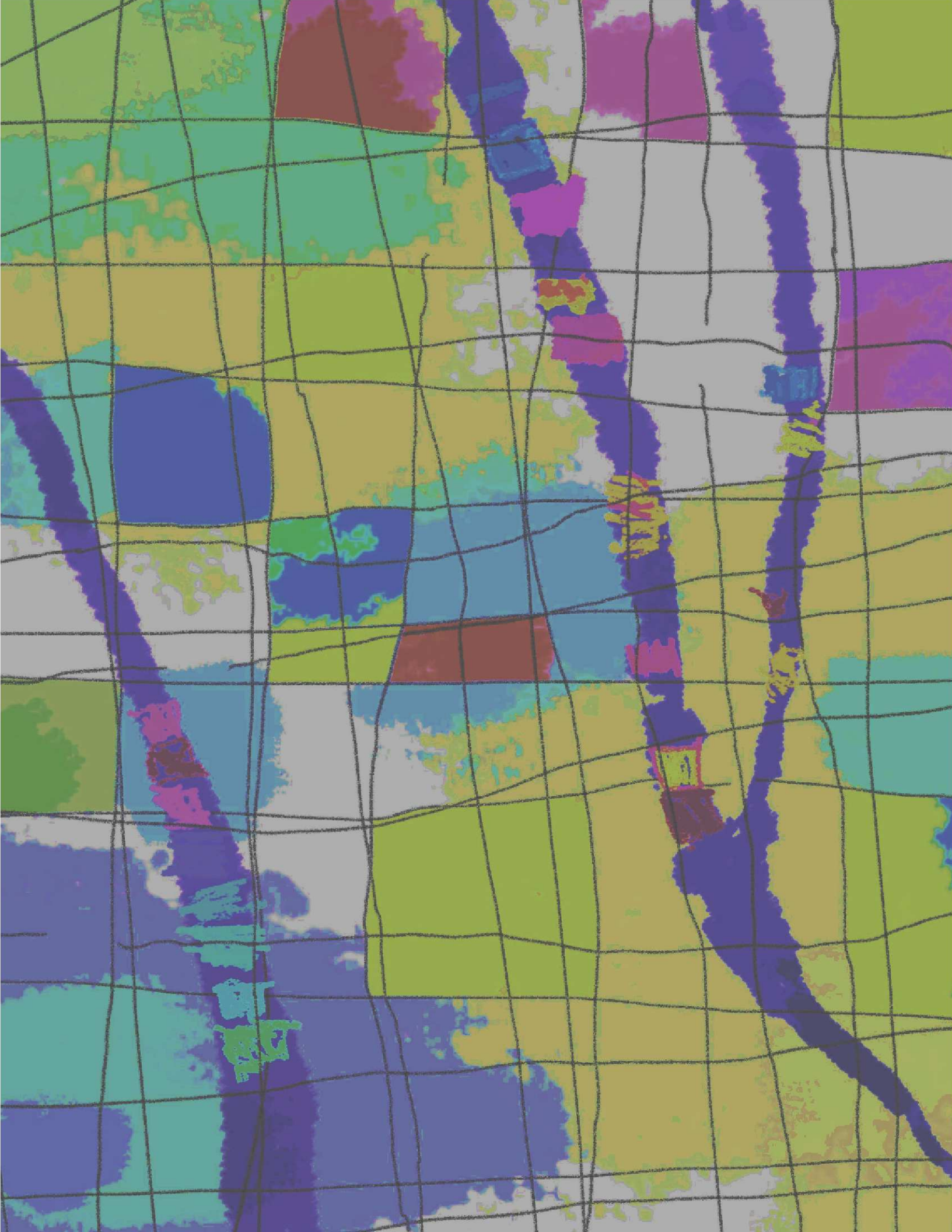
2010 GEORGIA DOMESTIC VIOLENCE FATALITY REVIEW

ANNUAL REPORT

Georgia Commission on Family Violence
Georgia Coalition Against Domestic Violence



how to use this report

THE BASICS

CONTENTS pages are divided into
DATA (charts) and **NARRATIVE** (essays)
NARRATIVE portion is divided into **7 MODULES**

2010's organizing principle is THE GAPS

about ADVOCATES

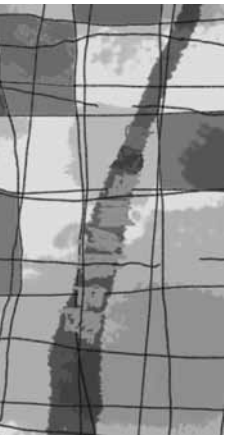
about DATING

about the WORKPLACE

about FAITH

about Roll Call TRAININGS

about MACON & DOUGLAS county



At the back of the Report are
useful, perforated **TEAROUTS** to post or pass along

PRESSED FOR TIME?

THE GAPS orients you to the 2010 Report's organizing principle and provides an overview

SCAN REPORT FOR BOLD TEXT: major points, take-home messages, and conclusions

GAPS are NOTED in DATA section; significant findings are highlighted in chart GAP notes

TEAROUTS are perforated pages at the back of this report that provide USEFUL information, resources, and reminders to post or pass along

contents: data

CHARTS ANSWER QUESTIONS ABOUT LOCATION, GENDER, INCOME, EMPLOYMENT, CAUSE OF DEATH, WITNESSES, PERPETRATORS' BEHAVIORS, PROSECUTION OUTCOME, AGE AT TIME OF HOMICIDE, AND AGENCIES INVOLVED

Data

About methodology: Please refer to inside back cover and prior reports for methodology notes of case reviews.
About previous reports: Copies of this report and all previously published reports can be downloaded online from the following websites: *www.gcfv.org, www.gcadv.org, www.fatalityreview.com*

ESSAYS FRAME PROBLEMS, DESCRIBE PROCESSES, REVEAL TRENDS, NOTE SYSTEM FAILURES, OFFER PRACTICAL GUIDANCE, EXPLORE RESOURCES, EXAMINE SOLUTIONS, AND DISCLOSE BEST PRACTICES

Narrative

organizing principle: the gaps

ORGANIZING PRINCIPLE: THE GAPS

This year's report addresses the primary reason each state conducts annual reviews of domestic violence (DV) fatalities: the gap between the system's intention to reduce DV-related deaths and the reality that between four and five women are killed daily in this country by present or past intimate partners.[1] This divide represents the difference between what we want and what we have; it is a complex, stubborn breach. Each year we work to better describe and define this distance between victims and the services designated to protect them. **Seven years into this process, we see that the gap is unwittingly sustained by mechanisms of the very systems charged with keeping women safe and holding abusers accountable**. Following are a few obvious, gap-creating mechanisms we experience:

- Georgia's DV victim services programs turned away 2,636[2] victims (including children) who requested shelter in 2010, because of a lack of accommodations.
- Only 19% of victims in fatalities reviewed since 2004 were connected with DV emergency shelter programs.
- Law enforcement bears much of the burden of intervention in DV cases, yet their incident-based response is sometimes a poor fit for the pattern-based abuse that defines much DV. An estimated 55% to 85% of 911 calls relayed to Georgia law enforcement are DV related.[3] In 2009, domestic incidents accounted for 24% of the 49 firearm-related line-of-duty deaths for U.S. officers.[4] Still, specialized training in DV is a rarity in many jurisdictions in Georgia. Escalated hazards plus the lack of specialized training and support compromise first responders' capacity to make victim safety a first priority.
- Calling law enforcement may result in criminal charges, lost family income, escalated violence, and possibly no relief of the victim's suffering.
- While prosecutors understandably prefer clear-cut cases in which the survivor definitively leaves the relationship and agrees to testify fully against the abuser, many DV cases are intrinsically legally problematic. Some DV victims' sense of self may be damaged from years of abuse, their self-efficacy compromised, their internal and external resources and support networks exhausted, their loyalties confused, and they may not want their relationship to end. Other victims may not be confused at all: they may have come to a clear-eyed and entirely rational understanding that their abuser will kill them if they take steps to leave, separate, or testify against him. Indeed, our research has shown consistently that **women in Georgia are most likely to be killed when taking steps to separate from their abusive partner.** Survivors in these circumstances may frustrate the system by appearing confused, belligerent, cowed, or uncooperative with prosecutors and others genuinely concerned with protecting victims. Our legal response best serves a certain, resourceful, and ideal victim, anxious to terminate her relationship with the abuser. This sort of victim rarely exists.
- Most DV victims work outside of the home, and a considerable amount of DV occurs in and around the workplace, but few employers have DV policies, are trained to spot signs and symptoms, or can safely refer victims to help.
- Teens receive little if any information on safe dating or DV resources at school; even if they are alert to DV or stalking, they cannot apply for protective orders without assistance from an adult.

HOW WE ADAPT

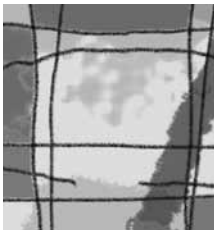
The Project addresses gaps in our ability to keep women safe and gaps in the abuser's control of the victim. **Our primary strategy is to anticipate our systemic lapses so that we can help survivors navigate these gaps as they move towards safety.** If we anticipate the gaps, and help the survivor navigate them, we also undermine the abuser's ability to exploit the gaps to further control and hurt the victim.

One sort of gap holds positive promise: gaps in the abuser's control of the victim. Certain interventions create lapses, providing space for the survivor to move, regroup, connect with other people and resources, and break the isolation that is so damaging. These interruptions in the abuser's control of the victim also provide opportunities for accountability and change for the abuser. Someone intervenes, someone provides space. This intervention may not look like we imagine. There is great potential for intervention while a victim is at work and while she is in her faith community. It may be a friend saying, "Are you ok? This isn't normal." It may be a rabbi giving a sermon about DV, posting resources in the congregation's newsletter and placing brochures in synagogue restrooms. Or, it may indeed be a flashing police light.

One of the most disruptive and volatile breaks in an abuser's control occurs when 911 is called. Officers responded at least 200 times in the 77 fatality cases we have reviewed; clearly all potentially dangerous incidents. We promote specialized roll call trainings for law enforcement to improve safety measures and increase resources offered to the victims during these unique and perilous opportunities. If friends, family, coworkers, and teachers understand and are aware of the signs and symptoms of DV, dating violence, and workplace violence, we can expect these natural helpers to notice, step in, and offer safe help. We can better protect victims as we discover and take advantage of lapses in the perpetrator's direct control of her. These are opportunities to offer victims a safe way to get support, help, and resources. Every time a trusted person lets a victim know she has their support, a potential break in the abuser's control is created.

"**Every victim has a 'safety zone'**; a supplemental relationship, a place they can go (hair dresser, work, school e.g.), a diary, a time in the day, etc., where they can step outside the penumbra of the abuser's control and consider their options and so on. Men go on "search and destroy" missions to identify these gaps and close them, so that the victim has little or no space to breath the air of a free person."

-Dr. Evan Stark



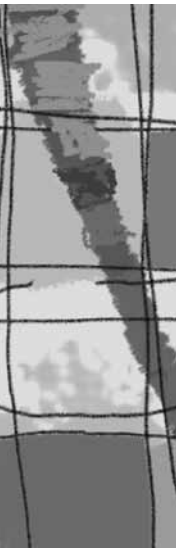
IT IS WHAT IT IS

During the 2010 National Domestic Violence Fatality Review Initiative conference, forensic social worker Dr. Evan Stark spoke eloquently about the gap that separates women's actual experience of DV from our dominant cultural and functional concepts of DV. In *Coercive Control*,[5] Stark contrasts the life experiences of battered women with our present response. He explains that survivors/victims often experience a campaign of low-level violence and control that may not even register with the legal system, since it is designed to respond to severe injury. Much of DV (low levels of violence, emotional abuse, and personal coercion and control) is not illegal, but the abuser's intention is clear: "I control your liberty and life, and I will take your life (or children) if you resist, separate, or leave." Intention is not illegal; the criminal justice system cannot intervene.

Another problematic gap that supports our finding that only 18% of fatality victims reviewed

organizing principle: the gaps (continued)

used available services is identified by Neil Websdale, director of the National Domestic Violence Fatality Review Initiative. Websdale states, "These multiple services that we frequently see as logically laid out to support and protect victims often appear to them to be a confusing, alienating maze."



"The mark of abuse tends to be the frequency and duration of assault rather than its severity. This may be one reason why there were so many police visits in the 77 homicides. The officers take the event seriously, but don't put it into the context of all that has come before. The victim's level of fear is the cumulative byproduct of all that has come before. But when the police compare her level of expressed fear to the incident to which they respond, they can easily conclude she is 'exaggerating' and so they discount her fear. They interpret repeat calls as a woman's not breaking off the abusive relationship. Rather, this is an indication that the abuse is ongoing and that the **police have done something right** or she wouldn't call them again."

-Dr. Evan Stark

Our present reality is that we are working with a complex set of hardworking, non-dovetailing systems and services, each of which has independent accountabilities and objectives to meet while pursuing maximum safety for victims and accountability for perpetrators. Hazardous gaps in service and protection are intrinsic to our system; we can limit their damage by anticipating and including them in our response.

For seven years we have documented how particular women, with every intention of saving their own lives, have attempted to call or called upon the system to help. Various agents, officers, advocates, social workers, family members, employers, and faith-based individuals could not prevent the 107 deaths we have researched since 2004. Only 18% of these fatality victims were in contact with DV emergency shelter programs during the 5 years leading to their deaths. To our knowledge, only 17% were connected to DV-program advocates, our primary experts specifically trained to deal with the victim's challenging and dynamic safety needs. A primary objective of this report is to expand the visibility of and access to community-based DV advocates; dedicated, free and available twenty-four hours a day, seven days a week to engage in survivor-centered advocacy.

REVIEW THE WORK

Since 2004 we have partnered with 20 different fatality review teams across the state to document 82 DV-related fatalities and near-fatality cases. We trained and supported these teams as they wrestled with the gritty reality of how to improve, how to keep women safer, and how to reach out to victims and survivors. Each year we look at who dies in which counties, the victim's source of support, the manner of death, who else was present, who was aware of the abuse, the disposition of calls to 911, prosecution outcomes, and what agencies were involved. We look at known risk factors: previous DV history, unemployment, poverty, and substance abuse. We examine precipitants: looming accountability for the perpetrator, increasing independence of the victim, lack of observers or guardians, financial desperation, and psychological breakdowns.

This work consists of measuring missed connections, tracing what could have been, pursuing what is lacking. After several years of reviews, trends emerged and we could clearly define solid recommendations to better keep victims safer. We necessarily shifted our primary focus away from reviewing cases and toward refining and transmitting what we had learned, passing on both our successes and cautionary

tales. In the last three years, we have been devoted to conducting implementation and supporting teams as they implement our recommendations at the local level.

NEXT STEPS

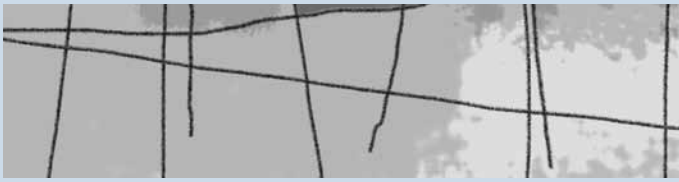
All evidence suggests that the roots of this gap between our intention to keep women safe and the reality of DV fatalities lie in the domain of disadvantage, fed by social pressures and gender-based inequalities experienced by women in our culture. This is a slippery and confounding cause; problematic to fight. Our tack is to confront the face of this problem and to compensate for its breaches in service with intentional and effective partnerships. If we actively countermand these lapses with connections, bridges, attachments, and collaborations, we eliminate opportunities for abusers to hurt victims.

To that end, in this 2010 Report, we promote:

- Broadcasting community-based **advocates**' expertise and reframing DV programs: inviting all DV responders to include these valuable experts
- **Dating violence** prevention initiatives: connecting stakeholders to resources
- **Workplace** initiatives: linking employers with policies, training, and DV programs
- **Faith**-based initiatives: integrating faith with safety and sanctuary
- **Law enforcement** roll call trainings: partnering DV programs with first responders
- Expanding Georgia's **local fatality review teams**: bridging local gaps

ENDNOTES

1. Catalano, S., Smith, E., Snyder, H., Rand, M. 2009. *Female Victims of Violence*. U.S. Department of Justice, Bureau of Justice Statistics. Retrieved January 1, 2011, from: http://bjs.ojp.usdoj.gov/content/pub/pdf/fvv.pdf.
2. Georgia Department of Human Services. Statistics from state-certified domestic violence programs. Retrieved on January 19, 2011.
3. 2005 survey of police chiefs and officers in the state of Georgia inquiring about relative percentage of 911 calls relating to domestic disturbance. Conducted by Grant Programs Administrator, Georgia Association of Chiefs of Police.
4. National Law Enforcement Officers Memorial Fund. *Law Enforcement Officer Deaths: Preliminary 2010 Research Bulletin*. Retrieved January 1, 2011, from http://www.nleomf.org/assets/pdfs/reports/2010_Law_Enforcement_Fatalities_Report.pdf.
5. Stark, Evan. 2007. *Coercive Control: The Entrapment of Women in Personal Life*. New York, New York. Oxford University Press.



next: advocates

"I HAVE SUCH RESPECT AND ADMIRATION FOR THE ADVOCATES THAT WORK IN MY CIRCUIT. THEY ARE SO DEDICATED AND WORK SO TIRELESSLY ON BEHALF OF VICTIMS AND THEIR FAMILIES THAT THEY MOTIVATE ME TO CONTINUE TO STRIVE FOR SOLUTIONS TO THIS VERY COMPLICATED ISSUE OF FAMILY VIOLENCE. AS I TRY TO BALANCE HOLDING THE PERPETRATOR ACCOUNTABLE AND KEEPING THE VICTIM AND CHILDREN SAFE, ADVOCATES REMIND ME THAT OFTEN VICTIMS ARE FURTHER VICTIMIZED BY THE VERY COURT SYSTEM THAT IS SUPPOSED TO HELP THEM! I APPRECIATE ADVOCATES KEEPING ME MINDFUL THAT EACH CASE IS UNIQUE AND EACH VICTIM HAS A VOICE THAT THE COURT MAY NEED TO HEAR PRIOR TO DISPOSITION OF THE CASE."

-JUDGE NANCY BILLS
ROCKDALE COUNTY STATE COURT
CHAIR, ROCKDALE COUNTY TASK FORCE
AGAINST FAMILY VIOLENCE

reframing advocates

THIS YEAR WE ADDRESS A PARTICULAR GAP IN DELIVERY OF SERVICES TO DOMESTIC VIOLENCE VICTIMS AND SURVIVORS: WE NEED PEOPLE TO KNOW THAT **VITAL, FREE SERVICES OFFERED BY DV PROGRAMS ARE AVAILABLE TO THOSE WHO ARE NOT STAYING IN SHELTERS OR WHO HAVE NOT LEFT THEIR RELATIONSHIP...**

REFRAMING SHELTERS & DOMESTIC VIOLENCE PROGRAM ADVOCATES

In nearly every Project-reviewed case, victims had taken steps toward independence from their batterer shortly before they were killed. In some cases these were formal steps, like filing for a TPO, filing for a divorce, or pursuing criminal charges. In others, the steps they were taking to separate from their abusive partner were more informal, like changing locks, moving out, calling a DV hotline, interviewing for a job in a different state, or telling friends and family about a plan to leave the relationship. Clearly, danger also increases for victims when there is a significant event in the justice system that has the potential to hold the batterer accountable for his behavior. The victims in reviewed cases were in highly dangerous situations, either because of their own steps taken toward separation or those predictable events that occur as a case moves through the criminal legal system. It is during these dangerous times that domestic violence advocates can provide critical help to victims—services such as danger assessment and safety planning can be essential to victims trying to escape a violent relationship. **Sadly, 82% of fatality victims reviewed never connected with any DV programs intended to assist them.**

There are multiple reasons why victims are not connected to valuable resources at crucial times. We have reviewed instances where faith leaders, employers, law enforcement, attorneys, and professionals in other systems missed opportunities to refer victims to their local DV advocate. This happens in part because those people are unaware of the existing resources. The second part of this problem lies within how the referral is presented to victims. **We commonly refer to domestic violence service providers as "shelters," when a more accurate description of their range of services is reflected by the term "domestic violence programs."** We have learned that women are not calling DV programs for the following reasons:

- They don't need or want shelter services and assume that shelter is the only service offered or that they must be staying in the shelter to receive other services.
- They believe help is available only for women ready or able to leave their relationship. If they aren't ready/able to leave, they assume there are no services available or that they will be pressured to leave.

By making this simple change in the language we use, we can help victims get connected to valuable resources.

Shelter remains the most identifiable service offered by DV programs. While shelter is a vital service, it is limited and only appropriate when someone is physically capable of leaving and has the desire to leave their relationship. Many other crucial, non-residential services are available to victims in any situation. **There are approximately 66 DV programs in Georgia; 52 of these offer safe and confidential shelter for victims. Most, if not all, of these programs provide services free of charge.** In all of these programs, DV advocates deliver needed services, listening to stories of survival, collecting facts and nuances that inform their work with survivors. Safety and danger lie in these details of the survivor's life;

"AFTER 6 YEARS OF POLICING AND RESPONDING TO OVER 1,000 DOMESTIC VIOLENCE CALLS, I THOUGHT I KNEW EVERYTHING ABOUT THIS ISSUE. NOW I REALIZE THAT UNTIL I STARTED LISTENING TO ADVOCATES, I KNEW ABSOLUTELY NOTHING ABOUT DV."

-SGT. JAY EISNER, DEKALB COUNTY POLICE DEPT., 19-YEAR VETERAN

the advocate focuses on these details to help the survivor reach safety and accomplish her goals. In 2010, 71,212[1] calls[1] were answered by trained advocates on Georgia's 24-Hour Statewide Crisis Hotline. Advocates also worked with an estimated 49,053[2] survivors (including children) in person, providing them with critical support, safety planning, resource coordination, and referrals. They delivered legal advocacy, addressed financial justice issues, advocated for victims and children with social service systems, served populations with special needs, and always, in every situation, provided danger assessment and safety planning. Many DV programs provide free support groups and child care; essential services for some victims remaining in abusive relationships.

In Georgia there are also 13 DV programs that are not residential, but that offer extensive services for victims; particularly for specific religious and/or cultural communities. Statistically, we know that the majority of victims being served are not living in emergency shelters. In fact, the NNEDV Domestic Violence Counts 2009 reported that, on the day of the census, "of the more than 65,000 victims served, 32% of them were living in emergency shelter."[3] Georgia's DV programs turned away 2,636[4] victims (including children) who requested shelter in 2010, because of a lack of accommodations. Shelter is certainly needed, but the majority of women need and use non-residential services.

Advocates, often the heart and soul of these DV programs, are the experts when it comes to domestic violence. They are versed in DV laws, skilled at safety planning and knowledgeable about community resources. They have the most comprehensive and refined understanding of a victim's unique situation, and are equipped with the most critical safety information for each particular victim. DV advocates are the most valuable resources we have in bridging our system gaps as we combat DV fatalities.

The Project makes the following recommendations to increase safety for victims and prevent future domestic violence homicides:

- DV advocates should be at the top of the list of people to call when working with a victim
- We need to fully integrate the DV advocate into every exchange the DV victim has with criminal justice, faith, and social service systems
- We need every professional who works with DV victims to know about DV programs' range of services beyond physical shelter and to recognize DV advocates' competency and knowledge
- We also need these same professionals to make a connection with their local domestic violence programs and always refer victims of domestic violence to those programs
- Organizations should contact DV programs for brochures and posters that can be used to spread the word about available services
- There should be more engagement with DV programs' community educators; they're often willing to train and speak in different settings
- Social service agencies need to involve DV advocates when training, developing agency policies, and evaluating their own practices

ENDNOTES

1. Georgia Department of Human Services. Statistics from state-certified domestic violence programs. Retrieved on January 19, 2011.
2. Georgia Department of Human Services. Statistics from state-certified domestic violence programs. Retrieved on January 19, 2011.
3. National Network to End Domestic Violence. 2010. *Domestic Violence Counts 2009*. Washington D.C.
4. Georgia Department of Human Services. Statistics from state-certified domestic violence programs. Retrieved on January 19, 2011.

dating violence age 16-24

TEEN AND YOUNG ADULT DATING VIOLENCE

The issue of teen-and young-adult-dating violence has recently rocketed to the top of national consciousness; it demands our attention. Teen- and young-adult-dating/relationship violence is a pattern of actual or threatened acts of physical, sexual, financial, verbal/emotional abuse, sexual or reproductive coercion, social sabotage, and/or sexual harassment perpetrated against a current or former intimate partner.[1] This population experiencing dating violence faces challenges very different from those that adult victims face, and our strategies for helping them must be tailored to meet their needs. We are concerned with the lack of legal protections available to young women and girls experiencing dating or relationship violence, the scarcity of targeted resources, and the gap in awareness about the resources which do exist. We are interested in young women and girls who may be in our educational systems, and any whose parents may still provide some safety by their active involvement in their children's lives. School, peer, and family support are all potentially strong allies in the fight against dating violence for younger women.

HOW COMMON IS DATING VIOLENCE?

The CDC finds that both youths and adults are unaware of how frequently dating violence occurs. About one in three teenage girls in the U.S. is a victim of verbal, emotional, or physical abuse from a dating partner.[2] Almost one in four teens report having been abused through technology. Young women aged 20-24 are at the greatest risk for nonfatal injurious intimate partner violence; from dating, cohabiting, and previous partners.[3] People age 18 and 19 have the highest rates as stalking victims.[4] Who else knows about these abuses? Peers are in the loop; 40% of teens from age 14 to 17 report that they have a same age friend who has been hit or hurt by a boyfriend. Parents less so, as 63% of parents of dating age children claim that dating violence has not been a problem for their children. Why the mismatch? **When teens who had experienced abusive dating relationships were asked, 68% said they had not confided in their parents about the abuse.**[5] Our intention is to encourage community outreach to address this knowledge gap on the part of parents.

WHAT DOES THIS HAVE TO DO WITH FATALITY REVIEW?

The Project has reviewed four cases of young women who were in their teens when they were killed by a dating partner; three of them were 19 and one was 16. In three of these cases, the parents were aware of the abuse and were actively involved in seeking solutions and looking for help. In the case involving the 16-year-old victim, she and the perpetrator had known each other since childhood. It is uncertain whether they had recently broken up or were still together, but just two days before the homicide, the perpetrator was arrested because he had grabbed her by the neck, placed her in a choke hold, and forced her into his car. He drove her to a nearby park and continued to assault her, tearing her clothes, leaving strangulation marks around her neck, and bruising her shoulders. Her parents were aware of the abuse and visited his mother to talk about it. On release from jail, the abuser shot the victim and her mother. Her mother survived.

On page 13 of this report we have highlighted the story of an 18-year-old, Annabelle, who survived an attack on her life by her boyfriend. She bravely shared her story with the promise of anonymity. Her story perfectly illustrates the challenges that teens and young women in abusive relationships face; we deeply appreciate her willingness to tell her story.

Several factors were present that indicated Annabelle's increased risk for serious injury or death:

- History of verbal abuse, control, isolation tactics, and extreme jealousy
- Stalking; repeated texts and phone calls, showing up when she did not respond
- Depression and suicidal threats and attempts by perpetrator
- Victim attempted to end relationship
- Access to a firearm
- Perpetrator mentally impaired by alcohol and drugs

BARRIERS, UNIQUE CHALLENGES, AND MISSED OPPORTUNITIES:

- Victim and perpetrator attended the same high school until he graduated, they shared mutual friends, and lived only a mile from each other.
- Victim experienced pressure from peers to stay in the relationship; only one friend advised her to end the relationship if she was not happy.
- At least one of his friends knew he was suicidal; their mutual friends knew he was depressed but did not communicate that to her.
- His family knew of his problems with depression, suicide, drugs, and alcohol but felt powerless to intervene.

- Victim's parents did not approve of the relationship; she kept it a secret from them.
- When the relationship was revealed, her mother advised her to ignore him and file a restraining order.
- A deputy was dispatched to her house and wrote a stalking incident report. This interaction left the victim feeling confused; she wondered if she was overreacting.
- A safety plan and information for her parents would have greatly decreased her risk and given her additional strategies for protecting herself.
- The victim had only one interaction with the criminal justice system but she was a high school senior and employed at a restaurant part time. Neither of these two systems provided her with information, support, or resources.

Over half of our victims began lethal relationships when they were 16 to 24 years old

In response to other states' fatality review findings related to teens and young women, we analyzed our reviewed case data for possible insights. What we discovered is profound. **In our reviews, over one half (52%) of our victims were between the ages of 16 and 24 when they began their relationship with the partner who eventually killed them. Over one quarter (29%) were teenagers when they began relationships with the partners who killed them;** five of the victims were just 15 when their relationships began. This information should be our call to action. We must not miss our chances to intervene with young people; these are opportunities to prevent future homicides and the devastating impact they have on families, surviving children, and communities.

Why is youth dating violence so risky?

We aim to communicate the compression and intensity of danger and violence in this population. Risk markers for intimate partner violence and homicide are perilously high in this group and these risk factors in many teenage and young adult lives can have an accelerating affect on the violence that can lead to fatalities. The intense quality of young people's experiences of intimate relationships and sexuality can feed existing social and behavioral patterns that encourage and accept violent behaviors. Adolescent girls in abusive relationships are three and one half times more likely to become pregnant than girls in non-abusive relationships, they are three times more likely to become infected with an STD, and there is an increased risk for smoking, eating disorders, sexual risk-taking and suicidality.[6] Dating violence is a negative experience for everyone, but it is especially perilous for young women, setting up health consequences that can affect and shorten their lives. Young people are learning how to navigate intimacy; experts feel this is a prime opportunity for using cognitive, behavioral, and community interventions.

Factors indicating a high level of danger in teen relationship violence[7]

- Victim is ending the relationship, or starting to plan to do so
- Abuser is depressed; higher risk if the abuser has talked about or attempted suicide
- Abuser has history of threats to seriously harm or kill
- Stalking
- Access to weapons, especially guns
- History of serious injury, strangulation/choking, prior use of weapons by abuser
- Mental impairment of abuser due to alcohol, drugs, or mental illness
- History of failed community controls on abuser (multiple contact with police, courts, protection orders, etc., with no corresponding reduction in violent behavior)

Current laws and barriers to protection in Georgia

Georgia law excludes teenagers and young adult victims who are dating but have never lived with their abuser (or who do not share children) from petitioning for a Temporary Protective Order (TPO). The Stalking Statute does allow people who do not meet the definition of family to petition the court for a TPO if the abuse they are experiencing meets the definition of stalking as defined in the Georgia Code. This definition represents a barrier to protection for teens and young women: stalking's "pattern of behavior" is difficult to prove given the nature of the social connections between the young. Attending the same school, extracurricular events, or even college, presents special problems in meeting and proving the stalking definition.

Georgia state law does not allow minors to petition for a TPO on their own behalf. An adult must petition for the order on the minor's behalf. Minors who do attempt to seek protection must do so with the assistance of an adult. These are massive barriers for

teen victims if they are afraid or unable to confide in their parent, guardian, or other adult. Georgia law does not specify whether the parent or guardian of the minor will be notified about the TPO. It also does not specify whether TPOs can be granted against minor abusers.

Georgia law requires the State Board of Education to develop a program for preventing teen dating violence for grades 8 to 12. However, teaching this curriculum is optional and there is no follow-up with the local school boards to ensure they implement a dating-violence curriculum. The schools that do teach about teen dating violence are not required to collaborate with local DV programs to develop or identify a suitable curriculum. The law also does not specify policies and procedures for the school system on how to handle dating violence.

Minor victims have difficulty accessing DV services. They generally do not request or need shelter but if they do, DV programs are not allowed to accept minor victims into their shelter unless accompanied by their parent or guardian. As for the non-residential services these programs provide for victims, some programs lack services specifically tailored for teens. The skill sets and techniques for safety planning and advocacy with teens are unique; not all DV programs are prepared to provide these valuable services. Furthermore, it is unclear if minor victims are entitled to the same level of confidentiality that DV programs are required to give to adult victims. These barriers and this lack of clarity complicate matters; they hamper advocates' ability to build the trust and rapport required to help protect these teens and young women.

UNIQUE BARRIERS AND CHALLENGES FACED BY TEENS AND YOUNG WOMEN

- Lack of control over personal safety and environment at home, school, work, after school activities, and social outings
- May attend the same school and classes as the abuser, many opportunities to be victimized
- Social networking websites, emails, texting, and cell phones are opportunities for abuse
- Available support network presents its own challenges (e.g. friend's don't understand and may take sides which isolates the victim)
- Fear of damaging reputation inhibits help-seeking
- Fear of parent's response inhibits help-seeking
- The places they go, the things they do, and the people with whom they associate are dynamic, continuously changing
- Gaining young victim's trust and building rapport may be difficult for adult advocates

RESOURCES

National Helplines

The National Teen Dating Abuse Helpline:
Call 1-866-331-9474 TTY 866-331-8453 or online chat
www.loveisrespect.org

Rape, Abuse & Incest National Network (RAINN)
Hotline: Call 1-800-656-HOPE (4673)
www.rainn.org
online.rainn.org

Suicide Prevention Hotline: 1-800-273-TALK (8255),
http://www.suicidepreventionlifeline.org/

For more information and implementation strategies to prevent teen dating violence, go to:

www.startstrongparents.org
(a website for parents)

www.chooserespect.org

www.loveisnotabuse.com

www.athinline.org (stalking & digital abuse)

www.gradyhealthsystem.org/teen.asp

TEAROUT: from the back of this Report tear out and post **"Safety Planning for Teens Tip Sheet."**

ENDNOTES

1. *Teen Relationship Violence: A Resource Guide for Increasing Safety.* 2010. Ohio Domestic Violence Network. www.odvn.org
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4. Baum, Katrina, Catalano, Shannan, Rand, Michael and Rose, Kristina. 2009. Stalking Victimization in the United States. U.S. Department of Justice Bureau of Justice Statistics.
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dating violence near-fatality review
annabelle's story

"I just want it to be easier and simpler for girls who are going through similar experiences to get help. I felt like I couldn't turn to anyone, I felt as if no one understood. Leaving him was easier said than done. Children should be able to turn to their parents, not be afraid of them when they are most scared."

Annabelle was a graduating, 18-year-old high school senior on the day of the attack. Her family had moved to Georgia from New Jersey the week before her junior year of high school began. Annabelle's family is close-knit and protective; she has three siblings, all first generation Americans. Both of her parents' families emigrated to the United States, one from Central America and one from South America. At the time of the shooting, Annabelle and her mother were not communicating smoothly; she was closer with her father at that point.

Luke was 21 and had recently received his high school diploma. His family had moved to Georgia from Ohio; he lived with his mother, stepfather, and two siblings. He worked at various jobs in an irregular pattern. Not happy in Georgia, he reported a troubled childhood to Annabelle and his mother was periodically forcing him to move out of the house. Expelled from high school during his senior year; he graduated from an alternative school. Luke's family knew he was struggling with depression and suicidal ideas; they believe he was an alcoholic, as toward the end of his life he consumed a bottle of alcohol each night. He smoked pot, though Annabelle disapproved. Luke's mother begged him to seek counseling; he refused. At some point before the shooting, his mother found a box of ammunition with two rounds missing.

Annabelle and Luke went to the same high school and lived about a mile apart. They knew each other for almost two years. Annabelle recalls once trying to talk with Luke on the school bus before she knew him, but he seemed remote and didn't respond. Through other neighborhood kids, the two became friends that first year, hanging out with a group of mutual friends who liked to watch movies at someone's house or go to the mall together. Initially, Luke made overtures to Annabelle, but she was not interested in being more than friends because, as she explained, "it just didn't click." When asked why, she said "something told me I didn't want a relationship with him." But by the end of that first year, Annabelle and Luke had grown closer. Annabelle's parents didn't approve of Luke, even as a friend, so she hid this relationship from them. The two began dating at the beginning of her senior year. She was influenced by her friends who made statements such as "Oh, he really likes you. You should give him a chance because you like him, too." Annabelle described the beginning of their dating relationship as "all good, it was fine, I was happy, it was like the honeymoon months." Once she started dating Luke, she got more wrapped up in him and began to care for him.

During their relationship, Luke was never physically violent towards Annabelle, but she had become aware of a different side of him. Most of the time, his mood was good, but when it wasn't, everything was wrong with the world. He could be disorganized and irrational, and would get furious at his teachers. Friction seemed to be everyone else's problem; Luke was never at fault. **He was verbally abusive towards Annabelle and attempted to control her interactions with friends.** When he was angry at Annabelle he would curse at her, calling her a bitch. He yelled at her and if she responded loudly, he would escalate, yelling even louder. Once, while they were talking on the phone, he angrily punched a hole in his bedroom wall. Luke insisted that Annabelle not talk to other guys. He pressured her to not speak to her best girlfriend because of rumors the friend was promiscuous, and Luke did not want Annabelle "hanging around someone like that." When they first began dating, Luke bought Annabelle a cell phone that she sensed was "kind of like a tracking phone." One of Annabelle's male friends paid for minutes on the phone so he could talk to her, too. Luke had the phone disconnected when he learned of this. Afraid she would cheat on him, he always wanted to know where she was; he would call her friends looking for her. When she participated in school activities or spent time with other people, Luke became jealous. Annabelle states, **"Luke would always assume I cheated on him. He called almost every hour. He had to text me, asking me what I was doing all the time, even if I had family things to do."**

Annabelle hid her relationship with Luke from her parents; they only learned of the depth of the relationship a few weeks before the attack. Because they could not openly date, Luke picked Annabelle up in the morning from her bus stop and took her to breakfast before school. They continued to see each other with their group of friends, but Annabelle grew tired of the effort required to keep their relationship a secret, and Luke was angry and resentful about the secrecy.

annabelle's story (continued)

Annabelle and Luke talked about marriage and made comments about being together forever. In December of her senior year, Luke asked Annabelle to marry him and presented her with a ring. The following January, Annabelle celebrated her eighteenth birthday and the fighting between the two accelerated. He was increasingly jealous and insisted she was not making enough time for him. Annabelle says, "He sometimes would just randomly show up if I was hanging out with my friends. He sort of stalked me while we were dating. If I didn't answer and tell him where I was, he'd ask around 'til he found out. **He'd show up wherever I was without announcement… some of our friends allowed and encouraged this."**

In March she began working three to four times a week as a restaurant hostess. Luke and his friends would come in to eat, but he would get angry and leave when she did not give him attention. Annabelle admitted her unhappiness to her best friend, who told her she should let the relationship go if she was not happy. **In late March she tried to break up with Luke over the telephone. He told her that he "wouldn't be able to live."** She told him she needed some space; he was unwilling to give it to her. Every day he was waiting for her at the bus stop in the morning or after school. He would yell out how much he loved her and how angry he was that she had left him. He persisted, trying to get back together, but she insisted the relationship was over. Luke began threatening suicide. This overwhelmed Annabelle; she took him back. Luke attempted suicide in front of Annabelle on two separate occasions. Once he insisted that she meet him across the street from her house at the pool clubhouse. She noticed his car had a hose hooked from the gas tank to the inside of the car with the engine running. She "freaked out" and agreed not to break up. On another occasion, Luke was in his car waiting for her after school. She told him to leave. He banged his head against the steering wheel and knocked himself out for a few seconds, while the car continued to move. Luke regained consciousness, stating "I can't live without you." He got out of the car and began huffing fumes from a cup of gasoline, passing out in a nearby yard. This incident was witnessed by Annabelle's co-worker who was also a neighbor.

By the first week of April, Annabelle was exhausted, miserable, and wanted to end the relationship for good. She was tired of feeling guilty about Luke's suicide threats. Luke was calling her house at all hours; her parents were upset by the blocked caller ID and hang ups. They put Annabelle on "lock down"; she was allowed to go to school but nowhere else. **Initially, Annabelle interpreted Luke's constant text messages and suicide attempts as threats of self harm, not harm to her, but she grew more concerned when he began telling mutual friends "I'm going to make sure I'm her one and only, just like she was mine."** He told Annabelle "I am going to take you with me." At least one of Luke's friends knew he was suicidal, and their mutual friends knew he was depressed but did not talk about this with Annabelle. They would tell her "he really cares about you and would do anything for you." This made her feel guilty, and as if she was the problem.

In mid-April, Luke picked Annabelle up before school for the last time. He said he was going to tell her parents about their relationship, ignoring her pleas, saying, "No, I'm going to make your life a living hell." Luke grew increasingly angry as he drove around. He lifted his hand to strike her, just missing her face as she dodged his blow. Luke drove Annabelle home; they screamed at each other while parked in her driveway. Annabelle's father heard the fighting and threatened to call the police if Luke did not leave. Annabelle asked her father to call the police; Luke drove off. Later, Luke called the house and told her father about the year-long relationship conducted behind his back, revealing that he and Annabelle had been sexually intimate. Annabelle's parents were extremely upset and grounded her. Annabelle was upset and sad that they had learned about the relationship in this way, but she felt relieved that they knew the truth.

By early May, Annabelle had grown tired of Luke's repeated emails, text messages, phone calls, and Facebook messages. She read the messages but stopped replying. Her mother advised Annabelle to ignore him and file a restraining order. Annabelle was not ready to do that but **she did call the sheriff's department to report Luke's harassing behavior. A deputy was dispatched to her home and wrote a stalking incident report.** The report indicates that Luke had told Annabelle and other friends that he was going to another state to buy a gun and "kill himself right this time." Luke had called Annabelle when travelling and said "I came here and got what I needed and I'm on my way back." He implied to a friend that he had bought a gun but did not directly state it. The officer notes in his report that Annabelle was visibly upset and crying,

revealing her fear that Luke might use this gun on her. Annabelle completed a written witness statement, was given a victim's rights pamphlet, and was told how to get a restraining order. The report indicates that she was instructed to call a victim's advocate to get help with the process.

Annabelle says that her experience with the sheriff's deputy left her feeling as if this was just another call for him. She felt confused and was not sure what was going on, wondering if she was overdramatizing the whole situation. She recalls that she was told that she needed to file this harassment report first and must wait until he "attacked" before she could file for a restraining order.

Annabelle informed Luke that she had filed the incident report and believes this caused him to leave her alone for a few days. He began harassing her again when he learned that she had attended her senior prom with his best friend while Luke was out of town.

The morning of the shooting, Luke told his 16-year-old sister that he was going to shoot himself. They got into an argument; his mother, overhearing, asked what was going on. Luke angrily stormed out of the house. He walked to Annabelle's neighborhood and waited for her to approach the bus stop. Luke's mother called the sheriff's department and asked for their help in trying to commit him. Luke's sister called Annabelle's friend and asked her to warn Annabelle to be careful; his mother and sister were frantic and could not locate him.

The morning of the attack was Annabelle's last day of school before graduation. As she walked to her bus stop, Luke ran up to her, grabbed her by the arm and put a gun to her temple. He pulled the trigger but the gun did not fire. Luke started messing with the gun as Annabelle ran away, screaming for help. Luke followed her and knelt beside her as she fumbled for her cell phone. Luke said "Look what you did to me. I want you to watch this. I want you to see me do it." Annabelle replied "please don't do it." Annabelle began running again, heard the gunshot and turned slightly to see Luke falling to the ground.

Annabelle is not sure that the school handled the situation the way she would have wanted. She recalls going to school after completing the interviews with the investigators but she does not remember much of the day. She was told not to worry about her exams and she turned in her textbooks. Nobody bothered to ask her if she was okay until she got to her last class of the day. The teacher asked "Are you okay?" and Annabelle broke down, crying. This same teacher had revealed earlier that she could relate to what Annabelle was going through because she was experiencing similar trouble in her divorce.

Annabelle and her family struggled emotionally after the incident. At times she would isolate, locking herself in her room. She called in sick to work several times and was subsequently fired. Annabelle now talks to only one friend she knew at the time of the incident. She feels that most of her old friends would be angry at her for participating in this interview because they blame her for what happened. Some people told her "If you would have stayed with him, none of this would have happened." When asked what advice helped her move on with her life, she admitted that she is still dealing with it.

Annabelle made the choice to go away to college, as she says "to get away from everything that happened that day." She is studying education and wants to teach elementary school. **Her advice for young women is to do what they want to do and not what other people tell them to do, but also to listen to the advice of those who care about them the most.** Clearly, peer pressure in this case contributed to the initial connection, conditioned the continuing relationship, and caused Annabelle pain and difficulty after Luke's suicide. "Recognize that your parents want what is best for you." Her advice to parents is to give the person their daughter wants to date a chance before forbidding the relationship. Annabelle's reaction to her parents not giving Luke a chance was to rebel.

"FOLLOW YOUR HEART, NOT WHAT OTHERS SAY IS GOOD FOR YOU. KEEP IN MIND THE ADVICE FROM THOSE WHO LOVE YOU, BUT DON'T LET PEOPLE TELL YOU WHAT'S GOOD FOR YOU WHEN IT COMES TO LOVE. YOUR GUT FEELING IS ALWAYS RIGHT. IF YOU'RE NOT FEELING IT, THERE'S PROBABLY A GOOD REASON WHY."

-ANNABELLE

dating violence: local lessons

Increasing knowledge about teen dating violence and young people's access to appropriate services and interventions are key to addressing teen dating violence in your community. Below are some **recommendations on educating teens on the realities of teen dating violence** which emerged from the local community review of Annabelle and Luke's case.

- Designate and train peer leaders in schools to help educate their classmates
- A free online training module is available for teachers or peer leaders who would like to increase their understanding of teen dating abuse and how to teach about it. The training module is called **Dating Matters** and can be accessed at: **http://www.vetoviolence.org/datingmatters/**
- Provide a dating violence awareness event prior to Homecoming/Prom
- Utilize the drama class students to provide 2-3 minute skits
- Have school coaches discuss teen-dating violence
- Get a local athlete involved
- Publish the **National Teen Dating Abuse Helpline** number on school supply list
- Encourage more parental involvement at school events such as PTA meetings
- Educate students during in-school detention

Sexting is a related topic and is a big issue that many young people face. **MTV's A Thin Line** campaign has very compelling PSAs and a news story entitled "Sexting in America." This information can be used in the classroom or in other educational/instructional settings. Students can be directed to the following website to view the information for themselves: **www.athinline.org/videos** These videos focus on consequences that seem to truly resonate with students.

workplace domestic violence

DOMESTIC VIOLENCE FOLLOWS VICTIMS TO WORK

Employers can use education, training, and vigilance to protect employees and prevent domestic-violence-related workplace homicides.

The Project launched its 2010 Workplace Initiative because the workplace presents both unique dangers and the potential of safety and protection for victims of DV. A victim of DV is particularly vulnerable at work as the abuser likely knows where she works. The consequences of DV in the workplace can be fatal, not only for the victim, but for co-workers and others present. Employers are uniquely positioned to have a positive impact in the lives of their employees directly and indirectly affected by DV. **Knowing the cost of DV, employers have every incentive to train managers and employees to recognize signs and symptoms of abuse as well as instituting a model policy responding to DV.**

Research tells us that current victims of DV are more likely to be employed than unemployed.[1] Our own review of fatalities since 2004 indicates that 74% of victims were employed outside of the home; 52% were full-time employees at the time of their death. We show that employers also had access to perpetrators, but to a lesser degree, as 60% of perpetrators were employed; 42% were employed full time at the time of the victim's death.

The workplace represents refuge for many DV victims; it may be the only time that she is away from the abuser and feels safe. Having a productive career can be both an economic necessity and a crucial lifeline to health and sanity. Many women report having connected with co-workers as friends. Perhaps most important: **the most likely predictor of whether a battered woman will permanently separate from abuse is whether she has the economic resources to survive without the batterer**. Victims of DV need their jobs as much, if not more, than anyone else. Sadly, 60% reported losing a job because of abuse.[2]

One near-fatality survivor began working full-time outside the home after years of helping her husband with his business. Her outside employment gave her financial autonomy, time to connect with other people,

EMPLOYERS SHOULD NOT TRY TO SOLVE THE PROBLEM THEMSELVES; THEY NEED TO DEVELOP A RELATIONSHIP WITH A DV-PROGRAM ADVOCATE BEFORE ONE IS NEEDED.

and some badly needed support. Her co-workers became her friends; they provided a reality check after seeing the perpetrator stalk and verbally attack her. One co-worker told her "This is scary! This is not normal!" Their response to his behavior helped her understand the danger she was in. She also learned of Temporary Protective Orders (TPOs) from her supportive and concerned boss. She found it helpful to have people tell her "This is not normal" and ask her "Do you want to live this way?" without blaming or judging her. Her employer was able to help by connecting her to outside resources for assistance.

DV injuries and fatalities affect others at work, with long-term emotional impact continuing after the incident. We interviewed the co-worker of one victim who revealed that she sometimes "forgets" that her friend and co-worker is gone. She still looks for her car as she pulls into the work parking lot in the mornings.

HOW PREVALENT IS DV IN THE WORKPLACE?

The CDC reports that nearly one quarter of all workplace violence is related to personal relationships, including DV, and this type of violence occurs across all industry sectors.[3] The NIJ funded a large study by Reeves & O'Leary-Kelly that found

- 30% of women have experienced DV in the past
- One in 10 female employees were currently experiencing DV
- One-fifth of current DV victims said that they were experiencing some abuse while at work[4]

A national CAEPV survey in 2005 found that 21% of adults working full time stated they were current victims of DV and 44% reported that they had experienced DV in the past.[5] Even if not directly affected, 44% of adults working full time reported that they feel the effect of DV at work. These reports of current and past DV class this problem as pervasive, but only 15% of U.S. businesses are estimated to have DV safety policies in place.[6]

The workplace is ideal for promoting DV awareness and victim safety because it involves access. Access is that territory the perpetrator works hardest to control. His access to the victim comes initially through a current or past intimate relationship, sometimes with shared living, sometimes with children. From the point that the abuse begins, his continued access is gained with threats, control, subjugation, and coercion. Skilled at controlling her remotely, the perpetrator cannot easily hide his tactics from close co-workers, attuned supervisors, or managers who have been trained to spot the signs of DV. **Employers are well-positioned to take advantage of this break in the perpetrator's direct control of the victim** by offering victims a safe way to get support, help, and resources.

The Project reviewed one near-fatality case in which the sole system the victim had turned to for help prior to the attack was her employer. She asked that they call the police if they ever saw her husband at the school where she worked. Her employer refused, stating that this was not a work-related issue, and advised her to deal with private problems at home. This survivor had recently separated from her husband who was stalking her. One morning, as she arrived for work, he attacked, attempting to shoot her. His gun jammed several times, so he instead beat the victim into a coma. This incident was witnessed by numerous co-workers who did call the police. One of her co-workers told police "The incident affected me terribly because the lady he was beating was one of my co-workers and she had just told me last week that her marriage wasn't working out. She said they were having money problems and that she was not telling her mom but was trying to work it out with her husband."

WHAT DOES DV IN THE WORKPLACE LOOK LIKE?

DV victims may be responding to abuse with decreased productivity, increased tardiness, and distractedness. **Employers should expect an abuser to sabotage the employee's work relationship.** Co-workers may notice a victim receiving regular unwanted calls, text messages, or emails from the abuser. Unwanted or unappreciated deliveries of flowers or gifts are a tipoff. Some additional signs are unusual fatigue, unexplained injuries or injuries that do not fit the explanations of how they occurred, being inappropriately dressed (e.g., long sleeves in hot weather, wearing sunglasses indoors), wearing excessive makeup, hypersensitivity about home life or hints of trouble at home. Ironically, the more elite a victim's work position, the less obvious her abuser's controlling tactics may appear.

workplace domestic violence (continued)

It is more of a challenge to hide interrupting texts, emails, and phone calls in a cubicle than in a corner office.

TECHNOLOGY WORKS BOTH WAYS

Workplaces often provide workers with access to email, texting, and the Internet. There is a good chance that a DV victim is experiencing stalking behavior while at work. Stalking is unwelcome, threatening behavior that causes the victim to fear for their own or a family member's safety. Stalking can include appearing at a victim's home, work, or attended events unannounced or without reason, monitoring the victim, spying or following, or leaving unwanted gifts. It can occur as information publicly posted about the victim, unwelcome mail, email, text messages, the use of electronic surveillance including GPS, or messages on blogs or social networking sites.

Technology is democratic; it provides sharp tools for the perpetrator's coercive control tactics of isolation and monitoring, yet it also arms employers, advocates, and victims with enhanced possibilities for victim safety. Employers can take steps to promote workplace safety, take a stand of no-tolerance on stalking, and provide victims with resources for safety and support. The Project can work with employers, connecting them to organizations and advocates specializing in protecting victims from technology-based control.

Good news for employers: taking a stand on DV is good business. It can benefit your employees, your community, and your profitability. Reeves & O'Leary-Kelly confirmed DV's work-related costs to employers and effects on the workplace. Abused women miss an estimated 8 million days of paid work each year.[7] The annual cost of DV to the US economy is more than $8.3 billion. This cost includes medical care, mental health services, and lost productivity (e.g., time away from work).[8] Taking steps to offer resources to victims and education to employees and management can reduce a company's liability and losses, and improve the quality of life of its primary resource: people.

WHAT CAN YOU DO IN YOUR OWN WORKPLACE?

Liz Claiborne's CEO Bill McComb reassures employers who may balk at addressing this problem: "The key is companies don't have to get into the business of domestic violence counseling. They need to get in the business of letting women know the workplace is a safe haven." **Employers do not have a responsibility to solve the problem, just to train their people to try to identify DV and to make resources safely available to victims. "It's a matter of posters, signage, and referrals to websites and numbers,"** states McComb. **"When you see the writing on the wall, literally you stop and you think."**[9]

MESSAGE TO EMPLOYERS

Doing the right thing and bottom-line profitability are both served by supporting your employees with DV-sensitive policies and procedures. Institute your own Policy on Domestic Violence, Sexual Violence, Dating Violence and Stalking! This customizable process takes 15 to 20 minutes and can be completed at:
http://www.workplacesrespond.org/policy_tool/begin

MESSAGE TO ADVOCATES

Both non-profit and for-profit organizations need the expertise and information you offer to keep their workers safer. Partner with employers in your community; we can help. Also, plan an outreach campaign to build corporate friends and increase victims' options for safe help. Please contact GCADV at 404-209-0280 for more information.

launching the workplace initiative

"THE EMPLOYER CAN'T FIX THE PROBLEM... BUT IT CAN BE A LINK TO RESOURCES, AND CAN BE AN INCREDIBLE SOURCE OF SUPPORT."

-STACEY P. DOUGAN
BOARD CHAIR, MEN STOPPING VIOLENCE

DOMESTIC VIOLENCE IN THE WORKPLACE INITIATIVE: RELATIONSHIPS & RESOURCES

A significant, recurring Fatality Review Project finding is that engaging our non-traditional allies is imperative if we are to create safer communities and eliminate the scourge of domestic violence. Our findings regarding DV in the workplace suggest that employers are ideal allies for outreach. **We have learned that victims of DV are likely to disclose abuse to a trusted co-worker or manager; even when victims do not disclose at work, their co-workers often know or suspect when abuse is happening.** Often, however, employers and co-workers are not prepared to respond to victims in an effective way. And in some instances, the unprepared employer's response can unwittingly increase danger for victims.

Engaging the business community is a key strategy to drive social change, as employers are uniquely positioned to provide support and resources. **Trained and prepared employers can have a direct impact on victim safety and economic autonomy if they recognize the signs of DV, respond appropriately, and make referrals for outside assistance.**

In 2010 the Fatality Review Project launched our Domestic Violence in the Workplace Initiative. This involved the following activities: developing a plan for the initiative, researching existing materials and resources, developing key relationships, and conducting training sessions with individual businesses. **We have the following purposes:**

- Establish the collaborative relationships through which employers will gain a greater understanding of DV and its impact on the lives of their employees
- Give employers information and resources to create a workplace that is safe and responsive to victims of DV
- Connect employers with local resources and advocates

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launching
the workplace initiative (continued)

PLAN: ACTION, IMPACT, & INFLUENCE!

ACTIONS FOR 2011: MATERIALS AND RESOURCES AVAILABLE FOR DISTRIBUTION:

- Make a guide for employers available in both print and web format
- Develop training materials targeted for profit and non-profit employers
- Provide collateral print materials: brochures, posters, cell phone drive packets, etc.

IMPACT: TO HAVE AN IMPACT ON THE ATTITUDES AND KNOWLEDGE BASE OF EMPLOYERS. OUR GOAL IS TO HELP THEM:

- Recognize the scope and prevalence of DV and its psychological and social impact on individuals
- Realize the business costs associated with DV and the economic consequences of failing to establish adequate policies and protocols
- Understand the policies and protocols that contribute to a safe workplace for employees who may be experiencing DV
- Know the local organizations, advocates, and resources that are available as partners and the support available to assist employees who may be experiencing DV
- Develop compassion for survivors and victims and recognize the real impact that they as employers can have on the safety and well-being of their employees

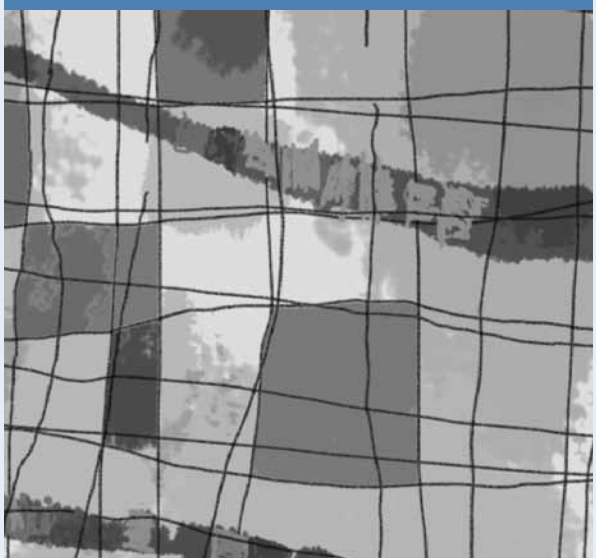
INFLUENCE: WE PLAN TO INFLUENCE EMPLOYERS' BEHAVIORS AND TRANSMIT SKILLS, ENCOURAGING EMPLOYERS TO RESPOND WITH THESE ACTIONS:

- Create policies, practices, and protocols that aid and support survivors
- Practice ongoing training of supervisors and managers on policies and protocols related to DV
- Make their commitment to a safe workplace visible to employees on an ongoing basis
- Develop connections with advocates, DV programs, and other resources in their local area
- Engage the Fatality Review Project in conversation and seek out its guidance on ensuring the safety and well-being of employees

WHAT YOU CAN DO: Reach out to the employers in your area and begin building these relationships.

WHAT WE CAN DO FOR YOU: The Fatality Review Project can provide you with technical assistance to help you develop your own expertise and become recognized as local experts on DV in the workplace. Contact **GCADV** at **404-209-0280.**

WHAT IS THE BENEFIT: Engaging the business community in the work to end DV develops new allies in our communities and increases the safety of victims where they work.



rabbi bridges belief & practice

Georgia advocates have invested tremendous energy in improving the criminal legal response to domestic violence survivors. Meanwhile, since 2004 our Fatality Review Reports have consistently revealed that many homicide victims never contact the criminal legal system, and yet many of those victims were members of faith communities or faith played a major role in their lives. We have identified faith communities as potentially effective and potent resources for supporting victims and preventing domestic violence assaults.

Some of our early findings regarding faith community leaders were discouraging. Faith leaders sometimes demonstrated a lack of understanding of the seriousness of the problem, questioning whether DV existed in a faith-abiding congregation. Uninformed leaders would find ways to hold the victim responsible for the abuse, for example, asking her how she provoked her abuser or by expecting her to solve the problem by keeping the family together, no matter what the cost. In the past, some faith communities unwittingly sent confusing and misguided messages about what they could offer victims and perpetrators of DV. Now we are becoming increasingly aware of inspiring exceptions, as we find examples of clergy and their congregations stepping up to do the right thing. Below we highlight the story of a rabbi in Georgia, referred to here as Rabbi C, for sake of anonymity.

In November of 2009, Rabbi C attended a multi-faith DV summit sponsored by the Georgia Coalition against Domestic Violence (GCADV) and the Georgia Commission on Family Violence (GCFV). The rabbi came at the request of a congregant, who was hoping that his synagogue would step up their efforts to address DV. As a youth, the rabbi had been deeply affected by a close friend's experience of sexual abuse, and so was attentive to issues of intimate abuse.

Rabbi C was moved by the summit and decided to preach a D'Var Torah or a sermon on the Rape of Dinah, which focused on the ways that faith communities have consistently failed to meet the needs of survivors. The Rabbi crafted the D'Var Torah to send the following strong messages to congregants and particularly to survivors:

- This synagogue takes violence against women seriously
- Here are some ways that you can respond to a loved one who reports abuse
- Reach out to me if you need assistance

Rabbi C had a similar Passover message printed in the synagogue newsletter to capture the attention and serve the needs of women who may not attend services. The rabbi also arranged for DV flyers with emergency numbers to be placed in both the men's and women's restrooms in the synagogue. Soon after, Rabbi C learned that a woman had come forth to report that she was being abused by her husband. Before agreeing to meet with this woman, Rabbi C contacted Wendy Lipshutz, lead advocate at Georgia's Shalom Bayit, an innovative Jewish Family & Career Services program for families struggling with DV. Rabbi C was new to the complexities of DV and wanted to be able to provide information and resources that would help, not compromise the victim's (referred to here as "Ellen") safety. Wendy and members of her advisory committee and staff were most helpful, providing Rabbi C with information that would assist Ellen in pursuing safety for herself and accountability for her husband (referred to here as "Tom"). Advocates also referred Rabbi C to Sgt. Jay Eisner, head of the Domestic Violence Unit at a Georgia police department, which had a reputation for being ultra-responsive to the needs of victims of DV.

Early in this intervention, Rabbi C became aware that Ellen's husband Tom was about to be offered the honor of pronouncing a blessing over the Torah. The rabbi also knew that a court had issued a protective order against Tom and that he had moved out of the house. Feeling compelled to intercede and prevent Tom from experiencing this honor, Rabbi C made two important calls before acting. First, the rabbi consulted with experts who work with abusers to prepare for confronting Tom. The rabbi also checked with Ellen to ask if this meeting with Tom would put Ellen at risk for further abuse. Ultimately, Rabbi C informed Tom that it would not be acceptable for him to experience this honor, as his choice to abuse Ellen violated the teachings of the Torah. Tom's first response was to blame Ellen for the abuse, and then he

faith follow-up
rabbi bridges belief & practice (continued)

When looking for community support for families suffering from DV, we cannot ignore the enormous potential of faith communities. They have unlimited potential for providing spiritual and moral support in ways that few community resources can match.

challenged Rabbi C's Talmudic (religious teaching) authority. Ultimately, Tom did not publicly bless the Torah.

Tom had moved out of the home, but he wanted to return to pick up more of his belongings. Ellen was anxious about this and shared her worry with the rabbi. The synagogue then arranged for other men to be present when Tom went to pick up his items so that Tom couldn't use that occasion to manipulate or intimidate Ellen.

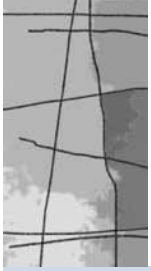
Ellen expressed concern about attending High Holiday services if Tom would be present. As there were six different services offered during the High Holidays, the rabbi arranged for Ellen and Tom to come on different days, even arranging an option for Tom to attend services at a nearby synagogue.

During this intervention with Ellen and Tom, Rabbi C created a DV advisory group, generating synagogue policy to promote survivor safety and perpetrator accountability. The rabbi wanted these principles and practices institutionalized so that they could be referred to and implemented regardless of future synagogue leadership and staff changes.

It is worth cataloging the numerous actions taken by Rabbi C and the synagogue that promoted safety for victims and accountability for abusers.

- The rabbi listened to the congregant's request to do something about DV and acted on it.
- Feeling passionate about this topic was not enough, the rabbi knew. Before acting, the rabbi turned to local domestic violence experts for knowledge and guidance… repeatedly. That connection resulted in Rabbi C joining a network of community partners including victim advocates, law enforcement, and batterer-intervention experts.
- The Rabbi delivered a D'Var Torah on DV to send a message to the congregation that DV would be taken seriously at the synagogue and that Rabbi C would be available to assist survivors.
- Rabbi C had a special message included in the synagogue newsletter to insure that all congregants had access to the communication that their synagogue was going to treat domestic violence seriously.
- Rabbi C had DV information flyers with emergency phone numbers placed in the men's and women's restrooms.
- The Rabbi referred Ellen to Shalom Bayit, whose practice and principles were consistent with Ellen's spiritual beliefs and who could walk her through a process that would include safety planning, etc.
- Before engaging Ellen's batterer, Rabbi C checked with her to determine whether it would compromise her safety to do so.
- Rabbi C put Ellen in touch with a specially trained law enforcement officer so that she could know her options regarding protection by law enforcement.
- The Rabbi held Tom accountable by letting him know that by his behavior he had disqualified himself from participating in a ceremony to bless the Torah.
- The synagogue arranged to have men at the house when Tom went to secure his belongings.
- The Rabbi arranged for Ellen and Tom to attend High Holiday services on different days and/or different locations.
- Rabbi C proactively worked towards institutionalizing policies and procedures to follow when addressing the complex issues inherent in DV cases.

Finally, when asked the reasons for persisting in efforts to find support for Ellen and accountability for Tom, **Rabbi C spoke to feeling deeply compelled to act on the Jewish Principle of Pikuach Nefesh, which means "to save a life." "There is nothing more important that I could be doing than that," the rabbi said.**



faith follow-up
a survivor's path of faith

ONE TEAM'S REVIEW: A SURVIVOR'S PATH OF FAITH

As a follow-up to the Georgia Fatality Review Project's 2009 focus on faith communities' response to domestic violence, the Episcopal Diocese of Atlanta passed a resolution creating a special committee to address DV issues. The local bishop appointed people to this committee and several survivors were included. One of these members is in close contact with an Episcopal survivor in the Diocese whose experiences provided a compelling example of a complex but ultimately successful intersection of faith and DV. The committee decided to review her story using the same protocols and precautions we now recommend for all near-fatality, survivor, and victim-related interviews. What follows is a description of one survivor's path of faith, offered as an example of resourcefulness and resiliency, intended to educate the broader community.

One thing we are learning from, and about, many survivors is never to underestimate the importance of their faith. Whether that person attends a place of worship regularly, infrequently, or not at all, for many survivors it is their faith or spiritual orientation that sustains them through the horror of their abuse.

Rhonda,* a survivor of a thirty-year abusive relationship, details how her faith was absolutely crucial to her survival. In Rhonda's chilling but inspiring account she tells of when she first met her batterer ex-husband, how he pursued her relentlessly, showering her with gifts, trips, money, and expensive dinners. But he also used wanton deception and dishonesty; his claims to be a psychologist, professional athlete, and gifted musician were replete with lies and misleading partial truths. But it was his role as an "Elmer Gantry"-type preacher that was most demoralizing to Rhonda, as he refused to let her visit churches to find a church home. She came to realize that because so much of her identity was tied to her being active in her church, his strategy to deprive her of that community had the effect of draining the well of her psyche. Like many batterers, Rhonda's ex used a variety of tactics to intentionally erode her core sense of self. In addition to isolating her from her church and friends, his campaign included verbal and emotional abuse, direct physical force, and threats to physically injure or kill her and her two children. As he was an imposing 6'6"tall, she constantly feared that he would carry out his menacing threats.

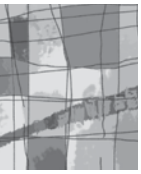
In the face of these organized and debilitating tactics of terror, Rhonda maintains that it was her faith, her praying to God for help that sustained her. When her friends, neighbors, co-workers, and medical caretakers would offer her crucial and timely support, she experienced them as having been placed on her path by God, so that when she was ready, she could use them to free herself.

Ultimately, drawing on confidence inspired by her faithful supporters, Rhonda was able to overcome the objections of her ex and she joined an Episcopal Church. She describes how meditating on the Episcopal prayer guide "Forward Day By Day" buoyed her until she was ready to break from her ex and file for divorce. For many years following her divorce, Rhonda was a professional victim's advocate and was able to use her experiences to inform the listening, advocacy, and safety planning she provided for others. Now Rhonda serves in a leadership role in her church and in the Diocese of Atlanta where she advocates for other survivors where faith and DV intersect. In her words, **"My motivation is that if I can help other women get to a point of sanity and safety, it would be like the story of Joseph: taking what was intended for evil and turning it for good. I was fortunate to get out alive, and I can take this and use it for good."**

*A pseudonym

faith follow-up: partnership
caminar latino & our lady of lourdes

Caminar Latino (CL), one of this country's premier programs for Latino families dealing with domestic violence, has found a unique and solid partnership with Our Lady of Lourdes Catholic Church (OLL). For a nominal fee, OLL provides CL with space to provide groups for survivors, perpetrators, and their children. This is particularly important because program participants have felt safe and welcomed by the OLL community, in no small part because of their opportunity to maintain their connection to the Catholic Church. Some might wonder about the safety implications of holding simultaneous groups for survivors and perpetrators in the same location, but **Jessica Nunan, CL's executive director, notes that in the 15 years of their having been hosted by two different Catholic faith communities, they have never experienced an incident of violence in or around the church.** She adds that Latinos are more likely to avail themselves of a community service if that service is provided for the whole family. **What Nunan is revealing here is that in Latino culture, family is everything. When we require or offer an intervention to an individual family member, it will have little meaning or appeal unless it addresses or includes the needs of the whole family.** When we decide to rehabilitate an individual, some Latinos would contend that lasting healing will only happen when the family is integrally involved in reinforcing that change. **This explains why Caminar Latino is so effective and why our criminal legal remedies are so often experienced as threatening or irrelevant by Latino families.** Nunan also feels that holding these groups in a church setting seems to reinforce participants' attitudes of respect and spiritual commitment to their work.



There is mutual benefit to this relationship. Caminar Latino provides a vital service to Latinos in a safe and welcoming space. Our Lady of Lourdes' meeting space features a prominent sign which reads "Ningun Ser Humano es Illgal," which means "No Human Being is Illegal." This is not so much because program participants are necessarily undocumented, but because Lourdes is a community which prioritizes people's humanity over their citizen status. This also signals non-Latinos that OLL is an open congregation, a message that is clearly congruent with their church mission; OLL is known for the ethnic diversity of their congregants.

> "OUR COLLABORATION WITH CAMINAR LATINO AFFORDS US AN OPPORTUNITY TO SERVE OUR SISTERS AND BROTHERS IN NEED AND TO BRING JUSTICE AND HEALING TO OUR COMMUNITY."
>
> -REV. JEFFERY OTT, OP
> PASTOR, OUR LADY OF LOURDES CHURCH

Serving over 125 families a year, Caminar Latino is renowned for the creative ways they approach their work. For example, when men come into the program with low or no income, CL offers them the option of working off a portion of their sliding scale fees by performing building maintenance work for OLL. In this way CL maintains their commitment to make their services accessible to all members of their community, as well as making an important contribution to Lourdes. What we learn from their experience is that **Caminar Latino and Our Lady of Lourdes represent much more than a landlord-tenant relationship. This is a complementary partnership that truly deepens both of their core missions.**

www.caminarlatino.org

GUIDE FOR ADVOCATES

The FaithTrust Institute has produced this helpful guide for DV advocates: **"Walking Together: Working with Women from Diverse Religious and Spiritual Traditions."**

Available from www.faithtrustinstitute.org

Statistics compiled by GCADV and GCFV from its media monitoring services and from reporting domestic violence programs statewide. This count represents all the DV-related deaths known to us at the time of this report. Statistics include intimate partner victims and related persons such as new partners, children and other family members. Statistics also include alleged perpetrator deaths. Most alleged perpetrators who died committed suicide after killing or attempting to kill the victim(s). Deaths of alleged perpetrators are included to show the full scope of loss of life due to DV.

chart 1

How Many Died from Domestic Violence in Each Georgia County by Year?

Chart 1: Domestic Violence Deaths in Georgia by County 2003-2009

County of Fatality	total annual deaths						
	'09	'08	'07	'06	'05	'04	'03
Appling				4			
Baldwin	2		1	3	3		
Barrow					1	1	1
Bartow			1		2		4
Ben Hill			2			2	1
Berrien			1				
Bibb	7		6	2	6	4	1
Bleckley		1			2		
Brantley		1				1	
Bulloch	2			1			
Burke		3				1	2
Butts			2				1
Calhoun			1				3
Camden					1	1	1
Carroll	3		1	2		1	1
Catoosa	1		1				
Chatham	4	4	2	3	8	2	6
Chatooga	1						
Cherokee	4	4	3		4	1	1
Clarke	10	2	1	2	2		3
Clay	2						
Clayton	1	5	7	11	10	3	3
Cobb	7	4	5	11	8	3	6
Coffee			1		1		
Colquitt			1		3		3
Columbia		1			2		1
Cook			1	2			
Coweta	1	3	2			1	
Crisp			1		1		2
Dawson					1		
Decatur	3	1					
DeKalb	9	13	7	8	3	5	17
Dodge	1			1			
Dooly						1	
Dougherty	1	1	2	1		2	1
Douglas		2				1	1

County of Fatality	total annual deaths						
	'09	'08	'07	'06	'05	'04	'03
Effingham				1			
Elbert	1				1		1
Fannin		1	2		1		1
Fayette			3	1		4	
Floyd	2	2	1	1	1	2	1
Forsyth		3		2			4
Franklin	1					1	
Fulton	11	3	10	4	7	15	10
Gilmer					1		
Glascock					1		
Glynn		1	2	1			2
Gordon	2		1	1		4	
Grady			1				1
Gwinnett	12	6	7	12	12	12	6
Habersham							1
Hall			3	2		2	
Hancock						1	
Haralson							4
Harris	2				2	1	
Henry		1		4	3	1	3
Houston		7		1	2		1
Jackson	2	1		6	1	2	
Jeff Davis		1					
Jefferson				2			2
Jenkins			1	1			
Lamar		1			2		
Laurens		2		1	1	2	2
Lee		1	2				
Liberty				6			4
Lowndes	5				9	1	
Lumpkin						1	
Macon		1			1		
Madison							2
McDuffie		2				2	1
Meriwether		1					
Monroe	2			1			
Montgomery							1

County of Fatality	total annual deaths						
	'09	'08	'07	'06	'05	'04	'03
Murrary	1						
Muscogee	1	8	5	1	9		3
Newton		2	4	3		1	3
Oconee						1	
Oglethorpe	1						1
Paulding	2					2	1
Peach		2					
Pickens			1		1		
Pierce		1					
Pike	3						
Polk			2			2	1
Pulaski	1						
Richmond	4	4	4	1	2	6	4
Rockdale	2		1		3	4	
Schley			1				
Screven				1			
Seminole				1			
Spalding		1	3				
Tattnall	2					2	1
Telfair	2	2		1	3		
Thomas			2			1	
Tift		1	5		1		
Towns						2	
Troup	2	1	1				1
Twiggs						1	
Union	2	2					
Upson						1	2
Walker			1		2		
Walton	1	1				2	
Ware			1		1		
Warren			1				
Washington		2			1		1
Wayne		2	3				4
Webster							1
Wheeler		1					1
White		2				1	2
Whitfield					1	3	2
Worth		2	1				
Undisclosed							3
YEAR	**'09**	**'08**	**'07**	**'06**	**'05**	**'04**	**'03**
TOTAL DEATHS	**123**	**113**	**118**	**106**	**127**	**110**	**137**

Means of Death 2009	firearm	stabbing	blunt force	asphyxiation	burn	unknown	TOTAL
number of deaths	94	12	9	5	1	2	123
percentage of deaths	76%	10%	7%	4%	1%	2%	100%

Chart 1 only includes counties in which a domestic violence homicide was known to have occurred between 2003 and 2009.

faith follow-up

charts 2, 3

What Was the Gender of the Victims and Perpetrators, How Were Both Employed, What Were Their Sources of Support?

Chart 2: Gender, Employment, and Income 2004-2010

CHARACTERISTIC	Victim		Perpetrator	
	Number	%	Number	%
Gender				
Female*	74	96%	3	4%
Male	3	4%	74	96%
Employment Status				
Employed	57	74%	46	60%
Employed full-time	40	52%	32	42%
Employed part-time	5	6%	4	5%
Employed, unsure if full-time or part-time	7	9%	6	8%
Self-employed	3	4%	4	5%
Employed part-time and student	2	3%	0	0%
Unemployed	7	9%	12	16%
Retired	2	3%	1	1%
Disabled	2	3%	2	3%
Unemployed student	1	1%	2	3%
Unknown	8	10%	14	18%
Sources of Financial Support				
Personal wages	53	69%	44	57%
No personal income, reliant on perpetrator for financial support	3	4%	0	0%
SSI / SSDI	2	3%	1	1%
Personal wages and family support	3	4%	1	1%
Family support	1	1%	1	1%
Family support, WIC, and Food Stamps	1	1%	1	1%
No income, unknown source of support	1	1%	2	3%
Personal wages & Food Stamps	2	3%	1	1%
Personal wages and alimony	1	1%	0	0%
Widow's pay	1	1%	0	0%
Drug dealing or other illegal income	0	0%	4	5%
No personal income, reliant on victim for financial support	0	0%	7	9%
Retirement pension	0	0%	1	1%
Unknown	9	12%	14	18%

*Note: Two female perpetrators killed male partners; one killed a female partner. One male perpetrator killed a male partner. All remaining homicides were men killing women.

Chart 2 Key Points & GAPS

- In line with national statistics, the overwhelming number of homicide victims in reviewed cases were women; the overwhelming number of perpetrators were men.
- GAPS: 74% of victims were employed outside of the home; 52% were full-time employees at the time of their death. Employers and co-workers have the potential to increase victim safety through training on recognizing symptoms, supporting victims, and making referrals.

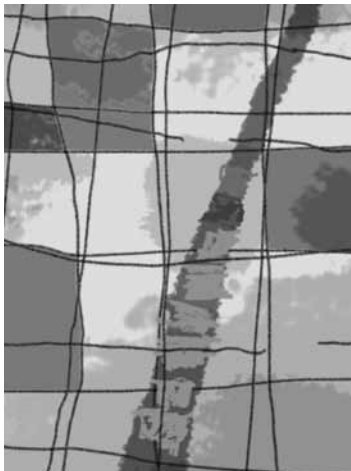
Was it a Single Homicide or Were Others Killed/Hurt?

Chart 3: Types of Incidents 2004-2010

TYPES OF INCIDENTS	Aggregate % for 2004-2010
Single Victim	53%
Homicide + Suicide	22%
Homicide + Attempted Suicide	6%
Homicide + Suicide + Attempted Homicide of Others	4%
Multiple Homicide + Suicide	4%
Multiple Homicide	4%
Homicide + Attempted Homicide of Others	3%
Homicide + Suicide + Others Wounded	1%
Multiple Homicide + Attempted Homicide of Others + Others Wounded	1%
Victim Suicide	1%
Totals	
Incidents Involving Perpetrator Suicide or Attempted Suicide	39%
Incidents Involving Homicide of Others, Attempted Homicide of Others, or Others Wounded	16%

Chart 3 Key Points & GAPS

- In 39% of the cases reviewed, the perpetrator attempted or completed suicide in addition to killing or attempting to kill one or more persons. This finding indicates a significant correlation between domestic violence perpetrators' suicidal thoughts or threats and their danger to others.
- In 16% of the cases reviewed, the perpetrator killed, attempted to kill, or injured someone other than the primary victim. Perpetrators do not limit their violence to their intimate partner. Often, other people close to the primary victim are targeted either because they are with the primary victim at the time of the attack or because the perpetrator intends to cause additional anguish to the primary victim by harming her friends or loved ones.
- GAPS: A perpetrator's threat of suicide is one of the strongest indicators for imminent lethal violence. The Project promotes training of first responders, advocates, attorneys, parole officers, court personnel, social services, and health care personnel to increase vigilance and recognition of this extreme risk factor.



How Were the Victims Killed?

Chart 4: Cause of Death 2004-2010

CAUSE OF DEATH	Aggregate % for 2004-2010
Gunshot	55%
Stab wounds / Stab wounds and lacerations	26%
Strangulation	10%
Blunt or sharp force trauma	6%
Asphyxiation due to smoke inhalation	1%
Multiple traumatic injuries	1%

Chart 4 Key Point

- Firearms continue to be the leading cause of death for victims in reviewed cases, greater than all other methods combined, indicating the urgent need to use all legal means possible to remove firearms from the hands of perpetrators.

For specific information and guidance on teen dating violence and safety issues, see the Ohio Domestic Violence Network's 2010 Teen Relationship Violence Resource Guide. Available from **www.odvn.org**

Who Else Was There When It Happened?

Chart 5: Who Else Was Present, a Witness to, or Killed at the Fatality 2004-2010

PRESENT, WITNESSED, OR KILLED	Present		Witnessed		Killed	
	Actual number of people	% of total 2004-2010 cases	Actual number of people	% of total 2004-2010 cases	Actual number of people	% of total 2004-2010 cases
TOTAL	**186**	**57%**	**156**	**47%**	**7**	**9%**
Children	66	43%	50	19%	3	4%
Family members	21	18%	13	6%	3	1%
Friends	5	5%	4	4%	0	0%
New intimate partners	3	4%	2	3%	1	1%
Co-workers	3	3%	3	1%	0	0%
Acquaintances or neighbors	17	9%	14	9%	0	0%
Strangers	71	8%	70	8%	0	0%

Chart 5 Key Points & GAPS

For the purpose of this chart, individuals labeled as "present" are those who were in the same area where the homicide occurred but did not hear or see the homicide. Those individuals who did have a sensory experience of the homicide have been determined to have "witnessed" the homicide.

- 2004-2010 data indicate that in 57% of cases someone was present at the scene of the fatality. 47% of the time someone witnessed the homicide. In 9% of cases, someone other than the primary victim was killed.
- In 19% of cases, children witnessed the homicide.

- GAPS: Contrary to popular understandings of domestic violence as a "private" issue, it is often the case that people other than the victim and the perpetrator are present at, witness to, or killed during a domestic violence homicide. The violence often spills over to affect family, friends, and bystanders.
- GAPS: There is a critical need to assist children in dealing with the traumatic effects of witnessing the homicide of a loved one and losing one or both parents.

chart 6

Who Was Aware of the Perpetrators' Behaviors?

Chart 6: Perpetrators' History as Known by the Community 2004-2010

PERPETRATORS' BEHAVIORS		Percentage of cases where this factor was present	WHO WAS AWARE?				
			Family and friends	Law enforcement	Criminal courts	Civil courts	Service providers
Violent or criminal behavior	History of DV against victim	90%	74%	62%	23%	22%	29%
	Threats to kill primary victim	60%	63%	41%	17%	26%	17%
	Violent criminal history	53%	44%	88%	39%	10%	24%
	Stalking	44%	62%	32%	9%	6%	12%
	Threats to harm victim with weapon	39%	57%	37%	17%	7%	17%
	Child abuse perpetrator*	33%	47%	47%	24%	35%	41%
	History of DV against others*	29%	53%	67%	40%	13%	7%
	Inflicted serious injury on victim*	27%	100%	57%	50%	0%	43%
	Sexual abuse perpetrator	23%	50%	39%	6%	22%	11%
	Strangulation	21%	44%	50%	31%	6%	19%
	Threats to kill children, family, and/or friends*	21%	73%	64%	36%	18%	9%
	Harmed victim with weapon*	13%	71%	71%	57%	0%	43%
	Hostage taking*	8%	75%	50%	50%	25%	50%
Controlling behavior	Monitoring and controlling	57%	77%	14%	0%	9%	14%
	Isolation of victim*	35%	89%	0%	0%	6%	6%
	Ownership of victim*	25%	100%	8%	0%	8%	15%
Mental health issues and substance abuse	Alcohol and drug abuse	55%	67%	57%	24%	12%	26%
	Suicide threats and attempts	39%	57%	30%	7%	7%	33%
	Depression*	29%	73%	27%	13%	20%	67%

*Includes cases reviewed in 2005-2010 data only.

Chart 6 Key Points and GAPS

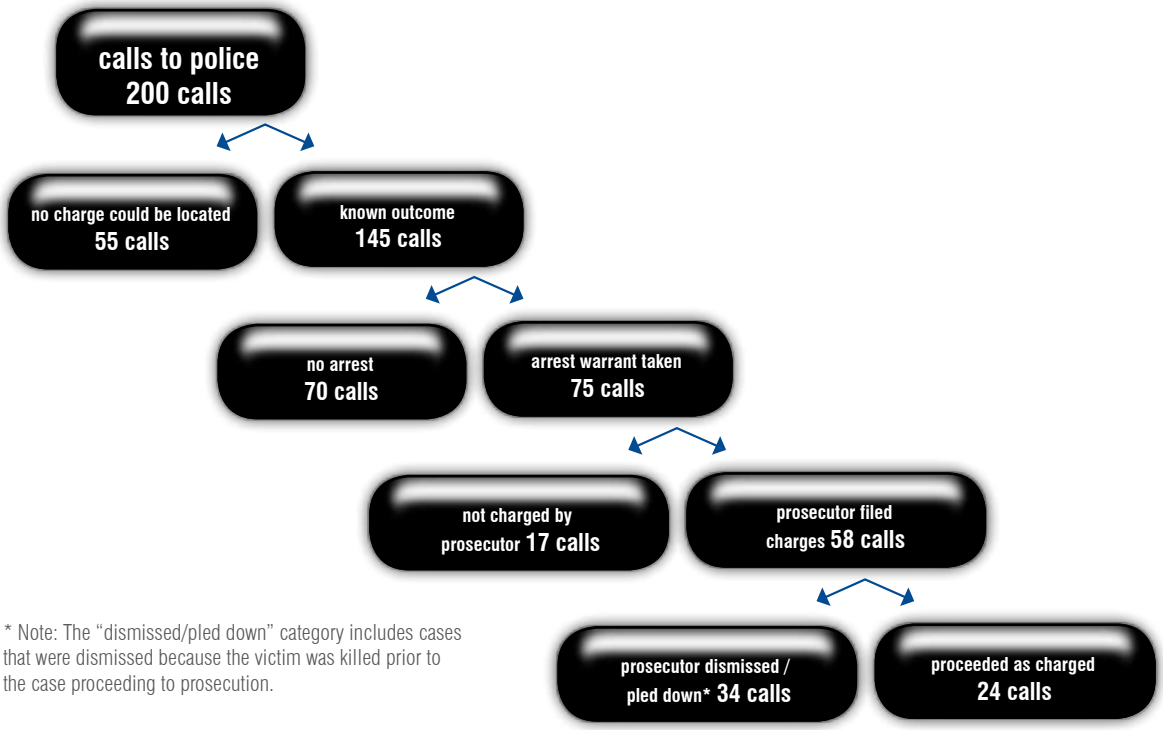
Information for this chart was gathered primarily through available protective order petitions, police reports, prosecutor files, homicide investigations, and interviews with family and friends. Project Coordinators then categorized these behaviors based on commonly used guidelines for lethality indicators. Conclusions about who knew what information were based on the source of the information.

Here is an example of how this chart may be read: **"In cases where monitoring and controlling behaviors were present, family and friends knew about this in 77% of those cases."**

- In cases where the perpetrator had inflicted serious injury on the victim, family and friends were aware of this fact 100% of the time, yet law enforcement was only aware of this fact 57% of the time. This reminds us that law enforcement often has limited information about the relationship and reinforces the critical role of those very knowledgeable parties: victims' friends and family.
- In 90% of the cases, the perpetrator had a history of some DV against the victim prior to the homicide. A good indicator of future and possibly lethal violence is past violence.
- In only 27% of the cases did the perpetrator inflict serious injury on the victim in an incident prior to the homicide. This suggests that while serious or visible injury is a predictor of future and possibly lethal violence, it will not always be present in cases where victims are later killed.
- GAPS: These numbers reveal that family and friends of the victim generally have the most information about the relationship, yet they often do not know how to help.
- GAPS: Perpetrator's DV history may be invisible to first responders; the most vital lethality indicator can easily be missed.
- GAPS: In the majority of cases, family and frends were very aware of the perpetrator's controlling behaviors, but the rest of the system was only marginally aware.

What Was the End Result of Calls to 911?

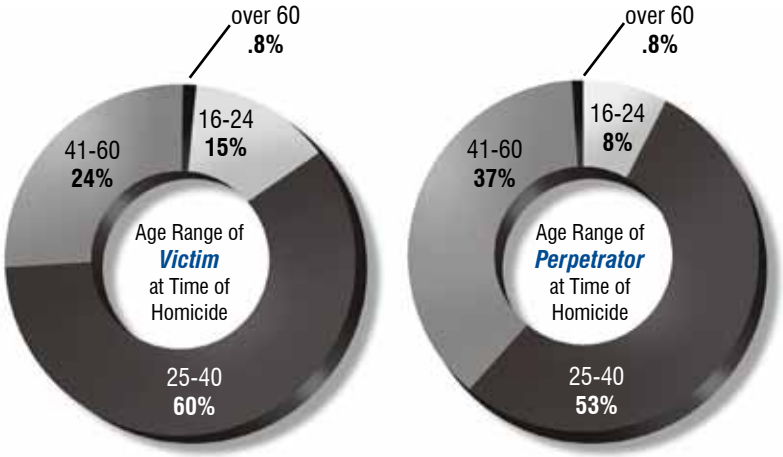
Chart 7: Detail of Investigation and Prosecution Outcomes 2004-2010



* Note: The "dismissed/pled down" category includes cases that were dismissed because the victim was killed prior to the case proceeding to prosecution.

What Proportion of Victims and Perpetrators Were in Each Age Range?

Chart 8: Victim and Perpetrator Ages at Time of Homicide 2004-2010



Convenience sample of 75 homicide victims, 75 perpetrators. The average age of victims at death was 35 years; perpetrator's average age was 36.5 years at the time of the homicide.

Chart 8 Key Points & GAPS

- In our reviews, over one half (52%) of our victims were between the ages of 16-24 when they began their relationship with the partner who eventually killed them.
- Over one quarter (29%) were teenagers when they began relationships with the partners who killed them; five of the victims were just 15 when their relationships began.
- GAPS: Our lack of recognition of, resources for, and effective responses to teen dating and young relationship abuse represent critical missed opportunities for preventive interventions.

Chart 7 Key Points & GAPS

- When law enforcement was called to the scene, 63% of the time no arrest warrant was taken or no evidence of a charge could be located. This percentage includes cases where the law enforcement officer did not take a warrant because the perpetrator had left the scene. It also includes cases where the perpetrator remained on the scene and the officer advised the victim to take the warrant herself. **These practices send a message to the victim that the crime committed against her is not being taken seriously by the criminal justice system. Additionally, they send the message to perpetrators that the criminal justice system will not hold them accountable for their behavior.**
- GAPS: A review of the case histories reveals that calling law enforcement does not always result in increased safety, justice, or perpetrator accountability. In those cases where law enforcement was called and the outcome is known, only 29% were charged by the prosecutor, and 59% of those were subsequently either dismissed or pled down.

chart 9

Chart 9 Key Points & GAPS

- Law enforcement had the most contact with both victims and perpetrators prior to the homicide. Continued law enforcement training on the dynamics of domestic violence (DV) and how/where to refer DV victims for services is needed. **See section on "roll call" trainings for information on strategies for change.**
- GAPS: **Only 18% of DV homicide victims were in contact with a DV shelter or safehouse** in the five years prior to their death. DV programs need to take proactive steps to ensure that their full range of services are known, accessible, culturally relevant, and inviting to DV violence victims.
- GAPS: A significant number of perpetrators and **victims interacted with a religious community, church, temple, or mosque** in the five years prior to the homicide. Faith communities have great potential for offering resources, referrals, and safety to congregants.

Which Agencies and Services Interacted with Victims and/or Perpetrators?

Chart 9: Agencies and Services Involved with Victims or Perpetrators in the Five Years Prior to the Fatalites 2004-2010

AGENCY / SERVICE / PROGRAM		VICTIMS		PERPETRATORS	
		Number	% total cases	Number	% total cases
Justice System Agencies	Law enforcement	60	78%	65	84%
	County prosecutor	30	39%	37	48%
	Superior court	25	32%	30	39%
	Magistrate court	23	30%	30	39%
	State court	18	23%	16	21%
	Civil court, including juvenile court	18	23%	17	22%
	Protection order advocacy program	13	17%	1	1%
	Court-based legal advocacy	13	17%	2	3%
	Probation	7	9%	27	35%
	Municipal court	5	6%	9	12%
	Legal aid	4	5%	0	0%
	Parole	1	1%	8	10%
	City prosecutor	1	1%	5	6%
Social Service Agencies	Child protective services (DFCS)	9	12%	9	12%
	Child care services	4	5%	2	3%
	TANF or Food Stamps	4	5%	2	3%
	WIC	3	4%	0	0%
	Homeless shelter	2	3%	1	1%
Health Care Agencies	Hospital care	16	21%	14	18%
	Private physician	15	19%	13	17%
	Emergency medical service (EMS)	13	17%	6	8%
	Emergency medical care	13	17%	6	8%
	Mental health provider	8	10%	18	23%
	Medicaid	3	4%	0	0%
	Substance abuse program	2	3%	4	5%
	PeachCare	1	1%	0	0%
Family Violence Agencies	Domestic violence shelter/safe house	14	18%	0	0%
	Community-based advocacy*	13	17%	4	5%
	Family violence intervention program (FVIP)	1	1%	10	13%
	Sexual assault program	1	1%	0	0%
Miscellaneous Agencies	Religious community, church, temple, or mosque	23	30%	14	18%
	Immigrant resettlement	2	3%	1	1%
	English as a Second Language (ESL) program	1	1%	0	0%
	Anger management	0	0%	5	6%

*Community-based advocacy is defined as non-residential domestic violence services

BRINGING IN LOCAL DV PROGRAMS TO DELIVER CRUCIAL INFORMATION ABOUT SERVICES.

Just as victims and perpetrators of domestic violence exist across multiple systems, solutions to DV are to be found within and between multiple systems. Survivors of domestic violence who regularly call law enforcement for emergency intervention use other support systems far less frequently, if at all. In this 2010 Report, Chart 9 (page 30) indicates that while 78% of DV homicide victims had contact with law enforcement, only 18% had ever utilized DV program emergency shelter and just 10% had used counseling services. These non-governmental resources are all confidential and free of charge. **Clearly, law enforcement has a primary role in connecting survivors of domestic violence with the information they need to access vital services.** Learning about local DV program services is critical to survivors, regardless of the outcome of their call to 911. Bringing local DV programs into targeted roll call trainings is an effective and creative strategy to answer victim's needs.

Law enforcement officers are mandated by state statute to notify DV victims of available services and remedies, both governmental as well as non-governmental. DV program directors, legal advocates, and other program staff are best qualified to deliver details of their services for survivors. Law enforcement roll call trainings provide an excellent format for this type of information exchange. **Many officers are unaware of the full scope of services offered by DV programs and that many services are available for victims still in the abusive relationship.** Roll call training provides an opportunity for law enforcement to put a name and face to specific programs and services. The more familiar law enforcement becomes with the people and services of the DV program, the more likely they are to pass that information along to victims. In communities where law enforcement works collaboratively with other service providers, there is a marked decrease in DV crime and homicides.

Georgia has unique challenges with regard to training of law enforcement officers. The state has 159 counties divided into 49 judicial circuits. There are over 1,000 law enforcement agencies employing close to 55,000 certified law enforcement officers. Fifty-eight percent of the law enforcement agencies in Georgia operate with eight or fewer officers or deputies. A survey of police chiefs and sheriffs in Georgia revealed that, depending on the demographics of the area served, 55%-85% of calls to law enforcement were domestic related or for domestic violence.[1] **Roll call training sessions provide an opportunity to present a consistent message across the state to law enforcement officers and agencies.** Roll call training sessions are also beneficial to local DV programs' advocates and staff, who can become more familiar with line officers, supervisors, and administrators of local law enforcement agencies. This training strategy broadcasts crucial information effectively while promoting multiple system collaborations and encouraging partnerships.

ENDNOTES

1. 2005 survey of police chiefs and officers in the state of Georgia inquiring about relative percentage of 911 calls relating to domestic disturbance. Conducted by Grant Programs Administrator, Georgia Association of Chiefs of Police.

EASY STEPS TO SET UP A ROLL CALL TRAINING

For Law Enforcement interested in receiving roll call training: call GCFV at 404-657-3412

For DV Programs who would like to present roll call trainings call GCADV at 404-209-0280

ROLL CALL TRAINING FAQS

Q What is the purpose?

A Twofold: To help law enforcement officers understand what services are available to DV victims so that they can relay this to victims they serve. Also to foster trusting relationships between law enforcement and DV program advocates

Q How long does each training last?

A 10 minutes

Q Who presents?

A The victim advocate from a local DV program

Q What topics are covered?

A Officers learn about:

- ✯ Services available to residents
- ✯ Emergency services
- ✯ Crisis line services
- ✯ Children's services
- ✯ Services available to non-residents
- ✯ Legal advocacy for victims
- ✯ Length of resident's stay at shelter
- ✯ Confidentiality issues
- ✯ Costs of services to victims

Q What is the fee for roll call trainings?

A There is no charge

roll call trainings: gwinnett implements change

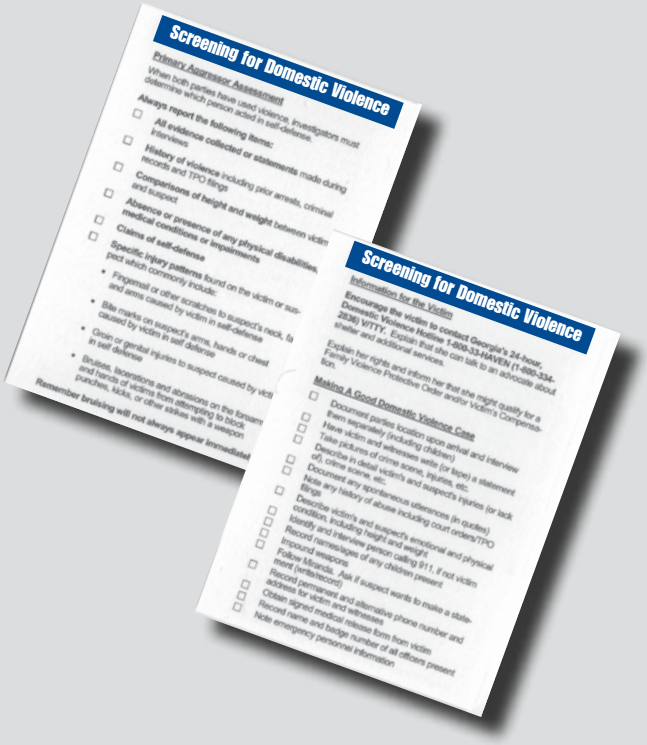
HOW GWINNETT COUNTY FAMILY VIOLENCE TASK FORCE IMPLEMENTED ROLL CALL TRAININGS

Our Community Response subcommittee of the Gwinnett County Family Violence Task Force was moved when reading Georgia's 2009 Fatality Review findings about victims' contact with law enforcement. **Seeing that 78% of victims had contact with law enforcement, yet only 18% were in contact with DV emergency shelter programs drove us into action to address this gap. We believed that we could take steps to ensure that victims received more information about critical, free services meant to protect and even save them.** The choice to use roll call trainings came about because one committee member, Jeanette Soto from PADV, recalled a similar training that PADV had provided for the police in another county. We implemented this idea with our own Gwinnett County resources. Our task force has two law enforcement members, Phil Raines and Natasha Burney, who provided introductions to police precinct chiefs. Phil and Natasha arranged for our trainings with each precinct chief, and we were granted 10 minutes with each shift immediately after roll call. We presented to each precinct over two to three days, at 6:30 a.m., 2:30 p.m., and 10:30 p.m. In this way, we were sure to address all of the line officers.

During these 10 minutes, we presented an overview of domestic violence, explained the task force's activities and distributed updated victim resource lists for Gwinnett County. The officers were able to ask questions; this resulted in some great feedback from them. At each roll call training we had one task force member plus either Phil or Natasha. We presented first to the big precincts – North, South, East, West, and Central – and now we are beginning on the city precincts.

This task requires a lot of dedication and many volunteers, but it has been truly beneficial. Now we are developing pocket cards with information from the solicitor's office for the police officers to give to victims during 911 domestic disturbance interventions. **With Phil's help, we were also able to get our updated resource list loaded into the squad car laptops.** Now the officers can easily look up specific resources for individual victims as needed. We are planning to increase our volunteer staff and streamline our plan as Gwinnett's city precincts are more numerous. Our next step is to interview prosecutors at the district attorney's office to determine what they feel they need to prosecute a case; then we will present this information at future roll call trainings.

With the help of the Georgia Commission on Family Violence and the Georgia Coalition on Domestic Violence, we were able to host a training for other Georgia fatality review board members on how to implement roll call trainings. **It is really gratifying to know that steps we are taking to get good information out to officers is helping them to better serve victims.** We hope to continue our efforts into the next year.



Above are **Law Enforcement "Screening for Domestic Violence" Pocket cards,** available at no cost from GCADV at 404-209-0280.

macon: fatality review team from scratch

Macon's Central Georgia Council on Family Violence (CGCFV) had been in existence for over four years when they decided to create a fatality review team subcommittee. Frank Mack, Executive Director of the Family Counseling Center of Central Georgia, is a member of the CGCFV and led the initiative. Mack notes, **"While we felt we were doing a credible job of educating our community on family violence, we continued to suffer family violence fatalities. We knew we needed to learn more about DV fatalities and explore ways that the Macon community could better protect DV victims."**

Mack and Allison Owen, LMFT on staff at the Family Counseling Center of Central Georgia, first contacted Georgia's Fatality Review Project, who helped them build a team, adopt policies and procedures, and educate the team on the complexities of domestic violence. The Project advised them on selecting only adjudicated cases, developing a case chronology, techniques to appropriately interview the victim's family and friends, how to best interview law enforcement and victim service providers, and how to avoid the "blame game."

Mack's group was very particular about the team they assembled, choosing members already highly invested in the processes of responding to victims or creating and enforcing accountability for offenders. They attracted an assistant pastor experienced in educating the community on DV issues as well as one attorney, one investigator, and one victim's advocate from the district attorney's office. Additionally, there were two attorneys from Georgia Legal Services, a lieutenant from the Macon Sheriff's Department, a representative from the Macon Police Department, a DFCS/RiverEdge Behavioral Center employee, a representative from a DV program/shelter, and a chief probation officer sensitive to DV safety issues. Mack states that several people were especially critical to the team's successful fatality review. **"Key staff from our district attorney's office, Georgia Legal Services, and Family Counseling Center of Central Georgia played critical roles in gathering information on the case we selected, and in appropriately interviewing family and friends of the victim."** The team appreciated the support it received from CGCFV and the guidance and technical assistance that came from Georgia's Fatality Review Project.

Mack notes that everybody came at the issue of DV fatalities from different directions, each carrying the expertise and baggage of their particular profession. He was pleased that members were able to balance their own agendas with the group goals, and that they collectively came to see how they could change and improve the ways they were dealing with DV.

When asked how they came to choose the particular case they reviewed, Mack explained that the district attorney had offered four cases as candidates for review. The group reviewed these and unanimously chose one that "really bothered everyone. It was so egregious, and so unacceptable that this had happened in our town, on our watch." This fatality review team intuitively understood that there is much to be learned from cases that can feel most damning of well-intentioned services and most embarrassing to a caring community.

"My biggest surprise was that many of the individuals connected to this case lacked knowledge of all of the resources that were available and many lacked a clear understanding of the complexities and realities of family violence. As a result, our committee, with support of the CGCFV, is developing new strategies to educate our community on the cycle of family violence and to broadcast information on the many resources that are available in our community," states Mack. Clearly, the gaps between a victim's needs, her ability to access help, and the availability of safety and resources confounded Macon's Fatality Review Team as it does teams and DV professionals throughout Georgia. *(continued on next page)*

macon: fatality review team from scratch (continued)

Macon's process had a unique feature that has become the new model in Georgia for best practices when interviewing family members and friends of fatality victims. For the first time, this team used the same caring protocol to interview the victim's family and friends that had been used in Georgia's near-fatality interviews. Family Counseling Center's therapist Allison Owen was present before, during, and after the interview to help debrief, and other safety precautions were taken as well. The response from those interviewed was so positive that the Georgia's Domestic Violence Fatality Review Project has integrated this protocol into existing interview procedures.

Mack's suggestion for communities considering fatality review is "to first determine if their community is committed to taking an honest look at DV fatalities in their community; decide who will provide the leadership for a fatality review team; seek assistance from the Georgia's Fatality Review Project, and last but not least, understand that this process is not about blaming anyone."

POPULARITY POSED A PROBLEM

Armed with what they had learned in the training, they formed a fatality review sub-committee to their task force, and were quickly overwhelmed with task force volunteers for this committee. Everyone seemingly wanted in and this subcommittee quickly became the largest they had, by far. Understandably, their law enforcement representatives were uncomfortable revealing murder case details to so many people and a case was never identified for review. Barbara Hogan, **Task Force Director, now feels that starting a fatality review subcommittee with a select few representatives first, then recruiting additional members more slowly, would be a more productive approach.**

REALITIES OF RECESSION A BARRIER

When the idea of a fatality review committee was introduced, task force members felt too taxed adding another meeting to their already heavy workloads. They decided to toggle meetings, cutting back task force meetings to every other month, alternating months with subcommittees meetings. The fatality review team began meeting every other month, but they quickly sensed it was not a productive schedule. It was not an option to ask members to meet more often because many of them were employed in departments and organizations that were cutting positions and adding to their workloads. **The Executive Board was clear that the sluggish economy had taken its toll on all agencies**; everyone had to do more with less. Sensibly, the Executive Board decided to suspend the Fatality Review Committee until they could reasonably regroup.

DOING THE WORK OF FATALITY REVIEW WITHOUT REVIEWING A CASE

In the meantime, the Executive Committee made a commitment to not let the idea of fatality review fade away completely. Recalling a key message from their 2009 training, they turned their attention to the findings and recommendations printed in the Georgia Domestic Violence Fatality Review Project's 2009 Annual Report. They focused on three specific issues and devised particular tactics and strategies to respond to each. Following is a summary of their focus, work, and accomplishments:

FAITH AND DOMESTIC VIOLENCE

Victims, survivors, and their family members consistently turn to their faith communities for support and safety, whether they disclose the abuse or not.

spotlight douglas county

At the urging of Judge Peggy Walker, in 2009 the Douglas County Task Force on Family Violence decided to collectively get involved in Georgia's Domestic Violence Fatality Review Project. They invited the Project Coordinator from Georgia Commission on Family Violence (GCFV) to present on what their participation could involve. Their interest was piqued; soon after, they sent representatives to the Fatality Review overview training offered by GCFV and GCADV. They saw that they could not only learn from their own experiences but could also benefit from lessons learned from fatality reviews in other jurisdictions.

- Rev. Steven Saul, Vice-Chair of the Task Force Executive Board, has begun incorporating the topic of domestic violence into his sermons.
- Rev. Saul has also held a forum on Domestic Violence: Best Practices for Clergy.
- Rev. Saul has appeared in the local paper, educating the community about the intersection of faith and domestic violence. He appeared on the county cable TV channel discussing this topic and getting the word out to clergy and victims. As a result of the interview, the reporter who interviewed him joined the task force.

SUBSTANCE ABUSE

Alcohol and drug abuse were identified in many cases as a factor, not a cause in the escalation of danger. The system gets distracted or fixated on the substance abuse issues and misses the warning signs for increased danger.

- Douglas County Task Force Legal Coordinator Maegan Eggler-Bright and Sgt. Jesse Hambrick of the Douglas County Sheriff's Office teamed up and developed a four hour domestic violence and substance abuse training program for law enforcement personnel. Over 100 individuals have received this training including counselors for people in court-ordered substance abuse treatment programs, law enforcement officers, and others.

ISOLATION

The isolation of victims that is purposely inflicted by a perpetrator or unintentionally inflicted by the intervening systems can result in increased danger for the victim.

- Douglas County task force developed its first community outreach committee to reach out to the victims of domestic violence and sexual assault. This team is comprised of Douglas County Task Force Legal Coordinator Maegan Eggler-Bright; Sgt. Jesse Hambrick of the Douglas County Sheriff's Office; Gayle Griffin, RN; Jamie Bennett, reporter and public relations specialist; and Dr. Jennifer Lawrence from Georgia State University.

We highlight this work of the Douglas County task force on family violence for several reasons.

1. Community organizing is challenging. The work of task forces and fatality review teams is extremely important in moving us towards the systemic and social change necessary to defeat domestic violence in our communities.
2. People on the frontline tend to focus on the crises directly in front of them. Systems-change work often takes a backseat to the everyday caseload and tasks that must be attended to. This is particularly true in the face of budget cuts and personnel reduction. Douglas County task force on family violence was able to creatively balance their first priority of frontline tasks with their commitment to have a local impact on DV fatalities.
3. Their creative solutions show us that we can make system level changes without reviewing a case; case review is not the only option.

Douglas County Task Force on Family Violence Members: Lynn Abass: Douglas County Solicitor's Office, **Jamie Bennett**: Douglas County Commissioners Office, **Phyllis Bunday**: Community Volunteer, **Dr. Brenda Blackwell**: Georgia State University, **Richard Bowen**: Georgia State Board of Pardon and Paroles, **Elisa Covarrubias**: Douglas County Task Force, **Merv Darter**: Families First, **Maegan Eggler-Bright**: Douglas County Task Force, **Brian Fortner**: Douglas County Solicitor General, **Jedidiah Godfrey**: Douglas County Animal Control, **Gayle Griffin**: Douglas Wellstar Hospital, **Sgt. Jesse Hambrick**: Douglas County Sheriff's Office, **Barbara Hogan**: Douglas County Task Force, **Capt. Bobby Holmes**: Douglas County Sheriff's Office, **Carla Hungate**: Family Transition Center, **Dr. Jennifer Lawrence**: Georgia State University, **James H. Lewis**: Attorney at Law, **Deborah Ogle**: Douglas County Magistrate Court, **Inv. Sadie Pittman**: Douglasville City Police, **Dep. Anne Rice**: Douglas County Sheriff's Office, **Steven Saul**: Trinity Anglican Church, **Det. Lynn Seagraves**: Villa Rica Police Department, **Teresa Smith**: Share House, **Dep. Chief Gary Sparks**: Douglasville Police Department, **Doug Streeter**: Restoration Services, **Shellie Wallace**: Tanner Medical Center.

We applaud the work of family violence task forces and fatality review teams around the state and hope you can take inspiration and comfort in knowing that you are not alone in your challenges and that they are surmountable.

acknowledgements

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The Georgia Commission on Family Violence (GCFV) and the Georgia Coalition Against Domestic Violence (GCADV) are grateful to the many individuals who continue to make Georgia's Fatality Review Project possible.

Fatality Review Project Staff
Jan Christiansen, Associate Director, GCADV
Nancy Dickinson, LMSW, Editor, Creative Director
Greg Loughlin, Co-Coordinator, Fatality Review Project, GCFV
Taylor Thompson Tabb, Co-Coordinator, Fatality Review Project, GCADV
For part of the project year, **Kirsten Rambo**, Former Executive Director, GCFV

The Georgia Coalition Against Domestic Violence (GCADV) brings together member agencies, allied organizations, and supportive individuals who are committed to ending domestic violence. Guided by the voices of survivors, we work to create social change by addressing the root causes of this violence. GCADV leads advocacy efforts for responsive public policy and fosters quality, comprehensive prevention and intervention services throughout the state. Being a coalition means working together for a common cause. We know that now and in the years to come, we will be up against enormous challenges that promise to test our capacity for conviction and perseverance. It is as vital as ever that we remember that the foundation for the future success of this Coalition lies in our hands, all of us, collectively. As we coalesce around our common cause, we do so with the voices of domestic violence survivors and their needs for safety always in the forefront of our minds. To learn more or get involved, please visit www.gcadv.org.

The Georgia Commission on Family Violence (GCFV) is a state agency that was created by the Georgia General Assembly in 1992 to develop a comprehensive state plan for ending family violence in Georgia. GCFV works throughout the state to help create and support task forces made up of citizen volunteers working to end domestic violence in their communities. In addition, GCFV conducts research and provides training about domestic violence, monitors legislation and other policy impacting victims of domestic violence, certifies all of Georgia's Family Violence Intervention Programs, and coordinates the statewide Domestic Violence Fatality Review Project. Please visit www.gcfv.org for more information.

SPECIAL THANKS

A special acknowledgement goes to the family members and friends of homicide victims who were willing to share with us the struggles their loved ones faced.

We are especially grateful to **Allison Smith**, GCADV, who again conducted data analysis for the project, allowing us to display aggregate data in this report.

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REVIEW TEAMS

We acknowledge the commitment of the Fatality Review participants from around the state who devoted their time, energy, and expertise to work towards creating safer communities. Several of the communities that participated this year are new to the Project, but a number have been participating for the last seven years. This presented a challenge for some in identifying a case for review, as they had exhausted their eligible pool. Teams unable to identify a case for review instead focused their efforts on implementing past recommendations.

Atlanta Judicial Circuit
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Laura Barton, Partnership Against Domestic Violence
Aparna Bhattacharyya, Raksha, Inc.
Robin Brooks, Tangu, Inc.
Sonja Brown, Fulton County District Attorney's Office
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Rosalyn Garner, Families First
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Charlisa Herriott, Fulton County Accountability Court
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Cassandra Jones, Chief, Fulton County Police Department
Vanessa Kinsey, Sisters Against Domestic Violence

Wendy Lipshutz, Shalom Bayit of Jewish Family and Career Services
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Cindy Norton, Division of Family and Children Services
Jessica Norton, Department of Corrections
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Kylie Rowlands, Rockdale Medical Center
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Dee Simms, Crisis Line & Safe House of Central Georgia
Michael Tafelski, Georgia Legal Services Program
Pam White-Colbert, District Attorney's Office

Fatality review is difficult work, both for the review teams and for the project staff. We want to acknowledge that the project staff could not have successfully conducted our work and completed this report without the support, analysis, and feedback from our colleagues. Special thanks to our co-workers for assistance on this project:

GCFV
Maggie Beck-Coon, Research and Communications Coordinator
Jameelah Ferrell, Planning Coordinator
Erin Oakley, FVIP Contractor
Jennifer Thomas, Interim Associate Director and Statewide Task Force Coordinator

GCADV
Jenny Aszman, MSW Intern
Angie Boy, Project Connect Coordinator
Christy Cardina, Director of Training and Membership
Jan Christiansen, Associate Director
Shenna Johnson, Community Resource Coordinator

acknowledgements (continued)

Nicole Lesser, Executive Director
Penny Rosenfield, Director of Finance
Allison Smith, Economic Justice Coordinator
Susan Swain, Communications Coordinator

We continued making progress this year with implementing fatality review findings related to the faith community. Progress this year was largely due to the following **ad hoc team of advocates and faith leaders** who advised us and pushed our initiative forward. Thank you; we look forward to building on what we have accomplished together.

Aparna Bhattacharyya, Raksha, Inc.
Alice Davidson, DV Task Force, Episcopal Diocese of Atlanta
Lynda Goodwyn, Hopewell Missionary Baptist Church
Rev. Sara Hayden, Tri-Presbytery New Church Development Commission
Dr. Gus Kaufman, Jr., Licensed Psychologist, Oakhurst Psychotherapy
Wendy Lipshutz, Shalom Bayit of Jewish Family and Career Services
Hadayai Majeed, Baitul Salaam Network
Barbara E. Maples, DV Task Force, Episcopal Diocese of Atlanta
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Amita Rao, Raksha, Inc.
Karria James, Partnership Against Domestic Violence
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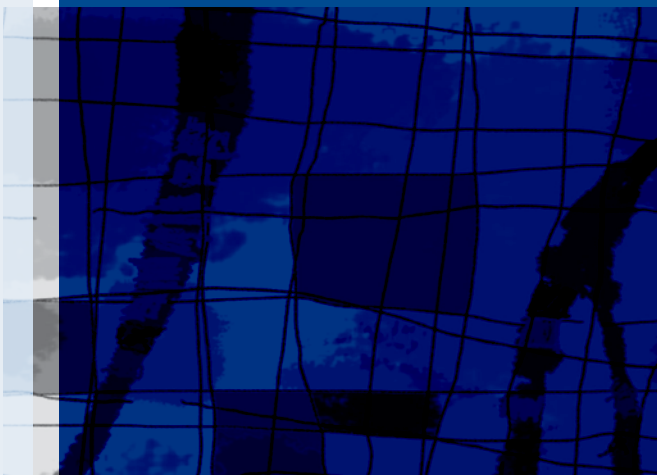
Contact GCADV for copies of this informative and supportive three color folding pocket card: "Warning Signs of Dating Violence."

Includes:

- How to tell if it's abuse
- How to tell if your friend is being abused
- How to help a friend

dedication

THIS REPORT IS DEDICATED TO ALL THOSE WHO LOST THEIR LIVES TO DOMESTIC VIOLENCE AND TO THEIR FAMILY MEMBERS, FRIENDS, AND SURVIVING CHILDREN WHO MUST GO ON WITHOUT THEM.



safety planning with teens tip sheet 1

Safety planning can look different for teenagers. Their situations are different in several ways from that of adults, including:

- An adult may be able to completely avoid all situations where she would run into her abuser. **But a teenager might be forced to go to school everyday with her abuser.**
- An adult can apply for an order of protection for herself. **A teen under 18 in Georgia cannot apply for a TPO without an adult.**
- An adult has the possibility of accessing shelter, whereas **in Georgia this is not always an option for a teenager.**

For these reasons, the ways we safety plan with teens might be quite different than how we safety plan with adults. **Here are some common situations you might hear when talking to teens and their family and friends, and some suggestions on how to respond:**

NATIONAL TEEN DATING ABUSE HELPLINE
1-866-331-9474
www.loveisrespect.org

This resource was developed by **Carol Tureaud** of the **National Domestic Violence Hotline.**
www.thehotline.org
Used with permission.

YOUR CALLER SAYS:	YOU CAN SUGGEST:
"I'm going out with a new guy I don't know too well."	Consider double dating the first few times you go out with a new guy. Before leaving on the date, make sure you know the exact plans for the evening, and make sure a parent or friend knows these plans and what time to expect you home. Let your date know that you are expected to call or let someone know when you get in. Be aware of your decreased ability to react under the influence of alcohol or drugs. If you leave a party with someone you do not know well, tell a friend you are leaving and with whom. Ask your friend to call and make sure you got home safely. Trust your instincts. If a situation makes you uncomfortable, try to be calm and think of a way out of the situation. Keep money with you in case you need to take a taxi home.
"My new girlfriend wants me to spend all my time with just her."	Stay in touch with your friends. Make it a point to keep in contact with people other than her. Stay involved in activities that you enjoy. Don't stop doing things that make you feel good about yourself. Make new friends. Increase your support network.
"Sometimes I'm scared when I'm alone with my boyfriend."	Go out to public places with your boyfriend. Try not to be alone with him, or at least not to be alone in an isolated or deserted location. Let other people know where you are and what your plans will be. Try not to be dependent on your boyfriend for a ride. Always try to keep a cell phone with you. If you feel you are in danger, don't be afraid to call the police. Don't minimize your fears.
"I want to break up with my boyfriend, but I'm afraid of what he'll do."	If you think the situation might be dangerous, don't break up in person. Do it over the phone, even email. If you do end up breaking up in person, do it in a public place and don't leave with him. Have a friend with you, or tell a friend or a parent what you are going to do and where you will be. Call a friend or counselor afterward and talk about what happened. If he gave you a cell phone, get rid of it, he might be able to track your movements with the built-in GPS. Change your passwords to anything he might have access to. Plan for the times when you will miss him.

please tear out & post or pass along

safety planning with teens tip sheet 2

YOUR CALLER SAYS:	YOU CAN SUGGEST:
"My ex is threatening me; I'm afraid of him."	Consider telling your parents or other family members what is happening. They can help you screen calls and visitors. Try not to be alone at home. Make sure to always lock doors and windows when you're at home. Talk to your local domestic violence agency about what you or your parents might be able to do about getting an order of protection. They might also offer group or individual counseling. Keep a journal of the things he is doing to harass you, or how he is abusing you
"My ex is harassing me at school."	Try not to be alone. Let your friends know what is happening and have them walk you to classes and have lunch with you. Tell teachers, counselors, coaches, or security guards about what is happening. Change your routine. Don't always come to school the same way, or arrive at the same time. Always try to ride to school with someone. If you take the bus, try to have someone with you. Talk to school staff about rearranging your class schedule. Change your locker or lock. Plan things you can do after school other than going home to an empty house. If he's stalking you, this is illegal and can be reported to the police. If you think the situation might be dangerous, tell this to a trusted adult.
"My friend told me her boyfriend slapped her. How can I help her?"	Listen to your friend and be supportive. Don't judge your friend for being in the situation or blame her for what happened. Tell her you believe her and that it wasn't her fault. Let her know that you are worried about her safety. Encourage her to talk to a trusted adult; offer to go with her when she talks to them.
"My 15-year-old daughter is being abused by her boyfriend. What can I do?"	Try to control your emotions; if you appear too shocked or angry, your reaction might frighten your teen. Don't blame your daughter for being in a bad situation. Avoid giving her ultimatums about leaving him. Don't ask her to choose between you. Make sure she knows you will always be there for her no matter what. You might be able to get an order of protection for your daughter. Call your local DV program to get more info about this.
"My boyfriend is threatening to post revealing photos of me on my Facebook page."	Set your profile to private. Block anyone you don't want to view your profile, but know that setting up a fake profile is very easy. Don't use the same user name/passwords for all accounts. If photos are already posted, do a screenshot to a Word document so you'll have documentation Report inappropriate content, messages, etc., immediately to the HELP section of the website. Never post info about your daily activities and whereabouts online. If you break up with an abusive partner, change your passwords to these and all online accounts immediately, if not before the breakup.

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calling faith community leaders to take action now!

Since 2003, domestic violence has claimed the lives of at least 940 Georgia citizens.

In 2010, domestic violence agencies in Georgia received more than 71,000 crisis calls.

Nationwide, one in three women reports being physically or sexually abused by a husband or boyfriend at some point in their lives.

Week after week, many of these women carry their wounds through the doors and into a church, temple, mosque, or synagogue. Too often, no one knows. Even when leaders and members are aware of a problem, many feel helpless to protect the victim, and powerless to stop the violence and hold the abuser accountable.

In fact, faith communities have tremendous potential to respond effectively and compassionately to those who are experiencing domestic violence.

What can YOU do as a leader in your faith community?

- Educate yourself on the psychological and social dynamics of domestic violence at **www.faithtrustinstitute.org**, **www.interfaithpartners.org**, **www.gcfv.org**, or **www.gcadv.org**.
- Make it your first priority to develop a strong relationship with a local domestic violence advocate or program; they welcome your partnership.
- Ensure that your congregation is a place where everyone is safe and victims of domestic violence can find help.
- Support a local domestic violence program with volunteers, funding or in-kind gifts from your congregation.
- Take a vocal, visible and public stand against DV.

What can you do RIGHT NOW?

- Add a domestic violence advocate to the contact list in your cell phone right now. Check **www.gcadv.org** for a local DV program or call us at **404-209-0280** for a list of resources and referrals.
- Post a tearout from page 43 of this Report in restrooms or other places where people in your sacred community can see it.
- Raise awareness in your congregation by hosting a cell phone drive to benefit a local domestic violence organization. Contact **GCADV** at **404-209-0280** for more information.

Your organization's education specialist, trainer, or a domestic violence advocate in your faith community can provide you with a list of advocates and agencies in your area. For printed materials to post for your congregation, call GCADV at 404-209-0280.

please tear out & post or pass along

10 STEPS EMPLOYERS (OR BUSINESSES) CAN TAKE RIGHT NOW TO PROMOTE DOMESTIC VIOLENCE AWARENESS

1. *Connect with your local domestic violence program and meet your local advocates. Go to **www.gcadv.org** and search for your nearest domestic violence program.*
2. *Place posters in employee break rooms or bathrooms. To request these materials, call the **Georgia Coalition Against Domestic Violence (GCADV)** or your local domestic violence program.*
3. *Place domestic violence brochures in Human Resources, employee break rooms and bathrooms.*
4. *Host a cell phone drive, an easy way to build awareness and support survivors of abuse.*
5. *Host a domestic violence Lunch & Learn for managers and supervisors, HR, EAP and/or employees.*
6. *Devote a half day to training managers and supervisors on workplace domestic violence issues.*
7. *If you outsource your EAP services, make sure the providers are knowledgeable about domestic violence and prepared to provide resources.*
8. *Develop & implement a Model Policy at: **http://www.workplacesrespond.org/policy_tool/begin** It takes 15-20 minutes to develop online and will enhance your employee safety.*
9. *Join your local domestic violence or family violence task force and engage in this vital work. Contact the **Georgia Commission on Family Violence (GCFV)** at **404-657-3412** or **www.gcfv.org** to find your local task force.*
10. *Lead initiatives to reach out and speak at other organizations in your community; encourage them to institute their own Model Policy. Become recognized as an expert leader in your community.*

OUR FAITH COMMUNITY DOES NOT SUPPORT ABUSE!

Does your partner try to control you? Threaten or blame you? Call you names? Do you feel like you are "walking on eggshells"? Afraid?

If you have a controlling or abusive partner, you are not alone. The abuse is not your fault.

There is **HOPE**...please, ask for **HELP!**

Call the 24/7 Georgia Domestic Violence Hotline at 1-800-334-2836 (voice and TTY) to talk with someone confidentially about your safety.

This hotline is free and anyone can call. You do not have to give your name or any identifying information to receive help. You do not have to leave your relationship in order to get help. Language interpretation is available. If you have trouble reaching an interpreter at this number, please call **1-800-799-SAFE (7233).** Or, visit the Georgia Coalition Against Domestic Violence website at **www.gcadv.org.**

(Computers store information on the websites you have visited even if you delete your browsing history. Consider using a computer at a library, friend's house, internet café, or school.)

 This project is supported by Award No. W09-8-019 awarded by the Office on Violence Against Women and administered by the Criminal Justice Coordinating Council.

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"A FATALITY REVIEW IS AN EXERCISE IN THE HUMANIZATION OF THE PROFESSIONAL ROLES OF ALL OF THOSE WHO CAME IN CONTACT WITH THE VICTIM."

-DR. NEIL WEBSDALE
NATIONAL DOMESTIC VIOLENCE FATALITY REVIEW INITIATIVE CONFERENCE, AUGUST, 2010

IF YOUR TASK FORCE, COMMUNITY, OR AGENCY WOULD LIKE TO LEARN MORE ABOUT WHAT IS INVOLVED IN CONDUCTING YOUR OWN FATALITY REVIEW, PLEASE CONTACT US. WE HAVE SEVEN YEARS OF PRACTICAL EXPERIENCE AND TRAINING TO PASS ON. THIS IS HUMANIZING & IMPORTANT WORK. THERE IS GREAT POTENTIAL FOR MEANINGFUL INTERACTIONS WITH SURVIVORS AND INCREASED SAFETY FOR LIVING VICTIMS.

REGARDING GENDER LANGUAGE IN THIS REPORT

The majority of domestic violence homicides in Georgia are men killing women in heterosexual relationships. However, it is important to acknowledge that domestic violence exists in same-sex relationships at roughly the same rates as in heterosexual, and lives are lost in those cases as well. Also, some men are battered by women, although this is an extremely small percentage of cases. Thus, while the language in the report reflects this reality, it should not be construed to suggest that all victims are female, and all perpetrators are male

CONTACT US:

Georgia Commission on Family Violence

Georgia Comission on
Family Violence (GCFV)
244 Washington Street, Suite 300
Atlanta, GA 30334
Phone: 404-657-3412
Fax: 404-656-3987
www.gcfv.org

GCADV

Georgia Coalition Against
Domestic Violence (GCADV)
114 New Street, Suite B
Decatur, GA 30030
Phone: 404-209-0280
Fax 404-766-3800
24-Hour Statewide Crisis Line:
1-800-33-HAVEN (1-800-334-2836)
www.gcadv.org

CLARIFICATION REGARDING DATA IN THIS REPORT

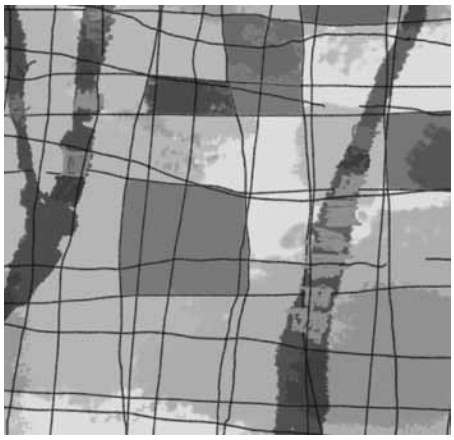
Rounding: In this report, the sum of individual data fields may not total 100% due to rounding.

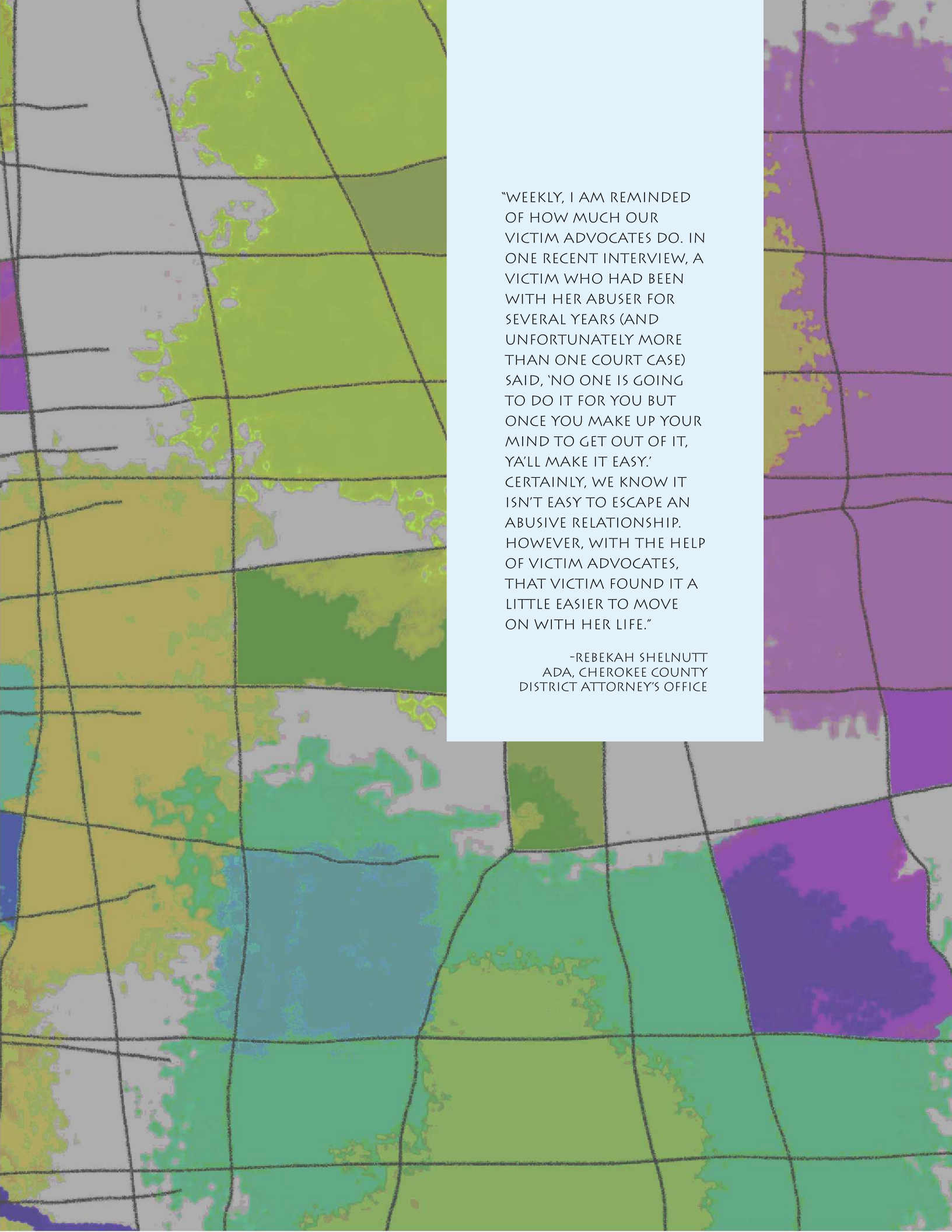
Total cases reviewed: The Georgia Domestic Violence Fatality Review Project began in 2004. Since its inception, we have reviewed 82 total cases. This total of 82 includes 77 fatality cases and five near-fatalities in which the primary victim survived the attack.

Chart 1 refers to all known domestic-violence-related deaths in Georgia, whether reviewed by the Project or not. All other charts include only data collected from the 77 fatality cases reviewed by the Project. Data from the near-fatality reviews is not included in the charts.

Chart 1 begins in 2003. All other charts begin in 2004, the first year of the Project. Also, Chart 1 includes data through 2009 data; all others include data through 2010.

Chart 1 counts all deaths, where each primary victim, secondary victim, and perpetrator is counted individually. All other charts count cases, where each case is counted as one unit, even if the case included multiple deaths.





"Weekly, I am reminded of how much our victim advocates do. In one recent interview, a victim who had been with her abuser for several years (and unfortunately more than one court case) said, 'No one is going to do it for you but once you make up your mind to get out of it, ya'll make it easy.' Certainly, we know it isn't easy to escape an abusive relationship. However, with the help of victim advocates, that victim found it a little easier to move on with her life."

-Rebekah Shelnutt
ADA, Cherokee County
District Attorney's Office