Technology Facilitated Gender-Based Violence Survivor Listening Sessions:

2025 Report and Findings

NEW YORK STATE

Office for the Prevention of Domestic Violence

Table of Contents

Executive Summary

The Office for the Prevention of Domestic Violence (OPDV), created in 1992, is the country's only Cabinet-level executive state agency dedicated to the issue of domestic and gender-based violence. As part of OPDV's commitment to improving New York State's gender-based violence (GBV) response system and centering the voices of survivors, OPDV facilitates listening sessions with victims and survivors of gender-based violence. These Survivor Listening Sessions (SLS) allow us to hear directly from survivors about their experiences when navigating the GBV response system.

In 2025, OPDV intentionally sought to hear from victims and survivors of technology-facilitated gender-based violence (TFGBV) for this round of survivor listening sessions.

The topics participants discussed most during the listening sessions were the varying tactics of TFGBV that were life-altering, pervasive, and difficult to prove; the impact that TFGBV had on survivors' lives; strengths and challenges of the gender-based violence response system; and recommendations for more survivor-centered, trauma-informed, and culturally responsive services for survivors and victims of TFGBV.

Survivor Recommendations:

- Training for the GBV response system
  - Survivor-centered, trauma-informed, and culturally responsive
- Education and Public Awareness
  - Community-wide, including virtual spaces, schools, hospitals, and workplaces
- Legal Protections
  - Increased accountability for perpetrators and more pathways to safety for victims and survivors

The New York State Office for the Prevention of Domestic Violence is working to protect New Yorkers and address the growing risks of technology facilitated gender-based violence. OPDV has several initiatives designed to increase safety for survivors and hold offenders accountable.

OPDV, in partnership with Sanctuary for Families, was awarded a federal Office for Violence Against Women grant focused on the enforcement and response to cybercrimes and technology abuse in NYS. Through this grant, OPDV and Sanctuary for Families will develop trainings and educational materials for law enforcement, prosecutors, judges, and law enforcement telecommunicators on how to respond to technology facilitated domestic and gender-based violence in New York State.

In 2024, Governor Hochul awarded OPDV funds to safeguard youth from risks and dangers online, including teen dating abuse. OPDV has launched a public awareness campaign, Power Down Speak Up, to educate the public on this issue. OPDV will also be developing trainings and educational materials to help inform and protect the public from growing online risks for youth.

OPDV has developed trainings for service providers, community-based organizations and others on technology facilitated domestic violence and gender-based violence, covering the basics of technology abuse, sextortion, deepfakes, and AI.

One aspect of TFGBV that was a common theme for survivors in these listening sessions was the tactic of employment sabotage. OPDV recognizes that economic abuse, including employment sabotage, is often present in GBV experiences and has devastating consequences for survivors. To address this issue, Governor Hochul signed Executive Order 17 in April of 2022, requiring OPDV to review and update the state's gender-based violence and the workplace policy and provide training and technical assistance to agency liaisons. In the SFY 2025-2026 enacted budget, Executive Order 17 was codified and expanded to include a requirement that all vendors of competitive contracts with New York State also have a gender-based violence in the workplace policy. The gender-based violence and the workplace policy provides information on rights and resources for employee survivors and on responsibilities of employers when responding to an employee who has experienced gender-based violence. OPDV is committed to equipping and empowering workplaces to respond to and support employee victims and survivors in a survivor-centered, trauma-informed, and culturally responsive way.

OPDV remains committed to implementing initiatives that strengthen New York State's response to gender-based violence and will continue to uplift the needs identified by the impact experts: victims and survivors of gender-based violence.

Introduction

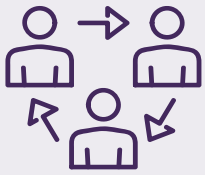
About the NYS Office for the Prevention for Domestic Violence (OPDV)

OUR MISSION

To improve New York State's response to and prevention of domestic violence with the goal of enhancing the safety of all New Yorkers in their intimate and family relationships.

OUR VISION

To create a State in which communities and systems are committed to supporting and promoting equality, dignity and respect so that individuals can feel safer in their intimate and family relationships.



OUR ROLE

To advise the governor and legislature on policies and best practices; train professionals across the state; facilitate coordination between state agencies and stakeholders on issues related to domestic violence; and serve as a resource on the issues of domestic and gender-based violence.

OPDV's Three Pillars—The Lens Through Which We View Our Work

OPDV has expanded its work beyond domestic violence to include other forms of gender-based violence. We know that we cannot address domestic violence without confronting other forms of gender-based violence such as sexual violence, trafficking, and more. The White House (2023) defines gender-based violence as:

"Any harmful threat or act directed at an individual or group based on actual or perceived sex, gender, gender identity, sex characteristics, or sexual orientation. [Gender-based violence] encompasses, but is not limited to, physical, sexual, psychological, emotional, economic, and technological abuse or harm; threats of such acts; harassment; coercion; and arbitrary deprivation of liberty."

While gender-based violence can be perpetrated against anyone, this pervasive threat disproportionately impacts women and girls:

- Almost 1 in 2 women and more than 2 in 5 men reported experiencing contact sexual violence, physical violence, and/or stalking victimization by an intimate partner at some point in their lifetime (Leemis et al, 2022).
- Approximately 1 in 3 women in the United States have experienced sexual violence (Smith et al, 2018).

- Gender-based violence can happen at any age; Youth can experience dating violence, and older adults are also vulnerable to abuse, particularly from caregivers.
- People can also experience gender-based violence multiple times during their lives. One literature review of 80 studies found that 47.9% of people who experienced childhood sexual abuse were revictimized later in life (Walker et al, 2019).

To deepen our understanding of gender-based violence, we must consider how it intersects with discrimination and oppression. We know that gender-based violence disproportionately impacts certain communities:

- Some people have unique risk factors that can lead to higher rates of victimization, such as people with disabilities and Indigenous women.
- Some are less likely to be believed when they report and/or more likely to be blamed for the violence they experienced, particularly Black and Latina women.
- LGBTQI+ people are also disproportionately impacted by gender-based violence, including domestic violence, sexual violence, and violence rooted in bigotry toward their gender identity and expression.
- Almost half (45.3%) of homicides of women who were pregnant or within one year of pregnancy have been found to involve intimate partner violence.

People with marginalized identities are more likely to experience barriers to receiving help (Kulkarni, 2018). For example:

- Transgender survivors of intimate partner violence often experience transphobia-related barriers when accessing services.
- According to the U.S. National Transgender Survey (James et al, 2016), 16% of respondents indicated that they experienced discrimination at a domestic violence shelter.
- Being denied equal treatment, verbally harassed, or physically assaulted were reported as common forms of discrimination at shelters (Messinger et al., 2021).

Because of these complexities, we know the gender-based violence response system must not apply a “one-size fits all” approach. Responses to gender-based violence must be survivor-centered, trauma-informed, and culturally responsive. OPDV defines these three pillars as:

- **Survivor-Centered**—an approach that works with survivors to meet their needs as they prioritize and define them.
- **Trauma-Informed**—an approach that realizes that trauma is common, recognizes the signs, activators, and symptoms of trauma, and uses this knowledge to inform practices, policies, and procedures.
- **Culturally Responsive**—a holistic approach that actively incorporates a person’s complex identities and cultural values, going beyond simply acknowledging their cultural identity exists. Culturally responsive services reflect and address differences in identities to actively meet the varying needs of all survivors and communities.

Methodology

Survivor Listening Sessions (SLS) are conducted on a virtual platform at a date and time determined by the mutual availability of the participants, the program, and OPDV. Survivor participation is voluntary and anonymous. Camera use by the survivor participants is optional. The SLS includes 5 questions, which are shared with participants in advance, with an optional grounding activity. Each program we work with gets one session for the survivors they engage for this process. Our goal is 5 survivors per program/session. The survivors respond to questions verbally, and the sessions are two hours in length.

Participants were invited to complete a pre-session questionnaire asking for demographic information and experiences with elements of the GBV response systems. Of the 27 people who responded to the questionnaire, 25 participated in the Survivor Listening Sessions.

OPDV utilizes the following survivor-centered, trauma-informed, and culturally responsive best practices to guide the process for the survivor listening sessions.

Confidentiality

Protecting participants' identities is paramount in the listening sessions. Efforts to maintain confidentiality can be noted throughout the process. We also prioritize confidentiality in reporting on the information gathered in the listening sessions.

Informed Consent

Survivor-centered, trauma-informed, and culturally responsive processes must include opportunities to give power back to survivors. Their experiences are theirs to share with intention. OPDV provided information about the SLS to programs and participants before receiving consent to participate, so that consent to participate was truly informed.

See the appendix at the end of this report for more information about confidentiality and informed consent.

Recognition of Expertise

Survivors of gender-based violence are subject matter experts and were compensated for their time. Similarly, the non-profit organizations who partnered with OPDV are subject matter experts and were compensated for their time.

- OPDV provides funding to the partner programs. The money can be used to cover nominal administrative costs and provide a stipend to the survivors for their participation.
- OPDV utilizes semi-structured focus groups as the qualitative methodology for the listening sessions.
- OPDV staff analyze the transcripts, using software called MAXQDA, which is a qualitative data analysis software that organizes survivor feedback. Used in the 2025 Survivor Listening Sessions, MAXQDA helped identify patterns and themes that emerged across all five listening

sessions regarding GBV technology-facilitated abuse.

- Each session was two hours and included up to five survivors. Participants only took part in one session.
- OPDV inquired about any formal and informal supports that the survivors received. Formal and informal support are defined in the appendix at the end of this report.

The data in this report is based on 5 listening sessions conducted with 5 different non-profit victim services organizations and 25 total impacted survivors from March through May 2025. This approach was chosen because of the growing prevalence and awareness of technology-facilitated gender-based violence, the likelihood that victim service providers have encountered victims and survivors of technology-facilitated gender-based violence, and the organizations' ability to support participating survivors throughout the process.

The organizations selected to participate represent a reasonable snapshot of the range of experiences of survivors in different communities across New York State:

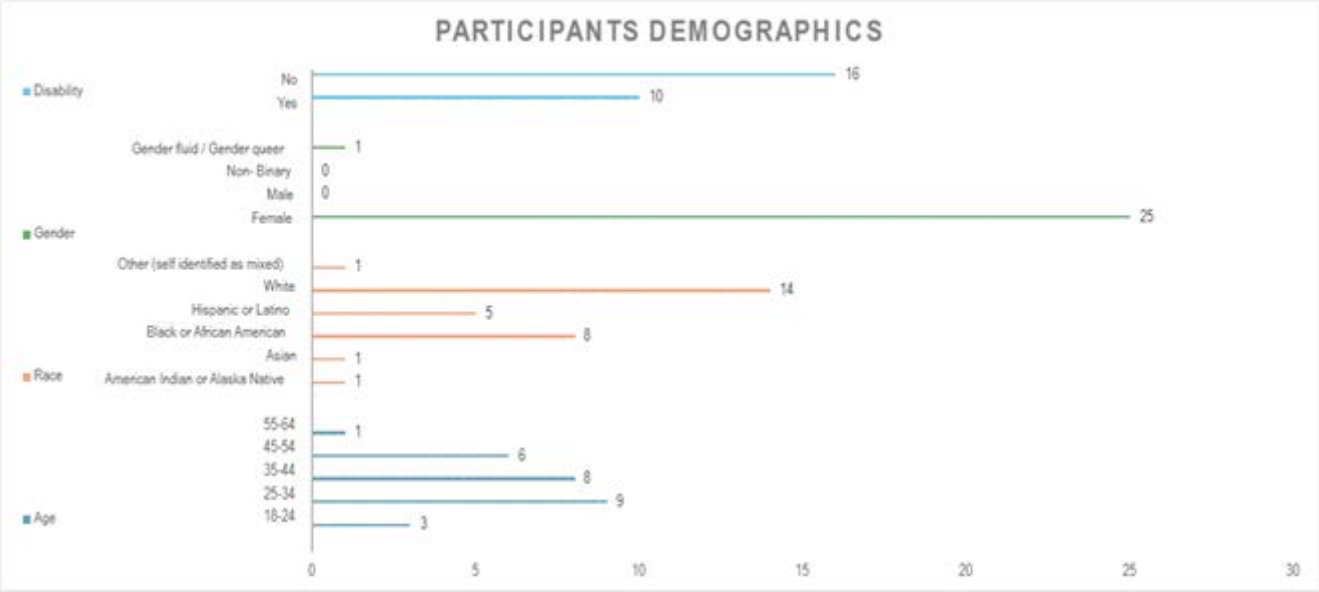
- → The program's geographical catchment areas ranged from urban to suburban communities. The programs were in the Mid-Hudson, Capital District, Long Island and Western NY regions.
- → One program was a NYS Office for Children and Family Services (OCFS) licensed residential, OCFS recognized non-residential program, and a NYS Department of Health (DOH) Certified Rape Crisis Program whose primary mission is to serve victims of domestic violence and sexual assault.
- → One program is an OCFS recognized non-residential program that is part of a larger multi-service community focused organization.
- → One program whose primary mission is to promote the health and well-being of LGBTQI+ BIPOC people in their community. This includes providing services to people who have experienced crime including gender-based violence.
- → One program is dedicated to assisting victims of human trafficking and offers both residential and non-residential services.
- → One program works with justice impacted women.

To recruit programs who could identify willing participants, OPDV staff:

- Announced the opportunity during a monthly virtual meeting hosted by OPDV specifically for organizations that provide services to victims and survivors of gender-based violence, as well as during other routine meetings OPDV hosts or attends.
- Emailed and called non-profit organizations known to OPDV for their work with victims and survivors of gender-based violence.

Participant Demographics

Participants were invited to complete a pre-session questionnaire asking for demographic information and experiences with elements of the GBV response systems. Of the 27 people who responded to the questionnaire, 25 participated in the Survivor Listening Sessions. While OPDV makes every effort to recruit a wide range of participants, all 25 identified as female, with one additionally identifying as gender fluid/gender queer.



Technology-Facilitated Gender-Based Violence (TFGBV)

Technology-facilitated gender-based violence (TFGBV) is the misuse or manipulation of technology to commit any harmful threat or act directed at an individual or group based on actual or perceived sex, gender, gender identity, sex characteristics, or sexual orientation.[1]

The misuse of technology can include surveillance, impersonation, alteration of photos and videos, withholding or breaking devices, financial fraud, employment sabotage, hijacking of social media, and more. People who cause harm leverage technology to elevate control and increase fear, which can disrupt survivors' lives for years. TFGBV transcends the boundaries of proximity and time and can be carried out in digital spaces in ways that are not possible in the physical environment. Persistent and constant TFGBV can feel inescapable and frightening, heightening the fear of physical harm. It can sometimes be difficult to prove that TFGBV is perpetrated by a specific person and although this is not a new form of violence, it is a landscape that is rapidly changing, making it difficult to keep up with the latest tactics of victimization.

Survivors' accounts of their experiences indicate that technology itself isn't the problem. On the contrary, survivors reported technology as a necessary tool for managing their lives, receiving information and a connection to community resources such as gender-based violence service programs, employment opportunities, and more. It's the misuse of technology by the perpetrator that is problematic and poses a danger.

1 Two versions of TFGBV are Technology-Facilitated Domestic Violence (TFDV) and Technology-Facilitated Sexual Violence (TFSV). TFDV is defined as a pattern of behavior and coercive tactics perpetrated against an intimate partner with the goal of establishing and maintaining power and control through the misuse or manipulation of technology. Examples of this would be cyberstalking, hacking, password misuse and online impersonation. TFSV is defined as the misuse or manipulation of technology to impose sexual activity or conduct on an individual without their consent. Examples of this would be online sexual harassment, sextortion, cyberflashing, sexually explicit deepfakes and nonconsensual intimate image sharing.

Survivor Experiences

Qualitative analysis of the sessions revealed that survivors mainly spoke about the varying tactics of TFGBV that were pervasive and difficult to prove; the impact that TFGBV had on their lives; and the strengths and challenges of the gender-based violence response system. Survivors provided recommendations for more survivor-centered, trauma-informed, and culturally responsive services for survivors and victims of TFGBV.

See the appendix at the end of this report for additional quotes from SLS participants.

Technology-Facilitated Gender-Based Violence Tactics

Some tactics of abuse rise to the level of a crime, and others do not. Since the Penal law does not include all tactics, OPDV uses the following definitions to describe the tactics of abuse.

CYBER STALKING

Defined as a type of online harassment that uses technology (social media, apps, GPS location, trackers, etc.) to stalk an individual. When we compare stalking as a tactic of TFGBV to other forms of gender-based violence, there is an added layer of danger when technology is involved due to the seemingly unlimited access in digital spaces. The lack of methods to hold offenders accountable and provide justice creates additional levels of anxiety and hopelessness for the survivor. Stalking through technology is easier to do than stalking someone in-person. It is harder to prove but is just as dangerous. Additionally, according to Jacquelyn C. Campbell's danger assessment,[2] stalking is an indicator of lethality. Yet, as clearly described by the survivors in these listening sessions, this tactic is frequently minimized and ignored.

"He was able to track everywhere I was going, popping up where I was, knowing everywhere I was at every second of the day."

"Some apps can be disguised as other things like something simple like a calendar or a calculator, but then when you try to go into them, they have like a sneaky way to put in a code and once you put the code in, then you can access different things that are within the app. They can use them to track you, monitor your conversations and your texts."

SURVEILLANCE

"To me, the most egregious use of technology he used was a surveillance camera in our bedroom. He gutted the smoke detector and put the camera in there. When we were in a custody battle, he gave one video to the forensic evaluator. He has been able to see us the entire time. For over a year and a half after he was removed from the home. This invasion of privacy caused me significant emotional distress. He put cameras in our bedroom… I didn't even know there was a camera in the corner of the room, and I don't know if he showed

2 Danger Assessment. (n.d.). www.dangerassessment.org. https://www.dangerassessment.org/

anybody. I'm hoping he didn't. So, whenever I go into my bedroom, even though he hasn't been here in four years because he's in jail, I still look around just to make sure I didn't miss anything, because I just don't know.""

"He had cameras at his house where when he left for work (sic), to make sure that I didn't leave or no one came over, so he used the cameras to keep me there so I would be scared to go anywhere because he could see everything."

CYBER BULLYING

Defined as the practice of electronic harassment that can occur through a computer or phone.

"Then he started to have a friend reach out, so there wouldn't be any type of repercussions fall on him and started to reach out on applications I never even though you could use to harm somebody, like Venmo. I looked at my phone one day and had like 10 Venmo requests for money. You can put a comment into the Venmo request, so it was a way to get a hold of me."

"He would just post up things about me. Post my picture, lies about me doing things I wasn't doing."

"Calling and harassing me all the time and threatening me and my friends about my whereabouts."

HACKING

Defined as breaking into or manipulating access to accounts that harmfully impact financial status, credit, limit control of assisted devices for communication and mobility, or immigration status.

"He was able to hack my messages and see all my private messages to my lawyer."

"Basically, has access to my bank information which eventually did get shut down because he was using it to do fraud."

CONTROLLING ACCESS TO TECHNOLOGY

Defined as restricting, monitoring, or otherwise regulating someone's access or use of technology for the purpose of maintaining power and control over them.

"He would come home from work and check it [my phone] constantly. I wasn't allowed to have a passcode on it, or anything else private. He would take it away from if I wasn't being 'good'."

"He would smash my phone, and I wouldn't have contact with anybody. I couldn't talk to anybody because we didn't have a home phone, and he would control me. Like our laptops. I couldn't get into it unless he was home, and he put in the password."

SPOOFING

Defined as the practice of disguising an email, name, phone number, or website to trick individual(s) into believing they are interacting with a trusted source.

"My ex also used the technology of a spoofing number. I go to the police and report this spoofing number. Hey, I got this threat, I know it's my ex. [Their response] Why are you assuming that that's the number he's [using]?"

"He would write my 7-year-old daughter on Roblox about me…It's a little kid's app. You play a bunch of games. He was blocked and he would be on his kids' tablet and pretend to be his kids playing as them but questioning my 7-year-old about me. So, then I would block his kids, and he made a whole new account, so it's a constant thing where you have to block him and again the police can't do anything because I can't prove it was him."

"Even though I blocked the person they will still call me from another number and basically threaten me, saying if I do something or tell them something, they will try to do something to me."

ONLINE IMPERSONATION

Defined as using fake social media accounts false email accounts, etc., to use an individual's name and photo to discredit, expose, hurt, or comprise them.

"My ex would impersonate me and try to say different things or get in contact with people that may have sold things to me even on Free Marketplace, just trying to locate where I was or what I was doing and using other people in a sort of roundabout way because how can the police even follow that?"

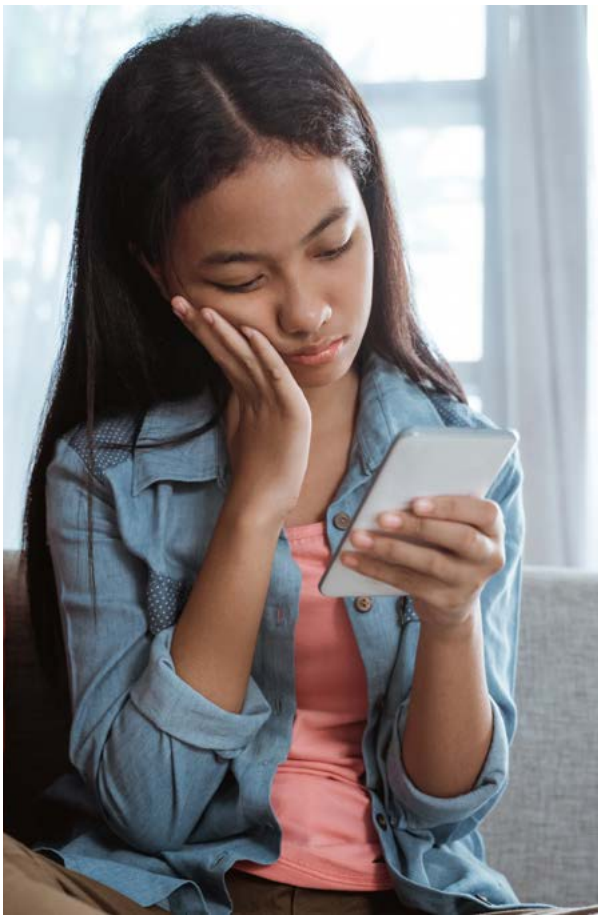
"When I didn't want to be with him anymore, and I blocked his number, he was using like fake apps and fake pages to get in touch with me so that he could stalk me and harass me."

IMAGE-BASED GENDER-BASED VIOLENCE

Defined as the use of synthetic content generated by Artificial Intelligence (AI) and real intimate images distributed without a person's consent.

"I had a boyfriend who I thought I was in love with, who [I] shared some explicit pictures [with] and then before I knew it, everyone had them and everyone was looking at them and I didn't know how to stop it. I just stopped sending them, but once they're out there, they're out there."

"The photos that he leaked from my phone he posted it publicly on Facebook's social media so everybody could see it. And people were sharing it to other social media sites saving it on their phones, texting me like saying nasty things to me, like just degrading me."



Impact of TFGBV on Survivors

The impact of technology-facilitated gender-based violence is far-reaching and takes a significant toll on a person's well-being. Survivors share experiences of mental anguish, isolation, fear, financial hardship, loss of employment, impact on relationships and lifestyle, and serious health consequences. The egregious misuse of technology by abusive partners exacerbated survivors' trauma symptoms, causing significant emotional stress and psychological pain. The abuse disrupted survivors' access to victim services and connections with family and friends. Survivors also reported abusive partners used technology to make them fearful of physical harm to themselves and their children. Many described an overwhelming sense of fear and paranoia that affected their mental and physical health. Loss of employment due to constant harassment and the expense of having to repeatedly replace phones and other technology to evade the abuser and their associates were some of the harms caused to survivors' careers and financial resources.

See the appendix at the end of this report for additional quotes from SLS participants.

ISOLATION

Isolation, a common tactic of abuse and impact of abuse, decreases access to support networks and increases dependence on the person causing harm. Survivors felt isolated from their physical environment, with the added layer of TFGBV making them feel isolated from their virtual environment, too. Participants described being afraid of going places in public because their abuser could track where they were and potentially show up to harass them and their companions. Places that would have normally provided help, comfort, and connection were now unsafe.

Sometimes survivors thought they were communicating with a trusted friend or family member, but it was really the perpetrator pretending to be them. In other instances, the perpetrator manipulated family and friends to carry out the harm. These actions can make it difficult for victims and survivors to trust and connect with people in their lives. Survivors limited their engagement with social media to decrease the amount of information about them that was available, increasing isolation. Even if a survivor used privacy settings, abusers found ways around that by using friends of the victim to access vital information about who they are spending time with and where they were. Participants also shared that they made changes to their online activity to decrease their digital footprint, creating further distance from the online community, which many had turned to for connection, help, resources, and support.

"I couldn't do anything without him saying yes and he knew that my only contact with anybody outside of my house was through that phone. I was very isolated because of cell phone abuse."

"Going through something like that makes you not want to be around other people, even if their intentions are good because you always have the feeling that this person is gonna show up or someone related to them is going to say 'Oh, I saw [them] here or there". So, isolation is a key factor, it made me a huge homebody which I don't care for that much, but safety first for me. To avoid all that [risk], I only go places I know it's a close-knit folks that I truly trust. So that's the only time I go out."

"I haven't spoken to this person in the last two years and this is still consistently happening on different platforms. I am definitely less trusting in general, but also more concerned about my digital footprint and what I share with the public and what's available for anyone to see. I'm very protective of my information. I completely deleted my LinkedIn and everything else like that. I don't want people to know certain things about me anymore."

FEAR

People who cause harm want to instill fear in their victims as a way to control them. Participants described fearing for their physical safety and that of their children, fear of further harassment, fear of escalating violence, and fear of seeking help because of potential retribution by the perpetrator. These fears were long-lasting, causing survivors to continuously feel like "they're looking over their shoulder," "walking on eggshells," living a life filled with anxiety and dread at what their abuser might do based on the horrific things they have already done and have threatened to do in the future.

"My biggest fear is that he is going to kill my child [or] my child would wake up and find me dead."

"I blocked the person on everything. Everything you could possibly think of. So, what's happening now is they're showing up across the street from my house. Several cars down from my house." OPDV Facilitator: "So, the tactics have changed?" "Absolutely, and it's very scary. If this person is outside my home after awhile will they end up making it to my door? Will they then become aggressive and want to make me have a conversation with them by banging on my door, getting my attention to have me come out? Will they be by my vehicle when I come out early in the morning. These things they are doing purposefully to get my attention, and it does because it wakes me out of my sleep. So, yes, safety is very much a concern for me."

In addition to the fear described above, participants described overwhelming feelings of worry and apprehension because of the TFGBV they experienced. The abuse perpetrated against them caused them to lack trust in others and to doubt themselves. Technology increased the abuser's reach, leaving survivors feeling there was no safe place and no way to stop the pervasive threat to their safety.

"Do you listen to me while I'm driving? Do you listen to me when I'm working? Because now I was paranoid."

"I just never know who's watching me because of trauma that I've dealt with in the past. So, it's just like, who can you trust? … it just makes it hard for me to share information with people."

ECONOMIC ABUSE

Economic abuse is seeking to control, sabotage and/or exploit a survivor's financial stability and independence. Economic abuse creates a significant barrier for survivors to achieve safety and stability. Many survivors shared how their experiences with TFGBV caused financial hardship by having to replace expensive technology, move to a new location, loss of money due to fraud, and disruptions in employment.

"It was making it very difficult for me to keep funds. I was constantly moving…I was constantly bouncing around, place to place, becoming homeless, things like that because just my whole identity is out there like some of the other women were saying too, on social media taking pictures or taking your social security numbers and things like that and just using it to their benefit."

"It was financially harmful because I would have to constantly buy new technology because the old technology was compromised. There were a lot of ways that it was used to control me and my interactions with others. Spending thousands of dollars on cell phones over and over again."

EMPLOYMENT SABOTAGE

A stable job can be a lifeline for survivors, increasing their ability to be safe and independent. However, many people who cause harm try to disrupt survivors' employment opportunities. This is called employment sabotage. This common form of abuse includes forcing a victim to miss work or harassing a victim and/or their colleagues at work. More than half of survivors in one study reported they lost a job because of gender-based violence.[3]

"When you leave, you think it's going to get easier and it actually gets harder. You're tied to these devices. You just never know when you're going to get a notification and you always feel on edge. I actually lost my job because I was so unwell."

"Losing jobs because of constant harassment. If they are constantly hitting you up on your phone or if they can't get through to your phone, figure out your job phone number and constantly be calling your job and eventually a job will just let you go."

3 Hess, C. and Del Rosario, A. (2018). Dreams Deferred: A Survey on the Impact of Intimate Partner Violence on Survivors' Education, Careers, and Economic Security. Institute for Women's Policy Research. https://iwpr.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/09/C475_IWPR-Report-Dreams-Deferred.pdf

"He knows it's my job to pick up the phone. I got an order of protection, but if he calls my job, he is a customer. It's not a personal matter between him and me. That is my job. I will be scolded by my boss if I don't pick up the phone because that's my job and he's the customer."

PHYSICAL AND PSYCHOLOGICAL HEALTH CONSEQUENCES

Survivors shared the acute and chronic health consequences that resulted from their experiences with TFGBV. Although it varied across participants, the most common health issues were anxiety, stress, lack of sleep, and questioning their perception of reality.

"I have had an actual physical reaction that's very difficult to control. I have been to every specialist and doctor you can think of just because of the wide range of symptoms. The health aspect for me has been huge."

"He used technology in such a way to gaslight me from knowing what was real and what wasn't. I've been in therapy probably 18-months and I still don't think I can trust myself or instincts about others around me anymore."

Strengths and Challenges of the GBV Response System

Survivors had positive interactions with the GBV response system when professionals were knowledgeable about technology-facilitated GBV. Participants faced significant challenges when interacting with the GBV response system when working with agencies or organizations that don't use survivor-centered and trauma-informed practices. From a survivor perspective, the gender-based violence response system often lacks knowledge about TFGBV and coercive control, frequently dismissing this type of victimization and the far-reaching consequences to survivors and their children. Survivors also pointed to the frequent minimization of the harm it caused and insensitivity to the impact that TFGBV had on survivors. For example, survivors were told to block the phone number of their abuser as their only recourse, which often resulted in the abuser creating new numbers; using friends, family, and children to commit the harassment for them; and escalating their violence by showing up at the person's house or place of employment or threats to do so.

See the appendix at the end of this report for additional quotes from SLS participants.

STRENGTHS

While survivors recounted the shortcomings of the systems' response to TFGBV, some experiences showed that when the system response was survivor-centered, trauma-informed and culturally responsive, survivors' safety and overall well-being were positively impacted.

"They helped me change all my passwords on my social media and kick him off so he wouldn't have all my info anymore. They were able to build my confidence back up, like interacting with people. So, they helped with my social anxiety. They also helped me with my self-blame."

"I appreciated having the NYS DV Hotline, especially if it was late at night and I'm thinking about things, or maybe somebody was reaching out to me, or I was kind of spiraling. It was

nice to be able to call that number and speak to somebody. The majority of the individuals I spoke with on the DV Hotline had been through it. So, they got it."

"NYS Police were great. The technology team swept the house, the car, took the camera hidden in the smoke detector. They went back and found other surveillance device. Was charged with unlawful surveillance"

CHALLENGES

Survivors were frustrated that their experiences with TFGBV were not taken seriously by the GBV response system. Participants also noted the lack of understanding by the GBV response system of the systemic barriers to adequately respond to TFGBV.

"We've already been through a lot of stuff and it's not fair that they treat us like we're nothing when we've already been through trauma. We are already scared and is just like you are supposed to make us feel safe and you are not. You are just treating us bad and not listening to us. It's not easy to just block someone [from the phone] because the harm is still going to be there. You're still going to feel scared and anxious. It's not like if you block the person, everything is going to go away. It's not that easy."

"I brought up some of the issues with technology when I went to [family] court. It wasn't taken seriously and that was really scary. My husband hid them [air tags] in diaper bags and my kids' shoe, and when I tried to use that as a way for court to know he was stalking us, I was told he was allowed to know that his child was safe. If it was about a child's safety, then we should both have access to the app to be able to track."

Survivor Recommendations

Participants called for all professionals interacting with survivors to receive comprehensive training on technology-facilitated abuse and survivor-centered and trauma-informed practices. Many participants shared that they did not know what they were experiencing was a form of gender-based violence and recommended increased education and public awareness about how to recognize TFGBV. Survivors emphasized the necessity for informed and relevant resources to be widely available so they can access the critical support and assistance required to address the abuse of technology by their partners.

TRAINING

Participants overwhelmingly recommended additional and enhanced training for the gender-based violence response system to increase survivor-centered, trauma-informed, and culturally responsive practices. Survivors indicated a need for increased knowledge of TFGBV, recognition that the acts of TFGBV are significantly impactful on the safety and well-being of survivors, the system's response to survivors seeking help needs to be improved, and there needs to be more accountability for perpetrators.

"They need to understand instead of questioning. Not to interrogate a victim. Be a good listener. Victims already distressed. They assume we are crazy. They don't believe victims."

"I feel because technology, and its uses and abuses, is ever evolving that more training for victim services, whether it's officers or judges or victim advocates should be put in place because as soon as we understand one type of technology and how it could be used and abused another one comes up. I had no idea about using a cash app to harass someone."

"Why didn't you just, fill in the blank? Why didn't you just leave? Why didn't you just do this?...It just sounds so easy and it's really not... they need to have a better understanding that it isn't just that simple."

"More training and more awareness, like this actually is a real thing. Like this happens more often than what people think and I think that's some of the problem...they feel it is not a real thing or it's just as easy as blocking someone and it's not."

PUBLIC AWARENESS AND EDUCATION

Survivors uplifted the importance of community-wide education and public awareness, so more people can recognize TFGBV when it is happening and can access available resources.

"Public education, just awareness campaigns about digital abuse so survivors can recognize if it's happening to them early. Healthcare, schools and even employers [should] have trainings so that they can recognize digital abuse and the signs what that might be."

"We need more programs in schools. With everything on social media, they don't even really understand what technology abuse is. There's not a genuine understanding among younger children, middle schools, high schools and there should be programs."

"Just bringing awareness to more things and so there is awareness of the impact of access. Right down to allowing people to be on your phone plans."

LEGAL PROTECTION

Although TFGBV is not a new form of gender-based violence, it is one that is constantly evolving, making it difficult for the criminal and civil legal system to keep up. Currently, acts of TFGBV have to fit within existing NYS penal law, such as cyber stalking being charged using one of the existing stalking crimes. Survivors recommend legislation that would lessen the burden of proof for the victim, enhance understanding of the tactics and impact of TFGBV, recognize the weaponization of the legal system by abusers, and increase accountability of those who commit TFGBV.

"Legislation and laws that support victims, specifically of technology-based abuse, especially after hearing from multiple organizations that it is more difficult for someone like me to get an order of protection against my abuser because it's technology-based. So that's definitely a struggle that I would like to see and would just want more support for people who go through this."

Conclusion

Building on its 30+ year history of working to continually improve New York State's response to and prevention of domestic violence, OPDV has expanded its work over the last five years to address all forms of gender-based violence, including an evolving understanding of technology-facilitated gender-based violence. To underscore the importance of this shift, OPDV intentionally sought to hear from victims and survivors of technology-facilitated gender-based violence for this round of survivor listening sessions.

Governor Kathy Hochul is also addressing TFGBV head on, because of the immediate danger this form of GBV poses for New Yorkers:

- To protect young people from online dangers and distractions and improve their mental health and wellbeing, Governor Hochul championed a nation-leading bell-to-bell cellphone ban in all New York State K-12 schools in her 2025 State of the State, which is now in effect.
- As part of her 2024 State of the State, Governor Hochul directed OPDV to develop sextortion-focused training and technical assistance programs, create a public-facing informational website, and public awareness campaign.
- Also in 2024, Governor Hochul also signed nation-leading legislation (S.7694A/A.8148A) to combat addictive social media feeds and protect kids online.
- Governor Hochul established a nation-leading law to require AI companionship companies to implement safety features and interrupt users engaging for sustained periods with these systems. AI companions will be required to detect and implement a safety protocol if a user talks about suicidal ideation or self-harm, including referring them to a crisis center, and will be required to notify and remind users that they are not interacting with a human.
- Governor Hochul also signed innovative bills to bolster New York's status as a national leader in combating TFGBV and meaningfully engage youth in these conversations by establishing the New York Teen Tech Council.
- In 2023, New York State updated violations of Penal Law §245.15 (Unlawful Dissemination or Publication of an Intimate Image), to include synthetic images like deepfakes or AI generated images. Unlawful dissemination or publication of an intimate image, whether real or synthetic, is a class A misdemeanor.

New York State has positioned itself at the forefront of promoting online safety and preventing TFGBV due to Governor Hochul's decisive actions. OPDV applauds the expansive work being done under Governor Hochul's leadership to address TFGBV in New York State.

In addition, this year the federal government signed the Tools to Address Known Exploitation by Immobilizing Technological Deepfakes on Websites and Networks (Take It Down) Act into law. The Take It Down Act prohibits the nonconsensual online publication of intimate images, videos, and other visual depictions of individuals, both real images and computer-generated deepfakes or synthetic images. Threats to publish intimate images, videos, and visual depictions of an individual is also prohibited under this new law and is subject to criminal penalties. Violators are subject to mandatory restitution and criminal penalties, including prison, a fine, or both. This law also requires certain online platforms like public websites, online services, or applications that primarily provide a forum for user-generated content, to promptly remove such images, videos, or depictions upon receiving notice of their existence within 48 hours.

Survivors' testimonials identified a need for comprehensive training for GBV response system professionals about TFGBV and how to respond in a survivor-centered, trauma-informed, and culturally responsive way. They also noted the need for increased education and public awareness to help people recognize TFGBV and the resources available to assist those impacted by it. Survivors would also like increased legal protections that recognize and confront the seriousness of TFGBV and provide pathways to safety for survivors.

OPDV agrees with these survivor recommendations and continues to ask what more we can be doing as a state to address all forms of gender-based violence, in particular, TFGBV, with its constantly changing landscape? Part of the answer involves learning more, including through increased research and collaboration, and continued opportunities for survivors to share their experiences and recommendations.

Survivors recommend training for the GBV response system to increase knowledge of TFGBV and survivor-centered, trauma-informed, and culturally responsive approaches. OPDV is currently providing training that addresses those topics, as described earlier. We are committed to going further than just offering trainings on the topic. OPDV will stay up to date on the latest tactics of abuse, so that we can develop ongoing and updated trainings that are relevant to the GBV response field and most importantly, help professionals meet the evolving needs of victims and survivors of TFGBV. We encourage our state agency partners and all professionals that work to address GBV to do the same.

Survivors recommend increased public awareness to draw attention to this form of GBV that is often ignored and dismissed as less serious than other offenses. In addition to the public awareness campaign that OPDV has already launched, we will continue to embed TFGBV awareness into our messaging so that we increase community-wide recognition and referrals. This recommendation is particularly important because TFGBV is perpetuated by its hidden and secretive nature. Exposing common tactics of abuse will increase awareness, which is the first step in addressing any form of violence.

Survivors also spoke about the need for laws that address the unique forms of abuse perpetrated

through TFGBV to increase accountability of offenders and provide real pathways to safety for victims and survivors.

OPDV is a training and technical assistance resource for the gender-based violence response system and we take that responsibility seriously:

- To build on the progress already made in New York State under Governor Hochul's leadership, OPDV encourages exploring further legislative solutions that increase accountability and take technology into consideration when a person seeks out the criminal and civil legal system for help.
- OPDV remains committed to implementing initiatives that strengthen New York State's response to technology-facilitated gender-based violence and staying up to date on the newest tactics of abuse in this constantly changing landscape of victimization.
- OPDV will continue to develop trainings and resources to help responders recognize and validate technology-facilitated gender-based violence; respond in a survivor-centered, trauma-informed, and culturally responsive manner; and connect victims and survivors to the life-saving resources available.

Acknowledgments

OPDV is grateful to the survivors of technology-facilitated gender-based violence who chose to be part of these survivor listening sessions. Any form of gender-based violence is inherently traumatic. The survivors showed great courage in their willingness to speak about their experiences. We asked participants to share not only what went well when they accessed the gender-based violence response system, but also what did not go well. Sharing these experiences with a Cabinet-level executive state government agency is an act of bravery. We respectfully acknowledge their trust in to deliver their messages. We extend our sincere gratitude for their participation in this project and their genuine desire to promote excellence in the service delivery system.

To the non-profit organizations who dedicated their time to plan and participate in the listening sessions, we extend our appreciation for their partnership and respect for their tireless work. Despite the challenge of limited resources, they are committed to this work and ensure the voices of survivors are heard. Their partnership has been instrumental to the success of this project.

Appendix

Confidentiality

Protecting participants' identities is paramount in the listening sessions. Efforts to maintain confidentiality can be noted throughout the process. We also prioritize confidentiality in reporting on the information gathered in the listening sessions.

- The names of the partner non-profit organizations are not shared publicly to ensure that neither the organizations nor participants' identities can be determined.
- In preparation for participation, survivors worked with their advocates to discuss implications to their safety to mitigate potential risks. This includes strategizing for safer use of their technology during the listening sessions.
- Participation in the listening sessions is voluntary.
- Because the sessions are conducted virtually, participants were able to have their cameras on or off and could use aliases during the sessions. This allows them to keep their identity private from other participants if desired.
- The sessions are recorded to assist OPDV staff in the transcription of the sessions, ensuring fidelity of the quotes. OPDV has restricted access to these recordings, and they will be deleted upon creation of an accurate transcript.
- OPDV requests that participants voluntarily provide demographic information. We understand the many reasons why someone may not want to provide this information, but it helps inform the State in making decisions about things such as services and funding.
    - The demographic data is collected in a manner that does not disclose any personally identifying information (PII). PII is information that, when used alone or with other relevant data, can identify an individual.
    - OPDV will only use any data collected as aggregate data. Aggregate data is data that is collected from multiple sources and is compiled into data summaries or reports.

Informed Consent

Survivor-centered, trauma-informed, and culturally responsive processes must include opportunities to give power back to survivors. Their experiences are theirs to share with intention.

- OPDV hosted information sessions for the partner organizations, so they fully understood the process.
- OPDV provided information to potential participants, so they were fully informed of the purpose of participation.
- The non-profit organizations and the survivors considering participation in the listening sessions received the questions in advance. The advocates from the partner program reviewed the questions with participants before they confirmed participation.
- Survivors who chose to participate were provided a consent form informing them of the process and purpose of the listening sessions. OPDV retains these consent forms in a secure location following best research practices.

GBV Response System Formal Support

- ***Non-profit victim services providers*** *such as those that focus specifically on domestic violence, sexual assault, stalking, and trafficking.*
- ***Hotlines*** *such as National, State, and local domestic violence, sexual assault, mental health, or other crisis lines.*
- ***Department of Social Services (DSS)*** *where people access public benefits such as TANF, SNAP and HEAP benefits, child support, employment assistance, housing assistance, child or adult preventive or protective services.*
- ***Non-profit community-based organizations*** *such as disability services providers, homeless service providers, community action agencies, senior services, etc.*
- ***Law enforcement*** *such as police officers and prosecutors (district attorney), criminal defense*

attorneys, and criminal court judges/other criminal court personnel.

- ***Civil legal services** such as court-appointed attorneys or non-profit civil legal service providers for representation in family court on matters related to orders of protection, child custody and child support, and family court judges/other family court personnel.*
- ***Medical/healthcare** such as emergency department staff, including sexual assault forensic nurse examiners (SANE), primary care physicians.*
- ***Mental health providers** such as psychotherapists and substance abuse treatment providers.*
- ***Education services** such as k-12 education, college education, and the gender-based violence related protections within the educational systems such as Title IX protections and the Dignity for All Students Act.*

***Informal support** refers to emotional support or other concrete assistance from family, friends, colleagues, spiritual/faith communities and web-based support.*

Survivor Listening Session Questions

1. If technology was used to cause harm, what type of harm did it cause?
2. What are your current safety concerns about the misuse of technology to harm you?
3. How did technology-facilitated gender-based violence impact you?
4. If you sought help from any part of the gender-based violence response system about technology-facilitated gender-based violence, please describe the successes and challenges of that help.
5. What suggestions do you have for improving the gender-based violence system response system?

Survivor Experiences

Additional quotes from SLS participants.

CYBERSTALKING

"I've experienced stalking through social media, through email, apps having been downloaded on my phone."

"When we got married, we got a family account. He was able to track everybody."

"Checking me on my Apple watch. I thought it was a precious gift…so cool. I look like James Bond. I can answer my calls from the watch…Meanwhile, he was using it to track me."

"He was able to track everywhere I was going, popping up where I was, having sharing location (sic), knowing just knowing everywhere I was at every second of the day, basically."

"When they can pinpoint where you are or send you a photo of where you were….if I was talking to a friend they didn't know they would question me. They would wake me up in the middle of my sleep and they questioned me about it. Everything on my phone was open for them to take as soon as I fell asleep."

"[It] was almost like they had a notification anytime I posted anything I shared. They'd be the 1st person to 'like' it. They'd be the 1st person to view it, things like that. You feel like [you're] being stalked."

SURVEILLANCE

"They [traffickers] would use home cameras, baby cameras, any kind of camera to keep me in control. They would monitor anything and everything that was done. They would use technology to control and set up abuse in terms of trafficking."

"He'll be outside my house sometimes and he'll just record me in my room."

"I was fully surveilled, including the bathroom, living room, my room, my kids' room. That was just a complete lack of privacy which cause a lot of emotional and psychological harm."

HACKING

"They would use the apps associated with the jobs [I had] that told me how hours and pay I was to accrue."

"I use Family Wizard app and that ended up being hacked by the person pretending to be a child."

CONTROLLING ACCESS TO TECHNOLOGY

"I couldn't get into it [laptop] unless he was home and gave it to me. He put in his password."

"When I 'misbehaved' or didn't do what I was supposed to do, my phone would be taken away."

ONLINE IMPERSONATION

"The fake profiles, friend requests. When I go on certain apps, they have information where again, the stalking piece. They know where I'm at and what I'm doing. You think you're interacting with a person you know, and it ends up being the abuser."

"I'm sitting there trying to explain to [my] children, like, mommy didn't do that. [and my children say] But daddy said it was you."

"I've got three people reaching out to me so that my ex doesn't have to. And they are reaching out on multiple avenues. So, you block on person on one, but there's so many applications nowadays. Like you have Facebook, you have Instagram. The list just goes on and on. You could be sitting there for months, years. If you block one account somebody can just easily make another one. All you have to do is go on Google. Just create another account."

IMAGE-BASED GENDER-BASED VIOLENCE

"At the time, I didn't even have social media and my pictures were still all over the internet. Pictures that he even altered."

"The last victimization was being trafficked... forcing [me] to record sexual interactions with people who I didn't consent [to have sexual relations with]."

"He would also hack into any intimate videos we had together and then start sending them around. That also made me feel unsafe because I don't know if more videos would end up going out."

Impact of TFGBV on Survivors

Additional quotes from SLS participants.

ISOLATION

"He would take [the cell phone] with him and like he knew that made me very, very, very depressed. It took away a lot of my freedom for me. I wasn't able to call up my mother or father to say hi. I wasn't allowed to like do that unless he was home, and he knew who I called."

"[We had] no computers. He turned off the internet on us so we couldn't even log on and get help that way."

"I also kind of socially isolated, just worried about damage to my reputation. It might not have been a physical safety risk, but it did create barriers with social, you know, in isolating myself."

"I experienced [harassment through] text messages from him and family members. I guess that was his way of getting back at me. It just shut down completely. I stopped going to my groups. I stopped going outside. I literally stopped answering the phone. Family members and friends would come by and check on me just to make sure I was okay."

"There's a mistrust that other people have for me. Like, I don't want to be around you because this person might come looking for me. So then I lose out on the connection of friends, healthy relationships."

"I couldn't talk to anybody because we didn't have a home phone and he would control me that way and even with our laptops, I couldn't get into it unless he was home and gave me the password."

"It made me very isolated and scared because he had control of everything. Our phones. Our computers. I had no access to get any kind of help. He turned off the internet on us. So, it made me feel very scared and alone not having any technology to help me."

"I'd rather not be seen because I don't want this person to know my moves or where I'm at."

"My child doesn't get class pictures done at school."

"I have to watch who I accept as a friend [on social media]."

"I don't really post on Facebook a lot, because I'm just afraid who's gonna see it and let him know."

"I have to be mindful of the use of social media. Don't post whereabouts or images. Must always take into consideration the impact to my safety."

"My ten-year-old has an iPad, has an Oculus, has a laptop. I'm doing weekly checks, taking apart every other conversation she has with anyone. I'm worried about what she has downloaded on her computer, on her laptop or computer or her cell phone, not wanting her to carry it even when she needed to contact me because I'm worried about what people may do. They're so clever these days that I saw somewhere you could put yourself next to someone and it could take your information. She says I smother her and may be a little overbearing. But better safe than sorry."

FEAR

"Fear. Constantly having to walk on eggshells not knowing when they were gonna pop up or where they were gonna pop up and I have two small children too. That brought fear into them because they are with me most of the time, so they're kind of scared of when this person's gonna show up."

"I worry about when the restraining order is up. Is she going to just exploit me completely on the internet? Is she going to dead name me? Because I've already had people do that. They'll just threaten me with it through text message and tell me they're going to post it everywhere, let everybody know. Once things are on the internet, they are there forever. Who I was before my transition is still there and it's hard to block all of that and I've had people dive deep to find it all. So, all that worries me for the future and especially getting a job. I don't want my job to know that I'm trans. It's not the first thing I want people to know. It doesn't make me feel safe."

"I was really afraid. I didn't know if I were to seek help if he would know because he was recording. He surveilled our house, forced me to work at the same job. There were limited private moments I had throughout the duration of our relationship. So there really wasn't space for that without feeling afraid or that I would get caught. And culturally, seeking help is never the first "go to" per se. I grew up in such a way that what goes on stays between you and it's your business and we don't include other people in our business. So I carried this for a long time. Until I broke free from that."

"Does he have me [on videos or still images] getting undressed?"

"I felt paranoid. Where I felt I couldn't trust people around me. I didn't always know what was real and not real. It was used to keep me quiet because if I'm being told someone else is always listening to what I'm saying, it's a high level of paranoia. I had to put my cell phone in the microwave to talk."

"I might get tripped up psychologically. There can be times where I start to feel like maybe I'm being watched or maybe I'm being recorded or different things that make me feel like I don't have privacy or safety."

ECONOMIC ABUSE

"Economically, I've been impacted through technology abuse because all of that ties down to your credit, finances, housing. Anything that you need, bills, your children. So, I've been affected in all those areas. You're constantly having to rebuild yourself over and over again. Constantly having to find new jobs, new childcare, find housing, get another car. It's a ripple effect."

"[They]did not allow me to have a bank account. They have different accounts as he controlled the money. They had login credentials to them. The technology they used for tracking. They used it for gaining my monetary earnings."

EMPLOYMENT SABOTAGE

"There's a financial aspect to this as well. I had already spent money on a lawyer and family court against my ex. I had lost my job. I didn't have a lot of resources to fight these two other individuals. I just felt like there was nothing to do to make his friends stop."

"It causes harm professionally because I don't have that platform [LinkedIn]. It's another opportunity I'm missing out on. [I] lose opportunities that I have otherwise would have gone for."

"[He] knows where I work and his family has been associated with where I work in the past. It's definitely troubling to me that he could pop up at any time and I have a public facing job, so I feel very much vulnerable in that position. This made me want to get a different job in a different location. I also asked to have my photo taken down from the website."

"I've worked very hard to get where I am in my career, and one of his friends, at some point, made a threat to me to call my employer to make various accusations against me. So, when I finally did get a new job, I wasn't advertising it on LinkedIn. I wasn't networking as much as I normally would be, which is very important, you know in any career, because I didn't want him and his friends to find out where I worked."

"[I was] scared to even get a job. Are you gonna pop up or are you gonna record me? Where are you gonna be? Unfortunately, it led to me losing everything and trying to just hold on. So, it really mentally impacted me."

"I lost my job because my health was so poor. I had to go on unemployment. I was calling all these different programs to try and help myself get through, so I didn't lose my apartment. From a financial standpoint, it just set me back so much."

PHYSICAL AND PSYCHOLOGICAL HEALTH CONSEQUENCES

"I was hospitalized due to worsening anxiety."

"I've lost work because of this. I've had my health issues spike up to the extreme stress and [have been] physically sick from it."

"[I experienced] hypervigilance, insomnia, panic attacks."

"It causes a lot of stress and sleepless nights."

"They were extremely controlling with technology to the point where I didn't know the date and time."

"It has impacted me mentally, which then affected everything around me because of fear which I was always thinking about protection for myself and my children. I was unable to mentally provide for myself or my kids because I was always in survival mode or watching over my shoulder or scared to leave my children. Scared to take them to school."

"When I experienced technology violence, it made me feel very, very depressed. Made me like second guess who I was and second guess my worth because I know I deserve better."

"It took me a long time to reestablish my places in the world and re-interact with people comfortably without any type of anxiety or their judgement of me. It just caused unnecessary anxiety."

"Gaslighting was very present in my situation. He would say, 'Oh, you called this person?' No, I didn't. Or he would delete things off of my phone. I'd say, I called to tell you [where] I was. I was doing this while I was running late. 'No, you didn't. I can show you on my phone and my call history is somehow different. Or texts would somehow disappear from my phone. You become very unsure of yourself. Did I say that? Did I do that? It was a long period of second guessing myself.

Strengths and Challenges of the GBV Response System

Additional quotes from SLS participants.

STRENGTHS

"It gave me peace of mind. They were willing to take these avenues, and I felt very much, you know, supported because I feel like maybe the hardest thing for me was feeing alone in all this. My first call was not only returned, but I felt that I had undivided attention. I was given help right on the spot."

"I sought out help and it was very helpful to reach out to an organization and feel more in control of the situation and have sympathetic people who truly understand and resources. That was definitely very helpful emotionally and financially. It made me feel safer."

"Legal aid was able to assist me with going through the process of an order of protection. They were able to assist me with being escorted to my court hearings and back to get processes done."

CHALLENGES

"Treated the technology abuse like it was no big deal. There was infrequent communication with the investigative team...felt disregarded... like they were letting time pass waiting for her to drop the case."

"It was very much a feeling of being disregarded. It was a feeling of this, you know, why are you bothering us with this? I have no proof."

"I shouldn't have to be constantly calling and emailing them for an update when I know that's part of the victim's rights that we should be able to be kept abreast of any details."

"It was overwhelming. I wanted to give up. I understand DV. I understand the paths and avenues of what you're supposed to take. I know the steps, so I'm like, if I struggled this much, what about the people that haven't worked in a DV situation and don't know all the steps? It was overwhelming and I wanted to give up, so like how does everyone else feel?"

"There wasn't enough proof. I can't prove if he's using my son to talk to me. How am I going to prove that? It's hard. I'll even tell them that I can tell the difference between when I'm talking to my child and when I'm talking to an adult. And even with that there's still not enough proof. That's tech abuse if he's using my child to communicate with me or if he's using my Amazon account. I've had the situation where he tapped into the Amazon account and was buying things in my son's name. I try to explain that as well. My accounts, my funds are being taken. Now they're tracking me every second of the day, knowing where I am... [I get told] that's a custody matter you need to deal with. We can't give you an order of protection for that."

"I did not necessarily know that these systems existed. So my challenges would be finding more [resources]. I don't think at the time I recognized it as technology abuse, so I did not reach out to resources."

"The judge said that my husband had the right to essentially stalk me and my child."

References

1. James, S. E., Herman, J. L., Rankin, S., Keisling, M., motet, L., and Anafi, M. (2016). The Report of the 2015 U.S. Transgender Survey. Retrieved from https://transequality.org/sites/default/files/docs/usts/ USTS-Full-Report-Dec17.pdf
2. Kulkarni, S. (2019). Intersectional trauma-informed intimate partner violence (IPV) services: Narrowing the gap between IPV service delivery and survivor needs. Journal of Family Violence, 34, 55–64. https://link.springer.com/article/10.1007/s10896-018-0001-5
3. Leemis R.W., Friar N., Khatiwada S., Chen M.S., Kresnow M., Smith S.G., Caslin, S., & Basile, K.C. (2022). The National Intimate Partner and Sexual Violence Survey: 2016/2017 Report on Intimate Partner Violence. Atlanta, GA: National Center for Injury Prevention and Control, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.
4. Messinger, A. M., Kudyla, V., & Guadalupe-Diaz, X. L. (2021). Intimate partner violence help-seeking in the U.S. Transgender Survey. Journal of Homosexuality, 69(6). https://doi.org/10.1080/00918369.2021 .1901506
5. Sardinha, L., Maheu-Giroux, M., Stöckl, H., Meyer, S.R., & Garcia-Moreno, C. (2022.) Global, regional, and national prevalence estimates of physical or sexual, or both, intimate partner violence against women in 2018. The Lancet, 399, 803-813. https://doi.org/10.1016/ S0140-6736(21)02664-7
6. Smith, S.G., Zhang, X., Basile, K.C., Merrick, M.T., Wang, J., Kresnow, M., Chen, J. (2018). The National Intimate Partner and Sexual Violence Survey (NISVS): 2015 Data Brief – Updated Release. Atlanta, GA: National Center for Injury Prevention and Control, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention
7. Walker, H.E., Freud, J.S., Ellis, R.A., Fraine, S.M., & Wilson, L.C. (2019). The prevalence of sexual revictimization: A meta-analytic review. Trauma, Violence, & Abuse, 20(1), 67-80. https://doi. org/10.1177/1524838017692364

NEW YORK STATE

Office for the Prevention of Domestic Violence

New York State Domestic and Sexual Violence Hotline

Text: 844.997.2121
Call: 800.942.6906
Chat: opdv.ny.gov

Free. Confidential. 24/7.
Available in most languages

For more information, contact us:

518-457-5800

opdvpublicinfo@opdv.ny.gov

https://opdv.ny.gov/