Arizona
Domestic Violence
Fatality Report
2012

With deepest sympathy, the Board of Directors and staff of AzCADV dedicate this report to the surviving loved ones of victims of domestic violence homicide.

Contents

Introduction

The complicated dynamics of domestic violence make it a difficult issue for some to grasp. The relationship may start out normally and may continue that way for some time, but abuse may begin with insults and isolation from family and friends. The violence usually escalates and may be verbal, emotional, physical, sexual, or may contain elements from all of those categories. Recent research shows that abusive male partners may also engage in reproductive coercion. Reproductive coercion is defined as a pattern of behaviors exerting control over a partner's reproductive health; it is perpetrated by an adult or adolescent against an intimate partner. It includes attempts to impregnate her against her wishes, forcing or coercing sex without a condom, sabotaging contraceptive efforts, and using threats or acts of violence to control the outcome of a pregnancy.

These abusive verbal, emotional, sexual, and physical acts are different in the context of an abusive relationship than when used against strangers or even friends. Perpetrators utilize a series of behaviors which create a coercive, controlling atmosphere that leaves victims dependent on them for all of their emotional and often financial needs. These acts, however, are intermingled with acts of love and healthy behaviors, adding to the victim's confusion. The time immediately after a victim leaves an abusive relationship is statistically the most dangerous, as the abuser may attempt to gain his or her power back through increased physical violence.

Since 2005, at least 915 Arizonans have lost their lives in domestic violence related incidents. These tragedies represent a small fraction of those involved in abusive relationships in this state, but they demonstrate a wide ranging potential for lethality in intimate and familial situations.

Methodology

This document examines the fatalities that occurred in Arizona from January 1 – December 31, 2012. Each year, the Arizona Coalition Against Domestic Violence (AzCADV) catalogues domestic violence related fatalities by combing through hundreds of news articles from all over the state containing certain keywords. In 2010, the Coalition transitioned from a physical clipping service to an online service.

The domestic violence statute in Arizona, ARS 13-3601, outlines crimes that can be charged as domestic violence if the perpetrator and victim meet the defined relationship criteria: current or former spouses, people who currently live or previously lived together, people in a current or previous romantic or sexual relationship, people who share a child in common or one is pregnant by the other party, relations by blood or court order, or cases where the victim is a child with a specific relationship to the defendant.

Domestic violence is an attachment crime in Arizona, meaning certain crimes can be "tagged" as domestic violence. For example, an assault on a stranger will be charged as assault, but an assault by a perpetrator against a person with whom they have a specific relationship can be charged as assault per domestic violence. The list of crimes that can be tagged as domestic violence was expanded in 2010 to include the homicide and manslaughter statutes as well as sexual assault, unlawful imprisonment, animal cruelty, and prevention of the use of a telephone in an emergency.

In order to create a complete picture of the lives lost to domestic violence in Arizona, the deaths are not limited to intimate partner homicides. They include homicides perpetrated by family members as well as suicides related to incidents of domestic violence and perpetrators killed by law enforcement when they respond to a domestic violence call. Our list also contains information of bystanders killed because they were at the scene with the intended victim, or because they are seen as a sexual competitor to the perpetrator. The methodology creates a reasonably comprehensive list, but AzCADV recognizes that it is inherently incomplete. Some fatalities fail to garner a news article, or information related to underlying domestic violence may not be included. Other deaths may occur in related circumstances but cannot be specifically linked to domestic violence. For instance, between 22% and 57% of homeless women report domestic or sexual violence was the immediate cause of their homelessness (NNEDV). Some victims may die from conditions associated with living on the street, which is difficult to trace back to their experiences of domestic violence. Additionally, it is very difficult to document the link between suicide and domestic violence. Some victims may take their own lives to escape the abuse, and the public would rarely know (Suicide.org).

Another complication arising from our methodology is that entire populations may be overlooked by the media. Incidents occurring on tribal lands are not regularly highlighted by mainstream sources, previously leaving a broad gap in this report. Domestic violence incidents among Native women are much higher than other demographics (Tjaden & Thoennes, 2000).

The AzCADV is very fortunate to have partnered with the Federal Bureau of Investigation to begin collecting domestic violence related deaths to include in the 2012 report and here forward. This collaboration increased our toll by 17 victims, or 14%. Because so many cases from tribal communities were not captured in previous years, this 2012 report will refrain from comparing increases and decreases within categories and as a whole.

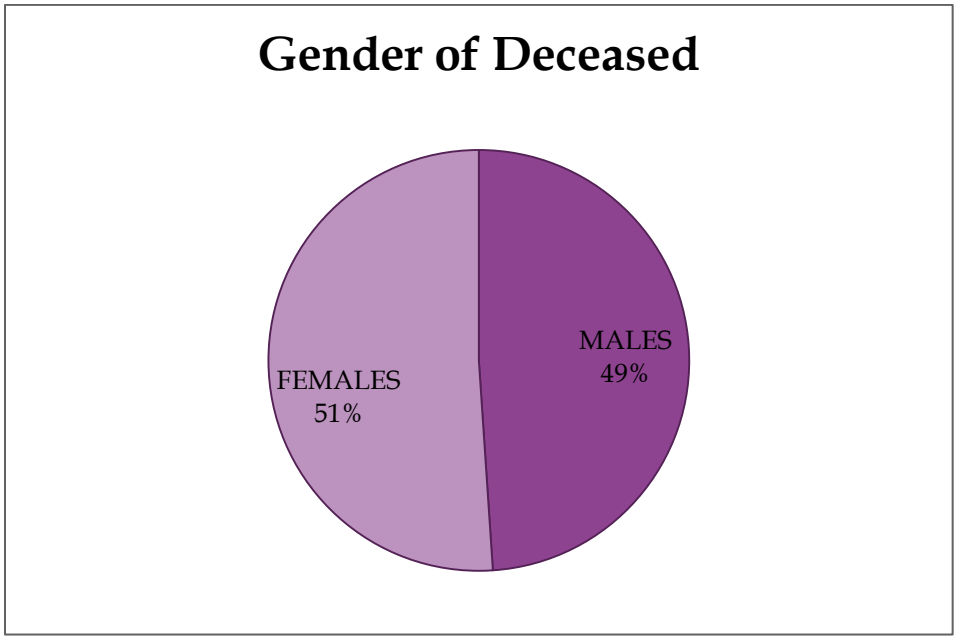
Same sex partners may be another population underrepresented if the intimate partner relationship did not reach media's attention. We also understand isolated immigrant communities are a demographic that faces unique challenges and we are not confident that we have a holistic approach to capturing any reported homicides with this population as well.

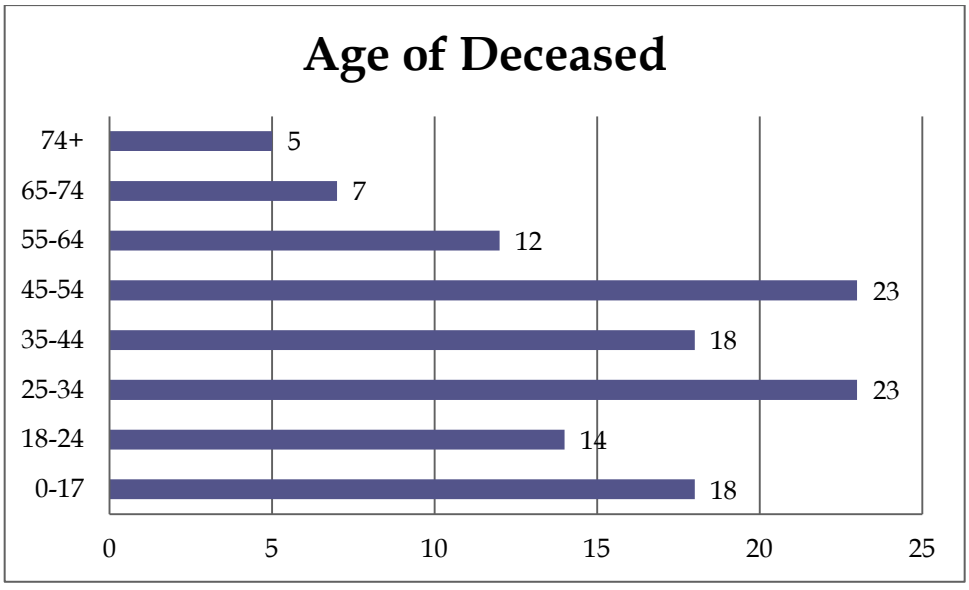
As domestic violence emerged from the confines of people's homes into the public sphere, community understanding and efforts to respond have changed and improved dramatically. Domestic violence programs are the cornerstone of victim safety in Arizona and across the country. The National Network to End Domestic Violence conducts a nationwide census of services delivered by programs. In a single 24 hour period in 2012, programs in Arizona served 1,487 victims, 75% of whom found refuge in shelters or transitional housing. Programs provided individual advocacy and group support for adults and children as well as court accompaniment and legal advocacy. Hotlines answered 252 calls for help, providing support, safety planning, referrals, and information. However, in that 24 hour period, 152 requests for services went unmet due to funding limitations. Programs did not have available beds or enough staff to meet every request, so some victims in Arizona are not finding help from conventional sources even when they find the courage to reach out. In June of 2012, the Arizona Department of Economic Security announced a new funding formula for Arizona's domestic violence programs. While some programs received an increase, others saw their funding slashed by up to 80%.

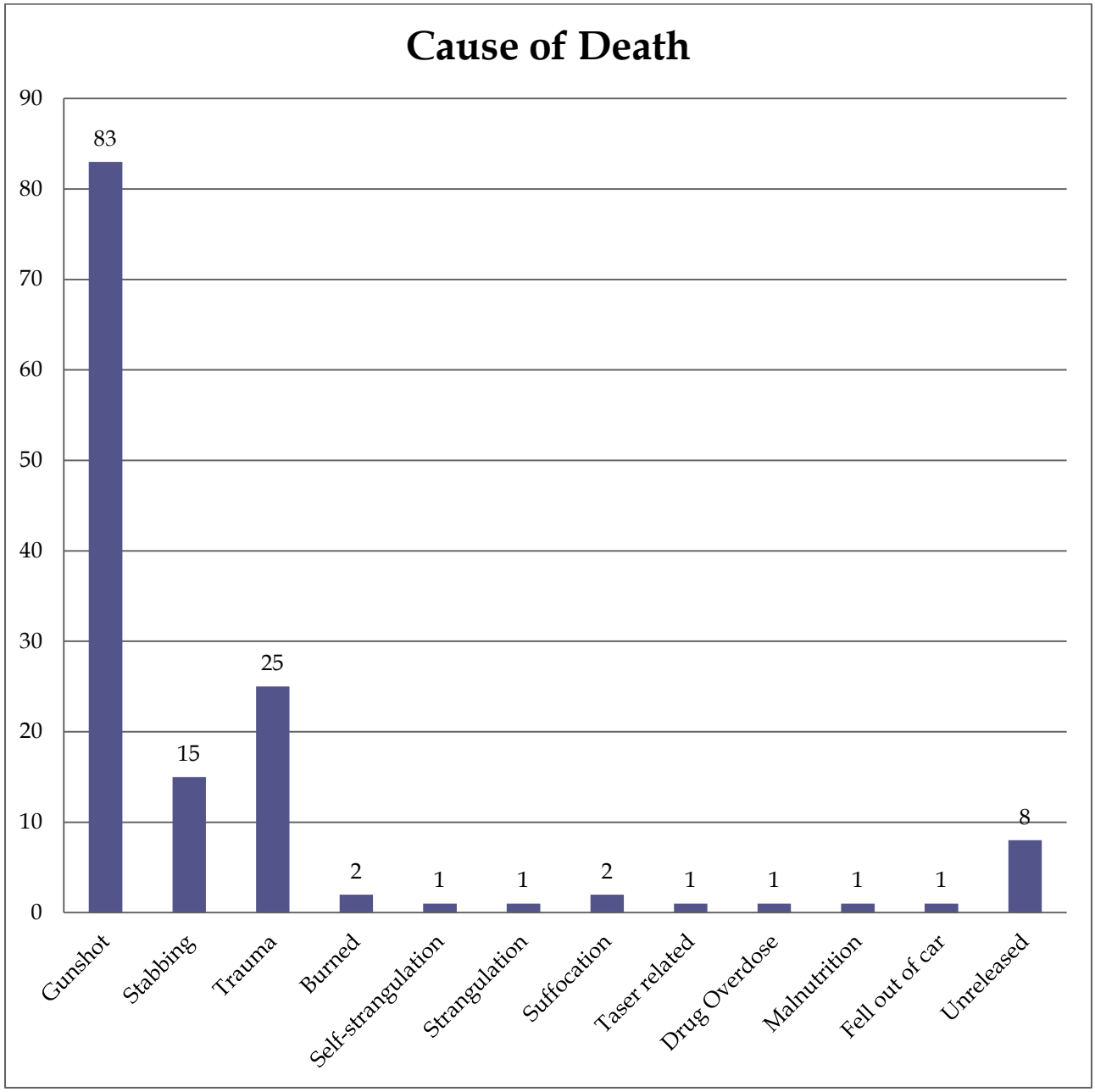
Statistical Overview 2012

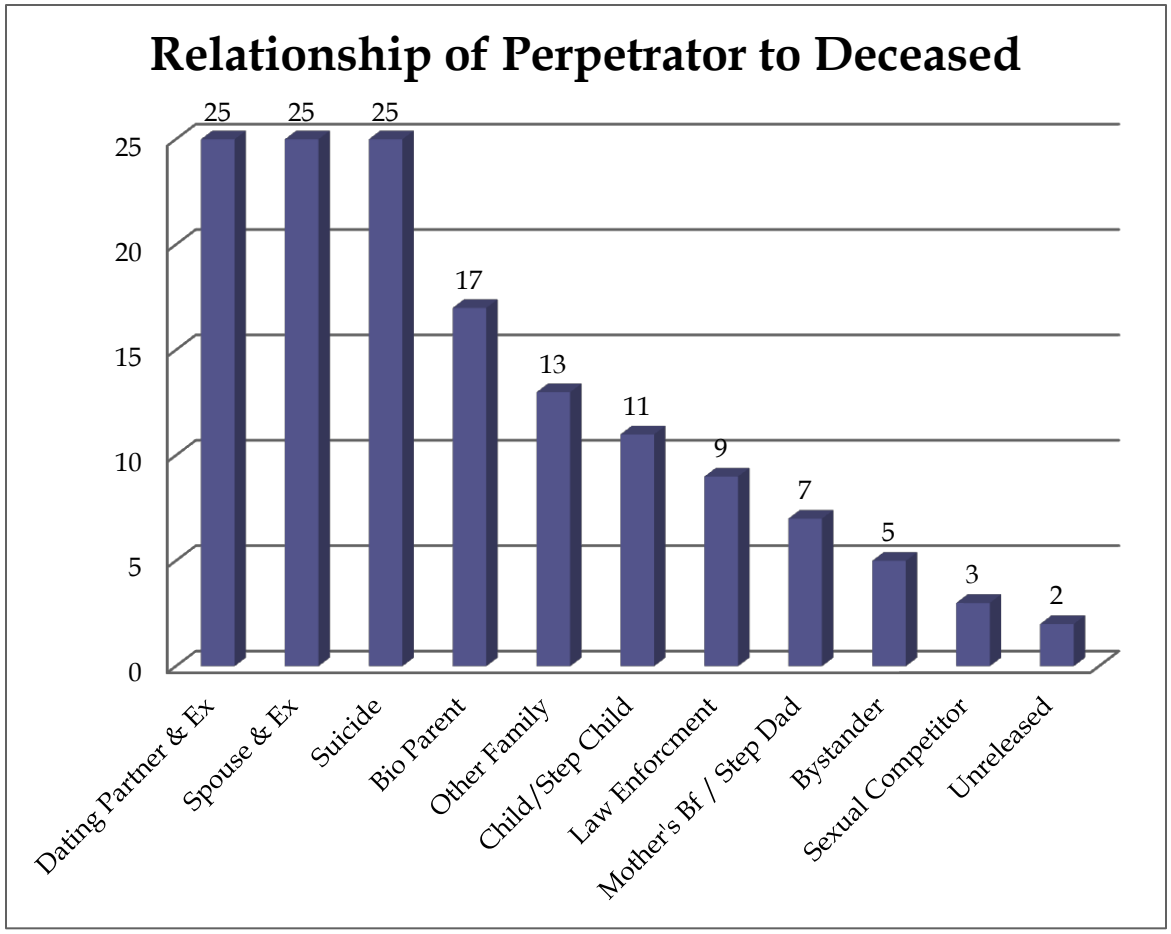
At least 139 individuals lost their lives due to domestic violence fatalities in 2012.

- 71 were female
- 68 were male






Cause of Death
90
80
70
60
50
40
30
20
10
0
83
15
25
2
1
1
2
1
1
1
1
8
Gunshot
Stabbing
Trauma
Burned
Self-strangulation
Strangulation
Suffocation
Taser related
Drug Overdose
Malnutrition
Fell out of car
Unreleased



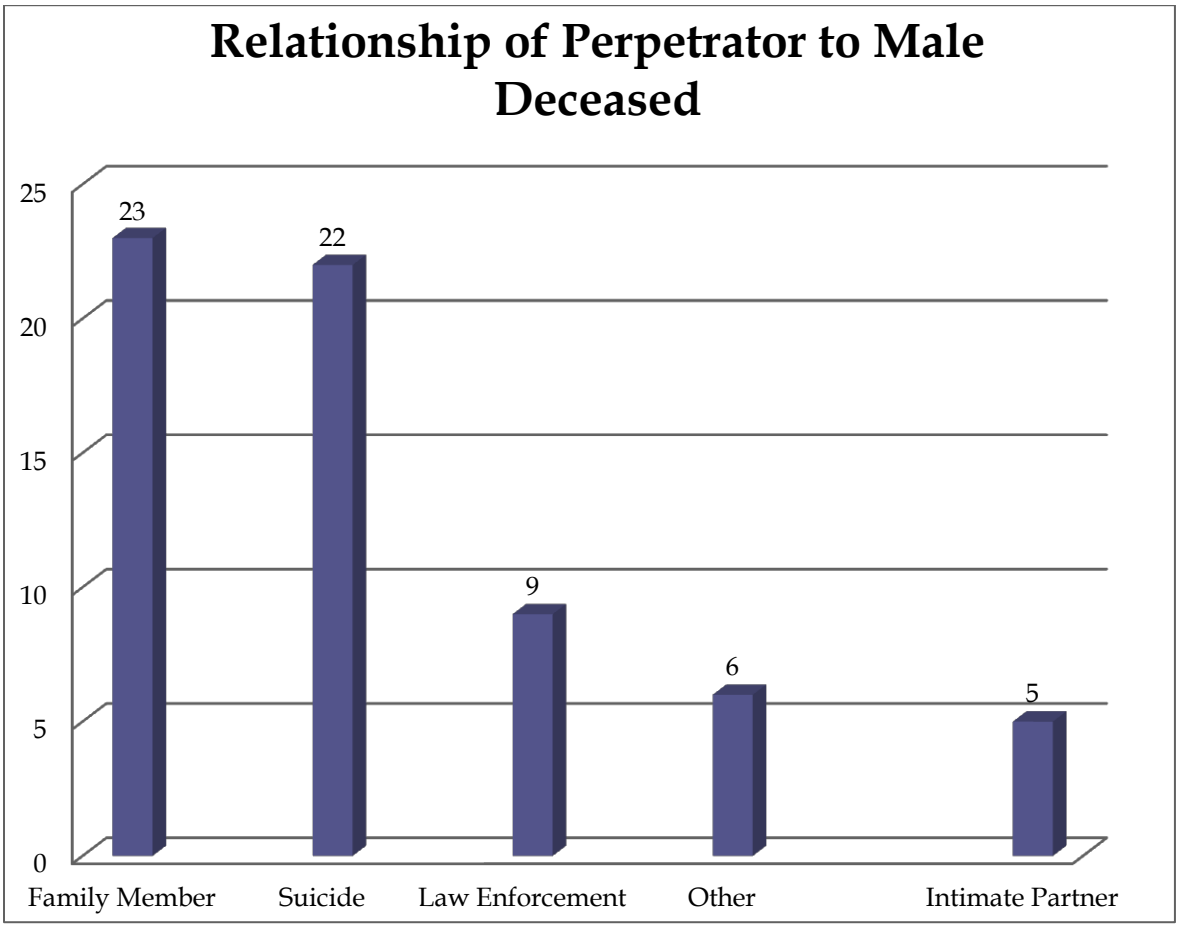
"Suicide" refers to persons who committed suicide in the context of a domestic violence incident.

Sex of Deceased & Relationship to Perpetrator

Males

In 2012, at least 68 males died in domestic violence related incidents in Arizona. Of these:

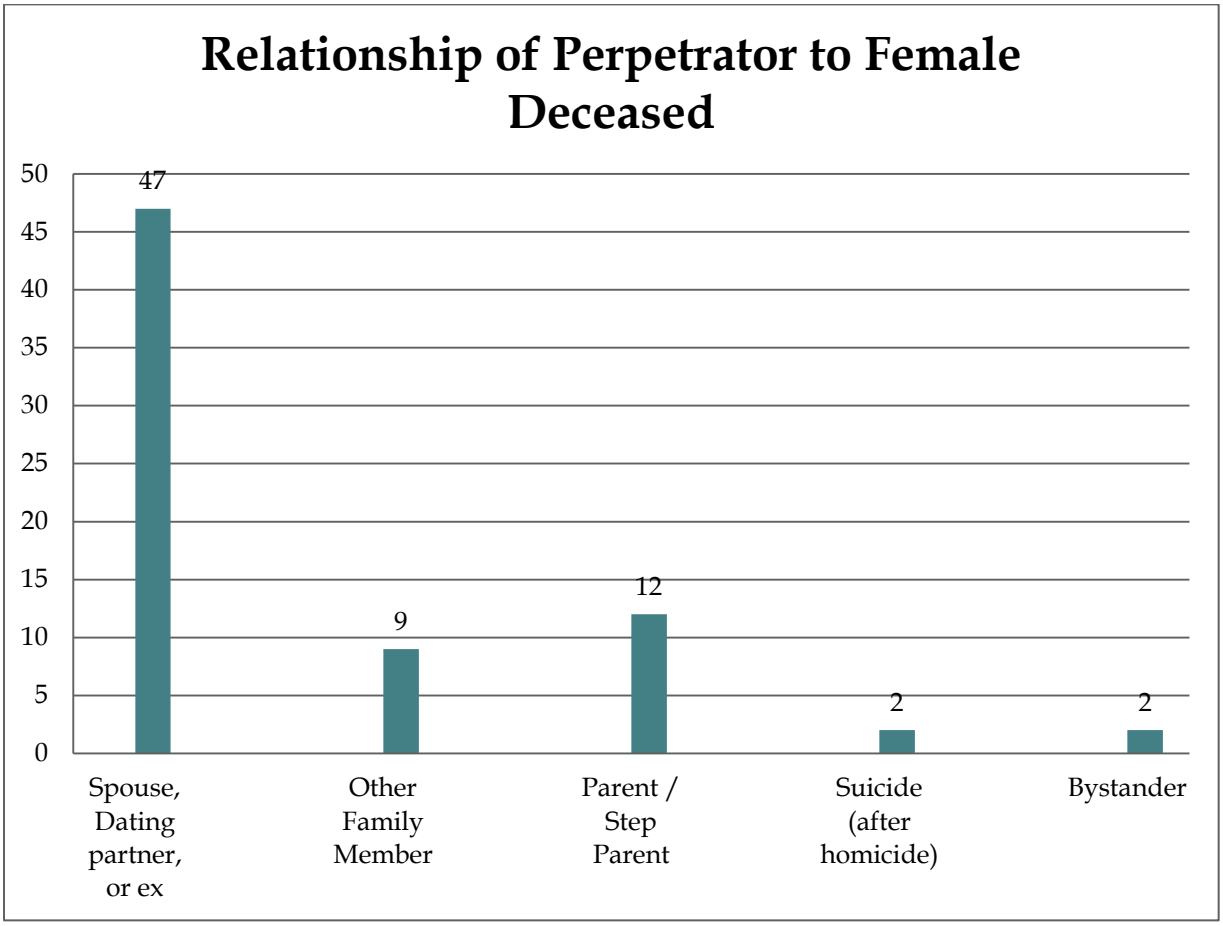
- 22 of them took their own lives
    - 19 men took their lives after killing their intimate partner and / or children
    - 3 men took their lives after threatening to kill
- 5 were victims of intimate partner violence (IPV), which are discussed in the "Intimate Partner Homicide" section
- 9 were killed by law enforcement responding to a domestic violence call
- 11 were killed by their parents or step-parents
- 3 were killed by a sexual competitor
- 2 were bystanders killed while the intentional victim was also killed
- The remaining males died at the hands of a family member



Females

In 2012, at least 71 females died in domestic violence related incidents. In contrast to male victims, female victims were most likely to be murdered by a current or former intimate partner. Those cases are discussed more in depth in the "Intimate Partner Homicides" section. The information we obtained showed that:

- 47 were killed by a current or former intimate partner
- 12 were killed by a parent, step-parent, or mother's boyfriend
- 2 committed suicide after killing their intimate partner
- 2 were bystanders
- The remaining 9 were killed by other family members



Intimate Partner Homicide

47 women and 5 men were the victims of intimate partner homicide. These deaths comprised 37% of the total deaths.

Male Victims of IPV	5
Wife / Common Law Wife	4
Boyfriend	1

Case Example: Female Perpetrated Homicide

Police responded to an unspecified call for service and found Donald Mellon, 46, suffering from a gunshot wound - who later died at the hospital According to the prosecutor, police have a video of the murder showing Rebekah "obtaining a weapon – a handgun – from a cabinet, walking into the room where the victim was sitting and shooting him in the head." Officers had repeatedly responded to the home for "arguments" but no prior arrests had been made.

Female Victims of IPV	47
Husband / Common Law Husband	17
Ex /Estranged Husband	4
Boyfriend	18
Ex-Boyfriend	4
Girlfriend	1
Other (Unreleased, Sexual Partner)	3

Case Example: Male Perpetrated Homicide

Shaniqua Hall, 21, was found dead in a burning apartment. Her boyfriend, Dwandarrius J. Robinson, 21, called police and told them he had returned to find the apartment on fire. Police discovered he had purchased the materials used to restrain her before she was set on fire. She was 8 ½ months pregnant at the time, and Robinson was the father.

In 22 of the above cases, the perpetrators took their own lives after killing their 'love object'. The subsection "Homicide/Suicides" provides more information.

Many of the intimate partner deaths included known lethality indicators. (See Appendix A for more information on current research.) Many of the cases with female victims contained prior domestic violence reported to the media. The single greatest predictor of homicide perpetrated by a romantic partner is prior domestic violence against the woman; this is true both for female and male victims in heterosexual relationships.

Marie Antoinette Mesa was stabbed to death by her boyfriend, Armando Lopez. Her teenage daughter called 911 during the murder. Police had responded three times previously for domestic violence calls in the last year, but police reported that no arrests were made.

Case Example: Male Perpetrated Homicide with Prior Domestic Violence

In many of the cases where females died, media reports cited estrangement. In the context of intimate partner violence, estrangement is based on the perspective of the abusive partner. It may include separation and divorce, but can also be identified when the victim appears to be moving away from the relationship emotionally. For some abusive partners, a victim seeking educational or job opportunities may be perceived as a threat to the relationship.

Thomas Lamont Moton, 38, went to a high school where his estranged girlfriend, Takesha Kasasha Barns, 33, was attending an 8th grade graduation ceremony for their daughter. He shot her multiple times. The two shared two children and had lived together for several years. Moton had a prior domestic violence arrest.

Case Example: Male Perpetrated Homicide with Estrangement

Homicide/Suicides

Of the 52 intimate partner violence homicides we have reported for 2012, 22 (42%) were accompanied by the suicide of the perpetrator. In all but two cases, the perpetrator was male and the victim was female. One of the remaining cases was a same-sex female couple and the other case the female partner killed her husband, and then killed herself.

Case Example: Male Perpetrated Homicide – Suicide

Michael Lloyd Brown, 63, called police and reported that he had just shot his girlfriend and he was going to kill himself. Police found Patricia Lee Hays, 65, and Brown dead of gunshot wounds. They reported that Hays had suffered recent injuries, indicating a physical altercation immediately prior to the shooting.

- *17 Men killed their intimate partner / ex and then themselves*
- *1 man killed his wife, their 3 children and then himself*
- *2 men killed their children and then themselves*
- *1 man killed his intimate partner plus her daughter, granddaughter, bystander and then himself*
- *2 women killed their intimate partners and then themselves*

Familicide

"Familicide refers to the deliberate killing within a relatively short period of time of a current or former spouse or intimate partner and one or more of their children, perhaps followed by the suicide of the perpetrator," (Websdale, 2010, p 1). Children and adolescents were present at many of the homicides mentioned above. In four of the intimate partner homicides cases, children were also killed. In another case in which the estranged couple was having custody arguments, the father killed his two children and then himself. At least 9 children in 2012 lost their lives at the hands of their father, or their mother's current or estranged partner due directly to intimate partner violence.

Officials discovered a burned SUV in the desert in Pinal County. The investigation identified the five bodies as James and Yafit Butwin, along with their three children, Malissa, Daniel, and Matthew. The couple was going through a divorce, and police reported that the notes found at the scene indicated James killed his family before driving the car into the desert and shooting himself.

Case Example: Familicide

Additional Issues

Sexual Competitors

Although the perpetrator and victim rarely know each other well, homicides that result from a 'love triangle' are still conceptualized as a domestic homicide (Websdale, 1999). In 2012, we were able to capture three domestic homicides in which the male perpetrator and the male victim had a current or former female intimate partner in common. In one of these cases, a wife and husband were both arrested for the murder of the man with whom she had extramarital affair with.

Dan Ruble, 32, reported to police he believed his girlfriend's estranged husband, Steven Brandt, 39, was stalking him. The responding officer met with Ruble and upon traveling back to his home, they found Brandt parked outside. As Ruble was walking inside, Brandt pulled out a concealed weapon and shot at Ruble, killing him. The officer fatally shot Brandt.

Case Example: Male Perpetrated Sexual Competitor Homicide

Law Enforcement Involved Domestic Fatalities

In 2012, at least nine domestic violence perpetrators were killed by law enforcement during a domestic violence incident. In two of these cases, the intended victim of the perpetrator was also killed.

Case example: Law enforcement involved domestic fatality.

Two law enforcement officers were walking up to a house to talk to the woman who called for assistance when 49-year-old Samuel William Barnes came out of the house with a rifle and pointed it at her. The officers yelled at him to drop the rifle, but he did not. Both officers opened fire on Barnes. Barnes then pointed the rifle at one of the officers, who again fired at him. Barnes was pronounced dead at a hospital.

Suicide

Threatening to or attempting to commit suicide is a risk factor associated with increased risk of homicide in violent relationships (Campbell, 2003). In 2012, at least three suicides were recorded that were linked to interpersonal violence:

Case examples: Domestic Violence Related Suicides.

- Mark Abbott, 24, went to his ex-girlfriend's house and forced his way inside, locking her mother outside before taking her sister hostage and demanding his ex-girlfriend's phone number. When Abbott realized that police were responding, he released the woman unharmed physically. Police heard a gunshot and found Abbott dead of a self-inflicted wound.
- An unidentified man and woman were arguing when she left the house and ran for help. She had injuries. When officers responded to the home, they heard a gunshot and found the man dead of a self-inflicted wound. Two children, aged 2 months and 4 years, were inside the home but were not physically harmed.
- Police officers arrived at the scene of a domestic dispute to find a man inside of the home and a woman outside with over a dozen stab wounds. The male was pronounced dead at the scene. The wife stated that she woke to find her husband stabbing her and he stabbed himself to death afterwards.

Child and Adolescent Deaths

There were at least 18 homicides with victims under the age of 18 in 2012. All of these children and adolescents were killed by a biological parent, step-parent or caregiver. In two cases, the father committed suicide after killing the children (one immediately, and the other months later while incarcerated) and in another case, the mother attempted suicide after killing her children. For this report, we have only recorded the deaths associated with direct physical abuse, as opposed to neglect – although we understand some of the child fatalities due to neglect in 2012 may have underlying domestic violence related circumstances.

Firearms and Domestic Violence

The vast majority of perpetrators used firearms to kill their victims and/or themselves. Gunshots were cited as the cause of death in 75 fatalities (not including perpetrators killed by law enforcement), more than all other causes combined. It is widely known that keeping firearms out of the hands of domestic violence offenders is a protective factor for victims. Dr. Campbell's groundbreaking work on risk assessment has shown that being attacked or threatened with a weapon increases risk for murder by 20.2 times, and merely having a gun in the home increases the risk by 6.1 times (Campbell, 2003). Under state and federal law, perpetrators who have been convicted of a qualifying misdemeanor, or who have a qualifying Order of Protection against them, are prohibited possessors. However, some offenders manage to retain or obtain weapons, even when those conditions apply.

Trends

As mentioned earlier, the AzCADV is unable to discuss trends of increase/decrease in domestic violence fatalities with this report due to the assistance of the Federal Bureau of Investigation's cooperation in obtaining domestic violence related fatalities on tribal lands, as well as the assistance of the City of Phoenix Prosecutor's Office in tracking child abuse death caused by a parent, step-parent or full-time caregiver. With these additions, our reported cases have substantially increased. We are saddened by the increase in numbers, but are grateful to have a more comprehensive picture for the entire state of Arizona in regard to domestic and family violence.

AzCADV Recommendations

Programmatic Support

Domestic violence victims utilize numerous support services in order to escape abuse. While a small population of all domestic violence victims attempt to access residential or non-residential services, full support from local, state, and federal governments keep these life-saving programs open. Emergency and transitional housing, case management, victim advocacy, legal advocacy, and economic empowerment create an environment where survivors can begin to rebuild their lives. The programs also cannot thrive without aid from their communities. Financial and in-kind donations can help fill the gap left by steep budget cuts.

Social service programs provided by government and non-government agencies offer temporary financial aid, job training, and support for permanent housing for domestic violence survivors who need them. While the Coalition understands the financial situation in Arizona and nationally, additional budget cuts to programs like the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP), Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF), and Women, Infants, and Children (WIC) will place survivors and their children in an increasingly tenuous financial situation. Child care, affordable housing, and transportation have been consistent issues among survivors in AZ for years. Additionally, research has shown domestic violence survivors and their children utilize health care at a greater rate than others, often for years after the abuse has stopped (Futures Without Violence). Victims are at increased risk for a myriad of health problems; asthma, seizures, diabetes, arthritis, and gastrointestinal problems have all been linked to experiences of abuse. The most consistent link is between domestic and sexual violence and reproductive health. Unintended pregnancy, sexually transmitted infections, and even cervical cancer have been connected to abusive relationships (Futures Without Violence). Sufficient access to primary and reproductive health care is essential for survivors to address both short and long-term consequences of abuse.

Risk Assessment

AzCADV continues to encourage exploration of the use of risk assessment in communities across the state. Many law enforcement agencies are in stages of implementation, and universal use of tools may help maximize available resources. Successful responses involve collaboration between multiple agencies, which is occurring in jurisdictions across the state. AzCADV looks forward to continued progress in this area.

Increased Community Awareness and Education

Many of the media reports did not offer information regarding prior systems involvement. Increasing access to information about domestic violence through community-based training and material distribution may help victims who do not come in contact with law enforcement. Some domestic violence programs have resources to conduct trainings, and expansion of these efforts is recommended.

The report found a significant number of the cases involved individuals over the age of 55. Resources for this population differ from those for younger victims and survivors, as individuals later in life have different advocacy, housing, and medical needs. Statewide, targeted community outreach to this population is recommended to raise awareness; generational gaps in beliefs about domestic and sexual abuse may leave some victims without avenues to discern available services.

Surrender of Weapons

Under ARS 13-3601, law enforcement responding to a domestic violence call or report has the authority to question the parties regarding the presence of a firearm in the home. If the responding officer believes the weapon may pose a threat to the victim or anyone else in the household, he or she can seize it temporarily. Utilizing this authority more regularly may help increase victim safety, and AzCADV recommends strict adherence to policies and procedures regarding firearm seizure.

The statute defining Orders of Protection, ARS 13-3602, grants judges the authority to deem the respondent a prohibited possessor if that judge finds that the respondent poses a credible threat. Judges who utilize this authority must make sure their orders are being carried out, and the surrender of firearms takes place within 24 hours of service.

Similarly, under ARS 13-3101, perpetrators on probation for domestic violence offenses become prohibited possessors for the duration of their sentence. Funding cuts to the criminal justice system have made supervised probation difficult. In order to enhance both victim safety and perpetrator accountability, supervised probation should be utilized and the prohibited possessor status enforced at all times.

On a federal level, under 18 USC 922(g)9, those convicted of a qualifying misdemeanor or who have been served with a qualifying protective order become prohibited possessors and are not

permitted to obtain or maintain weapons. Universal background checks, including checking purchases made at gun shows, can help vendors determine if they are supplying a firearm illegally.

Coordinated Community Response

Multi-disciplinary team work addressing domestic violence is a means of lessening trauma for victims and families and increasing offender accountability. Coordinated Community Responses also demonstrate to our communities that family violence is unacceptable and we work collaboratively to strengthen intervention, prevention, awareness and education. AzCADV applauds the many forms of Coordinated Community Repose Teams within our state who bring together the various systemic entities in order to understand the roles we share both, individually and collectively, in order to strategically develop and implement plans that enhance the criminal and community system's response.

These teams are seen throughout our state as formalized Coordinated Community Response Teams, Domestic Violence Coalitions, Domestic Violence Councils, Task-forces and Domestic Violence Fatality Review Teams. AzCADV encourages local, regional and statewide multi-disciplinary efforts to continue the collaborative work and partnership needed to end domestic violence.

Arizona's Domestic Violence Fatality Review Teams

Domestic Violence Fatality Review Teams (DVFRTs) analyze deaths that can be traced to domestic violence; they collect information about the parties, the relationship, and systemic involvement to identify gaps in the system and make recommendations to close them. They operate on a "no-blame, no-shame" principle, and instead acknowledge an imperfect system sometimes leaves victims' needs unmet. The Arizona Revised Statute enacted in 2005 provides confidentiality for the cases reviewed and the local government resolutions enable entities such as law enforcement, prosecution, advocates, public defenders, medical personnel, etc. to participate in these reviews for the sake of effecting true community change. Arizona currently has twelve formal teams established with two more teams in the planning stages.

Six of Arizona's DVFRTs completed a total of eight cases reviews in 2012. The majority of these (six) were homicide-suicide cases. One team reviewed a suicide and the other reviewed a 'near death'. Key findings and recommendations from these cases are summarized below.

Cochise County

Key Findings:

- Very little communication and coordination was present between the various officers handling the multiple calls for service involving the parties.
- There were variations among patrol officers in how they handled calls where the allegation was a violation of an Order of Protection (OPP).
- The neighbor was a crucial witness to ongoing stalking but was unaware of the situation and did not know to report the observations to police.

Recommendations:

- Implement a lead officer for ongoing domestic violence situations to help facilitate communication coordination, and oversight.
- Use of a lethality screen and safety plan packet at the first responding officer level at the scene.
- Provide 20-30 minute roll call training modules to patrol officers on a regular basis. Training modules will include the following topics: domestic violence dynamics, officer safety tactics, interviewing children in domestic violence situations, notifying Child Protective Services (CPS), stalking investigations, strangulation investigations, application of aggravating statutes, and use of the lethality screen / safety plan packet.

Coconino County

Recommendations:

- Encourage domestic violence screening in the emergency room at Flagstaff Medical Center and improve domestic violence training for medical personnel.
- Increase awareness and publicity, particularly among youth, about resources and responses to domestic violence. Consider distributing information at extra-curricular programs, such as Theatrikos and music lessons, to reach home-schooled youth.
- Provide consistent and improved levels of information available to all judges and prosecutors at the time of the initial appearance of offenders.
- Enhance services to people with mental illness and substance abuse disorders, including outpatient and follow-up services. Ensure all mental health and substance abuse issues are addressed simultaneously with domestic violence treatment.
- Continue ongoing efforts to eliminate barriers to the effective use of Orders of Protection.

East Valley Police Chiefs Association

Key Findings:

- Information about the suspect's prior suicide attempt in the military and what provided treatment was available to the suspect was not available to the suspect's family and was unable to be used by them in assisting with the suspect's return to a civilian life.
- Communication by the victim's step-mother to the suspect possibly played a part in the suspect's decision to commit murder/suicide instead of only suicide.
- Following mandatory hospitalization for a threatened suicide attempt not related to the suspect's military service, no follow-up or treatment options were communicated to the suspect's family.

Recommendations:

- Law enforcement and military interaction. Increase AZPOST sponsored law enforcement training on returning military personnel who may be suffering with PTSD and Traumatic Brain Injury.
- Creation of a liaison between law enforcement, the military and the mental health community.
- Training for batterer intervention and crisis line personnel that includes lethality and risk assessment.
- Discussion with the mental health community about the threat of suicide also being considered a danger to others, even if the threat is only to oneself.

Pima County

Analysis & Conclusions:

- There were people who knew about the abuse, yet it appears little action was taken to assist the victim or to provide support.
- The perpetrator had completed 26 sessions of court-ordered Domestic Violence Offender Treatment on two separate occasions, yet continued to offend.

Red Flags:

- Victim makes report to Law Enforcement that contained indicators for high lethality approximately one month before she was killed.
- Victim indicated her employer knew something about the domestic violence she was experiencing.
- Victim had a conversation with her sister about where to find her "paperwork" if something were to happen to her.
- Perpetrator had a history of several factors that are linked to increased risk.
- Perpetrator was stalking the victim close to the time of her murder.
- Perpetrator had extended violent behavior in front of both his own children and victim's children.
- Perpetrator was violent to victim's child.
- Perpetrator had experienced a recent job loss.
- Victim and perpetrator had broken up and reunited multiple times.
- Perpetrator owned weapons.

Recommendations:

- Pima County develops community capacity to identify and respond to victims of domestic abuse.
- Domestic Violence Offender Treatment be supported by the domestic violence community to assist in improving effectiveness, fidelity to evidenced base models and shifting paradigms regarding mandated treatment.
- Ongoing training is implemented regarding issuing and enforcement of OOPs to members of the domestic violence community including law enforcement, judiciary and prosecution.

Pinal County

Key Findings:

- Almost every lethality indicator was present in this case of intimate partner violence.
- The frequency and intensity of incidents and the primary abuser's distrust of the system increased leading up to the attack, and peaked when the case against the primary victim was dismissed.
- Pinal County is rooted in and attached to its historical practices related to intimate partner violence and especially the process of court cases.
- There is little to no information regarding services for the children in the wake of intimate partner violence attacks.
- There may have been opportunities for the medical and other service communities to intervene in the intimate partner violence in this case.
- An earlier incident of strangulation was not prosecuted as a felony in this relationship; the reason for this is unknown.
- Even when the primary victim had education, knowledge, and the opportunity for services and/or action, the intimate partner attack still occurred.

Recommendations:

- Explore lethality assessment and communication and coordination of lethality information. Develop a comprehensive system-wide recommendation.
- Investigate and support the development of a CCR to children impacted by domestic violence. Work with community agencies to develop a plan for implementation.
- When the victim and defendant are in opposite roles in the same court there should be a different judge, prosecutor, victim advocate, etc. Work with stakeholder agencies to implement appropriate policies.
- Add well-crafted screening questions to medical protocols and other service provider protocols.
- Re-examine court scheduling and victim notification practices.
- Examine the issues regarding weapons. Identify who is responsible to remove them, when, and how this is accomplished.

Yuma County

Key Findings:

- Stress of law enforcement jobs may contribute to domestic violence fatalities. Home may be the only 'safe place' where an officer feels he or she can vent without jeopardizing his or her employment and the victim may be more willing to accept

domestic violence as part of that employment. Additionally, the fatality by abusers may increase due to the accessibility of guns in the home.

- Because having a gun is required for most law enforcement positions, victims in such cases may be more reluctant to jeopardize their partner's employment since an OOP requires surrendering guns.
- The physical demands of law enforcement may encourage steroid use which appears to escalate the irritability or irrationality of a user who is already prone to being an abuser or already weak in processing the stress of his or her job.
- Once a divorce is finalized, spouses may still harbor fatal resentment toward their ex-partner and their partner's perceived allies even though years have passed since the final decree.

Recommendations:

- Educational video required prior to filing a motion to quash an OOP (shows signs of domestic violence, how to access assistance, information that they are not alone and alternatives to quashing).
- Law Enforcement employee mandatory evaluations (for those who have been accused of domestic violence).
- Mandatory evaluation for divorces that involve domestic violence (mechanism to determine if one party is harboring potentially fatal feelings towards the ex-spouse).
- A victim should receive information from law enforcement if domestic violence is suspected (if advocate not available, officer should provide info pamphlet. As well as increase community awareness).

The Arizona Coalition Against Domestic Violence congratulates our state's individual communities in working together to examine these sad cases and open up their individual agency files and records to look in-depth into the worst case scenarios while committing to coordinating a community response to domestic violence through fatality review work.

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Appendix A

Risk Factors for Lethality in Domestic Violence Cases

Dr. Jacqueline Campbell developed the "Danger Assessment," a risk assessment tool for domestic violence victims. In her research, she compared behaviors exhibited by abusers who murdered their partners to behaviors among abused women.

Behavior	**Increased Likelihood of Homicide**	**Behavior**	**Increased Likelihood of Homicide**
Partner used or threatened with a weapon	20.2	Physical violence increased in frequency	4.3
Partner threatened to kill woman	14.9	Partner uses illicit drugs	4.2
Partner tried to choke (strangle) woman	9.9	Partner drunk every day or almost every day	4.1
Partner violently and constantly jealous	9.2	Woman ever beaten while pregnant	3.8
Woman forced to have sex when not wanted	7.6	Woman believed he was capable of killing her	3.3
Gun in the house	6.1	Partner reported for child abuse	2.9
Physical violence increased in severity	5.2	Partner violent outside the home	2.2
Partner controls most or all of woman's daily activities	5.1	Partner threatened or tried to commit suicide	1.3

Campbell, J. et al. "Assessing Risk Factors for Intimate Partner Homicide." National Institute of Justice Journal. 250, p 17.

Dr. Neil Websdale's book, "Understanding Domestic Homicide," examined deaths in Florida. He found commonalities in the cases that can be seen in Arizona.

Understanding Domestic Homicide. (Websdale, 1999)