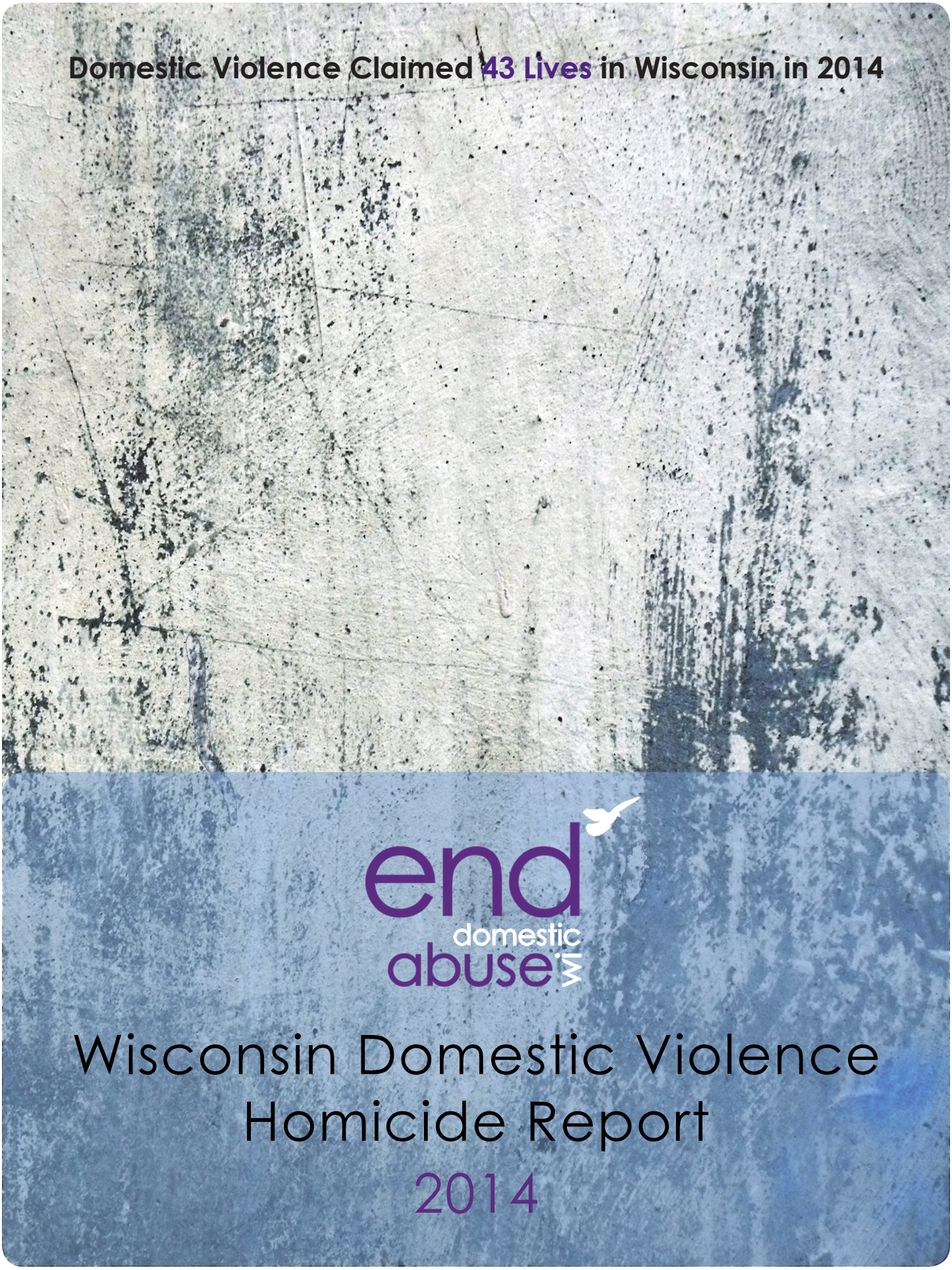

Domestic Violence Claimed 43 Lives in Wisconsin in 2014
end
domestic
abuse
WI
Wisconsin Domestic Violence
Homicide Report
2014

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Foreword

This is the thirteenth edition of the *Wisconsin Domestic Violence Homicide Report*. End Domestic Abuse Wisconsin has been tracking and analyzing all incidents of domestic violence homicide that occurred in Wisconsin since 2000. This report documents fatalities from 2014.

Any report about homicides cannot do justice to the immeasurable losses that it summarily recounts. The victims who perished in 2014 were each unique human beings with more to give to their families, friends, neighbors and the world. These pages do not—and could not—represent who they were and who they would have become.

. . .

The experience of remembering a loved one who has passed away is unlike any other human experience we have. Rekindling those memories puts us at a disorienting crossroads between the past and the future. Memories of the times spent with the deceased person can be so visceral that the person is almost present to us. Yet this vivid intensity often feels fueled by the loved one's irrevocable physical absence, by the knowledge that our lives will move forward into the future without her.

The *Wisconsin Domestic Violence Homicide Report* also stands at a nexus between retrospection, the here and now, and time as it moves forward. This document reports on past events, the cold and hollow ways in which 43 Wisconsinites lost their lives to domestic violence. However, the report is not written merely to be an archive with the goal of preserving facts and details about the past. Its purpose is oriented towards the present and the future; the report is a call to action and a call for improvement.

This year's edition of the report, in particular, is organized around a fusion of the past, present and future. The report contains a discussion of the risk factors that are predictive of domestic violence homicides. These risk factors are discussed under a portion of a petition for a temporary restraining order, written by a victim who, at that time, is writing about a perpetrator who would go on to commit a domestic violence homicide. The handwritten calls for help preserve a moment from the past. In the present, we now have research that shows these pleas could have been life-saving forecasts of lethal violence in the future. The report attempts to weave the past, present and future to strengthen our resolve and to use our knowledge about risk to support, protect and empower victims going forward.

Executive Summary

Since 2000, End Domestic Abuse Wisconsin has chronicled deaths due to domestic violence that occur in our state. Over that 15-year period, individuals have died in Wisconsin because of domestic violence at a rate slightly higher than 1 death every 8 days. In 2014, there were 35 domestic violence homicide incidents, resulting in 43 deaths: 36 homicide victims, 6 perpetrator suicides following homicides, and 1 homicide by legal intervention.[1] The table and points below outline the basic findings of the report.

2014 compared to previous years	2010	2011	2012	2013	**2014**
Incidents of domestic violence homicide	39	31	38	38	**35**
Victims of domestic violence homicide (excluding by legal intervention)	45	32	48	39	**36**
Homicides by legal intervention (responding law enforcement)	6	2	0	4	**1**
All domestic violence-related homicides	51	34	48	43	**37**
Perpetrator suicide (excluding by legal intervention)	7	3	4	12	**6**
Total deaths (victim and perpetrator)	58	37	52	55	**43**

Other aspects of domestic violence-related homicides in 2014 include:

- Perpetrators of domestic violence homicide incidents were overwhelmingly male. In 2014, 31 of 34 (or 91%) of perpetrators were men. This figure excludes the one homicide that occurred during legal intervention. This incident has also been excluded from other perpetrator demographic statistics.

- In 2014, the majority of victims of intimate partner-related homicide (57%) were killed after the relationship ended or when one person in the relationship was taking steps to leave the relationship. This figure demonstrates that leaving does not equal safety. It also supports the main message of this report: no victim in Wisconsin should have to take the courageous step of leaving an abusive relationship without the safety and support offered by domestic violence victim advocates and without the benefit of a coordinated community response that is designed to protect victims and hold perpetrators accountable.

- Victims reflected the span of life, from 11 months old to 78 years old. The average age of victims was 40 years old. Perpetrators ranged in age from 17 to 80. The average age for perpetrators was 41 years old.

1. Homicides were considered "domestic" if the victims and perpetrators were spouses or partners, former spouses or former partners, adults with children in common, adults or teens who had been in a dating relationship, or adult family members (e.g., parents killed by an adult child). Homicides of children by parents or adult household members are included if facts indicate the violence directed at the child was connected to on going intimate partner violence. Homicides of others were also included if the circumstances of the murder included a perpetrator's attack on someone connected with a current or former partner, such as a new partner or friend or family member. The report also includes homicides of domestic violence perpetrators that occur as their victims acted in self-defense, as well as those that occurred as a result of legal intervention. See *Methodology* for additional information on definitions and criteria.

- In 2014, homicides were committed in 19 separate counties in Wisconsin. About 55% of the homicide incidents occurred in urban areas, and roughly 45% happened in rural communities.

- Consistent with the findings throughout this report's history, firearms remain the most common means of perpetrating domestic violence homicides. In 2014, firearms were the weapons used in 59% of the domestic violence homicide incidents, excluding homicides by legal intervention. In at least 5 of these domestic violence shooting deaths, the gunmen were legally prohibited from possessing firearms.

- Many of the 2014 homicide cases reflect the risk factors that research has found to be particularly associated with lethal violence. These include, among other factors: threats to use or actual use of a weapon, threats to kill, stalking, strangulation, obsessive jealousy, and sexual assault. Many of these risk factors are discussed in depth in this report

National and Historical Context

Domestic violence homicide rates overall have declined nationally for all race and gender groups in the past thirty years. According to the Bureau of Justice Statistics, from 1980 to 2005, intimate partner homicides declined by 44% and homicides among other family members decreased 26%. Similarly, nonfatal domestic violence has decreased by about 63% from 1994 to 2010. This downward trend has been attributed to increased awareness, services and intervention. However, the decline has varied significantly for different populations. The data from the Bureau of Justice Statistics indicate that between 1976 and 2005, "the number of black males killed by intimates dropped by 83%, white males by 61%, black females by 52%, and white females by 6%."



Key Findings

Overview

Domestic violence homicide incidents	35
Victims of domestic violence homicide (excluding by legal intervention)	36
Homicides by legal intervention (responding law enforcement)	1
All domestic violence-related homicides	37
Homicide incidents with perpetrator suicide	6
Total deaths (victims and perpetrators)	43
Homicide incidents with two or more victims	2
Female victims	25
Male victims	12
Female perpetrators	3
Male perpetrators	31

Relationship of victim to male perpetrator

When perpetrator was male, victim was:	
Current female partner	14
Former or estranged female partner	8
Father of the perpetrator	4
Perpetrator's child (and child of current or former female partner)	2
New male partner of perpetrator's former or estranged female partner	2
Other family member killed in multiple domestic violence homicide incident	1
Former partner of perpetrator's current female partner	1
Child of perpetrator's current female partner	1

Relationship of victim to female perpetrator

When perpetrator was female, victim was:	
Current male partner	1
Perpetrator's child (and child of former male partner)	1
New female partner of perpetrator's former or estranged male partner	1

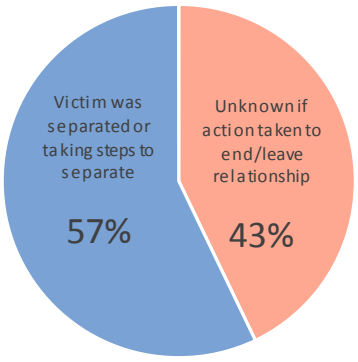
children killed

5

Homicide-suicide

Homicide incidents with perpetrator suicide	6
Homicide-suicide incidents involving firearms	6
Male perpetrators of homicide-suicide	6
Female perpetrator of homicide-suicide	0

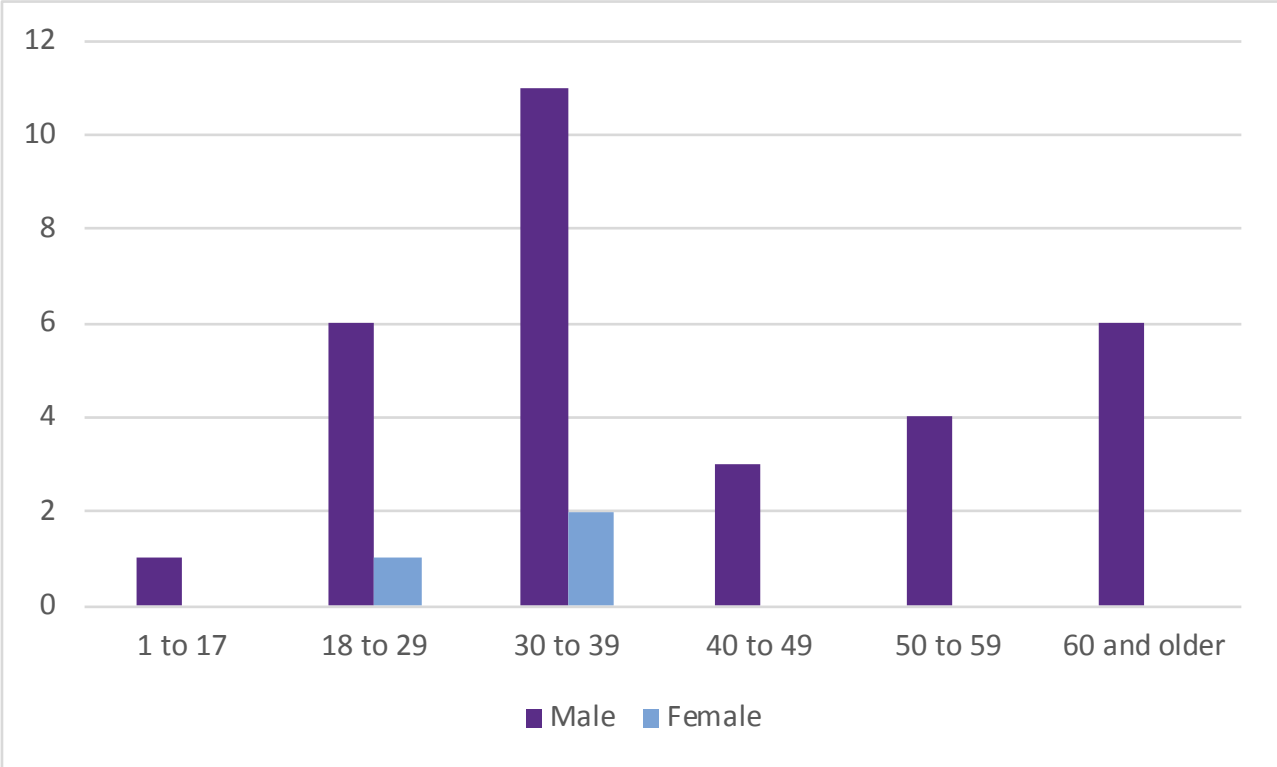
Intimate Partner Homicides: Separation does not equal safety.



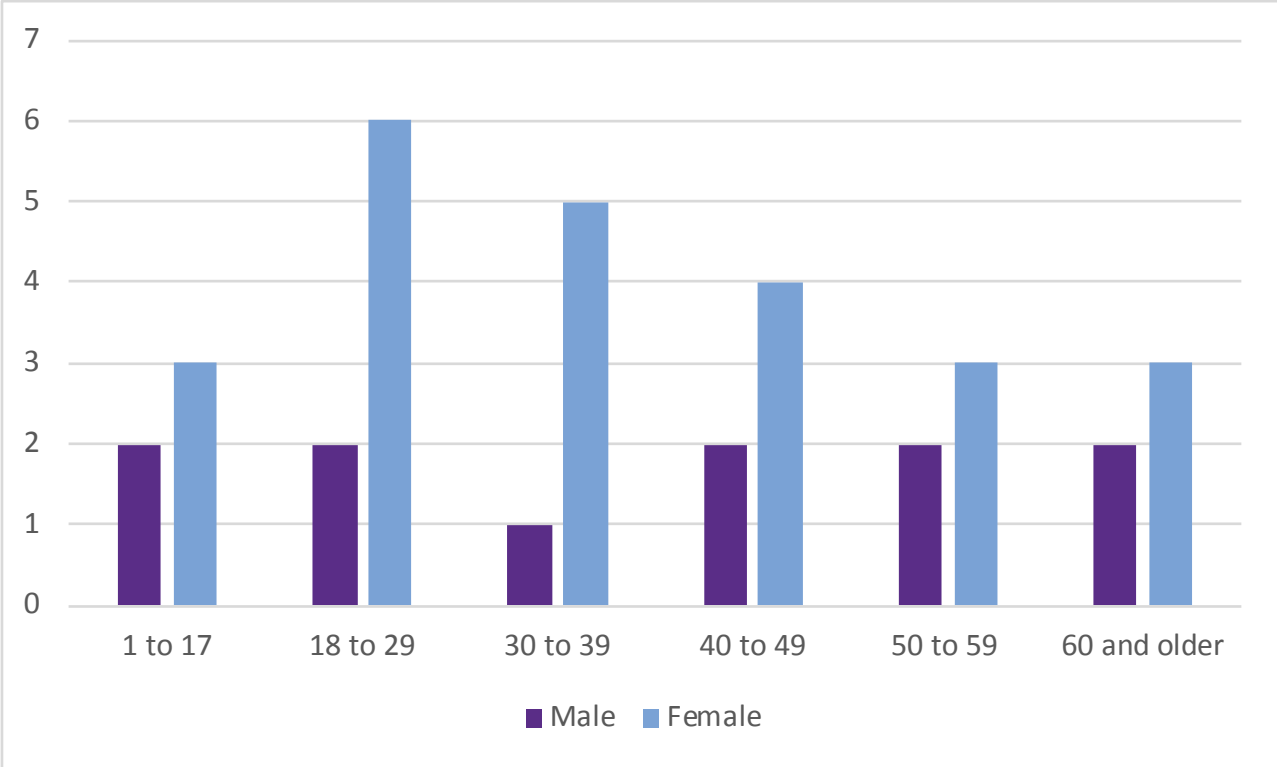
Intimate Partner Homicides: Many perpetrators have a prior history of DV.

By incident (intimate partner-related)	
Perpetrators with known prior DV history with homicide victim	8
Perpetrators with known prior DV history with other victim(s)	9
Perpetrators with prior any known prior DV history	14
Prior history is unknown	15

Age and gender of perpetrators



Age and gender of victims



Method of homicide

5

perpetrators are known to have been legally prohibited from possessing a firearm at the time of the homicide.

- Since 2005, firearms account for more domestic violence homicides than all other methods of killing combined.
- Domestic violence assaults involving a gun are 12 times more likely to result in death than those involving other weapons or bodily force.

Method of homicide (by incident)	count	
Firearm	19	59%
Blunt Trauma	6	19%
Stabbing	4	13%
Suffocation and Strangulation	2	6%
Ran over with car	1	3%
Delivery of a controlled substance	1	3%
Unknown	1	3%

Location of homicide incidents

Home of victim and/or perpetrator	26
Public space	3
Vehicle	4
Home of a third party	2

Race and gender of victims

	Black	Latino	Native American	White	Unknown
Male	2	1	0	8	1
Female	6	0	1	18	0

Race and gender of perpetrators

	Black	Latino	Native American	White
Male	7	2	1	21
Female	2	0	0	1



2014 Domestic Violence Homicides

…she was a person, she wasn't just a victim of a crime. [Her daughter] wasn't just some little girl that was killed. They were people. They were so much to so many people. They were people who had lives and people who cared for them.

All accounts and discussions of the homicides included in this report should be read with these words from surviving family members in mind. It is far too easy to reduce people's lives to either a sensational story or a dry statistic.

The accounts of the domestic violence homicides included in this report, as in past reports, are compiled from information that is readily available via public sources and limited follow-up inquiries. The amount of attention such sources pay to one domestic violence-related homicide in comparison to another varies greatly. Hence, the detail available to address each homicide varies greatly. See *Methodology* for an extended discussion of this shortcoming.

Clearly, these brief descriptions in no way reflect the complexity and circumstances of each person's death. They certainly do not capture the complexities and fullness of their lives and the impact that each homicide or suicide has on surviving family members, friends, neighbors, coworkers, communities and those responding and attempting to help during the immediate event or in the time preceding it.

Individuals' ages are listed as of the date of the homicide.

BARRON

Daniel Raven, 33, Barron – March 10, 2014

Daniel Raven's ex-wife Trista Hrabak, 29, and her new boyfriend Ian Skjerly, 34, carried out their plan to kill Raven at his home with the help of an accomplice, Robert McBain, 37, who drove the getaway car. A criminal complaint states that Raven had problems with Trista Hrabak, and that her boyfriend, Skjerly, had threatened to kill Raven before the murder. Skjerly said Hrabak put the plan into motion because Raven had turned Hrabak in for welfare fraud and she wanted him "gone as soon as possible." Skjerly admitted to detectives that he was the one who shot Raven twice with a semi-automatic rifle from outside of Raven's home, saying he was simply trying to save Trista Hrabak's life because she had been suicidal and despondent due to the problems she believed Daniel Raven had caused. Hrabak pleaded guilty to a first-degree reckless homicide

charge, and was sentenced to 15 years in prison. Skjerly pleaded guilty to a second-degree intentional homicide charge and was sentenced to 20 years in prison. McBain also pleaded guilty to a second-degree intentional homicide charge and was sentenced to 15 years in prison.

BROWN

Linda Dickenson, 47, Green Bay – February 24, 2014

Jeffrey Fish, 52, shot and killed his girlfriend Linda Dickenson with a rifle and then fatally shot himself. Their bodies were discovered when Dickenson's employer called the police after she did not show up for work. Police say they had responded to the couple's residence multiple times in the past dating back to 2007. None of these contacts resulted in the arrest of either party. Dickenson's family reported that they had tried to intervene in the past when Fish had given Dickenson a black eye and pulled a gun on her.

Linda Budzban, 55, Eaton – September 13, 2014

While going through a tumultuous divorce, Richard Phillips, 58, waited in the bushes outside of Linda Budzban's residence for her to return home. When she arrived, Phillips fatally shot his estranged wife before turning the gun on himself. A representative from the Brown County Sheriff's Department indicated that Budzban had been very fearful of Phillips for several months and would often have someone escort her home; however, on this night she returned home alone.

CRAWFORD

Karen Reagan, 68, Clayton Township – March 10, 2014

Robert Reagan, 70, killed his wife Karen Reagan with a single gunshot wound to the head as she lay in bed. He then walked outside and turned the revolver on himself in their driveway. Crawford County deputies say it is possible that the motive may have been some "troubling news" regarding Karen's health.

DANE

Cheryl Gilberg, 43, Mazomanie – February 23, 2014

Phillip Byrd, 39, fatally shot his former girlfriend, Cheryl Gilberg, at her residence. Byrd told police he and Gilberg were arguing when she pointed a handgun at him. Byrd stated there was a struggle when he straddled her to get the gun out of her hands. He claimed he grabbed the gun and fatally shot Gilberg in the head twice. Byrd the fled, taking the gun with him, before being found in Janesville and arrested on outstanding warrants. For his role in Cheryl's death, Byrd pleaded guilty to second-degree intentional homicide and faces 20 years in prison and eight years extended supervision. Court records show Byrd has a history of domestic abuse.

Ashlee Steele, 39, Fitchburg – August 22, 2014
Kacee Tollefsbol, 38

Ashlee Steele and her sister, Kacee Tollefsbol, were fatally shot by Ashlee's husband, Andrew Steele, 39. Andrew Steele is a retired Dane County Deputy who had been recently diagnosed with Lou Gehrig's disease, an incurable neurodegenerative disease. Kacee called the police after being shot by Andrew in the Steele home. When police arrived, she was able to identify Andrew as the shooter before she was rushed to the hospital, where she later died from her injury. Ashlee was found dead in her bedroom with a gunshot wound to the head and a zip tie around her neck. According to the criminal complaint, police found Andrew Steele in the laundry room with a grill turned on in an attempt to take his own life. Andrew Steele was charged with two counts of first-degree intentional homicide for the deaths of Ashlee Steele and Kacee Tollefsbol. During trial, the jury found that he lacked mental capacity at the time of the homicides due to a mental disease or defect. Andrew Steele was committed to the Wisconsin Department of Health Services for life.

Ciara Misiek, 15, Marshall – August 21, 2014

Seth Schumacher, 22, was found responsible for the death of Ciara Misiek after she died of an overdose of heroin with drugs supplied by Schumacher. Schumacher's mother reported that Schumacher and Misiek had been in a relationship for about four months. The mother said she picked Misiek up and drove Schumacher and Misiek to the Schumacher family home. Soon after, Schumacher, Misiek and another friend drove to Madison to purchase heroin from Antonio McCarroll, who has been charged with first-degree reckless homicide by delivery of a controlled substance. Misiek and the other friend waited in the car while Schumacher completed the transaction. Schumacher told authorities that he did not take any of the heroin and that he found Misiek unresponsive in the bathroom early the next morning. Schumacher has been charged with first-degree reckless homicide by delivery of a controlled substance. The cases for both of the defendants have not yet concluded.

County	In the death of...
DUNN	**Shonda Mikelson, 33, Boyceville – November 14, 2014** Shonda Mikelson was killed by a Boyceville Police Department officer after her boyfriend called 911, saying Mikelson was threatening him with a knife. According to reports, when an officer responded to the call for service, Mikelson had a knife in her right hand. The officer drew his service weapon and told Mikelson to drop the knife. Instead, Mikelson pulled a handgun from behind her back and pointed it at the officer. The officer fired a single fatal shot. The gun was later determined to be a replica.
EAU CLAIRE	**Lois Biesterveld, 58, Eau Claire – August 21, 2014** Lois Biesterveld was fatally shot in the back by her husband, Thomas Biesterveld, 60. According to the criminal complaint, Lois was found dead at the Biesterveld residence where police found signs of a struggle. Thomas confessed to police that he and his wife had been fighting, which led to him shooting her because he feared she was going to leave him. Thomas Biesterveld was found guilty of second-degree reckless homicide and sentenced to 10 years in prison.
FOND DU LAC	**Bradley Thayer, 55, Brandon – March 5, 2014** Ronald Kolosky, 56, shot and killed Bradley Thayer and then killed himself. The shooting took place at the home of a woman who knew both Kolosky and Thayer. Thayer and the woman were in her home talking when Kolosky entered and confronted Thayer, saying he, "knew something was going on." The woman told police that she at one point had an intimate relationship with Kolosky and he had recently expressed an interest in restarting the relationship. She told authorities that Kolosky seemed obsessed with her, calling her up to 20 times a day and showing up frequently at her place of employment.
GREEN LAKE	**Melissa Tuinstra, 28, Berlin – September 27, 2014** **Justin Daniels, 28** Two days after the couple had filed for divorce, Nicholas Tuinstra, 33, gunned down his estranged wife, Melissa, and the man she was dating, Justin Daniels, at Melissa's apartment. According to the criminal complaint, Nicholas was extremely upset and suicidal as a result of the impending divorce and had stated to a friend that Melissa's new boyfriend should do him a favor and kill him. A few weeks prior to the homicides, when Melissa was moving out of the home, a neighbor overheard Nicholas on the phone saying "If I find you, I'm going to (expletive) kill you." Nicholas is charged with two counts of first-degree intentional homicide, to which he has pleaded not guilty. The case has not concluded.

County	In the death of...
JEFFERSON	**Heather Stewart, 28, Watertown – May 29, 2014** Michael Henderson, 32, fatally shot his former girlfriend and mother of his child, Heather Stewart. Stewart's body was found the following day in her car in the parking lot of a former Pick n' Save grocery store, which is believed to be the location of the homicide. Police indicated that Henderson and Stewart had exchanged text messages the evening of the killing, making plans to meet. Henderson denied that this meeting happened, but video footage from surrounding areas captured both Stewart's and Henderson's cars driving into the parking lot and only Henderson's leaving. Henderson is charged with first-degree intentional homicide to which he has pleaded not guilty. He is awaiting trial.
KENOSHA	**Nancy Meyers, 78, Kenosha – June 28, 2014** Ronald Meyers, 80, drove his wife Nancy to a cemetery where he fatally shot her and then himself inside their pick-up truck. There were notes left behind in the vehicle and in their home indicating that Nancy's health was failing and that the couple had been planning this for some time. **Serenity Rose, 11 months, Kenosha – November 18, 2014** Serenity Rose was killed by her father, Russell Rose, 34, during a violent attack on her mother, April Lampy. According to the criminal complaint, the couple was arguing about separating and, while Lampy was holding Serenity, Russell began hitting and strangling her. Russell pushed both Lampy and Serenity down the stairs as they were trying to escape and continued to beat Lampy outside of the apartment. A neighbor observed Russell pick up Serenity and slam her on the concrete sidewalk repeatedly. Russell then ran back into the apartment building and started a fire before he emerged and was taken into custody. He admitted to authorities that it was his intent to kill Serenity because he, "wanted to rid her of the evil inside her, and destroy what he created, and save her from this world." Online court records show that Russell Rose has a lengthy violent history. For Serenity's death, he has been charged with six felony counts including first-degree intentional homicide. The case has not concluded.

MILWAUKEE

Karen Bradley, 33, Milwaukee – December 5, 2014

Karen Bradley was fatally shot by her husband Anthony Terrell Bradley, 42, after he physically abused and strangled her and prevented her from calling the police. Karen's 11- and 16-year-old daughters witnessed the incident. According to the criminal complaint, Anthony was also threatening to shoot them. The daughters told police that the couple had been fighting when Anthony grabbed his gun and blocked the door, holding Karen and her two daughters hostage inside. Karen's 11-year-old daughter was able to escape out the door to look for help. While she was gone, Anthony went after Karen and shot her in the head in front of her 16-year-old daughter. The daughter then ran out of the house to find her sister and flag down the police. He fled the scene. When police attempted to make contact with him again, nearly a week after the homicide, he fatally shot himself. Anthony was a convicted felon. He was therefore prohibited from possessing a firearm.

Leonidas Fisher, 14 months, Milwaukee – March 9, 2014

Nora Zylstra, 36, suffocated her 14-month-old son, Leonidas Fisher, after she had unsuccessfully tried to get back together with Leonidas' father. According to the criminal complaint, Leonidas' father became suspicious after receiving strange texts from Zylstra, and he called the police. The police found Zylstra alive in her bed after taking prescription pills. They found Leonidas deceased in his crib. When questioned by police, Zylstra told them she did not want Leonidas to grow up in a broken home. Zylstra was convicted of first-degree reckless homicide and sentenced to 25 years in prison plus 10 years extended supervision.

Barbara Killebrew, 60, Milwaukee – June 24, 2014

Barbara Killebrew was fatally stabbed by her boyfriend, Moreal Wilson, 53. Killebrew filed a restraining order against Wilson in early May of 2014, writing that he had held a knife to her throat and said, "I will cut the hell out of you." She concluded her petition by stating, "I am afraid of him and I do not know what he will do to me." On June 24th, Killebrew's neighbor overheard an argument between the two and opened her door to see Wilson dragging Killebrew up the stairs of their building by her throat with a butcher knife in the other hand. Wilson let go of Killebrew, who crawled into her neighbors residence covered in blood. According to a medical examiner, Killebrew suffered 16 stab wounds along with multiple abrasions, contusions and bruises to her face and neck. Wilson pleaded guilty to a first-degree intentional homicide charge and was sentenced to 33 years in prison.

County	In the death of...
MILWAUKEE	**June Lang, 75, Oak Creek – April 16, 2014** Jack Lang, 76, fatally shot his wife, June Lang, after the couple got into a verbal fight. He described her as continually "nagging" him for the past few weeks. June was legally blind. According to Jack, she did not believe him when he stated he had grabbed a gun and was going to shoot her. Jack then stood over her and shot her in the face because he "just couldn't take it anymore." According to the criminal complaint, after shooting June, Jack shot at himself one or two times in an attempt to commit suicide but one bullet only grazed his head. Jack Lang was charged with first-degree reckless homicide to which he pleaded guilty. He was sentenced to eight years in prison. **Justice McCoy, 18, Milwaukee – July 4, 2014** Corinthian Beamon, 20, fatally stabbed his girlfriend, Justice McCoy. The two got into a fight on the sidewalk outside of Beamon's residence. They fought about Beamon's possible involvement with another girl. According to the complaint, Beamon and three females "jumped" McCoy, punching and kicking her repeatedly. Beamon had a small knife in his pocket, which he used to stab McCoy in the chest during the fight. Corinthian Beamon was convicted of second-degree reckless homicide and sentenced to 12 years in prison plus 8 years extended supervision for the death of Justice McCoy. **Keanna Moore, 24, Milwaukee – December 13, 2014** Jorell Luckett, 30, fatally shot his girlfriend, Keanna Moore, while she was in her vehicle. According to the criminal complaint, officers were dispatched to an alley to check out a suspicious automobile and, upon arrival, found Moore dead inside the vehicle. Officers were able to locate Luckett at his place of employment, and he was placed under arrest for possession of a firearm by a felon. In addition, he was charged with first-degree reckless homicide in the death of Moore. He was found guilty of both charges at a jury trial and sentenced to 35 years in prison followed by 20 years of extended supervision.

MILWAUKEE

Peggy Pamperin, 50, Cudahy – August 13, 2014

On August 13, 2014, Cudahy Police found Peggy Pamperin deceased in her apartment. The date of Pamperin's death is not entirely clear, but police speculate she died in early June of 2014. Pamperin's boyfriend, Gregory Prey, 40, told police that Pamperin's health had been deteriorating for awhile and eventually she died in his arms. Because of the time that had passed since Pamperin had died, a medical examiner was unable to determine the exact cause of death. According to online court records, Prey has a past battery conviction and was the respondent to two domestic abuse restraining orders in 2009 and 2011. Prey stated he did not call police when Pamperin died because he didn't want go to jail for breaching the no contact order against him. Prey covered up Pamperin's body with a sheet in her apartment and continued living there. Prey was charged with hiding a corpse, to which he pleaded guilty. He was sentenced to five years prison and five years extended supervision.

Jim Penny, 29, Milwaukee – October 12, 2014

Miguel Bailey Torres-Bailey, 34, shot and killed Jim Penny. Torres-Bailey is the ex-boyfriend of a woman that Penny was dating. Torres-Bailey and the woman have a child in common. According to the criminal complaint, Torres-Bailey was upset that Penny and the woman were living together, and he called the woman twice asking to "get his child back." The shooting took place near the home of a relative of Penny. Torres-Bailey blocked the driveway in which Penny was parked and shot him while he was in the car. Penny was also armed and returned fire. Torres-Bailey sustained non-fatal injuries. Torres-Bailey was a convicted felon and, therefore, was prohibited from possessing a firearm. He pleaded guilty to charges of second-degree reckless homicide and being a felon in possession of a firearm and was sentenced to 20 years in prison.

Alonna Thomas, 23, Milwaukee – December 9, 2014

Tequila Cole, 20, fatally shot Alonna Thomas in the back. Cole was the current girlfriend of Thomas's ex-partner and the father of her child. According to the criminal complaint, Cole and Thomas had been involved in an ongoing feud for the past two years and on December 9th had planned to fight each other. The two met in the street. Cole fired a handgun approximately seven times hitting Thomas once in the back. Cole has a warrant out for her arrest and a first-degree intentional homicide charge has been filed. Cole has not yet been found.

County	In the death of...
MILWAUKEE	**Wyland Thompson, 41, Milwaukee – October 17, 2014** Temika Marker, 38, fatally stabbed her child's father, with whom she had been in an on-and-off relationship for 10 years. Marker told police that Thompson had jumped on top of her as they were fighting. She was able to get away and grab a knife from the kitchen. Thompson got the knife away from her, and they continued to fight. Marker grabbed a second knife and stabbed him once. According to court records, Thompson had at least three domestic-related charges against him in the past involving Marker, but all charges were dismissed. Marker was granted an injunction against Thompson in 2001. For Thompson's death, Marker has been convicted of homicide by negligent handling of a dangerous weapon and was sentenced to three years in prison plus five years extended supervision.
PORTAGE	**Christopher Bonnstetter, 77, Plover – May 26, 2014** Andrew Pray, 32, beat his stepfather, Chris Bonnstetter, to death with a baseball bat as he was lying on the floor of the living room in the home where he, Andrew and Andrew's mother lived. At his trial for first-degree intentional homicide, Andrew said he had a strained relationship with his stepfather and would argue with him about chores and money. Andrew was found guilty and sentenced to life in prison with the possibility of extended supervision in 20 years.
RACINE	**Roxana Abrudan, 36, Mount Pleasant – November 19, 2014** Cristian Loga-Negru, 38, tracked down his wife Roxana Abrudan in Mount Pleasant where she was hiding at her boss's home after obtaining a restraining order in Illinois. Loga-Negru laid in wait and attacked Abrudan with a hatchet outside the home, dragged her along the curb to his rental car and drove off with her to a motel where he was eventually apprehended. According to the criminal complaint, soon after the couple married in July, Loga-Negru began physically abusing his wife. For Abrudan's death, he faces three felony charges including first-degree intentional homicide, to which he has pleaded not guilty. The case is set to go to jury trial in early 2016.

ROCK

Britney Cross, 21, Janesville – May 4, 2014

Britney Cross died from numerous blunt force blows to the head and face at the hands of her boyfriend, Clayton Courtney, 28. Cross's body was found at a park in Janesville next to a bloody rock, which is suspected to have been the murder weapon. The two were seen arguing in the park earlier that day. According to online court records, Courtney had a history of violence including battery and disorderly conduct convictions. After killing Cross, Courtney returned to his residence where he subsequently stabbed and threatened to kill his roommate. Courtney has pleaded guilty to a first-degree intentional homicide charge in the death of Cross and has not yet been sentenced.

Bruce Hemmy, 58, Beloit – August 25, 2014

Peter Hemmy, 30, killed his father, Bruce Hemmy, by hitting him in the head with a hammer repeatedly. Peter became enraged when he learned that his parents were planning to move into an apartment and they told him that he could no longer live with them. After killing Bruce, Peter turned himself in to the Beloit Police Department. Peter Hemmy pleaded guilty to a first-degree intentional homicide charge and was sentenced to life in prison with parole eligibility after 40 years.

Sheila Rosenbaum, 47, Janesville – May 11, 2014

Christopher Rutherford, 41, ran over his ex-girlfriend, Sheila Rosenbaum, with her van as he was attempting to flee from police. Rutherford had moved out of Rosenbaum's residence about a month prior to the homicide, and Rosenbaum subsequently moved his things out to the front porch. Rutherford reported that he returned to the residence to change his clothes and found the front porch door locked, which angered him. He stayed to confront Rosenbaum about it when she returned home, and an argument and struggle over the keys to Rosenbaum's van ensued. While the struggle was going on, police arrived on the scene and attempted to defuse the situation, but Rutherford had gained control of the keys, entered the van and sped out of the driveway. In doing so, he fatally drove over Rosenbaum. Rutherford was chased and shot by police. He was under the influence of crack cocaine and alcohol at the time of the homicide and is facing numerous felony charges, including homicide by intoxicated use of vehicle and first-degree reckless homicide. The case has not concluded.

County	In the death of...
SAWYER	**Claudia Bunny, 48, Hunter – January 18, 2014** Claudia Bunny was shot by her boyfriend Kerry Stevenson, 52, while she sat in his truck on January 18th. She died from her injuries a week later on January 25th. According to the criminal complaint, Stevenson and Bunny had been drinking at a bar earlier that evening. On the way back to their motel room, Stevenson got his vehicle stuck in a snow bank. He claims that as he was attempting to help Bunny out of the vehicle a gun that he was holding in his opposite hand went off. Bunny was fatally shot in the head. Stevenson was previously convicted of negligent homicide in Louisiana in 1981. As a result, he was prohibited from possessing a firearm. Stevenson pleaded guilty to a charge of homicide by intoxicated use of a firearm and was sentenced to 10 years in prison.
SHEBOYGAN	**Emilio Torres, 41, Sheboygan – January 24, 2014** Dorian Torres, 17, killed his father Emilio Torres by beating him with a mallet. Dorian admitted that before the homicide he was drinking and smoking marijuana with two friends at the apartment he shared with his father. When Emilio returned, he became angry at the smell of marijuana smoke and slapped Dorian across the face. Dorian claims he then took a mallet and hit his father several times. Dorian used his father's credit cards and car for several days before Emilio's body was found in the apartment after Dorian's mother became concerned and requested that police do a welfare check. Dorian and his brother claim that Emilio physically abused them using belts, tree branches and a wire hanger. Other family members and community members painted a different picture, calling Emilio a "firm and fair" parent. Dorian Torres was sentenced to life in prison with eligibility for extended supervision after 28 years.
WAUKESHA	**James Witt, 60, Summit – January 22, 2014** Shawn Witt, 27, fatally shot his father James Witt at his residence. The day before the homicide, James was granted a temporary restraining order against his son after Shawn physically assaulted him. Shawn Witt had a history of heroin abuse. According to the criminal complaint, he was under the influence of heroin when police responded to the residence to conduct a welfare check on James. Initially, Shawn told police that his father had gone up north, but, when police entered the house, they found James's body in the basement. Shawn Witt has been charged with first-degree intentional homicide for the death of his father. The case has not yet concluded.

County	In the death of...

WAUPACA

Parker Sabel, 2, Waupaca – May 25, 2014

Joseph Jackson, 28, suffocated his two-year-old stepson, Parker Sabel, in his bed. According to the criminal complaint, the toddler was teething and would not stop crying. Jackson stated that he put his arm across Sabel's back and held him down until he stopped kicking and crying. Jackson left the room. When he returned 15 minutes later to check on Sabel, he noticed the toddler was no longer breathing. Jackson was charged in June of 2014 with child abuse against another of his stepsons. According to records, the act of child abuse occurred during an argument with Jackson's wife. For his role in Sabel's death, Jackson has been charged with first-degree reckless homicide. This case has not concluded.

Zofia Sum, 73, Waupaca – May 30, 2014

Stanley Sum, 74, and Zofia were found deceased in their home after police were called to conduct a welfare check. Both had suffered gunshot wounds to the head. The gun was found near Stanley. Circumstances surrounding the deaths were not immediately clear, however, suicide notes signed by both Stanley and Zofia were found in their home. A professional who frequently visited the Sums' home indicated that Zofia seemed very depressed lately and that Stanley often commented that he was tired.

WINNEBAGO

Addison Rochon, 3, Menasha – May 14, 2014

Addison Rochon was seriously injured by her mother's fiancé, Ryan Jorgenson, 26, on May 14th. She died from her injuries on May 21st. While under Jorgenson's care, Addison suffered high-impact head trauma and other injuries consistent with being shoved, shaken or slammed into a surface. Jorgenson reported various explanations of the event to the police, one being that he "kind of shoved" the toddler at the bottom of the stairs when she was crying. The toddler's parents recall their daughter having various injuries after being in Jorgenson's care, for which Jorgenson provided explanations. A criminal complaint in this case suggests that Jorgenson may have been motivated by jealousy of Addison's relationship with her father. Court records also indicate that Jorgenson was convicted of battery and disorderly conduct in 2012 for an incident involving Addison's mother and her boyfriend at the time. For his role in Addison's death, Jorgenson was charged with first-degree reckless homicide and was sentenced to 25 years in prison.

from him. He said he would kill me if I left him or ever contacted the police.

Two weeks ago went for a drive with him, twice stopped told me to get out non stop text, phone calls coming where I am, Threatening friends, Threatening to get rid of My things

He called me & wanted me to come over & told him NO. He said if a did not come over he would come to my house & wake everyone up. He told me a was the only one he could talk to. He acted like he was going to Kill himself. So after an hour a finally went over.

Struck me under my eye with a hand Gun. Then I had to Go to the emergancy room to get stitches

He went on a tirade including threatening to Kill me, while Kicking door violently.

Threatened to shoot me and my family burn my house down

has also forced sex upon me within the last month.

With him he always left Guns laying around with clips in them. he would always play with them like running the bullets through the chamber.

I was never able to get a license - phone or anything w/out his consent always told me I was able to go & get my license "whats stopping you" but he would not let me out to get it. If I made arrangements to go get it he would disappear not able to be found so I could go - had to watch my kids.

Risk Factors for Lethality

Over the last several years, advocates, law enforcement officials, health-care providers and others have paid increasing attention to the risk factors that are associated with lethal violence in domestic violence cases. Identification of these risk factors has grown out of a body of research that has been primarily led by Jacquelyn Campbell at Johns Hopkins University. Building on Campbell's research, communities have developed protocols to identify high-risk domestic violence situations.[2] Once cases are identified, victims are prioritized for outreach and the provision of services. Some communities target offenders in highly lethal cases for added law enforcement and prosecutorial attention. The most widespread and replicated protocol is the Maryland Lethality Assessment Program (LAP).

This section of the report is organized around 9 of the 11 questions from the screening tool that is used as part of the LAP.[3] Under the protocol, when law enforcement responders or certain other community professionals come into contact with victims, they ask 11 yes-no questions. An affirmative response to any of the first three questions indicates the victim is at high risk to be killed. Answers of "yes" to three or more of the other questions also indicate elevated risk. Under the protocol, when a high-risk case is identified, the officer or other professional places a phone call to the local 24-hour domestic violence hotline and encourages the victim to speak with the advocate on the phone. The victim is, of course, free to decide whether or not to speak with the advocate.

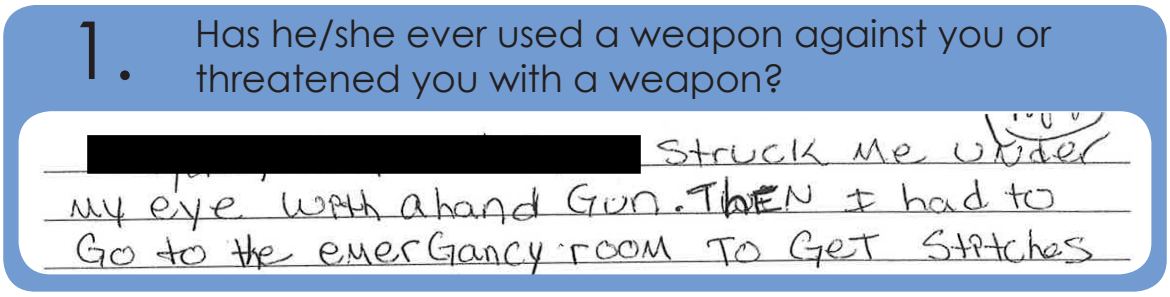
Each heading below shows a question from the screening tool alongside a portion of a petition for a temporary restraining order (or in one case, a portion of a criminal complaint). Generally, petitions for temporary restraining orders include written statements from victims that outline the basic facts that warrant the need for legal protection. The displayed portion of each document describes an account of a situation that relates to each specific risk factor. In each case, the indicator of risk that is described was committed by an individual who would later go on to perpetrate a domestic violence homicide in Wisconsin. Some of the petitions were written by the person who would eventually be murdered by the individual described in the petition. Others were written by a former partner or victim of a homicide perpetrator who later killed a different partner or victim. Following the headings are discussions of each risk factor.

The portions of handwritten petitions are shown with identifying information removed. The goal is not to sensationalize. Rather, the presentation of the petitions seeks to counterbalance the tendency to view statistical risk abstractly. Far from abstract, for the victims who wrote the petitions the warning signs of lethal violence were all too real. These handwritten documents illustrate that the predictive and, therefore, life-saving potential of lethality risk factors is not possible without listening to the stories and the pleas—the petitions in whatever form—of real-life people who experience domestic violence.

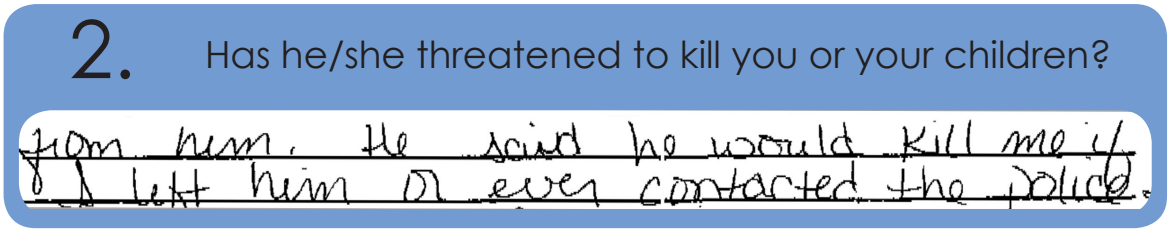
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2 See Campbell, Jacquelyn C., Daniel Webster, Jane Koziol-McLain, Carolyn Rebecca Block, Doris Williams Campbell, Mary Ann Curry, Faye Gary et al. "Assessing risk factors for intimate partner homicide." National Institute of Justice Journal 250 (2003): 14-19. This section makes multiple references to specific levels of increased risk for each enumerated risk factor. Those references can be attributed to this article. Repetitive citations have been avoided for ease of reading.

3 The following two lethality assessment questions are not included in this section: (1) Is he/she unemployed?; and, (2) Do you have a child that he/she knows is not his/hers? Campbell's research has also identified "forced sex" as a significant marker of high risk. A question pertaining to sexual assault is not included on the lethality assessment tool.



An abuser's use of a weapon, threatened or actual, is a marker of grave danger. While the use of any weapon is very serious, threats or acts of violence that involve guns are the clearest signs that a victim is at the highest risk of being murdered. Abused women who are threatened with or assaulted with guns in a prior incident are 20 times more likely to be killed than abused women who do not have this experience. The previous involvement of a gun indicates the abuser has access to the most lethal weapon and has the motivation or lacks the inhibition to use the gun. The combination of access and past behavior makes abusers who have used guns in previous incidents highly lethal because each incident involving a gun has a high potential to turn deadly. Family and intimate partner assaults are 12 times more likely to result in death when a gun is present.[4]



Research shows, in more than half of the domestic violence homicides committed against a woman, the perpetrator previously threatened to kill the victim. A previous death threat from the perpetrator is the second most predictive risk factor for homicide, next to use or threatened use of a weapon. This means abusers who actually commit homicidal violence have previously threatened victims with murder much more often than abusers whose violence never reaches that level. Therefore, when a abuser says he or she is going to kill the victim, there is good reason to regard that threat seriously.

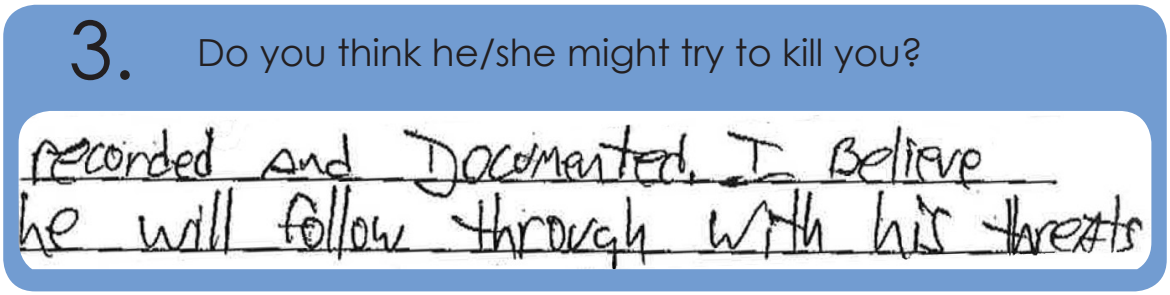
Children

The lethality assessment question about death threats also asks about threats to kill children. Certainly, the very act of threatening to kill children, often one's own child or children, is highly disturbing and intuitively an indicator of dangerousness. Threats to kill children are often a ruthless means to continue to control the adult victim. When a perpetrator senses the victim is becoming more assertive or considering leaving the relationship, he or she looks for other means of reestablishing dominance. Perpetrators know that victims' children are often the most precious things in their lives. A long campaign of abuse against the victim may have dulled or at least changed the adult victim's sense of fear of losing his or her life. For instance, when deciding

4 Saltzman, Linda E., James A. Mercy, Patrick W. O'Carroll, Mark L. Rosenberg, and Philip H. Rhodes. "Weapon involvement and injury outcomes in family and intimate assaults." JAMA 267, no. 22 (1992): 3043-3047.

to escape despite the knowledge that it may cost them their lives, some victims say they have nothing left to lose; their lives with their abusers are constant nightmares. When fear of violence or death is not enough to keep victims compliant, that some perpetrators turn to the children for leverage over their victims. Going to these lengths is a sure sign that the perpetrator is a clear and present danger to the family.

In terms of this report's criteria, children killed by one parent or an adult household member are included in the report when there are indications that the homicide perpetrator also abused the child's parent. These murders are included precisely because child abuse is a common tactic and an inseparable part of many abusers' campaigns to control their current or former partners. When adult abuse is not identified, murders of children by a parent or family member are not included in the report; however, the odds are high that ongoing adult abuse is a factor in these cases as well. Research estimates the overlap between adult domestic violence and child maltreatment is between 30% and 60%.[5]



Advocates for victims of domestic violence have long held that victims are the experts in their own lives. This means that advocates have a high degree of respect for survivors' understanding of their needs, their fears and the risks they face. The maxim that victims are experts in their own lives serves as a firm rejoinder to the all-too-easily-proffered judgements about what a survivor should have done or could have done to improve his or her situation. Take, for example, the most commonly given piece of advice to victims: they should "just leave." Many times, victims intuitively know what research bears out: leaving without support and without a plan often exposes victims to more serious and potentially lethal violence.

Therefore, the lethality assessment question that asks about the victims' perception of his or her level of danger rings true for advocates. The presence of the question on an evidence-informed risk assessment validates the idea that victims possess indispensable insight into the degree of danger they are facing.

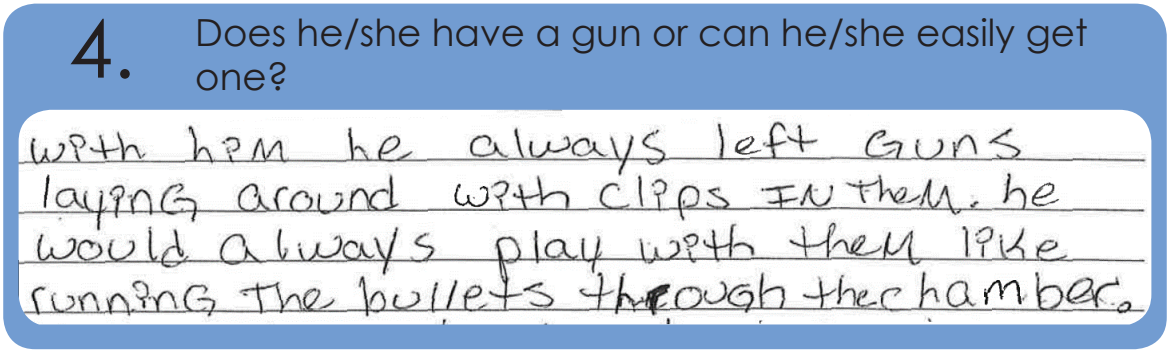
The research upon which the lethality assessment is based shows that victims of homicidal violence are three times more likely to have believed the perpetrator was capable of killing them than other abused women whose abusers did not commit murder. This research shows that a victim's own fear has predictive power and underscores the need to listen to victims. Advocates, social service providers, health-care workers, law enforcement officials, family and friends should

5 Domestic Violence and the Child Welfare System, Child Welfare Information Gateway, October 2009. Available at https://www.childwelfare.gov/topics/systemwide/domviolence/

treat a victim's fear with respect; it is a key signal that help is needed. When rendering support, it is critical to continue to respect the victim's beliefs about what assistance will be helpful and what could be harmful.

Importantly, while victims' understanding their abusers might kill them is predictive of lethal violence, about half of victims who are killed by their abusers were not known to have believed that their lives were in danger. Therefore, while a victim's perception of danger is predictive of homicide, a victim's lack of belief that the abuser will commit murder is not a good predictor of whether or not the victim will be killed. Survival mechanisms can block victims' full comprehension of what they have experienced. Responses to trauma include disassociation and minimization. Trauma can also impede victims' understanding of the sequence, duration or regularity of the abuse.

Therefore, it is critical that advocates and other support people reach out to all victims of domestic violence. Often a victim's process of becoming more aware of danger occurs once the victim has felt comfortable enough to speak with an advocate or other support person about what he or she has endured. Conversation and dialogue, along with evidence-based tools like the lethality assessment, can help victims better evaluate their level of individual risk.



While not as predictive as the use or threatened use of a firearm, the very fact that an abuser has access to a gun puts victims at elevated risk to be killed. An abused woman is five times more likely to be killed when her abusive partner has a gun in the home.[6]

Chilling stories from survivors make plain how some abusers utilize their access to a firearm as a means of terrorizing their victims, with varying degrees of subtlety. One perpetrator who would go on to shoot his wife did not have a gun in the home, but he would make sure the victim saw him looking at guns on the internet during tense moments in their relationship. Another victim, like the victim who wrote the petition above, described how the deliberate and constant presence of the guns was itself a threat:

> *My ex-husband did not hunt but he had several hunting rifles that had been his father's. He discovered that he could control me by just sitting at the kitchen table, after the children and I went to bed. . . .He never verbally threatened to shoot the children but he*

6 Campbell, Jacquelyn C., Daniel W. Webster, and Nancy Glass. "The danger assessment validation of a lethality risk assessment instrument for intimate partner femicide." Journal of Interpersonal Violence 24.4 (2009): 653-674.

would wait until they were asleep and walk towards their room while carrying a gun. . . . As I would be dozing off to sleep, I was often awakened at the sound of the click of the gun. Sometimes as I opened my eyes, he would be standing in the bedroom doorway, watching me as he clicked the gun.

For the purposes of assessing risk, demonstrations of firearm access that the victim understands as threats should be treated as such.

Because firearm access poses an elevated risk to victims, current laws restrict certain abusers' ability to legally possess firearms. Individuals subject to domestic abuse, child abuse and certain other injunctions are prohibited from having firearms and are required to surrender guns already in their control at the time the injunction is issued. Abusers who have been convicted of certain domestic violence misdemeanors are also restricted from owning a gun.

However, historically and into the present, the effectiveness of these laws has been undermined. For years in Wisconsin, a number of judges refused to order firearm surrender when issuing civil abuse injunctions, despite being legally obligated to do so. Many other jurisdictions, while not openly disregarding the firearm surrender requirement, were lax in its enforcement. Fortunately, in 2014, Wisconsin's firearm surrender law was amended to require active enforcement. In criminal court, plea bargaining in domestic abuse cases is many times designed with the intent to allow the defendant to maintain the ability to own guns. Commentators believe Wisconsin's history of inconsistently disarming abusers is related to the state's hunting heritage. One survivor from northern Wisconsin who was nearly killed in a domestic violence shooting said in response to this idea, "Many of these guys say they are hunters, but they have never been out in the woods. Yes, they hunt, but we are their prey."

Perhaps the biggest public policy failure to prevent domestic violence homicide is the gun lobby's no-holds-barred efforts to maintain the private-sale loophole in the gun sale background check system. States like Wisconsin that do not provide for background checks on gun transfers through private sales, such as sales arranged over the internet, have a 46% higher gun-related domestic violence homicide rate for women than states that require background checks.[7]

7 Every town for Gun Safety, *State Background Check Requirements and Rates of Domestic Violence Homicide,* accessed September 18, 2015, http://everytown.org/documents/2015/01/dv-background-checks-fact-sheet.pdf.

5. Has he/she ever tried to choke you?

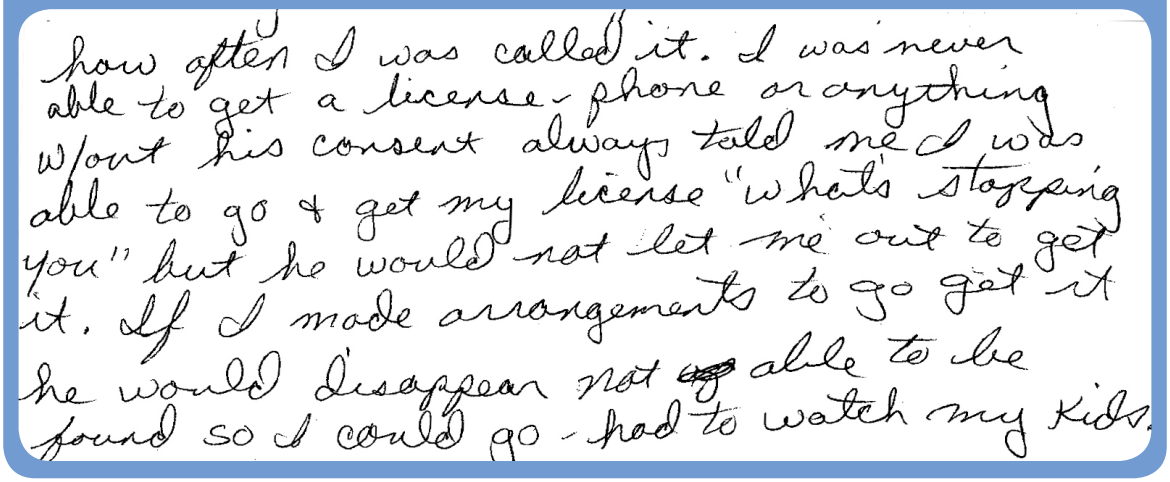
[redacted] County, Wisconsin, the above-named defendant, [redacted], grabbed [redacted] neck and threatened her with a knife. [redacted] stated that the defendant is her husband, and that on [redacted], the defendant, who was intoxicated, confronted her about seeing another person. The defendant then grabbed her neck and strangled her for approximately ten seconds. The defendant and [redacted] then went to their kitchen, whereupon the defendant grabbed a knife, stood behind [redacted] with his arms around her, and pointed the knife towards her, while stating, "We're both going to die tonight."

A previous act of strangulation is a strong predictor the abuser will kill the victim.[8] The reason this is true is simple: strangulation for all practical purposes is an attempted homicide. The act of applying pressure to another person's neck to cut off air or to restrict the flow of blood to the brain can cause the victim to lose consciousness in a matter of seconds. And, any act of strangulation is potentially fatal. Research shows that when abusers strangle victims, other high-risk factors tend to co-occur, such as threats to kill. Perpetrators who strangle once are likely to commit the act multiple times in a pattern of escalating severity.

Beginning about 15 years ago, health-care professionals, advocates and law enforcement officials made a concerted effort to bring greater attention to the seriousness of strangulation in domestic violence cases. Researchers discovered that, despite being relatively common, strangulation was an under-reported, under-diagnosed and under-prosecuted form of intimate-partner violence. This lack of awareness was in part caused by the fact that symptoms of strangulation can be delayed. Acts of strangulation can leave few immediate physical marks but can result in serious neurological and respiratory conditions, some fatal, that set in after the attack. In response to the growing knowledge related to strangulation, Wisconsin created a separate felony-level crime of strangulation and suffocation in 2008. Since then, a number of law enforcement officers and prosecutors in the state have received training on appropriately identifying and responding to cases of strangulation. However, there is still work to be done. Severe acts of strangulation are sometimes still charged as disorderly conduct (a low-level misdemeanor) and felony-level charges are pled down to lesser charges. In one recent instance, a perpetrator in southeastern Wisconsin who was charged but not convicted of strangulation went on to kill his girlfriend as she was trying to leave him.

8 Note the lethality assessment uses the term choke rather than the more precise terms strangulation or suffocation. Generally, "choke" is not a preferred term. Strangulation is a form of asphyxia caused by external pressure that results in closure of critical blood vessels or the airway. Whereas, choking is often used to refer to coughing up an internal obstruction in the air-way. (e.g., "I was laughing so hard I choked on my dinner.") The vastly different connotations of the terms was thought to have the effect of minimizing the serious and potentially fatal nature of the strangulation. However, the lethality assessment likely uses the more colloquial "choke" because the term is more easily understood by victims.

6. Is he/she violently or constantly jealous or does he/she control most of your daily activities?

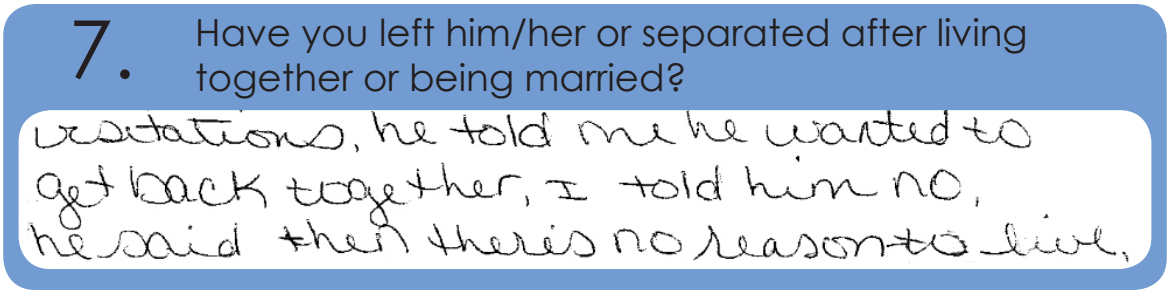

how often I was called it. I was never able to get a license - phone or anything w/out his consent always told me I was able to go & get my license "whats stopping you" but he would not let me out to get it. If I made arrangements to go get it he would disappear not ~~as~~ able to be found so I could go - had to watch my kids.

Domestic abusers often use isolation to control their victims. As the above excerpt illustrates, things such as access to a phone and vehicle can be perceived by abusers as undermining their ability to control the victim. By systematically cutting the victim off from his or her system of support, an abuser works to ensure that even if the victim did try to leave, he or she would not have anyone or anything to turn to. Things which are considered normal to the average person—having a job, phone, vehicle, and even inviting friends or family over to their home—are often not freely permitted. Some abusers will stop at nothing to ensure that every aspect of victims' lives revolve around them.

Jealousy is present in many abusive relationships. Jealousy frequently manifests with abusers making baseless accusations of infidelity and displaying extreme jealousy when their partners interact with anyone perceived as a threat. Many victims report that even everyday interactions come under scrutiny, such as conversations with co-workers, grocery store clerks, or even saying "hello" to someone on the sidewalk. Eventually, a victim learns that he or she will pay a price for engaging in these interactions and withdraws in order to stay safe—which seems counterintuitive to those who have never experienced this sort of domestic tyranny.

Related to possessive jealousy, abusers often require their victims to account for their time and spending. Any purchase, from clothes to toiletry items, can seem suspicious to an abuser. Additionally, victims of domestic violence are often expected to abide by a schedule that the abuser deems acceptable. This can be an explicitly stated by the abuser or implied (e.g., there will be punishment if a victim is five minutes late getting home from work, regardless of the circumstances). Controlling a person to the point of total submissiveness involves calculated, intentional actions on the part of the abuser. Jealousy and control of this nature may not involve inflicting any physical harm, yet they are strong indicators of the potential for lethal violence. Campbell's research of femicide and near-femicide victims found that women who experienced violent and constant jealousy in their abusive relationship were more than nine times more likely to be victims of homicide at the hands of their abusers compared to abused victims for which this risk factor was not present. Understanding the restrictive regime that victims are forced to

live under will aid advocates and other service providers in designing interventions that match victims' lived realities and avoid placing them at greater risk.



Every year, thousands of domestic violence victims make the decision to leave their abusive partners and create better lives for themselves and their children. Leaving an abusive relationship is often a very difficult, complex and dangerous process. The decision to do so requires the victim to weigh and reweigh how every step he or she takes has the potential to create more opportunities for safety or for greater risk of harm.

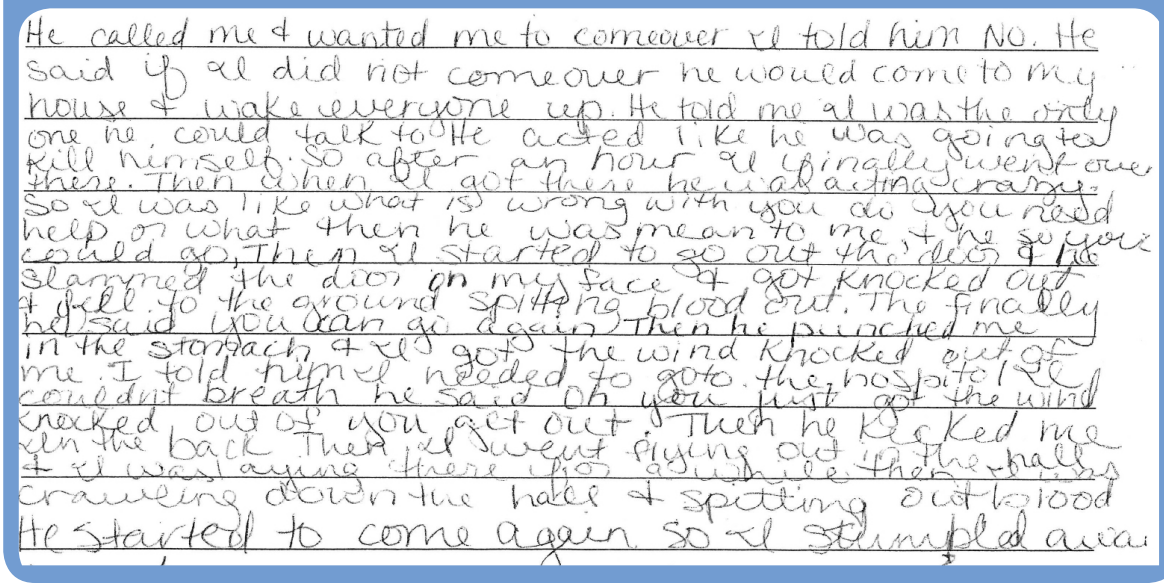
From an abuser's perspective, the victim's leaving is the ultimate threat to the power and control the abuser has worked so hard to establish. Abusers rely on their partners' submissiveness to make them feel valued; when a relationship ends the abuser's universe begins to unravel and he or she will stop at nothing to regain control. A chilling statement that abusers frequently make is, "If I can't have you, no one can." In too many cases each year in Wisconsin, this promise becomes a reality.

Research has found that an attempt to leave was a precipitating factor in 45% of intimate partner homicides of women.[9] Many of the homicides described in this report illustrate the frequent connection between leaving a relationship and homicide. The majority of victims of intimate partner-related homicides (57%) were killed after the relationship ended or when one person in the relationship was taking steps to leave the relationship. In the remainder of the cases, it is unknown whether a victim was taking any steps to leave.

While separating from an abusive partner poses a risk, it is equally important to note that the majority of victims who make the decision to leave their partners are not killed. Eventually, most will achieve a greater sense of safety after a period of time. Ensuring that victims are met with a caring, knowledgeable and victim-centered response from the systems and services they turn to for help during this dangerous period can be truly life-saving. With this in mind, many Coordinated Community Response teams in Wisconsin are working to generate widespread awareness of and responsiveness to lethality risk in domestic violence cases.

9 Block, Carolyn Rebecca. "How can practitioners help an abused woman lower her risk of death?." National Institute of Justice Journal 250 (2003): 4-7. See also, Websdale, Neil. Understanding Domestic Homicide. UPNE, 1999.

8. Has he/she ever tried to kill himself/herself?

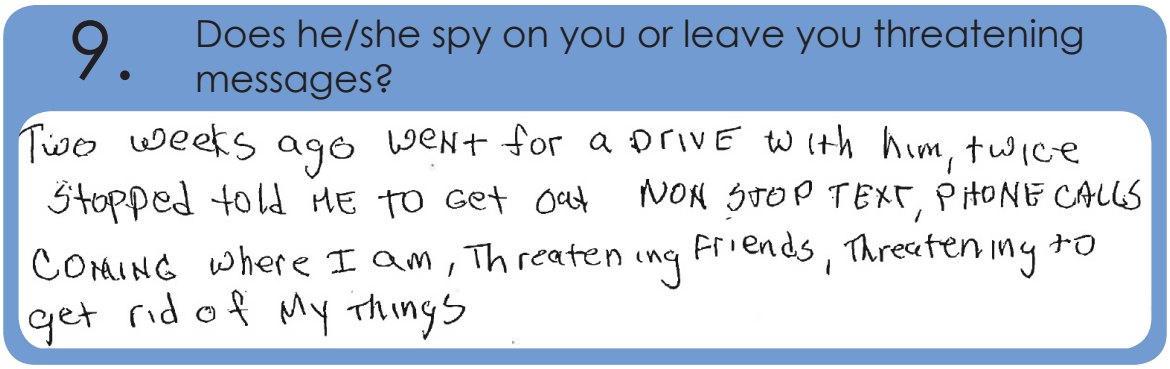

He called me & wanted me to come over & told him NO. He said if & did not come over he would come to my house & wake everyone up. He told me & was the only one he could talk to. He acted like he was going to kill himself. So after an hour & finally went over there. Then when & got there he was acting crazy. So & was like what is wrong with you do you need help or what then he was mean to me & he so you could go. Then & started to go out the door & he slammed the door on my face & got knocked out & fell to the ground spitting blood out. Then finally he said you can go again. Then he punched me in the stomach & & got the wind knocked out of me. I told him & needed to go to the hospital & couldn't breath he said Oh you just got the wind knocked out of you get out. Then he kicked me on the back. Then & went crying out the halls & & was saying there was a while then & was crawling down the halls & spitting out blood He started to come again so & stumpled away

There is a strong correlation between suicidal and homicidal ideation in highly lethal abusive partners. Abusers, contrary to what some may believe, often harbor feelings of low self-esteem and self-worth. They may use threats or attempts of suicide as a way to convince the victim stay with them. The abuser wants the victim to feel as though he or she would be responsible for the suicide. Similar to the other lethality risk factors discussed in this report, the risk that abuser suicidality poses is centered on their ability, or lack thereof, to control the circumstances in their lives. When abusers feel like they have lost control, they become the most dangerous.

Each year, Wisconsin experiences a number of "murder-suicide" incidents in which the perpetrator kills someone (usually the victim or someone close to the victim) and then commits suicide. Since this report's inception, we have included 130 perpetrator suicides in our total count of lives lost due to domestic violence. Usually the precipitating factor in a murder-suicide incident is the victim attempting to break free from the abuser's unrelenting control. Leaving a suicidal abuser is more dangerous for a victim than leaving a non-suicidal one. Independently, this risk factor does not have a high correlation with perpetrating a domestic violence homicide; however, when coupled with other factors included in this section, the lethality risk multiplies.

This edition of the report, specifically, includes an unprecedented number of murder-suicide incidents involving elderly couples. In many of these cases, there is no way of knowing what, if any, history of coercive control was present in the relationship. Failing health of one of the partners is often suspected, but rarely is anyone privy to the full story behind these incidents.

The fact that suicidality is a risk factor for homicide points to the glaring need for adequate mental health services in our communities, both in terms of quality of care and quantity of providers. If an abuser's maladaptive thinking patterns and coping skills can be identified and addressed earlier, there is a greater chance of identifying and breaking the cycle of abuse before it escalates to a lethal level.



This risk question speaks to a common theme in many of the past homicide reports: the use of stalking by domestic violence homicide perpetrators. One study estimates that 76% of women killed by their abusers were stalked prior to their murders.[10] Other research has found that perpetrators of domestic violence homicide are twice as likely to have used stalking behaviors.[11]

Abusive partners are uniquely positioned to engage in stalking. They often know personal details about their partner or ex-partner's life by virtue of having been in an intimate relationship with this person. Abusers will often stalk their partners during the relationship by doing things such as checking in on the victim at work and elsewhere and following them. Changes in technology make it easier for abusers to use electronic devices and social media to facilitate their stalking, as the excerpt above illustrates. Victims will often report receiving hundreds of text messages, e-mails or phone calls in a day, which often contain implied or explicit threats of harm.

When a victim of stalking ends or attempts to end the abusive relationship these behaviors do not stop—in fact they tend to escalate. Therefore, intimate-partner stalking points to the way in which the typical question, "Why doesn't she just leave?" is off the mark. Many victims of stalking have left their abusers but frequently are subjected to stalking and the elevated fear and danger it entails after the relationship has ended. As with the other risk factors discussed in this report, stalking comes on the heels of an abuser's perceived lack of control over the victim's life.

Many of the tactics that stalkers use are rarely considered criminal when seen in isolation. Because of this, victims of stalking often report they are not taken seriously when attempting to report these behaviors to someone who can help. To an outsider, receiving a bouquet of roses at work would seem like a loving, romantic gesture. The symbolism behind those roses is what may not be obvious. For example, the abuser may have told the victim that the day she receives roses at work is the day he is going to kill her. Knowing how risky stalking can be once again implores interveners to view the victim as the expert in his or her situation, including the implications of his or her abuser's behaviors. To the extent possible, we must look at the behaviors and tactics used to stalk in the context of the relationship (past, present or perceived) in which they are occurring and offer appropriate interventions.

10 McFarlane, Judith M., Jacquelyn C. Campbell, Susan Wilt, Carolyn J. Sachs, Yvonne Ulrich, and Xiao Xu. "Stalking and intimate partner femicide." Homicide Studies 3, no. 4 (1999): 300-316, available at http://www.margolishealy.com/files/resources/stalking_and_intimate_partner_femicide.pdf

11 Adams, David. Why Do They Kill? Men Who Murder Their Intimate Partners. Vanderbilt University Press, 2007.

Update on the Lethality Assessment Program in Wisconsin

Viewing risk from the perspective of victims demonstrates the need for greater attention to the full context of power and control in abusive relationships. As the above segments illustrate and research supports, the factors that make situations dangerous for victims extend far beyond physical abuse. Therefore, interventions should match the full spectrum of risk that domestic abusers exert, to help mitigate the risk to victims.

As noted in the 2013 edition of this report, the Maryland Lethality Assessment Program (LAP) was slated to begin in Wisconsin in early 2015, putting us on the map with more than 30 other states that have already adopted this protocol.[12] The goal of the LAP is to prevent domestic violence homicides, serious injury and re-assault by encouraging more victims to utilize the services of domestic violence programs. The LAP is predicated on research that found that only 4% of abused victims had used a domestic violence hotline or shelter within the year prior to being killed by an intimate partner.[13] Importantly, another study found a 60% reduction in risk of severe assault when victims utilize the services of a domestic violence program.[14] Therefore, while evidence shows domestic violence advocacy services are protective, research also suggests those who are perhaps at the greatest risk of death are not reaching out for help. These two facts present the opportunity both to predict who is at greatest risk and simultaneously to connect them with potentially life-saving services.

All law enforcement jurisdictions in Milwaukee County began administering lethality assessments when responding to intimate partner-related domestic calls for service in April of 2015. In the second quarter of 2015, Milwaukee County law enforcement officers completed 369 lethality assessments with domestic violence victims. Of these, 207 (56%) screened in as "high-danger" and officers activated the LAP protocol, informing the victim of their concern about the possibility of life-threatening violence, then placing a call to Sojourner Family Peace Center's 24-hour hotline and encouraging the victim to speak with an advocate. Of the 207 high-danger victims identified, 124 (59%) agreed to do so. Connecting with an understanding and knowledgeable victim advocate immediately after a volatile incident can help to alleviate feelings of self-doubt and fear that victims often report after the arrest of their perpetrators. One victim that was screened in as "high-danger" said it was helpful to hear concern about her safety from both the law enforcement officer and the advocate. The consistent message helped the victim to see her situation differently, and she ultimately sought shelter.

In addition to Milwaukee County, Dunn County will be trained on the LAP by the Maryland Network Against Domestic Violence in December of 2015. Other communities around the state are initiating similar protocols with the goal of crafting new and effective responses to the most dangerous cases. To learn how your community can implement the LAP or create other high-risk responses, contact the Community Response and Homicide Prevention Coordinator at End Domestic Abuse Wisconsin.

12 To view information about the LAP nationally, see MNADV's website: http://mnadv.org/lethality/lap-nationally/

13 Sharps, Phyllis W., Jane Koziol-McLain, Jacquelyn Campbell, Judith McFARLANE, Carolyn Sachs, and Xiao Xu. "Health care providers' missed opportunities for preventing femicide." Preventive Medicine 33, no. 5 (2001): 373-380.

14 Roehl, J., O'Sullivan, C., Webster, D., & Campbell, J. (2005). InOSullivan, Chris, Daniel Webster, and Jacquelyn Campbell. Intimate Partner Violence Risk Assessment Validation Study: The RAVE Study: Practitioner Summary and Recommendations: Validation of Tools for Assessing Risk from Violent Intimate Partners. US Department of Justice, 2005.

Methodology

Our definition of homicide is the killing of one human being by another. This encompasses criminal, justifiable, self-defense and reckless homicides. Homicides are considered domestic violence-related if:

- The victims and perpetrators were spouses or partners, former spouses or former partners, adults with children in common, and adults or teens that had been in a dating relationship.

- Beginning with the report for 2010, we also include cases that involved other adult family members, such as a parent or grandparent killed by an adult child or grandchild. We do not include these cases, however, if the defendant was found not guilty by reason of mental illness or lacked the capacity to stand trial.

- It was a homicide of a person other than the intimate partner and it occurred within the context of domestic violence. This encompasses cases where the circumstances of the murder included obsessive control of the perpetrator's current or former partner that extended to her or his new partner. We also include the homicide of a bystander or someone who attempted to protect a domestic violence victim from future harm.

- The homicide was a child death that occurred as an extension of or in response to ongoing abuse between adult intimate partners. For example, when a partner or estranged partner killed his or her children in order to exact revenge on his or her partner, it is consider domestic violence-related.

The report also accounts for overall deaths related to domestic violence homicide, including perpetrator deaths. Most perpetrator deaths are suicides. The count of domestic violence homicide victims occasionally includes perpetrators killed by responding law enforcement officers (homicide by legal intervention) or killed by someone in defense of another person who was under attack. The victim count also includes law enforcement officers killed in the line of duty when responding to domestic violence. There were no homicides in 2014 that fell into the latter two categories.

In each case of homicide-suicide, we listed the murdered person in our heading as the homicide victim. We seek to be as consistent and as accurate as possible year to year in determining which homicides to include in the report.

Throughout the history of compiling this report, we have been aware that the report is drawn from imperfect data. The growth of the #BlackLivesMatter movement has made us even more cognizant that the information upon which this report is based is filtered through many lenses that can make some lives appear to matter less than others. The homicide report research begins with an ongoing search for news accounts of domestic violence-related homicides. However, in marginalized communities the amount of media attention paid to homicides is often scant. To guard against the possibility of missing a domestic violence-related murder, we consult the Uniform Crime Reports (UCR) submitted to the Wisconsin Department of

Justice (DOJ) by local law enforcement agencies and attempt to discern the basic facts of every homicide that occurs in Wisconsin. But in too many instances, there is not enough public information accessible, particularly about the murders of young Black men or boys in Milwaukee, to know whether to include or exclude a particular homicide in the report.

Take Kwata Shields, who was shot and killed at a house party on June 22, 2014 in Milwaukee's near-south side. After Kwata's death, media reports were minimal, listing the victim's name, age, location of the homicide and status of the investigation. This degree of reporting is typical for violence in the inner city of Milwaukee. Often several fatal and non-fatal shootings are lumped together to form of a short recap of the violence from the previous day or two. At the end of 2014, the *Milwaukee Journal Sentinel* ran an article discussing year-end homicide statistics for the city. The article contained vignettes that described a few cases, including Kwata's:

> *When Kwata Shields, 19, was fatally shot at a house party in June, his death was recorded in a few paragraphs on local media websites.*
>
> *He left behind a grieving mother, girlfriend, a young son and an entire school of friends, said Rebecca Fitch, co-founder and chief executive of Right Step, a military-style private voucher school.*
>
> *He had a near-perfect attendance rate during his five years at the school and stayed an extra year beyond graduation to bring up his test scores, Fitch said. He worked part-time at the school and helped teach math to younger students.*
>
> *Shields got in trouble with the law after graduation, but was working to clear up the case and wanted to enlist in the military, she added.*
>
> *"He came from a really tough place, but he was really working hard to get out of it," Fitch said. "It's just so brutal out there. For every Kwata, there's a hundred in back of him."*
>
> *His killing remains unsolved.*

While it is unlikely that Kwata was killed by an intimate partner, this unsolved murder could have been included in the report if, for instance, an argument about a current or former partner factored into the motive for the shooting. The possible inclusion of Kwata in the report depends on this type of unknown information.

Yet, the implications of his death on the work of ending domestic abuse are not so narrowly limited. To end domestic abuse in Wisconsin, we need Kwata's life to matter. If the killing of Black men and women, regardless of the circumstances, continues to appear as an ordinary, regular and expected occurrence in our state and country, we will never be able to create peace in all Wisconsin homes. The change we seek requires the empowerment and engagement of all communities. And, such a future is impossible if African-American communities in Wisconsin are wracked by the effects of instituionalized poverty, on going segregation, racism and trauma.

The limited nature of the available information may also result in failure to correctly identify two other categories of domestic violence homicide incidents:

- Children killed by domestic violence abusers. We include children who were killed as a direct result of a domestic violence incident. We believe this count is low since a homicide of a child is often viewed as an isolated incident of child abuse. An investigation of a child homicide can often overlook past domestic violence or the domestic violence might not be included in the public record. While we believe that a larger number of child deaths are directly related to an ongoing pattern of domestic abuse, our current methods of tracking homicides do not allow us to consistently identify children killed by perpetrators of domestic violence.

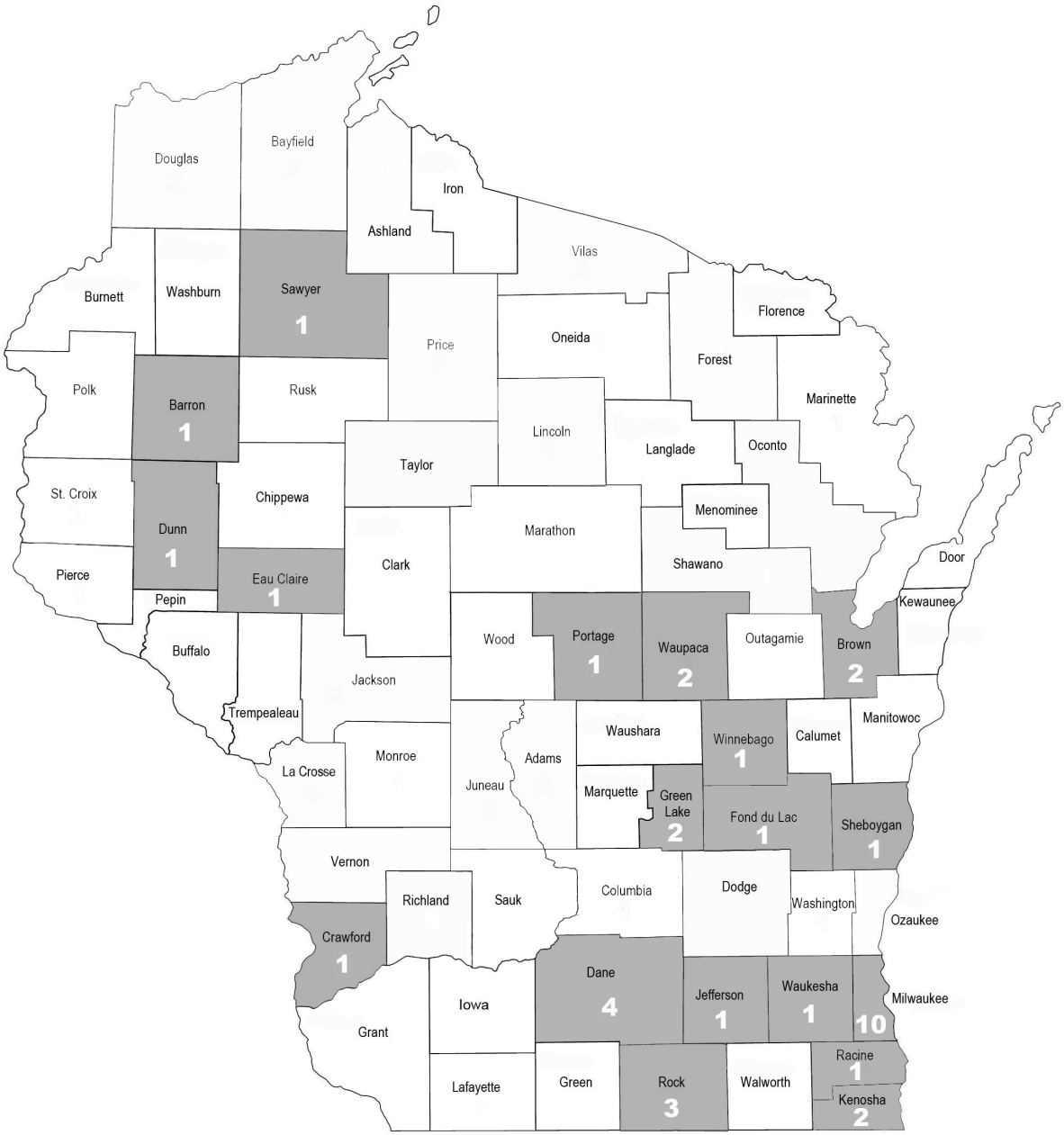
- LGBTQ relationships. It is likely that we undercount domestic violence homicides that occur in lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer (LGBTQ) relationships. Due to the stigma that is placed on LGBTQ communities, intimate-partner relationships may be hidden and the nature of a relationship might not be accurately identified in the public record of a homicide. An LGBTQ relationship may be coded as "friend," "roommate" or "other known to victim." Where the victim was reported as single and there was no apparent forced entry to the home or scene, the homicide may go unrecognized as related to LGBTQ intimate partner violence.

In compiling our summary data, we seek to include the total number of homicides committed in Wisconsin in a given year. As previously noted, we use UCR data submitted to DOJ and, if available for the year in question, information from Bureau of Health Information (BHI) from the Wisconsin Department of Health Services. Each agency compiles its data from various reporting methods including death certificates, police reports, coroner, medical examiner and hospital records. For example, BHI counts homicides of Wisconsin residents that occur in other states, as well as traffic fatalities from intoxicated driving; DOJ counts homicides in the Wisconsin county in which they occur and conforms to UCR standards that omit intoxicated driving deaths. DOJ does not include homicides by legal intervention. The BHI figure is therefore usually higher than the UCR-based count.

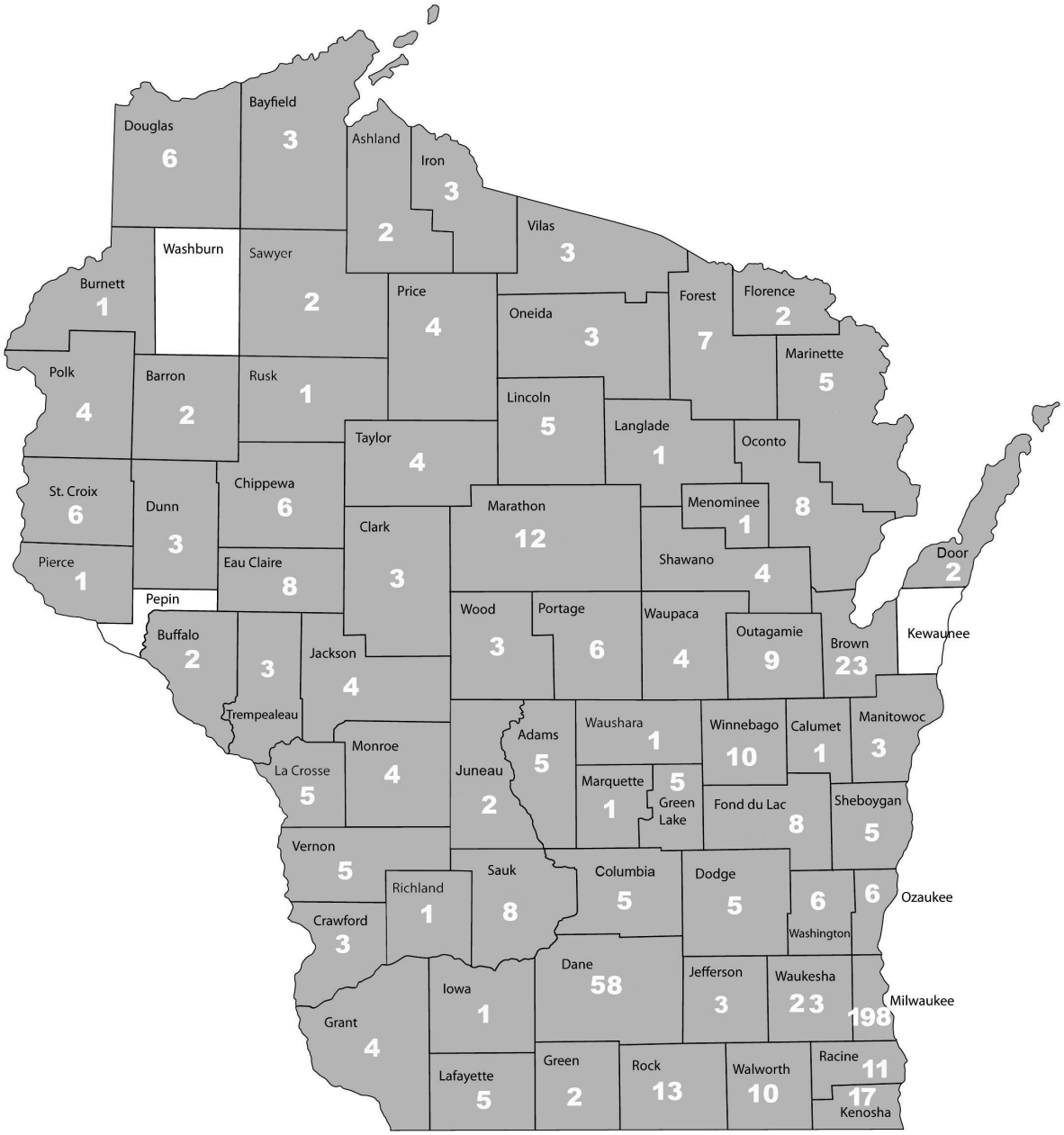
2000 to 2014 Totals

Year	Homicide Deaths	Suicides	Total
2014	37	6	43
2013	43	12	55
2012	48	4	52
2011	34	3	37
2010	51	7	58
2009	52	15	67
2008	36	10	46
2007	41	10	51
2006	28	8	36
2005	40	6	46
2004	28	5	33
2003	45	16	61
2002	38	11	49
2001	33	9	42
2000	33	8	41
Totals	587	130	717

2014 DV Homicide Map



2000 - 2014 DV Homicide Map



Topic Index to Previous Homicide Reports

Each year, the homicide report includes a discussion of a variety of topics. Below is an index of the topics that have been addressed. Each year's report is available at: http://endabusewi.org/ourwork/homicide-reports.

African-American communities, Impact on, 2005 (16), 2008 (23), 2009 (34), 2010 (37), 2011/12 (42), 2013 (46)

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Child custody, connection to, 2001 (7), 2006/7 (23), 2009 (25)

Children, Impact on, 2003 (10), 2005 (10), 2006/7 (22), 2008 (18), 2009 (22), 2010 (27), 2011/12 (39)

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Dane County, a closer look, 2009 (21)

Domestic abuse programs, impact on, 2009 (39), 2010 (30), 2013 (48)

Family members, surviving, 2013 (32, 34)

Gender differences, 2008 (21), 2006/7 (28), 2009 (30), 2011/12 (45)

Gun violence, 2000 (2), 2001 (5), 2002 (6), 2003 (7), 2004 (5), 2005 (8), 2006/7 (32), 2008 (25), 2009 (37), 2010 (33), 2010 (34), 2011/12 (34)

Health-care response, 2013 (45)

Help-seeking, 2005 (17), 2006/7 (33), 2009 (38), 2010 (37)

Hmong and Lao communities, impact on, 2006/7 (30), 2009 (33), 2011/12 (43), 2013 (39)

Interventions, missed opportunities, 2004 (9), 2011/12 (46)

Later life homicides, 2005 (15), 2008 (23), 2009 (35), 2010 (27), 2011/12 (38), 2013 (44)

Latin@ communities, impact on, 2009 (34), 2011/12 (42), 2013 (29)

LGBTQ communities, impact on, 2010 (30), 2011/12 (44), 2013 (43)

Law enforcement, homicides by, 2010 (35)

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Multiple homicides, 2006/7 (20), 2008 (16), 2009 (29), 2010 (32), 2011/12 (45)

Near homicides, 2006/7 (21), 2008 (16), 2009 (37), 2010 (36)

Northcentral Wisconsin, a closer look, 2006/7 (17)

Pregnancy, elevated risk, 2005(14), 2011/12 (35)

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Location of homicide, 2006/7 (21), 2011/12 (37)

Rural communities, impact on, 2009 (32)

Self-defense, 2001 (5), 2000 (2), 2003(8), 2005 (15), 2008 (22)

Separation, increased risk, 2001 (7), 2002 (7), 2003 (8), 2004 (7), 2006/7 (26), 2008 (20), 2009 (26), 2010 (32)

Sexual assault, 2004 (8), 2005 (13)

Suicide, 2003 (9), 2005 (9)

Stalking, 2001 (6), 2002 (8), 2003 (8), 2005 (13), 2006/7 (27), 2008 (21), 2009 (27), 2010 (33), 2011/12 (34)

Strangulation, 2005 (13), 2006/7 (29), 2008 (22), 2009 (29), 2010 (34)

Teen dating violence, 2013 (40)

Ten-year retrospective, 2009 (41)

Tribes, impact on, 2009 (32), 2011/12 (43), 2013 (41)

Veterans, 2010 (35), 2011/12 (36)

Welfare reform, 2000 (3)

Workplace violence, 2011/12 (37), 2013 (42)

About End Domestic Abuse Wisconsin

At End Domestic Abuse Wisconsin, we strive to be the statewide voice for survivors of domestic violence.

- We educate shelter and program volunteers and advocates, law enforcement, legislators and community members to provide safety and support to victims.
- We strive to shift Wisconsin from the attitudes and beliefs that cause domestic violence to values of mutual respect and equality.
- We partner with communities in the effort to prevent and end domestic abuse.

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