

Texting can be a type of stalking

By Mark Matthews
Victims of Crime Services

Your teenager just got another threatening text, the fifth threatening text message that has been received in the past day.

What are you going to do? Teens, their parents, and other victims of repeatedly harassing, annoying or threatening text messages often feel scared, or at least repeatedly annoyed.

However, the cell phone owners may not understand that threatening and annoying repeated unwanted text messaging is criminal.

January is National Stalking Awareness Month, and victim advocates at the Tribal Victims of Crime Services, plus victim advocates across the country, are using the month of January as an opportunity to educate the public about stalking—the pervasive crime that affects nearly 1.4 million Americans a year.

Type of stalking

Repeated, unwanted text messaging are a type of stalking.

Stalking and harassment are crimes on the Warm Springs Indian Reservation.

All 50 states have passed laws that make it illegal to engage in stalking—usually defined as a course of conduct directed at a specific person that would cause a reasonable person to feel fear.

The Warm Springs tribal code for the crime of Stalking is WSTC 305.180, which states:

“Stalking: Any Indian who shall knowingly alarm or coerce another person or a member of that person’s immediate family or household by engaging in repeated, unwanted contact with the other person where the repeated and unwanted contact

causes the victim reasonable apprehension regarding the personal safety of the victim or a member of the victim’s immediate family or household, shall be deemed guilty of stalking.”

Jail and fine

The maximum fine for a conviction of the tribal crime of stalking is either a \$5,000 fine, one year in jail, or both. The tribal court has the power to exclude non-members if a person is convicted of stalking or any other tribal crime.

According to Victims of Crime Services, some of the stalking cases on the reservation have involved multiple unwanted text messages and telephone calls to the stalking victims.

Other stalking cases on the reservation include repeated, unwanted contact by a former intimate partner.

Warm Springs Police Sgt. Paul Jim estimates that he has responded to about 12 to 18 offensive text messaging cases in 2008. This does not include those offensive text messaging stalking cases reviewed by sergeants Mobley and White.

Victims should report the offending text message stalking to tribal police and carefully document evidence by writing down the times, dates, and places they are stalked.

They should keep e-mails, phone messages, letters, notes, and anything sent by the stalker. Victims should also alert friends, family members, roommates, and co-workers about the stalking and enlist their support and help.

Sammy Bruised Head, the Victims of Crime Services supervisor advocate, reminds cell

phone owners to “save all your threatening text messages because they are evidence. Victims can either forward the offending text message to the tribal police as an email, or take the cell phone to the police so they can take a photograph or copy of the text message.”

Victim cell phone owners may not understand that stalking is criminal. And what they don’t know about stalking may jeopardize their lives.

Stalking behavior can range from annoying and intrusive to terrifying and dangerous. Stalking can escalate to violence and—in the worst-case situations—murder.

To defeat text-messaging stalkers, both victims, police, and communities must take stalking seriously.

Victims of annoying or threatening text messages should call 911 and have the Warm Springs Police Department take a report and do a follow-up investigation.

They can also receive support from Victims of Crime Services, the tribal victim’s assistance department. VOCS can help victims devise a safety plan, learn about the tribal laws, access other services, and take additional steps, such as seeking a tribal restraining order.

Family members, friends and the tribal community can support stalking victims by listening, showing support, and never blaming the victim for the crime. They can also discourage text message stalking and other stalking-type of behavior.

Victims need to know that help is available. They can call VOCS at 553-2293 during office hours, or at 553-1171 on weeknights and weekends. And

of course, they can call tribal police dispatch at “911” at any time. Victims can also call 1-800-FYI-CALL, the National Center for Victims of Crime Helpline, or visit www.ncvc.org for help with stalking or any other crime.

If you are being stalked or if you know of a stalking victim, call the Warm Springs Police Dispatch on the 911 emergency telephone for immediate response and assistance. Remember, you are not alone, the Warm Springs Police Department and Victims of Crime Services Department are here to help.

The preceding information on stalking is presented by the Warm Springs Victims of Crime Services Department with factual information provided by the Stalking Resource Center, National Center for Victims of Crime, www.ncvc.org/src.

(VOCS is partially funded by the OVC’s TVA grant no. 2006-VR-GX-0017 (USDOJ) and the Family Violence Prevention Services Act grant, Admn. For Children & Families (USH&SS). Points of view presented here are those of VOCS and not the US Dept. of Justice or US Dept. Health & Human Services.)

University schedules distance learning orientation in W.S.

Everyone is invited to an Eastern Oregon University orientation session from 1:30-2:30 p.m. on Thursday, Feb. 5 upstairs in the Educational building.

An advisor from the university will be on hand to discuss the university and its distance education programs.

Many students in the region are already working towards degrees with majors in anthropology/sociology, busi-

ness administration or economics, English, fire services administration, physical activity and health, philosophy, politics, psychology and liberal studies.

Come to the upstairs training room in the Education building to learn more.

For further information, call the Eastern Oregon University regional center in Bend, 385-1137.

Meetings set on IRMP

Integrated Resource Management Plan meetings are being scheduled to review comprehensive development plans for the Warm Springs and Simnasho community areas.

Plans are also being developed for other reservation areas, and meeting participants are invited to learn how they can

help shape future development in their communities.

The meetings will start at 6 p.m. and will be held at Simnasho on Tuesday, February 10; and in Warm Springs on Wednesday, February 11.

For more information please contact the Planning Department at 553-3270.

Panel discusses victim impacts of DUII

By Mark Matthews
Victims of Crime Services

The Driving Under the Influence Victims Impact Panel met in Madras earlier this month.

During the meeting, the audience listened to seven speakers—Eliza Jim, Gene Smith, Demus Martinez, Fawn Begay, Kate Rorher, Foster Kalama and myself—describe how driving under the influence traffic crashes, involving family or friends, have affected their lives.

Kate Rorher noted that this was the fiftieth time that she has talked to a group about how the DUII death of a close friend affected her.

There were a total of 21 mandatory attendees at the meeting, including five juveniles. They attended this DUII Victim Impact Panel in accordance to their treatment program, juvenile caseworker, or sentencing judge.

One of the attendees was discovered to have alcohol on his breath. This individual is on probation, and was taken to the Jefferson County Jail by the probation officers, where he blew a .05 blood alcohol content on the intoxilyzer. He was detained at the jail on a probation violation arrest. He did not get credit

for attending this DUII Victims Impact Panel.

The forfeited fee was donated to the Jefferson County EMS (ambulance service) volunteer training.

A slide show, called Trauma Nurses Talk Tough, was presented at the end of the meeting.

This visual impact program shows slides of wrecked DUII cars and the victims, living and deceased, with a short narrative emphasizing the importance of not driving after consuming alcohol and using seatbelts and child safety seats when driving.

Jefferson County Juvenile Officer Liz Littledeer attended the session, as an invited guest and observer. There were three designated drivers/parents of juveniles in attendance, who were not charged any fees to attend.

District attorney Steve LeRiche, and the newest deputy district attorney will be the invited guests for the next DUII Victims Impact Panel.

I would like to thank Richard Vigil and Brad Mondoy of the Jefferson County Probation Department/Adult Community Corrections for their assistance with set-up, registration, and security.

Thank you to Will Bean for

the use of the Trauma Nurses Talk Tough slide program. Thank you Frank O-Hearn for interpreting English to Spanish.

The next VIP in Madras is set for 7 p.m., Tuesday, April 14 in Madras. Please contact me at 325-1517.

Or send an email to: markmadras@hotmail.com. If you have any suggestions or comments about improving the VIP, or if you know of anyone who might be a speaker at a future VIP, please contact me.

(Note: Victims of Crime Services is exploring the idea of establishing a DUII victims impact panel in Warm Springs. The hope is to have the panel in place by the middle to end of this year. Anyone interested should call VOCS at 553-2293.)

FENDERS by ENDRES



Fast, Courteous 24-Hour Service.
Accident Recovery.
Roll Back, for damage-free Towing
Statewide coverage

Insurance approved.

475-6491 office, or 480-9685

Black Bear Diner Grrreat Family Food



Madras' Finest Family Dining

- All Products Prepared Fresh Daily
- Entrees Roasted Daily
- Featuring Hand Cut USDA Choice Steaks

BREAKFAST - LUNCH - DINNER

Served All Day

All Major Credit Cards Accepted

• Senior Menu • Children's Menu • Daily Specials

237 S.W. 4th Street, Madras • 475-6632 OPEN 6 am - 10 pm DAILY

Best Food In Town. . . . No Kidding!

Warm Springs Market

Indian Arts and Crafts

2132 Warm Springs St.

Warm Springs, OR 97761

(541) 553-1597