

Book review

Young People, Stalking Awareness and Domestic Abuse

Edited by Maria Mellins, Rachael Wheatley and Caroline Flowers
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As we know, youth is the period of transition between teenage and adulthood and is affected by many factors such as education, culture, society (Sawyer *et al.*, 2018), social media (Pandey *et al.*, 2017) and unhealthy relationship (Byers *et al.*, 2021). The book: “Young Age, Stalking Awareness and Domestic Violence” edited by Maria Mellins, Rachael Wheatley and Caroline Flowers in collaboration with The Alice Ruggles Trust, is a comprehensive and useful exploration of stalking and domestic violence in the younger generation.

The authors provide a combination of experience and expertise drawn from fields of criminology and psychology and from both academia and professional practice relating to this area. Innovative steps are required to surmount the issue of gender-based violence specifically in the younger generation and there is a need to enlarge and develop knowledge about stalking and awareness about relationships within schools and in relevant parts of the curriculum.

There is also a need for school councils and also through PSHE classes to undertake research and preliminary interventions to prevent the development of stalking behaviour, and to promote critical thinking in education, increase legal responses and protection for victims of coercive control and stalking. In addition, surveillance of telecommunication and social media

platform to protect young generation from coercive acts, stalking and abusive behaviour by others could be helpful. The target audience for this book is students (within social sciences, psychology and criminology), academics, researchers, professionals (including within victim support services), law enforcement, education, health service, parents and personal tutors.

The novelty of this book is its comprehensive exploration of stalking and domestic violence in the younger generation. It does not only consider prevalence and effects of stalking and abuse in young people it also examines the complexity involved to define the issue, considers attitudinal aspects and use of an integrated approach to inter-institutional collaboration. It discusses several methods that can be used to counter stalking behaviour and relationship abuse, including online surveillance (such as social media and other technology that might be used within coercive control), and examines stalking behaviour as depicted in visual media and the effects on viewers, particularly teenagers.

This book is composed of 13 chapters; each chapter consists of substantive information and data (including chronology-related) about stalking awareness and domestic violence. The subject coverage and book length are balanced. Every chapter discussion is comprehensive yet condensed and there is useful inclusion of case study examples and confirmatory research to substantiate the ideas contained. Each chapter explains and classifies teenage stalking (direct or indirect) as a consequence of social failure, emotional deregulation or psychopathology. There are also

relevant discussions about stalking in popular media, books, music and visual media including films, which often contain depictions of stalking either directly or indirectly.

The book presents the first results of a survey held in Ireland about the experience of stalking and abuse; this chapter includes a discussion about the landscape of law in relation to stalking in Ireland and makes a strong recommendation that police in the jurisdiction should attend training about stalking behaviour and attitudes to enforce law effectively. There is also an examination of how information and communication technology could facilitate stalking and abusive behaviour, privacy challenges, data control and policy implications, particularly about stalking and abusive acts facilitated by technology. The writer's opinion about the integration of law, technology, education, telecommunication industry, social media platforms and criminal justice systems (to regulate abuse and including that which occurs through use of technology) is also highlighted. Support for young people who experience stalking, inaccessible services, lack of access to supportive and special services and expert ignorance about the younger generation and their needs are challenges and additional risks faced by victims. There is also a useful discussion about this type of violence in a case study that happened to Emily's daughter whilst at university; this highlights the high numbers of gender-based violence (GBV) assailants within some educational institutions and the low levels of reporting rates. It also proclaims GBV as a priority policy to ensure that institutions are proactive to create safe environments, and also to increase awareness about the major impacts of stalking and domestic violence on teenagers.

The book highlights the need to provide effective interventions and support

services for young people who are affected, and advocates for increased security for young adults in our online world and also the development of critical thinking concerning this issue. Recognizing and managing stalking behaviour, individual needs, education, the development of healthy relationships and working to overcome stalking and domestic violence problems with inter-institutional collaborative approaches are seen as essential in this area.

The key strength of this book is its comprehensive scope (from case study to recommendations for policy and practice), its empirical base and inclusion of topics relevant to the digital era found in our present day. There is a slight weakness in that the book focuses only on young people, and there is a predominance of research and experience from England and Ireland. Generally, however, this book will be a useful resource to anyone who needs to understand and explore the relevant issues and for those who work to overcome the problems of stalking, abuse-related and obsessive behaviours specifically on the younger generation.

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