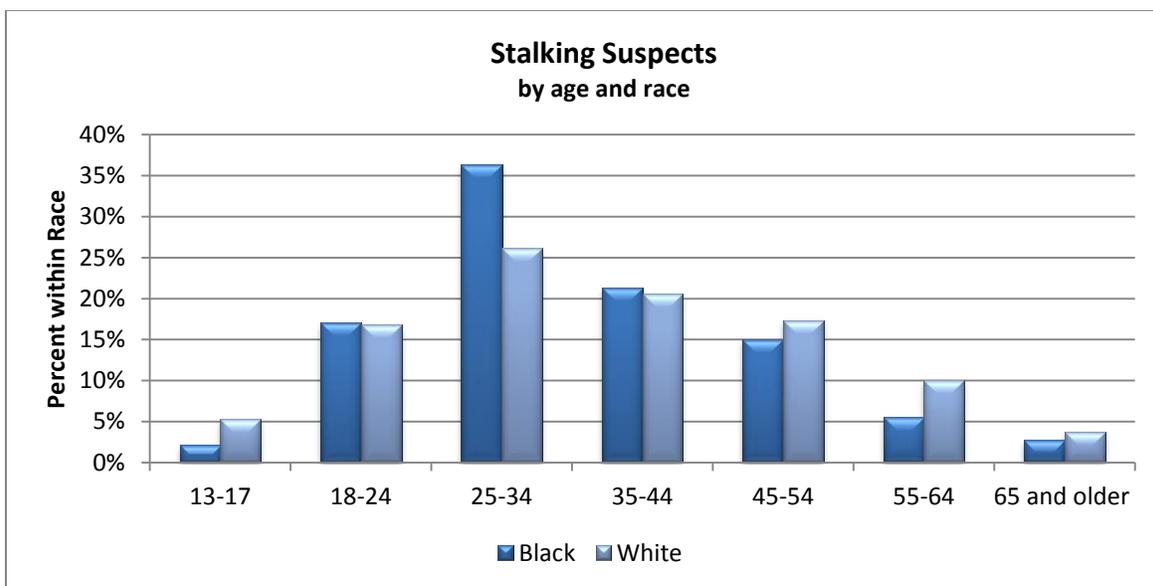| Age Range	Black	White
12 and under	~2.5%	~2%
13-17	~3.8%	~7.5%
18-24	~22.5%	~20.5%
25-34	~29%	~28%
35-44	~22%	~19.5%
45-54	~15%	~15.5%
55-64	~3.2%	~5.2%
65 and older	~1.5%	~1.7%

■ Black ■ White

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[1] The victim data are based on those victims for whom the information was provided or known. There were instances in which a victim's age, race, sex and/or relationship data were not available.

Suspect characteristics[2]

Of the suspect for whom demographic information is known, 81 percent of stalkers were male. Fifty percent of stalkers fell within the age range of 25 and 44 years.

Stalking Suspects by Age

A bar chart titled "Stalking Suspects by Age" with the y-axis labeled "Percent within Age Range" ranging from 0% to 35%, and the x-axis showing age ranges: 13-17 (about 4.5%), 18-24 (about 17.5%), 25-34 (about 29%), 35-44 (about 20.5%), 45-54 (about 16%), 55-64 (about 8.5%), 65 and older (about 3.5%).
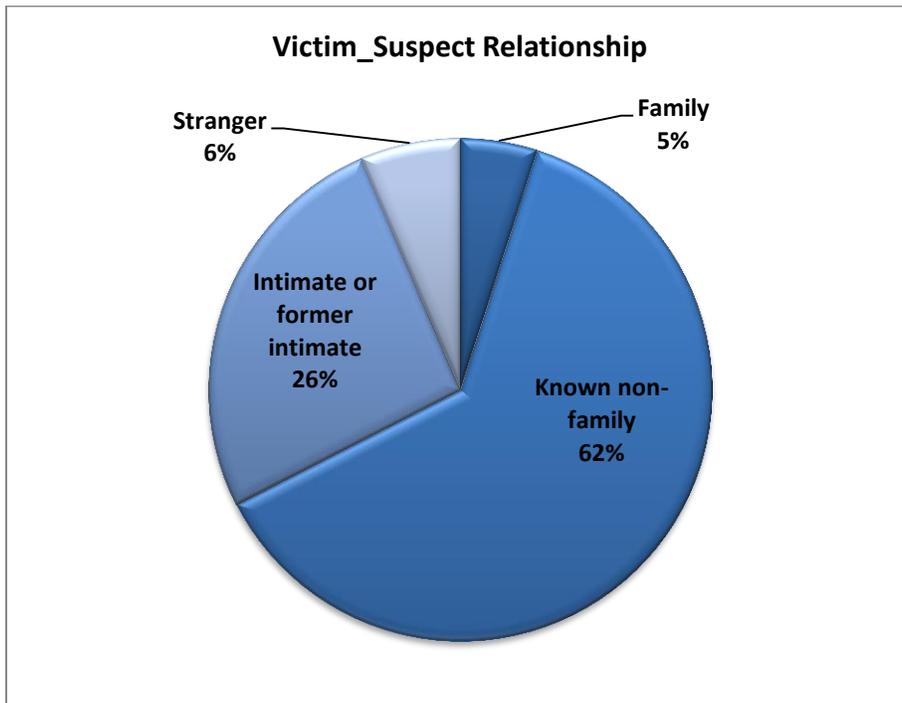
Sixty-six percent of stalking suspects were White and 33 percent were Black. Eighty-eight percent of Black victims reported a Black suspect as their stalker and 89 percent of White victims reported a White suspect as their stalker.

Stalking Suspects by age and race

A bar chart titled "Stalking Suspects by age and race" with the y-axis labeled "Percent within Race" ranging from 0% to 40%, and the x-axis showing age ranges: 13-17, 18-24, 25-34, 35-44, 45-54, 55-64, 65 and older. Two series are shown: Black and White.
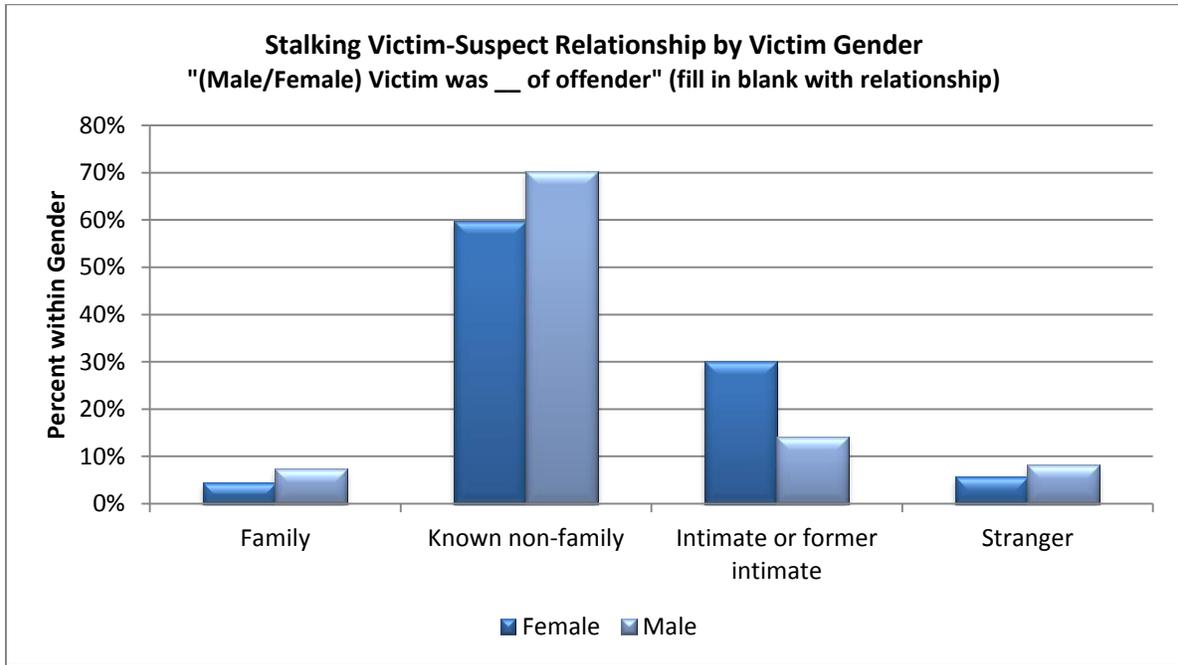
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[2] The suspect data are based on those suspects for whom the information was provided or known. There were instances in which a suspect's age, race, sex and/or relationship data were not available.

Victim-Suspect Relationship

Of the single-victim/single-suspect cases for which relationship data was known and reported (approximately 91 percent), the data show that stalking victims nearly always knew their stalker – only six percent of victims reported the stalker as a stranger. Approximately 26 percent of known stalkers were an intimate or former intimate (boy/girlfriend, common-law spouse, or current or former spouse). Within the 'known non-family' category, 53 percent were identified as acquaintances, 38 percent were identified generically as 'otherwise known', five percent were neighbors and two percent were friends.

Victim_Suspect Relationship

- Stranger 6%
- Family 5%
- Intimate or former intimate 26%
- Known non-family 62%

Breaking down the victim-suspect relationship data into gender categories revealed that 30 percent of female victims (out of all female victims) had an intimate/former intimate stalker, whereas 14 percent of male victims (out of all male victims) had an intimate/former intimate stalker.

Stalking Victim-Suspect Relationship by Victim Gender
"(Male/Female) Victim was __ of offender" (fill in blank with relationship)

Preliminary January – June 2014 Stalking in Ohio

Characteristics of Stalking

During the first six months of 2014, there were a total of 566 stalking incidents reported to the Ohio Incident-Based Reporting System. A comparison of the first six months in 2013 shows that there was a nine percent decrease in the number of reported stalking incidents from 2013 to 2014.

There was a 23 percent decrease in the number of stalking incidents reported in March from 2013 and 2014. In January, the number of stalking incident reports increased seven percent.

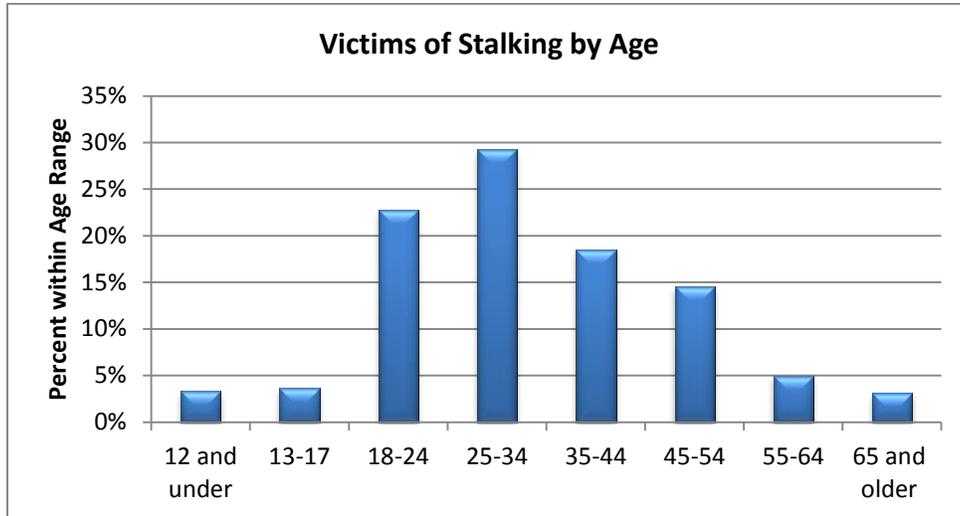| Stalking Incidents per Month		
	2013	**2014**
January	97	104
February	77	76
March	106	82
April	108	91
May	125	116
June	112	97
Total	**625**	**566**

The majority of stalking incidents were reported as occurring at a person's residence, similar to that of 2013 data. Specifically, forty-seven percent of stalking incidents were reported to have occurred in single family homes, 12 percent on the street and two percent of all stalking incidents occurred specifically at schools or colleges.

Stalking Incidents by Location

- Outside 17%
- Retail 8%
- Commercial Services 2%
- Public Access Buildings 5%
- Residential Structures 68%

Of the incidents where weapon information was reported, 83 percent reported no weapon and eight percent reported the use of a personal weapon.
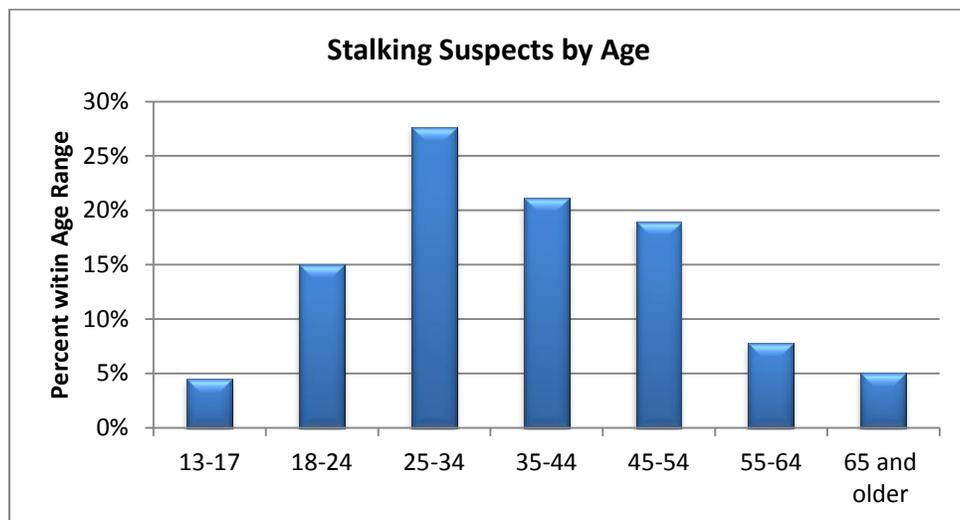
Characteristics of Victims

Sixty-one percent of stalking incidents involved a single victim. The average age of stalking victims was 33.8 years and approximately 52 percent of victims were between the ages of 18 and 34 years.

Victims of Stalking by Age

Percent within Age Range

Age	Percent
12 and under	~3%
13-17	~3.5%
18-24	~23%
25-34	~29%
35-44	~18.5%
45-54	~14.5%
55-64	~5%
65 and older	~3%

Seventy-eight percent of victims were female. Seventy-three percent of victims were White, 26 percent were Black and approximately one percent identified as 'Other'.

Characteristics of Offenders

Of the suspect for whom demographic information is known, 79 percent of stalkers were male. Fort-nine percent of stalkers fell within the age range of 25 and 44 years.

Stalking Suspects by Age

Percent witin Age Range

Age	Percent
13-17	~4.5%
18-24	~15%
25-34	~27.5%
35-44	~21%
45-54	~19%
55-64	~8%
65 and older	~5%

Sixty-seven percent of stalking suspects were White, 31 percent were Black and two percent were identified as 'Other'.

Victim-Suspect Relationship

Similar to 2013 data, stalking victims nearly always knew their stalker; only five percent of victims reported the stalker as a stranger. Approximately 24 percent of known stalkers were an intimate or former intimate (boy/girlfriend, common-law spouse, or current or former spouse). Within the 'known non-family' category, 56 percent were identified as acquaintances, 32 percent were identified generically as 'otherwise known', five percent were neighbors and three percent were friends.

Victim Suspect Relationship

- Stranger 5%
- Family 6%
- Intimate or former intimate 24%
- Known non-family 65%