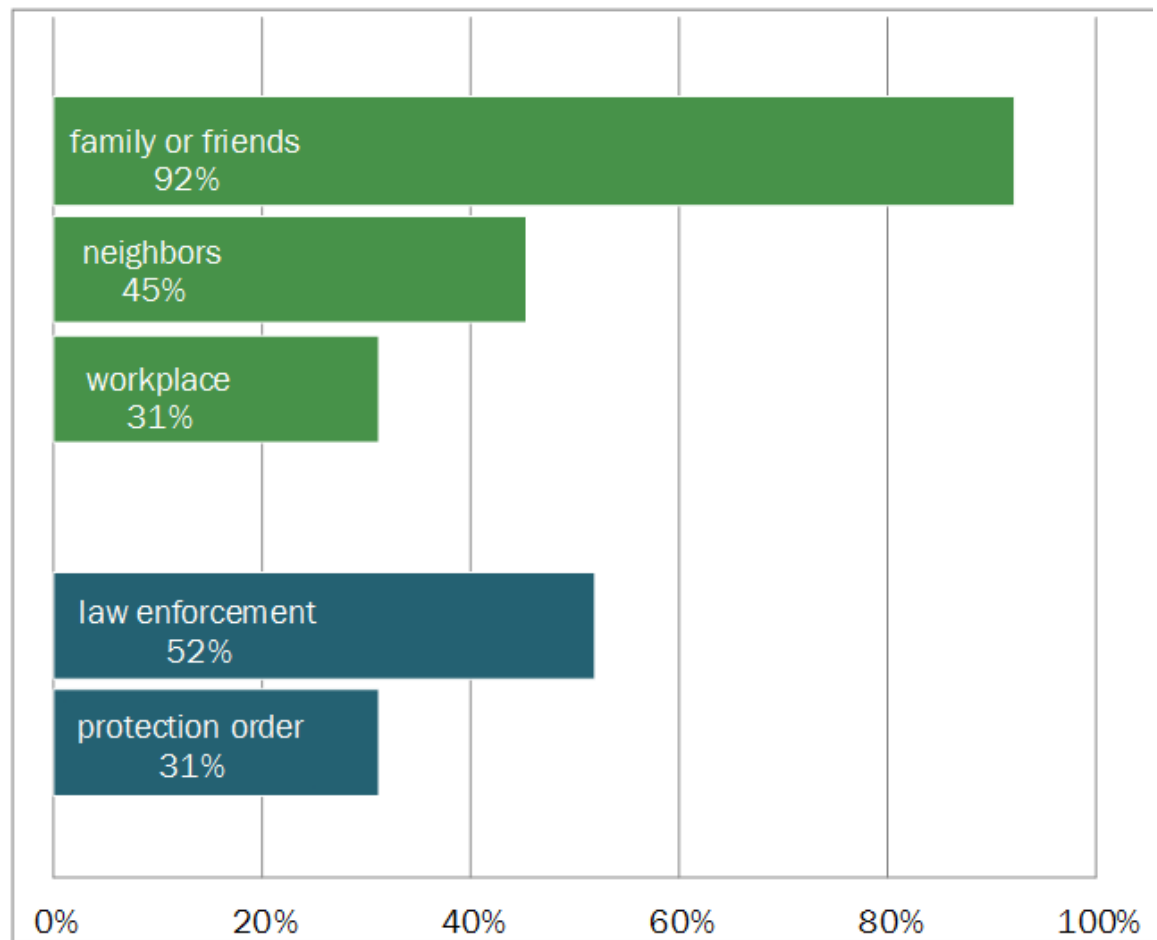


# Where did domestic violence victims turn for help?

Washington State Domestic Violence Fatality Review

June 2013

Domestic violence fatality reviews showed that nearly all victims reached out for help to family and friends. Victims turned to informal support systems earlier and more often than the legal system.



*Sources of support sought by domestic violence victims in reviewed fatality cases*

WASHINGTON STATE COALITION  
**WSCADV**  
AGAINST DOMESTIC VIOLENCE

## Find more online at [wscadv.org](http://wscadv.org)

- Get up-to-date statewide fatality statistics.
- Learn more about WSCADV's work to prevent domestic violence.
- Find resources for friends and families.

## In-depth homicide reviews showed ...

### **Victims turned to friends and family**

**first and most often.** In nearly all reviewed domestic violence fatalities, the victim had reached out to friends, family, neighbors or co-workers. Friends and family were the first line of support for victims and their children, and often were aware of the abuse long before it escalated to lethal violence.

### **Victims can't rely on the legal system alone.**

In nearly a third of fatalities, police had no contact with the victim and abuser

prior to the homicide. Fewer than half of domestic violence incidents that were reported to police resulted in the abuser being arrested.

### **Friends and family need support to be supportive.**

In most cases, friends and family wanted to be helpful, but did not know how. Abusers attempted to sabotage victims' supportive relationships and isolate them from community. Friends and family need support to maintain and rebuild those connections over time.

## Resources for Advocates



Check out WSCADV's **Model Protocol on Working with Friends and Family of Domestic Violence Victims**. Available at [wscadv.org](http://wscadv.org).

**It Takes a Village, People!** is a new toolkit for advocates working with LGBT survivors to strengthen support networks, and working with friends and family to support LGBT survivors. Available at [nwnetwork.org](http://nwnetwork.org).



## Resources for Everyone



**How's your relationship?** Tools for talking about healthy relationships with people of all ages. Chat about love with those you love! Available at [wscadv.org/howyourrelationship](http://wscadv.org/howyourrelationship).

[LoveisRespect.org](http://LoveisRespect.org) has online tools for adult and teen survivors including step-by-step tips for **building a support network** in your community, at home, in school, or at work.

