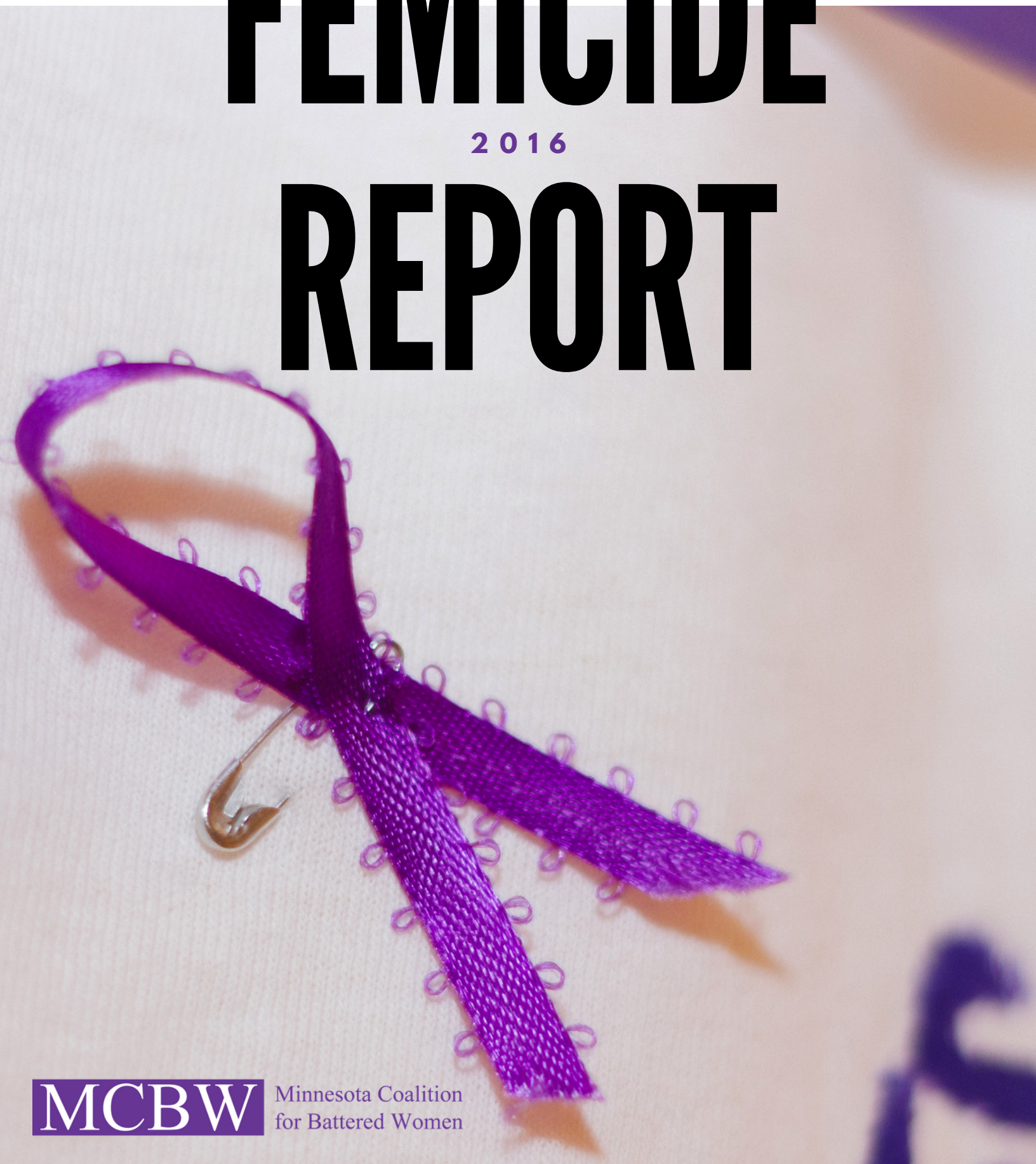
DOMESTIC VIOLENCE HOMICIDE IN MINNESOTA

FEMICIDE

2016

REPORT



MCBW Minnesota Coalition for Battered Women

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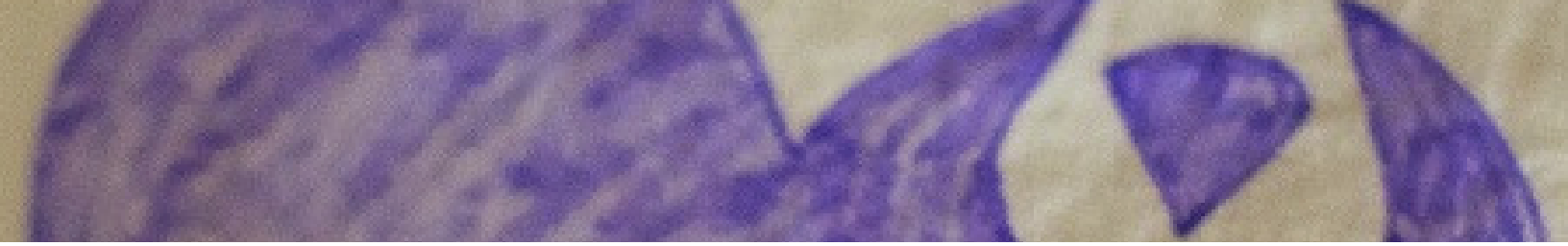


FOREWORD

The release of the 2016 Femicide Report marks 28 years of efforts by the Minnesota Coalition for Battered Women (MCBW) to document the deaths resulting from domestic violence in our state. Even by conservative measures, and by solely relying on publicly available information, between 1989 and 2016, our reports capture almost 1,000 cases of domestic violence homicide in Minnesota. In 2016, at least 21 people in Minnesota were killed in domestic violence related homicides. In the same year, over 60,000 survivors and their children accessed services through domestic violence programs, many whose needs went unmet due to lack of resources.

Year after year, we publish the statistics of these homicides, knowing all too well that neither these numbers nor our report can fully capture the impact these deaths have on our communities. We know and acknowledge that domestic violence related fatalities extend beyond those fatalities that are a result of homicidal violence. Domestic violence is also fatal when a victim is driven to commit suicide due to constant abuse and trauma, or when their death is caused by health complications resulting from prolonged exposure to violence and stress.

What we know from gathering information for the 2016 Femicide Report is this: the victims in our report lived full lives with the same hopes, aspirations, and expectations of safety shared by each of us. They ranged in age from 10 to 85 years old and belonged to many different communities across our state. Some of these victims stayed with their abusers, and many attempted to leave. Those who were killed include women, children, and a bystander. In some cases, minor children were present at the time of the homicide; in one, the children begged for their lives after watching their mother shot dead. In another, a 12 year old boy held his 2 year old sister and ran to safety as his mother was murdered. Police were called in some cases and not in others, but criminal justice system interventions were inadequate, failing to achieve safety for these victims. Many opportunities for intervention with the abusers were missed, multiple red flags for batterer lethality were ignored.

These deaths were not simply a result of criminal justice system failures, but failures of a myriad of systems, institutions, and communities which interacted with victims. These deaths are a result of our collective failure as a society to victims of domestic violence and our complicity towards intimate partner violence.

When the circumstances surrounding the 2016 domestic violence murders are so strikingly similar to those documented in reports from over a decade ago, we should all be outraged. Our hope is to never again hear the words "hindsight is 20/20" in the context of domestic violence homicides. We are beyond hindsight; we need to take action on our insights. We already have the information needed to prevent the next homicide. What we need now is to engage relentlessly in the work of changing our systems and strengthening our communities to better serve the needs of all those impacted by domestic violence.

Victims deserve to be believed, to be heard, and to be safe in their homes and in public. We still need to invest in resources, effective interventions,and in accountability measures that are victim centered, including prevention efforts. We can also work to end these homicides by being a resource ourselves for victims; as their family members, friends, faith leaders, employers, teachers, and neighbors. Services provide necessary tools and support, but it takes a community to keep a victim safe.

DOMESTIC VIOLENCE HOMICIDES IN MINNESOTA: 1989-2016

We remember our mothers, our fathers, our sisters, our brothers, our daughters, our sons, our wives, our husbands, our intimate partners, our family members, our friends, our neighbors, our co-workers, our fellow Minnesotans…

1989
At least 18 women died from domestic violence*

1990
At least 26 women died from domestic violence

1991
At least 12 women died from domestic violence

1992
At least 31 women died from domestic violence
At least 8 children died from child abuse+
At least 3 women were murdered while being used in prostitution#
At least 2 family members/friends were murdered by a woman's current or former partner**

1993
At least 28 women died from domestic violence
At least 13 children died from child abuse
At least 6 women were murdered while being used in prostitution
At least 5 family members/friends were murdered

1994
At least 19 women died from domestic violence
At least 7 children died from child abuse
At least 2 women were murdered while being used in prostitution

1995
At least 29 women died from domestic violence
At least 11 children died from child abuse

1996
At least 22 women died from domestic violence
At least 17 children died from child abuse
At least 6 women were murdered while being used in prostitution

1997
At least 17 women died from domestic violence
At least 5 children died from child abuse

KEY

*****
Cases of women murdered where the suspected, alleged, or convicted perpetrator was a current or former husband, boyfriend, intimate partner, household member, or family member.

+
Cases of children murdered where the suspected, alleged, or convicted perpetrator was the father, mother, guardian, babysitter, childcare provider, or household/family member of the child; or the perpetrator was the parent's spouse or intimate partner.

#
MCBW recognizes prostitution as a system of violence against women and children.

******
Cases of family, friends, interveners or bystanders murdered in domestic violence-related situations.

++
Cases of children murdered as a result of violence involving current or former intimate partners are now tracked under the family members, friends & interveners category.

DOMESTIC VIOLENCE HOMICIDES IN MINNESOTA: 1989-2016

We remember...

1998
At least 22 women died from domestic violence
At least 15 children died from child abuse

1999
At least 22 women died from domestic abuse
At least 20 children died from child abuse

2000
At least 40 women died from domestic violence
At least 6 children died from child abuse
At least 1 family member was murdered

2001
At least 33 women died from domestic violence
At least 12 children died from child abuse
At least 6 family members/friends were murdered

2002
At least 16 women died from domestic violence
At least 13 children died from child abuse

2003
At least 14 women died from domestic violence
At least 10 children died from child abuse

2004
At least 13 women died from domestic violence
At least 11 children died from child abuse
At least 3 family members/friends were murdered

2005
At least 26 women died from domestic violence
At least 1 women was murdered while being used in prostitution
At least 4 children died from child abuse
At least 2 family members/friends were murdered

2006
At least 20 women died from domestic violence
At least 20 children died from child abuse
At least 1 family member/friend was murdered

2007
At least 22 women died from domestic violence
At least 10 children died from child abuse
At least 3 family members/friends were murdered

2008
At least 23 women died from domestic violence
At least 7 children died from child abuse
At least 2 family members/friends were murdered
At least 1 man died from domestic violence

2009
At least 12 women died from domestic violence
At least 10 children died from child abuse
At least 2 family members/friends/interveners were murdered
At least 1 man died from domestic violence

2010
At least 15 women died from domestic violence
At least 7 children died from domestic violence
At least 4 family members/friends were murdered
At least 2 men died from domestic violence

2011
At least 23 women died from domestic violence
At least 4 children died from domestic violence
At least 6 family members/friends were murdered
At least 1 man died from domestic violence

2012
At least 14 women died from domestic violence
At least 3 family members/friends were murdered
At least 1 man died from domestic violence

2013
At least 25 women died from domestic violence
At least 6 family members/friends were murdered
At least 7 men died from domestic violence

2014
At least 16 women died from domestic violence
At least 5 family members/friends were murdered
At least 2 men died from domestic violence

2015
At least 22 women died from domestic violence
At least 9 family members/friends/interveners were murdered
At least 3 men died from domestic violence

2016
At least 18 women died from domestic violence
At least 3 family members/friends/interveners were murdered

REPORT OVERVIEW

The Minnesota Coalition for Battered Women (MCBW) tracks homicides in which the known or suspected perpetrator was a *current or former intimate partner* or the homicide is the result of domestic violence between current or former intimate partners. This includes family members, friends, and interveners who are killed as a result of the domestic violence being perpetrated by a current or former intimate partner.

EXPLANATION OF DATA

For over 25 years, MCBW has produced the annual Femicide Report. The information spanning 28 years of reports is overwhelming in terms of recorded individual deaths. The reports list the number of people killed; however, they do not reveal the enormous number of people impacted by those deaths, nor do the reports reflect the hundreds of thousands of individuals who, over the years, have experienced domestic violence and survived.

REPORT MEASURES

In 1989, MCBW began collecting the names of women killed by domestic violence for what would become the Femicide Report. The report has always recorded the deaths of women killed by current or former boyfriends and husbands. Over time, the report has evolved in terms of the types of deaths included in the report. The current report has expanded to include anyone killed due to domestic violence between current or former intimate partners. This includes the homicides between lesbian, gay, bi-sexual, and/or transgender current and former intimate partners, as well as cases of men killed by their current and former intimate partners. The report also documents the deaths of other family members, friends, neighbors, interveners, and bystanders who are killed due to domestic violence between current or former intimate partners.

Since 1993, the report has included those killed as a result of being used in prostitution or sex trafficking. These deaths are included because MCBW recognizes forced prostitution and sex trafficking as a system of violence against women and children. These numbers were tracked separately for several years but are now annotated in the general count.

While there has been some fluctuation over the years, MCBW is working to maintain consistent parameters regarding types of death included in the Femicide Report. In recent years, the report has listed people killed in Minnesota due to violence by a current or former intimate partner.

CURRENT CRITERIA

- The homicide victim and perpetrator were current or former intimate partners, including dating partners; or
- The homicide victim was someone present during, or intervened in, an intimate partner violence incident including friends, family members, new intimate partners, law enforcement officers or other professionals attempting to assist a victim of intimate partner violence; or
- Children who are killed by a parent's current or former intimate partner where there is sufficient public information that the perpetrator killed the child as an act of abuse against the parent; or
- The perpetrator killed the homicide victim due to perceived or actual rejection of romantic interest; or
- Homicides of sex workers, victims of sex trafficking, prostitution, and exploitation.

AND

- If the homicide happened in Minnesota, if the body of the victim was found in Minnesota, or if the body was found in a nearby state but the circumstances surrounding the homicide began in Minnesota.

We do not include cases where victims of domestic violence have killed an abusive partner in retaliation or self-defense. To make this determination, we look at each case individually, and focus on the history of abuse available to us.

OVERVIEW

CONTINUED

The Clothesline Project, an interactive art display honoring the lives lost to domestic violence. Learn more at www.mcbw.org

WHAT THE REPORT DOES NOT MEASURE

The legal definition of domestic violence in Minnesota is broader than the definition that we use for this report. Under Minnesota law the definition of domestic violence is physical violence or threats of physical violence between a family or household member. This includes violence between any family members or household members: adult child to parent, between cousins, roommates who have no intimate relationship, uncles who kill nieces, and parents who kill children. The Femicide Report focuses on one section of that broader definition of domestic violence. MCBW specifically looks at those killed by current or former intimate partners and as a result of domestic violence between current or former intimate partners.

Why do we limit our definition? While all of these homicides are tragic and there are many similarities, MCBW has expertise in intimate partner abuse. We hope that by limiting this report to the intimate partner definition and looking at those deaths in light of the research conducted regarding lethality and risk factors for that specific population, we may find information to help improve our work to end intimate partner violence.

MCBW only measures those killed in Minnesota. Sometimes a person from Minnesota is temporarily residing in another state and is killed while living there. That person would not be included in our count. Conversely, someone from Illinois or Wisconsin or New Jersey may be visiting Minnesota and be killed by their intimate partner while in Minnesota. We do include that homicide in our count. The reason we make this distinction is twofold. First, we do not have the capacity to monitor the homicides that occur in other states. Second, we gather the Femicide Report information in part to look at what we can do here in Minnesota to improve our work on domestic violence issues. In recent years, we have also included cases where the victim's body is found in Minnesota or where we have reason to believe the homicide occurred in Minnesota, even if the body was found in a different state.

LIMITATIONS OF THE REPORT

We rely on public information to create this report. In the early iterations of the report our sole source of information was media reporting. Currently, we identify most cases through media search results that are tracked daily, and then we follow up with local law enforcement agencies or county attorneys offices for more details. We also look to additional sources of information such as public court data, reports issued by medical examiners' offices, and social media. The amount of data available, and how we collect it, has changed drastically over the years. However, we still struggle with inconsistent and incomplete information due to discrepancies in the way information is collected and shared by various agencies across the state.

We use the phrase "at least" when describing the number of people killed each year because we cannot be certain we have recorded all domestic violence homicides due to our reliance on public records, primarily news accounts. Almost every year there are deaths of women considered to be suspicious yet the cases are not resolved. No state or federal agency collects comprehensive data on domestic violence homicides. In addition, the murders of women and children of color, Native and Indigenous people, immigrant and refugee women and children, those living in poverty, people with disabilities, rural women, lesbian/gay/bisexual/ transgender people, and those exploited in prostitution and sex trafficking may be underreported in our listing as their deaths frequently go unreported in mainstream media.

While we record all homicides that are a result of domestic violence between current or former intimate partners, we provide yearly comparison information on a series of factors exclusively concerning *murdered women*. We limit this analysis to women killed by intimate partners because we are limited to the research done on risk and lethality factors for women in abusive relationships. It may be that men face the same risk and lethality factors in abusive relationships, but to our knowledge, that research has not been done.

OVERVIEW

CONTINUED

The Live Free Without Violence flag honors Minnesota's domestic violence homicide victims while raising community awareness. Learn more at www.mcbw.org

MCBW's Femicide Report is not a research document but rather a compilation of data gathered from public sources. We gather this information to bear witness to those killed, to raise public awareness of domestic violence, and to help inform our work. One distinction is exemplified in tracking the rates of murder-suicides in domestic violence cases. For a number of years approximately 50 percent of the domestic violence homicides of adult women in Minnesota also involved the perpetrator subsequently committing suicide. This percentage was significantly higher than the homicide-suicide rate reported nationally at 30 to 35 percent. In a three year period lasting through 2015, this percentage showed a significant decrease in Minnesota, dropping down to as low as 23 percent. However, the 2016 domestic violence homicide data shows an uptick in murder-suicides again, with 56 percent of Minnesota's cases falling in that category. What we do not know, and what this report does not address, is why there was such drastic fluctuation in these percentages and what that means. MCBW is not a research agency. We present this information in the hopes of raising questions and opening the door to deeper conversations.

OVERVIEW OF THE 2016 FEMICIDE REPORT

The number of Minnesotans killed due to domestic violence varies from year to year. We have seen a yearly low of 12 deaths and numbers as large as 47. In 2015, 34 Minnesotans were murdered due to domestic violence. This year, the number is lower. However, one year's data alone does not depict a trend. In 2012, there were 18 cases included in our Femicide Report. In 2013, there were 38 domestic violence homicides in Minnesota.

In 2016, least 21 Minnesotans were killed due to violence from a current or former intimate partner.

At least 18 women
Were murdered in cases where the suspected, alleged, or convicted perpetrator was a current or former husband, boyfriend, or male intimate partner.

At least 3 friends, family members, or bystanders
Were murdered in domestic violence related situations.

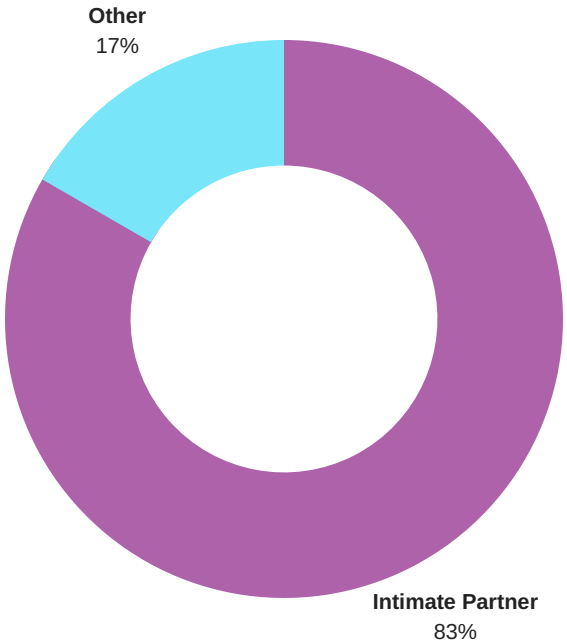
At least 14 minor children
Were left motherless due to domestic violence murders.

Note: At the time this report was completed, MCBW was reviewing two additional cases. These deaths occurred in 2016 but MCBW is waiting for further information on circumstances surrounding the deaths and the relationship between the victim and the perpetrator. Once full information is public, MCBW will update this report and the revised report will be made available through MCBW's website.
www.mcbw.org

VICTIMS AND RELATIONSHIP TO THE ALLEGED PERPETRATORS

Current/former intimate partner

18 victims



Amy Allwine
Ashley Hasti
Barbara Larson
Barbara Wilson
Beverly Miller
Courtney Monson
Danielle Denney
Elisa Gomez
Elizabeth "Betty" Thompson
Kimberly Kay Hernandez
Lyuba Savenok
Lynn Marie Josephson
Margaret Flath (St. Marie)
Melissa Norby
Rebecca "Becky" Drewlo
Tanya Jean Skinaway
Tasha Lynn Hanson
Trisha Lynn Nelson

Other

3 victims

Luis Ronquillo*
Nahily Ronquillo*
Roberto Bernabe Cortez+

* Children killed by father in an incident where he also attempted to kill their mother.
+ Bystander killed due to intimate partner violence.

RED FLAGS FOR BATTERER LETHALITY

When women are murdered, research shows that they are most likely to be killed in their homes by a current or former intimate partner. Around 80% of women murdered in Minnesota in the decade between 2005 and 2015 were murdered in domestic violence homicides. Through research into intimate partner violence related murders, a variety of tools have been developed to assess risk and potential lethality.

While it is helpful to utilize research and incorporate risk assessments in domestic violence cases, we must be cautious of how we use any tools determining our response to a victim. It is impossible to predict with certainty which batterers will become lethal to their victims. All batterers should be viewed as potentially lethal, though there are well-documented indicators of lethality of which everyone should be aware. Factors identified as possible lethality indicators include: separation, extended history of domestic violence or other violence, pregnancy, threats or fantasies of homicide or suicide, access to firearms, threats to use a weapon, stalking, attempted strangulation, sexual assault, extreme jealousy, and control of daily activities.

No risk assessment tool should be used as the sole basis for providing victims access to services, resources, or safety planning, but rather used in addition to other information, especially the totality of information provided by the victim. Research shows that victims are often accurate in predicting future risk, and we should rely on their expertise about their lives.

We must also remember that for victims of domestic violence, interventions that only take into account the danger posed to them by their abusers – while failing to take into account the risks generated in their lives by their immediate personal circumstances – can also inadvertently make them less safe.

It seems counter-intuitive that victims do not cooperate in a criminal justice process that we deem will make them safer by convicting the offender. We must remind ourselves of the many victims in this report who did attempt to leave their abusers but were killed in the process or shortly thereafter, despite significant criminal justice system interventions. We know that in 2016, at least three of the perpetrators were on supervision for crimes against the victim they killed at the time the homicide happened. In another case, the perpetrator was served a Harassment Restraining Order the week of the murder.

Interventions by the criminal and civil justice system alone do not guarantee safety for victims. We must expand our definition of intervention to include the different systems that victims interact with and increase collaboration between criminal justice and community advocacy agencies.

Each year, MCBW looks at homicide cases in Minnesota and gathers any known information regarding key lethality factors.

LETHALITY FACTORS

- the victim's attempts to leave the abuser;
- previous threats to kill the victim;
- abuser's access to firearms; and
- abuser's history of violence.

Of eleven lethality factors named by lethality experts, MCBW has chosen to analyze these four factors since 2006 (see box). For the past ten years, these lethality factors have been present in a significant number of cases. We would expect that a more complete analysis of public records and interviews with friends and family of the victims would yield more information on other cases and additional information on other red flags.

For each homicide case there is much to be learned from the individual circumstances, as the circumstances surrounding each death are complex and unique. We look at the key lethality factors with the expectation that this information is useful to inform public policy and intervention strategies.

VICTIM'S ATTEMPTS TO LEAVE THE ABUSER

LETHALITY FACTOR

Abusers often see any attempts by the victim to leave the relationship as loss of power and control which can result in increased risk for the victim. In 2016, at least 6 of the 18 women (33%) were attempting to leave, or had recently left, the relationship. This statistic has ranged between 30 – 67% over the years in our reports. In many of the cases, information is not known as to whether the victim was planning on ending the relationship. Attempting or planning to leave a relationship does continue to be a significant factor when assessing lethality.

Preparing to leave a relationship can be one of the most dangerous times for victims. If an abuser is involved with the criminal justice system, victims may think that there is increased safety for them at that time. This may or may not be true depending on the level of control and monitoring that is happening through the criminal justice system. At least two of the victims this year were killed shortly after the abuser was charged with a domestic violence related offense, and in at least two more cases, there had been recent criminal justice system involvement related to the abuse.

From our observations over the years, it is apparent that women often confide in people in their lives about their intention to leave an abusive relationship. Women murdered in 2016 who are in this report confided in family members, friends, employers, coworkers, local business owners, and their faith leaders. As a community, we must educate ourselves on existing resources for victims such as voluntary and confidential services through domestic violence programs that can safety plan with victims. We must also look at this data to inform ourselves of the complex situations, such as homelessness or financial instability, that victims who are attempting to leave an abusive relationship can encounter, all of which can be added burdens and barriers to safety. We need to invest in collaborations that will assist victims in being able to reliably access safety.

BARBARA WILSON

Barbara Wilson, 54, was shot and killed by her husband Delbert Wilson, 56, on April 26 in their Mankato home. Delbert subsequently committed suicide. According to news reports, the couple had been married for less than a year. Delbert had a documented history of domestic violence but not against Barbara. In 1993, he had a conviction of 5th degree assault and had been charged with violating an order for protection. **Barbara was in the process of leaving Delbert and had arranged for a family member to pick her up the day after she was killed. The day before her homicide, Delbert had pointed a shotgun at her head, and then under his own chin. This incident was reported to family members but not the police. The day of the murder, Delbert called Barbara's daughter and said, *"You don't need to come to the house tomorrow to get your mother, you can get her at the morgue."***

THREATS TO KILL THE VICTIM

LETHALITY FACTOR

Threats by the abuser to kill the victim are among the most reliable indicators of lethality and are the most frequently overlooked by the criminal and civil justice systems. A review of media reports covering the 2016 murders does not reveal much information about threats to kill. We know that in at least 2 cases, the woman experienced threats to kill. We also know that the perpetrator in another case made threats to kill previous girlfriends and their families. In two additional cases, perpetrators made comments indicating that they planned on hurting the victims and themselves.

Without access to review all police case files and court records, it is difficult to determine whether threats to kill were made against the victim. While the absence of threats to kill can be insignificant, their presence can be a strong indicator of an abuser's risk of lethality. Those who work with victims and those who intervene in domestic violence cases should pay close attention when victims disclose that the perpetrator has made threats to kill.

TASHA LYNN HANSON

On or around May 12, Kyle Benjamin Allers, 23, killed his girlfriend, Tasha Lynn Hanson, in Winona County. According to the medical examiner, Kyle strangled and beat Tasha to death. According to court records, Kyle has a prior history of convictions for domestic assault and disorderly conduct stemming from abusive conduct against Tasha in 2011 and 2013, respectively. **In the 2011 incident, Tasha called the police after Kyle strangled, assaulted, threatened to kill, used firearms to cause fear, and falsely imprisoned her. She reported to the police Kyle told her he "*should have tied her up and thrown her in the weeds*."** She was made to take a breathalyzer test, was arrested, and later convicted of misdemeanor domestic assault, alongside Kyle. **On May 14, 2016, two days after Kyle killed Tasha, law enforcement found her body in the woods.**

MARGARET FLATH

Margaret Flath, 27, was shot and killed by her husband, Antonio St. Marie, 26, on November 7. Earlier that day, Antonio had been charged with felony domestic assault against Margaret. He bailed out of jail a few hours prior to the shooting. Upon his release, Antonio posted on social media that he was angry and followed that post with another asking if anyone wanted to "make a quick $500." **He then held Margaret, their three year old A.B., and Margaret's brother hostage as he threatened them with a firearm. After a few hours, Margaret effectively pleaded with Antonio to let her brother leave with A.B. After she hugged her brother and child good-bye, Antonio shot and killed her.**

Antonio has a long, documented history of domestic violence. In 2009, directly and through social media, **he threatened to use a firearm to kill an ex-girlfriend's family members**. He was convicted of felony Terroristic Threats in that case. In 2011, Antonio **threatened to kill another ex-girlfriend, strangled her, and assaulted her and her family members with a knife**. He was convicted of felony Domestic Assault in that case. Besides the domestic violence related charges and convictions, Antonio has an extensive criminal history. A Domestic Abuse No Contact Order (DANCO) was in effect at the time Antonio killed Margaret. A few hours prior to her murder at Antonio's arraignment, a judge had specifically ordered him not to possess any firearms as a condition of his release. His prior felonies also made him ineligible to possess a firearm. Margaret leaves behind three minor children.

ACCESS TO FIREARMS

LETHALITY FACTOR

In 2016, 10 of the 18 (56%) domestic violence homicides were committed with firearms. While the percentage of domestic violence homicides using firearms fluctuates from year to year, firearms are the most frequent weapon of choice, used in about 50% of the documented domestic violence homicides (of women killed - 50% in 2012, 42% in 2013, 56% in 2014 and 50% in 2015). These statistics support the studies showing that access to firearms for an abuser can increase the risk of lethality. In light of current debates regarding guns and gun safety legislation, it is helpful to consider these statistics.

Domestic violence firearm prohibitions are only as effective as their enforcement. We need to understand how firearms were acquired. In 2016, in at least 22% of domestic violence homicides of women by firearms, the offender was prohibited from possessing a firearm at the time the homicide occurred. In the other firearms deaths, it appears the perpetrators had no firearms restrictions in place. For all offenses, we have very little data on where and how perpetrators accessed the firearm.

PERPETRATOR'S HISTORY OF VIOLENCE

LETHALITY FACTOR

Each year, we attempt to look in depth into the criminal and civil histories of perpetrators to understand whether and how the system intervened prior to the homicide. While each year we find a number of cases where the perpetrator had prior involvement in the criminal justice system, in 2016 a large percentage of perpetrators had significant histories of domestic violence.

- In 44% of the cases (8 of 18) the perpetrators had a documented criminal and/or civil legal justice system history of domestic violence.
- In 17% of the cases (3 of 18) the perpetrators had a documented history of domestic violence against the homicide victim.
- 38% (7 of 18) of the perpetrators had been on supervision for a Qualified Domestic Violence Related Offense (QDVRO) in the 5 years prior to the homicide.

We know that a conviction, incarceration, or probation alone do not necessarily result in offender accountability and cannot guarantee victim safety. In isolation, they do not change abusive behaviors. Even if we are able to keep individual victims safe by providing them with services, until the abusive behavior in the perpetrator changes, there will always be other victims in the future.

We want accountability, as well as safety and security for victims and our communities. Incarceration and supervision periods are integral points to provide meaningful, effective, and tailored interventions that will result in safety.

Victim safety is increased when a multi-faceted approach to domestic violence perpetrators is implemented. This approach includes abuser accountability, monitoring, effective and accessible programming, and locally available resources for families of abusers. Successful tools, processes, and policies created for victim safety and offender accountability can only be effective with close and ongoing collaboration with domestic and sexual violence victim advocates and victims themselves.

PROFILES OF SELECT PERPETRATORS WITH SIGNIFICANT CRIMINAL HISTORIES

WILLIAM PHILLIP SAYER JR.

2002: 5th degree Domestic Assault - Dismissed
2002: 5th degree Domestic Assault – Convicted
2002: Violation of Domestic Abuse No Contact Order (DANCO) - Dismissed
2003: 4th degree DWI – Convicted
2007: Disorderly Conduct - Convicted
2007: 5th degree Drug Sale – Dismissed, Drug Possession - Convicted
2007: Domestic Assault – Convicted
2008: Violation of No Contact Order – Convicted
2008: Terroristic Threats, Disorderly Conduct, Drugs Possession - Dismissed
2010: Domestic Assault – Convicted
2011: Domestic Assault – Convicted
2007 to 2011: Multiple probation violations + revocation to prison
2012: Criminal Vehicular Homicide or Operations (5 counts), DWI (2 counts) – Convicted
2015: Loitering with Open Bottle – Pending

In March of 2016, while on active supervision, William Phillips Sayers Jr. ran over and killed his girlfriend, Tanya Jean Skinaway.

PROFILES OF SELECT PERPETRATORS WITH SIGNIFICANT CRIMINAL HISTORIES

LUCAS JABLONSKI

2008: Aggravated Robbery – Adjudication
2008: Theft – Dismissed
2009: Aggravated Robbery – Convicted
2009: Theft – Convicted
2011: Theft – Dismissed
2011: Receiving Stolen Property – Convicted
2011: Tamper with motor vehicle – Convicted
2011: Give Peace Officer False Name – Dismissed
2014: Theft – Convicted
2014: Civil Harassment Restraining Order (HRO) put in place to protect Rebecca Drewlo
2014: Violation of HRO – Convicted
2015: Obstruction of Legal Process – Convicted
2015: Disorderly Conduct – Dismissed
2016: Domestic Abuse Violate No Contact Order – Convicted
2016: Theft – Dismissed

In May of 2016, while on active supervision and with an active Harassment Restraining Order (HRO) in place, Lucas Jabonski stabbed and killed Rebecca Drewlo at her residence.

ANTONIO ST. MARIE

2002: Criminal Sexual Conduct – Juvenile Stay of Adjudication
2009: Terroristic Threats – Convicted
2009: Liquor Consumption by Minor – Convicted
2009: Violation of No Contact Order – Convicted
2009: Theft – Convicted
2010: Theft – Convicted
2010: Trespassing – Convicted
2010: DWI – Convicted
2010 – 2011: 4 incidents of driving with a revoked license – Convicted
2011: Assault 2nd degree – Dismissed
2011: Domestic Assault – Convicted; Domestic Assault by Strangulation – Dismissed; Domestic Assault – Dismissed; Assault 5th degree – Dismissed
2014: DWI – Convicted
2016: Domestic Assault – Pending

In November of 2016, while on active supervision, Antonio St. Marie shot and killed Margaret Flath a few hours after being released from jail for assaulting her.

FINDINGS & RECOMMENDATIONS

While the ultimate responsibility for these murders rests with the perpetrators alone, opportunities for meaningful intervention in many of these cases were missed. Especially in the cases in which the victim reached out for help or the perpetrator was known to be dangerous. We must examine the reasons why our systems ultimately failed to protect those victims from lethal violence.

MISSING & INCONSISTENT DATA

MCBW invests significant time and resources to collect information on domestic violence homicide cases for the Femicide Report. While most of the information is public and mandatory for different system players to collect, we face challenges in accessing this information or find it is not consistently collected across the state.

We rely on criminal complaints and civil/criminal court records to gather histories of perpetrators and victims. The criminal information only tells part of the story. For instance, while we can collect data on past charges against a perpetrator, we do not know if those charges stemmed from an act of violence against an intimate partner. Often disorderly conduct, terroristic threats, or burglary charges relate to domestic violence but that information is not available through the public court records. Court records only reflect the incidents that reach the judicial system. Court records do not have consistent data on how many calls were made to the police and do not indicate an increasing number of calls made in the weeks prior to the homicide. In order to identify the gaps in the system that need to be bridged to prevent domestic violence fatalities, we need reliable and consistent data collection on domestic violence incidents beyond what currently exists.

We rely heavily on our systems partners and courts to gain access to public data. However, we often run into barriers in gaining access to public data that is valuable to our efforts in putting this report together. Victims and the perpetrators who killed them interact with various systems which capture information that can be helpful in developing effective interventions and responses to domestic violence homicides.

We recommend that:

- **Criminal justice system agencies across Minnesota consistently capture information regarding intimate partner violence.** This includes keeping data from 911 calls, arrests, charges, convictions, sentencing, incarceration, supervision, and violations. All agencies should collect reliable, consistent data to more fully capture information relevant to domestic violence.
- **Clear guidance be provided to all agencies collecting data with common definitions articulated to achieve greater consistency of data.** Terms such as "domestic violence" should be defined and should include subcategorization to distinguish between intimate partner violence and family/household violence.
- **Public data should be easily accessible.** MCBW relies on public data for this report. Others should have access to the data as well. If we are to continue to refine policies to address domestic violence, there needs to be research and ongoing evaluation of data.

ECONOMIC INSTABILITY

Economic instability is one of the toughest barriers for victims in achieving safety for themselves. Financial abuse is one tactic abusers use to maintain power and control over victims – it includes forcing a victim to give them money or forcing them not to work.

ECONOMIC INSTABILITY (CONT.)

FINANCIAL ABUSE IS A COMMON TACTIC OF INTIMATE PARTNER VIOLENCE.

[Rebecca Drewlo's] mother argued that Jablonski "has been taking advantage of" her daughter by moving into the apartment after he got out of prison in May 2014 on a robbery conviction, taking money for cigarettes and smoking marijuana in her daughter's home.

Research indicates that a lack of financial resources is one of the most commonly cited reasons domestic violence victims stay with or return to an abusive partner. A review of media and court records indicate that more than 1 in 4 women who were murdered in 2016 had faced economic instability in the five years prior to their homicide.

VICTIMS ARE OFTEN UNABLE TO AFFORD LEGAL FEES IN THE COURT SYSTEM.

“They just didn’t get along,” Johnson said. The two didn’t divorce because [Ashley] Hasti couldn’t afford one, Johnson said. Hasti was in medical school at the University of Minnesota and expected to graduate next spring.

Minnesota has a history of creating coordinated criminal justice response teams, which often include domestic and sexual violence advocates, law enforcement, prosecution, and corrections. Missing from these community response teams are key players from economic systems: landlords, housing and conciliation courts, homelessness and housing assistance providers, county economic assistance programs, employers, economic safety net programs, social service providers, and legal aid attorneys who assist with economic-related legal needs.

FINDINGS & RECOMMENDATIONS

CONTINUED

Economic stability could be enhanced with the following recommendations:

- **Broaden criminal justice response** teams to include economic systems.
- **Work with landlords and homelessness/ housing assistance providers** to prioritize homeless victims of domestic and sexual violence and to address policies that penalize domestic violence victims.
- **Create policies and practices** for prosecution and law enforcement to assess all victims for economic security issues and assist victims to connect with economic supports (housing, food, transportation, child care, employment, crime victim compensation, public benefits).
- **Educate others in economic sectors**, such as businesses, tax preparers, banks and lenders, utilities providers, to identify domestic and sexual violence and refer victims for advocacy assistance.

RESPONSES FROM THE CRIMINAL & CIVIL LEGAL SYSTEMS

Over the past four decades, there have been many advancements in the criminal justice system’s response to domestic violence. One thing we have learned, is that abuser accountability is not synonymous with victim safety. The histories of perpetrators in 2016 illustrate this reality. Despite repeated interventions by the criminal justice system, there were fatalities. The high numbers of dismissed charges and the high percentage of offenders with documented criminal histories indicate a need to further evaluate ways to promote victim safety.

FINDINGS & RECOMMENDATIONS

CONTINUED

RESPONSES FROM THE CRIMINAL & CIVIL LEGAL SYSTEMS (CONT.)

Our recommendations for the criminal justice system include:

- **Increase the investment in quality Batterer's Intervention Programming** (BIP) that is innovative, culturally appropriate, based on research, and locally accessible. Much of the current focus is on getting victims to leave and creating separation between a perpetrator and victim. There needs to be a serious investment in creating a process for change for batterers. A scan of court records show that at least 5 of the perpetrators who killed their intimate partners in 2016 had histories of abusing other women in the past as well. Without addressing the root causes of abuse and changing perpetrators' behavior, there will always be another victim.
- **Expand the criminal court's analysis** of risk assessment to include an examination of the full range of criminal behavior. Lethality and risk assessments must include an examination of past patterns of charges including convictions and dismissals.
- **Training for all personnel within the criminal justice system** to increase awareness of domestic violence. With heightened awareness of the dynamics and causes of domestic violence, the various courts should consider ways to minimize further victimization within the various legal proceedings. For example, housing court may vary or enhance their responses to victims of domestic violence involved in unlawful detainer housing actions.

MEDIA RESPONSE

Media shapes our worldview, our culture, and the behavior of our communities. Audiences have grown beyond city limits and state lines with the rise of social media and online resources. There is tremendous pressure for journalists to rapidly produce content for in-the-moment online consumption. Now, more than ever, journalists have the power to influence policy, law enforcement, and shape public opinion.

Journalists have the opportunity to highlight the complexity of cases involving low-income people, people experiencing homelessness, people of color and Native and Indigenous people, or people belonging to rural communities. Too often, these cases are overlooked in the major news outlets or receive very little attention.

Journalists also have the responsibility of accurately framing the relationships between victims and perpetrators of intimate partner homicides, including those within the LGBTQ community. Often, especially in rural areas, these relationships are miscategorized as "friends," "roommates," or "acquaintances," in media reports. This makes the ability to identify intimate partner homicides occurring within LGBTQ communities more difficult.

Recognition and contextualization of domestic violence homicide is an essential component of responsible reporting. We read reports utilizing extremely problematic terminology such as "love triangle," "romantic rivals," "domestic dispute," or passive language that disguises domestic violence. Narratives also portray domestic violence as a single "passionate" episode, rather than a systematic issue or pattern of power and control.

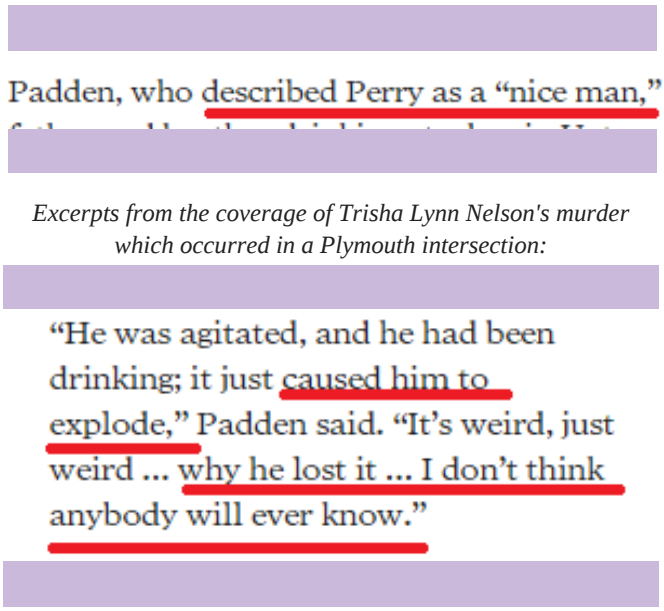
In the media coverage of several cases of women murdered in 2016 where the perpetrator had a documented history of domestic violence, some media outlets did not recognize the murder as a domestic violence homicide. In other cases, the media solely focused on the life and reputation of the perpetrator, instead of creating a narrative that centered the victim or highlighted lethality factors.

FINDINGS & RECOMMENDATIONS

CONTINUED

MEDIA RESPONSE (CONT.)

The initial media coverage of Trisha Nelson's homicide from a major metropolitan publication used only one source: the perpetrator's lawyer and friend.



Padden, who described Perry as a "nice man,"

"He was agitated, and he had been drinking; it just caused him to explode," Padden said. "It's weird, just weird ... why he lost it ... I don't think anybody will ever know."

Excerpts from the coverage of Trisha Lynn Nelson's murder which occurred in a Plymouth intersection:

Media plays a critical role in shaping the public awareness and understanding of domestic violence. The language the media uses can heavily impact the discourse in our communities which in turn has severe consequences for victims of domestic violence. Media outlets range from the statewide radio, TV and print media to online news forums and social media. We want to empower journalists to shape the most accurate narrative of domestic violence.

We recommend:

- **All media partners undergo appropriate training** to understand the dynamics of domestic violence and the importance of reporting on acts of domestic violence in context.
- **Media should reach out to local domestic violence experts** for their perspective when reporting on domestic violence issues and take their concerns on domestic violence coverage seriously.
- **Media must examine and expand coverage** on homicides to ensure that all homicides are both recognized and contextualized.
- **Examine reporting policies**, particularly around language usage.

OFFICER INVOLVED DOMESTIC VIOLENCE CASES

Domestic violence impacts the law enforcement community in many different ways. Past Femicide Reports have included law enforcement officers who were killed while intervening in domestic violence incidents. On the flip side, our reports have also included homicides where the perpetrator was a former police officer.

Victims whose abusers are in law enforcement experience unique challenges and are unlikely to look to the criminal justice system for protection and safety. Victims in officer involved domestic violence cases are often hesitant to report the abuse out of fear that there will be no response, that responding officers will support their abuser, or their abuser will gain information to use against them. Abusers who have increased knowledge of the criminal justice system and access to tools to monitor and harm the victim can use their expertise to assert power and control over their victim. Additionally, law enforcement officers might find themselves in the challenging position of responding to a call for help by a colleague or supervisor's victim.

CASE HIGHLIGHT: BARBARA LARSEN

In December 2016, Barbara Larsen sought a Harassment Restraining Order (HRO) because her ex-husband was stalking her. Her ex-husband was a former police officer. Days prior to her homicide, he was served with the HRO. Her ex-husband showed up at her place of work, shot and killed her.

FINDINGS & RECOMMENDATIONS

CONTINUED

OFFICER INVOLVED DOMESTIC VIOLENCE CASES (CONT.)

The uniqueness of officer involved domestic violence cases highlights a need to take proactive measures to ensure safety and protection for victims, as well as the officers who respond to domestic violence calls.

We recommend:

- **Police departments routinely screen new and existing employees** for records of domestic violence, including in civil court protective orders.
- **Law enforcement agencies adopt and enforce officer involved domestic violence policies** that take into account the conflict of interest and the unique challenges of such cases, looking at partnering with outside agencies for investigation, providing support to victims, implementing practices that "wall off" information from suspects and providing employee supports to change behaviors.

IMPACT ON CHILDREN

Children suffer due to domestic violence. Some children are injured or killed as part of the domestic abuse against their parent. Many more children are negatively impacted by witnessing the domestic violence.

A review of past Femicide Reports shows the impact of domestic violence homicides on children:

- In a third of the murders of women in 2016, children were either present at the time of the homicide or discovery of the body;
- Over 150 children have lost their mothers due to domestic violence in the last five years.

While experiencing and witnessing domestic violence negatively impacts children, research shows that children are most resilient and have the best emotional recovery when there is a strong relationship with the non-battering parent. The safety of children is directly linked to the safety and support of victim parents.

When looking at intervention strategies for children, child protection involvement is often considered the best solution. Involvement by Child Protective Services (CPS) and the legal system may provide protection, but can also cause trauma, and may not always be in the best interest of the child. System intervention into a family is intrusive and distressful. Because the intervention itself creates harm and trauma, it is important that any system intervention be targeted to children and families who will experience a drastic increase in safety through intervention. Focused, intentional interventions should be prioritized over broad, sweeping interventions. Interventions must promote safety and stability for the child and for the victim parent.

CASE HIGHLIGHT: MARGARET FLATH

Wadena County Sheriff's Sgt. Inv. Ament and Sgt. Savaloja met with A.B. who reported that "daddy shot mommy." A.B. was asked if he saw his dad at his mom's house and A.B. said "daddy had a gun at mommy's house." A.B. was asked if his ears heard anything and A.B. stated he heard his "mommy" say "no daddy no." Officers asked A.B. how that made him feel and A.B. said it made him feel sad.

We recommend:

- **The family court and child protective services systems should assess for domestic violence** and responses should take violence into account.
- When domestic violence is present, **safety must be the top consideration**: safety for the child and safety of the non-offending parent.
- **Provide resources, services, and support to victim parents** to provide stability and address the violence but those services must be voluntary.
- **Greater coordination** between the criminal, family and juvenile court systems when domestic violence is present.

CASE STUDY

In 2011, police responded to Tasha Lynn Hanson's call for assistance when her boyfriend, Kyle Allers, assaulted her. Tasha reported that Kyle held her against her will in the bathroom of their home for 30 to 45 minutes, strangled her till she couldn't breathe, threatened her with a gun, and told her **he should have tied her up and thrown her in the weeds**. Tasha explained that during the course of this attack, she found a knife and used it in self-defense.

After listening to Tasha, officers made her take a breathalyzer test because her eyes were bloodshot (a possible sign of strangulation) and she "smells of alcohol." Kyle was transported to the hospital with a cut to his abdomen and scratches. When police interviewed Kyle, he told them he got into an argument with Tasha and that she started biting and clawing at him. He said he was trying to calm her down but she stabbed him. When asked if a gun was involved, he responded, "*I live for her and would never do something like that*," and that no gun was involved. The police gained access to the house and found signs of a struggle, a broken knife in the bathroom, and an unloaded rifle in the bedroom. The police also found damage to both Tasha and Kyle's cars including destruction of Tasha's car windows.

They arrested both Tasha and Kyle as "co-defendants."

Kyle was charged with Terroristic Threats and Domestic Assault, was convicted of the Domestic Assault charge and was sentenced to 4 days in jail and 1 year on probation.

Tasha was charged with 2nd Degree Assault, Destruction of Property, and Domestic Assault. She was convicted of the Domestic Assault charge, sentenced to 6 days in jail and 1 year on probation.

On May 14, 2016, two days after Kyle killed Tasha by strangulation and beating, law enforcement found her body in the woods.

FINDINGS & RECOMMENDATIONS

CONTINUED

CRIMINALIZATION OF VICTIMS OF DOMESTIC VIOLENCE

We know that victims are labeled as both victims and offenders within the criminal justice system. Research shows that anywhere between 60 to over 90 percent of incarcerated women have histories of domestic and sexual violence victimization. Victims are criminally charged for a variety of reasons: retaliating or acting in self-defense; or engaging in criminal behavior due to addiction, which may be a coping mechanism to survive the abuse perpetrated against them. Due to a scarcity of resources, including effective and affordable treatment and services for mental health needs, many victims end up in the criminal justice system. Mental health and chemical dependency services must have a comprehensive understanding of domestic violence. Investments in mental health services must be prioritized. We must create assessment mechanisms within the criminal justice system that account for domestic violence. We are deeply concerned about the rates of women being arrested and criminalized in Minnesota knowing that a majority of these women have experienced domestic and sexual violence.

We recommend:

- **In-depth training for all criminal justice system professionals** (especially law enforcement, prosecutors, judges, and corrections) on the dynamics of abuse, the impact on victims, and the use of retaliatory violence in the context of domestic violence.
- **First responder training** and implementation of protocols on trauma that avoid further harm to victims
- **Criminal justice systems' adoption of victim centered policies and protocols** and on-going training on determining the predominant aggressor in an incident.
- **Increased collaboration** between law enforcement and community based domestic and sexual violence programs including immediately connecting victims with advocacy programs.

OUR CHARGE TO MINNESOTA COMMUNITIES

Domestic violence and domestic homicide have a devastating effect on every person living in Minnesota. Each of the victims whose story is told here is someone's family member, intimate partner, friend, neighbor, or co-worker.

We pledge to remember the women, children, men, family members, and friends who die each year from domestic violence.

Our charge to the community: in the wake of tragedy, take collective action!

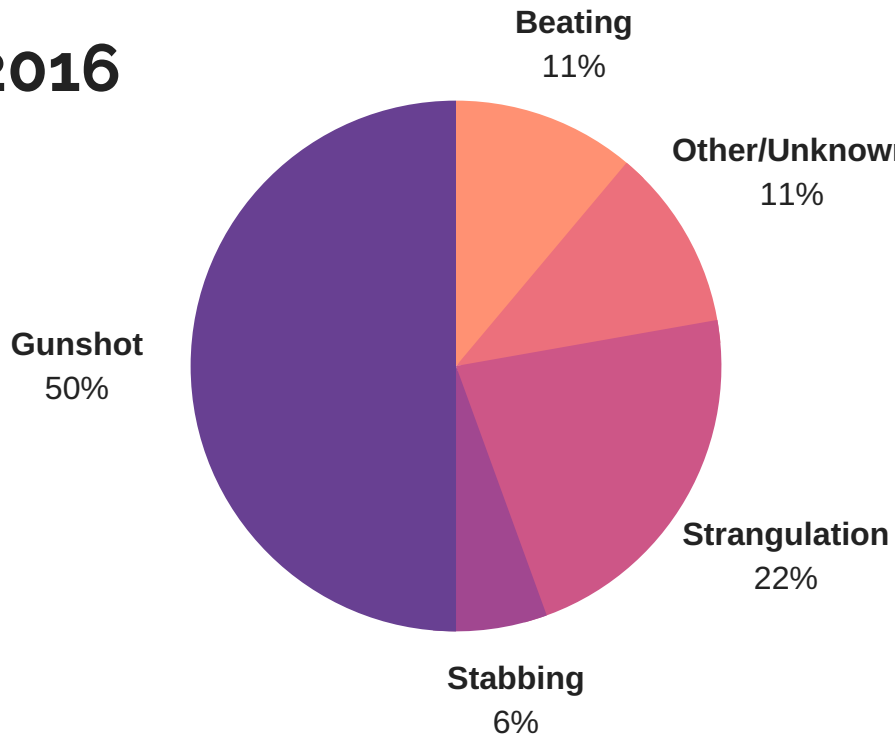
We have research and tools that can assist us in identifying the people most likely to re-offend and those most likely to engage in high risk and lethal behaviors, but nothing can predict with 100% accuracy the abusers who will seriously injure or kill. Some of the women injured and killed in Minnesota each year were so isolated or so disconnected that they never told anyone what was happening, and no one had any information about the abuse. Many of these women, however, did interact with our legal system, our medical system, our mental health system or reached out to family, friends or community members. It is precisely in those cases where we can start to make a difference. We can learn from the tragic loss of life by taking action towards meaningful change by implementing the recommendations found in this report.

Over the years, our laws have improved; our advocacy and justice systems and the personnel within those systems have improved how they respond to domestic violence; we have conversations with our children about healthy relationships and about domestic violence. We applaud all of those efforts but we can do even better. That is the challenge we name for ourselves and for all of Minnesota.

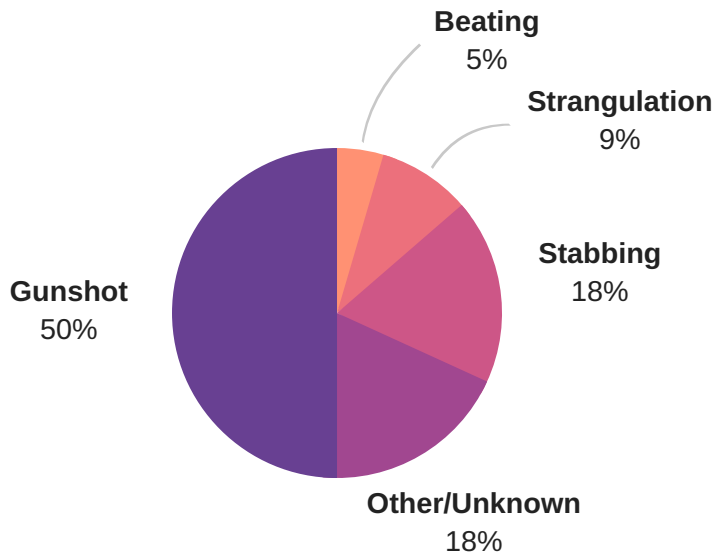
CAUSE OF DEATH

Key Femicide Statistics (2014-2016) for Adult Women Murdered by a Current or Former Intimate Partner

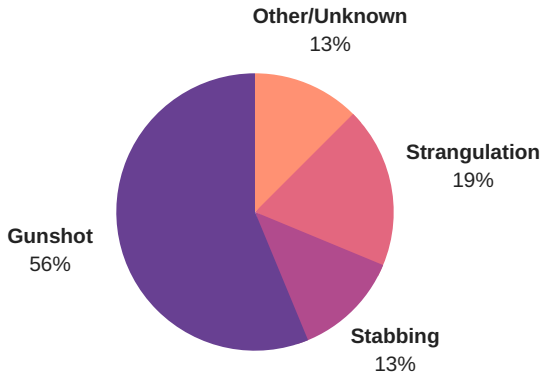
2016



2015



2014



2016 VICTIMS : 18

GUNSHOT : 9

Amy Allwine
Danielle Denney
Margaret Flath
Ashley Hasti
Lynn Marie Josephson
Barbara Larson
Courtney Monson
Trisha Lynn Nelson
Barbara Wilson

STABBING : 2

Rebecca Drewlo
Lyuba Savenok

STRANGULATION : 4

Elisa Gomez
Tasha Lynn Hanson
Kimberly Kay Hernandez
Elizabeth Thompson

BEATING : 1

Beverly Miller

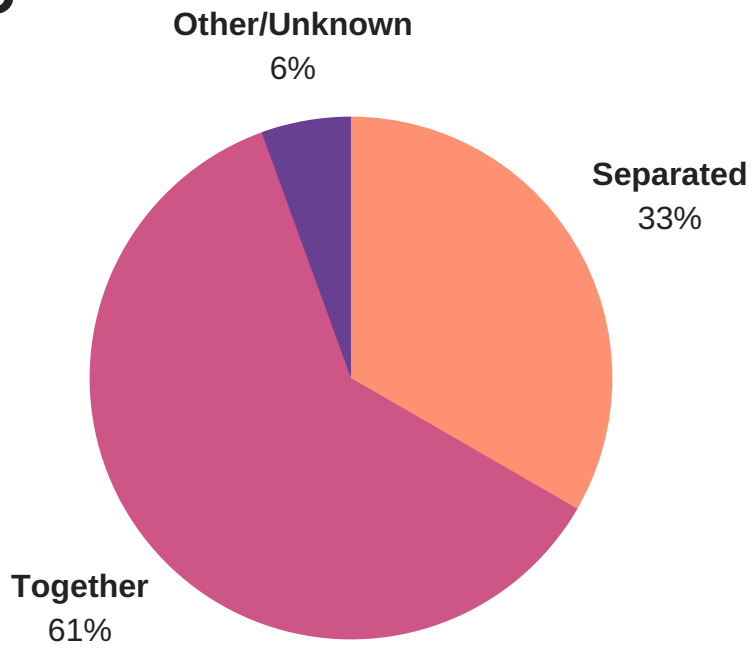
OTHER / UNKNOWN : 2

Melissa Norby
Tanya Jean Skinaway

VICTIM WAS SEPARATED FROM ABUSER OR ATTEMPTING TO LEAVE

Key Femicide Statistics (2014-2016) for
Adult Women Murdered by a Current or Former Intimate Partner

2016



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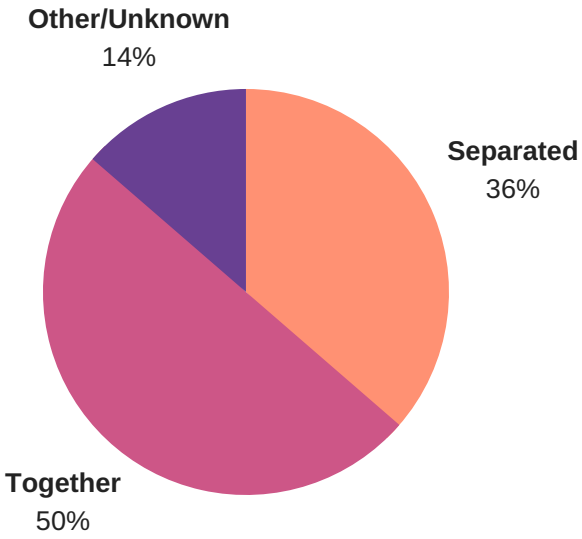
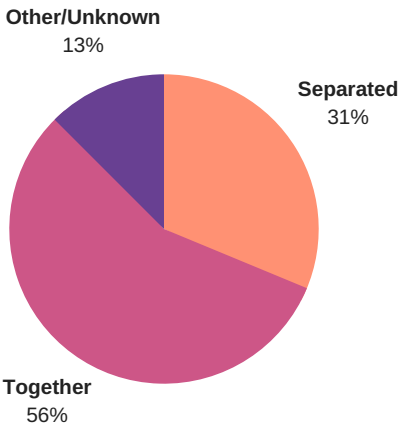


2014



2016 VICTIMS : 18

SEPARATED OR ATTEMPTING TO LEAVE: 6

Ashley Hasti
Barbara Larson
Barbara Wilson
Courtney Monson
Lyuba Savenok
Margaret Flath

TOGETHER: 11

Amy Allwine
Danielle Denney
Rebecca Drewlo
Elisa Gomez
Tasha Lynn Hanson
Kimberly Kay Hernandez
Lynn Marie Josephson
Trisha Lynn Nelson
Melissa Norby
Tanya Jean Skinaway
Elizabeth Thompson

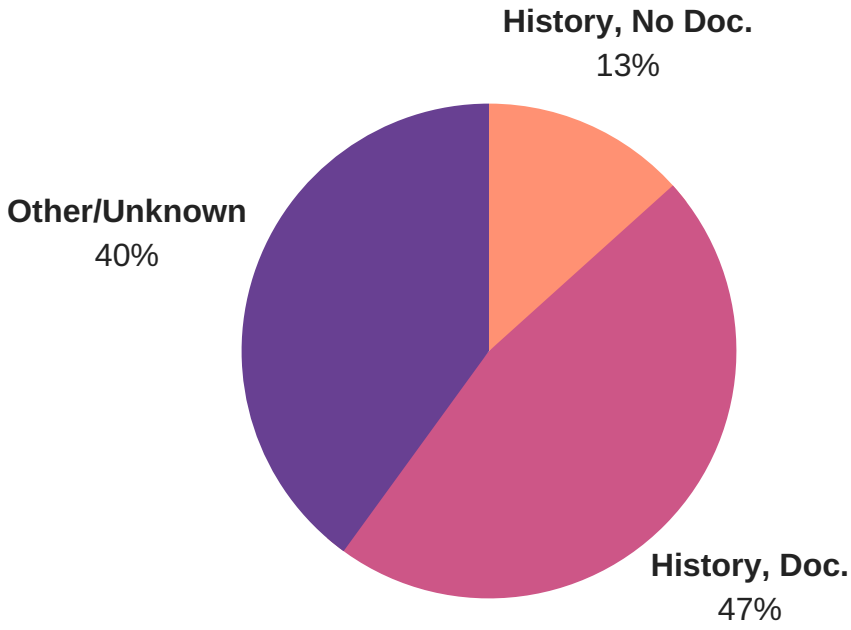
OTHER/ UNKNOWN: 1

Beverly Miller

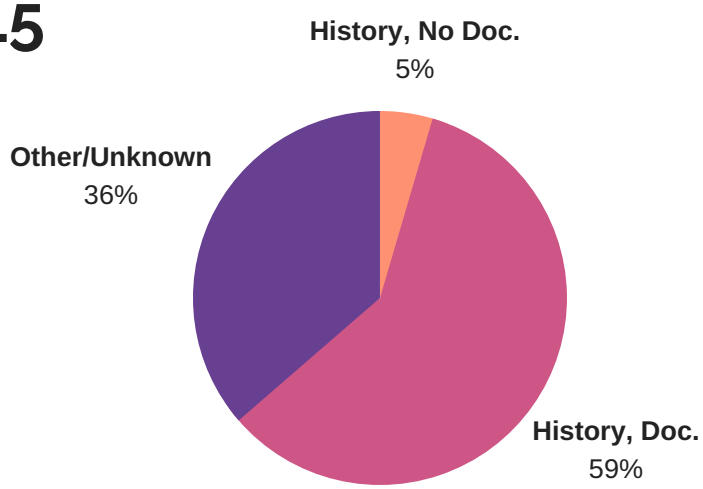
HISTORY OF VIOLENCE

Key Femicide Statistics (2014-2016) for Adult Women Murdered by a Current or Former Intimate Partner

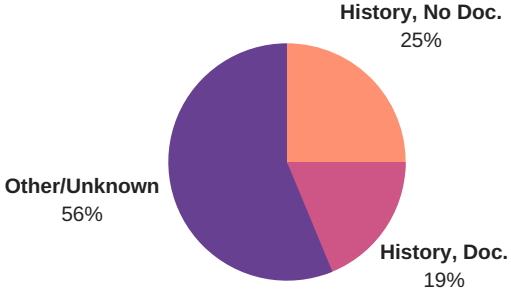
2016



2015



2014



2016 VICTIMS : 18

HISTORY, NO DOCUMENTATION: 3

Courtney Monson
Trisha Lynn Nelson
Melissa Norby

Cases in which offender had a prior history of abusive behavior but no documented involvement with legal system

HISTORY WITH DOCUMENTATION: 8

Rebecca Drewlo
Margaret Flath
Elisa Gomez
Tasha Lynn Hanson
Barbara Larson
Lyuba Savenok
Tanya Jean Skinaway
Barbara Wilson

Cases in which offender had a documented prior history of abuse in criminal or civil court

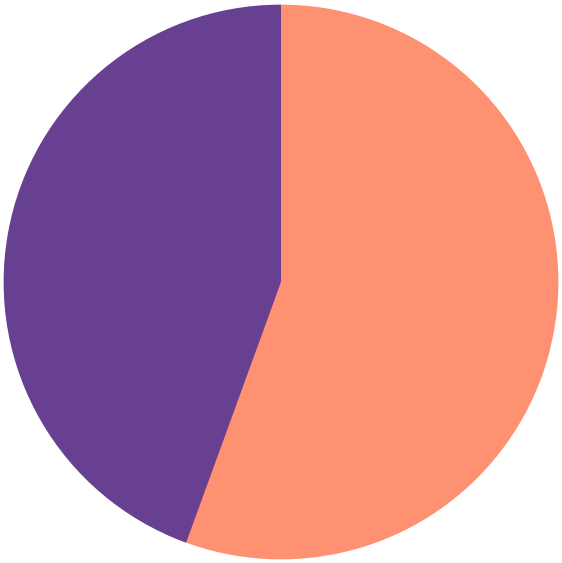
OTHER/ UNKNOWN: 7

Amy Allwine
Danielle Denney
Ashley Hasti
Kimberly Kay Hernandez
Lynn Marie Josephson
Beverly Miller
Elizabeth Thompson

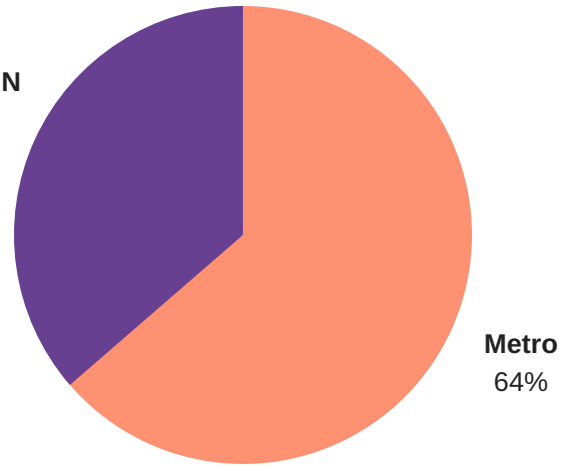
GEOGRAPHIC LOCATION OF VICTIM

Key Femicide Statistics (2014-2016) for
Adult Women Murdered by a Current or Former Intimate Partner

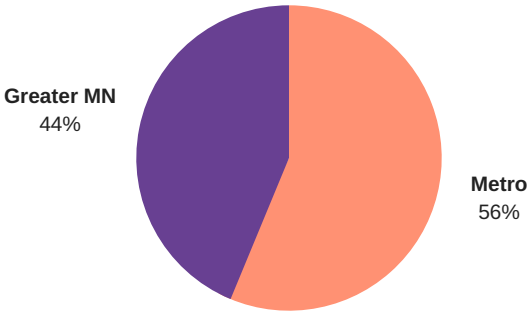
2016



2015



2014



2016 VICTIMS : 18

TWIN CITIES METRO AREA: 10

Amy Allwine
Danielle Denney
Rebecca Drewlo
Elisa Gomez
Ashley Hasti
Lynn Marie Josephson
Beverly Miller
Courtney Monson
Trisha Lynn Nelson
Lyuba Savenok

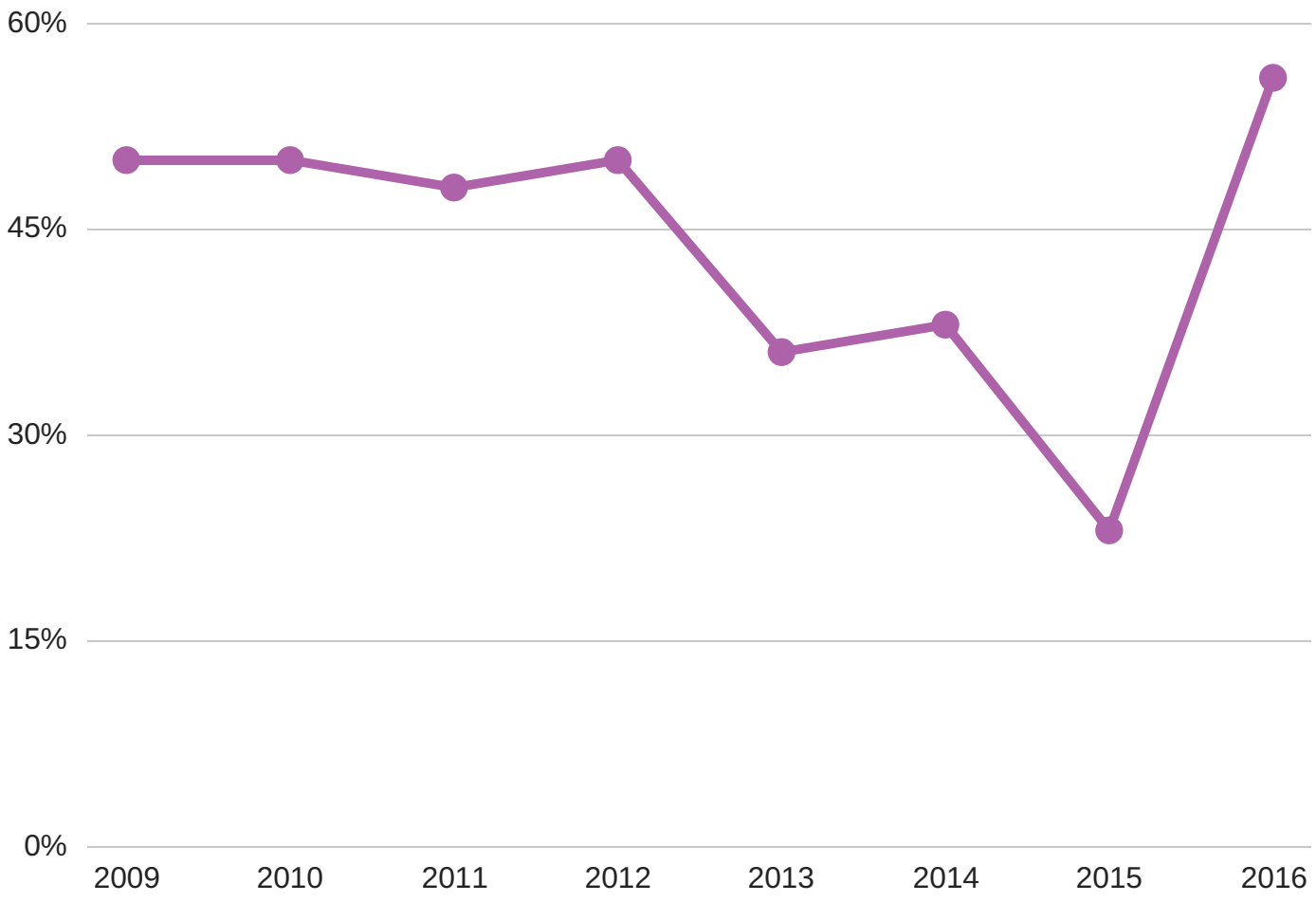
The "Twin Cities Metro Area" includes: Hennepin, Ramsey, Dakota, Anoka, Washington, Scott, and Carver counties

GREATER MINNESOTA: 8

Margaret Flath
Tasha Lynn Hanson
Kimberly Kay Hernandez
Barbara Larson
Melissa Norby
Tanya Jean Skinaway
Elizabeth Thompson
Barbara Wilson

HOMICIDE-SUICIDE

Key Femicide Statistics (2014-2016) for
Adult Women Murdered by a Current or Former Intimate Partner



2016 HOMICIDES WHERE PERPETRATOR COMMITTED SUICIDE

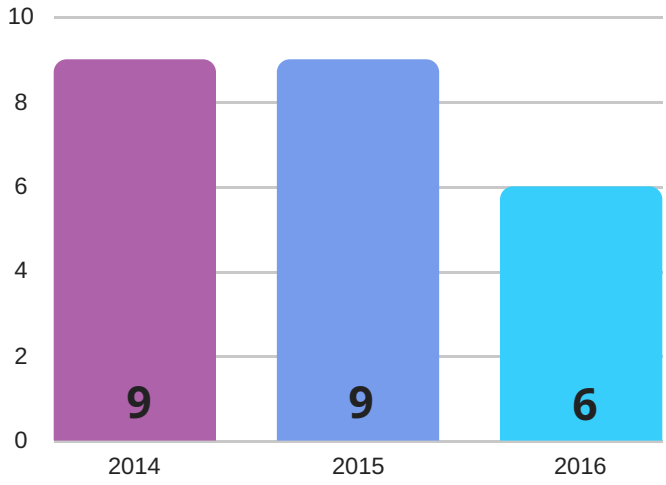
VICTIMS: 10

Ashley Hasti
Barbara Larson
Barbara Wilson
Beverly Miller
Courtney Monson
Danielle Denney
Elizabeth Thompson
Kimberly Kay Hernandez
Lynn Marie Josephson
Trisha Lynn Nelson

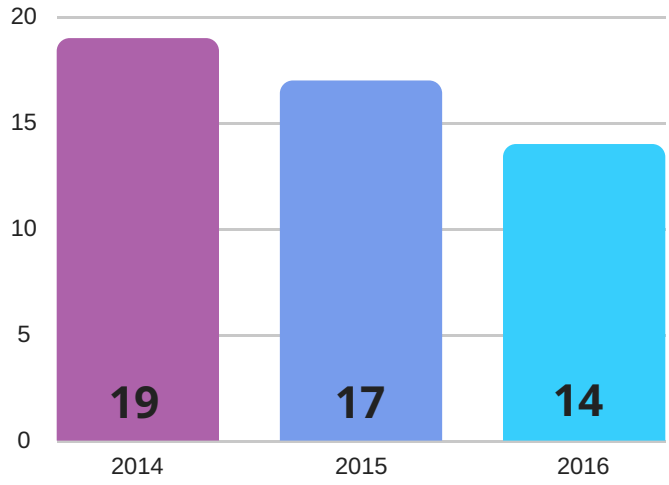
MURDER OF MOTHERS AND EFFECT ON CHILDREN

Key Femicide Statistics (2014-2016) for
Adult Women Murdered by a Current or Former Intimate Partner

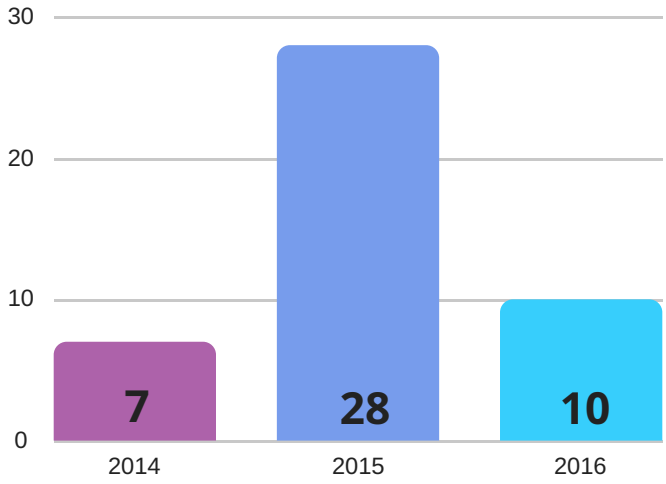
Mothers with Minor Children



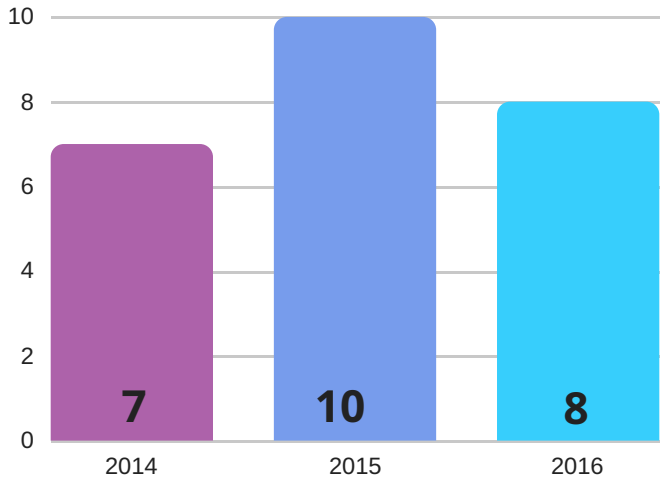
Number of Minor Children Who Lost Mother



Number of Adult Children Who Lost Mother



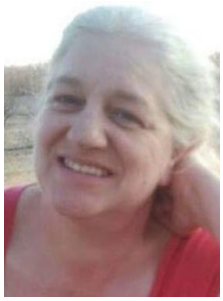
Child(ren) Present at Time of Murder or Discovery of the Body



2016 MOTHERS WITH MINOR CHILDREN

VICTIMS: 6

Amy Allwine
Margaret Flath
Tasha Lynn Hanson
Courtney Monson
Lyuba Savenok
Tanya Jean Skinaway



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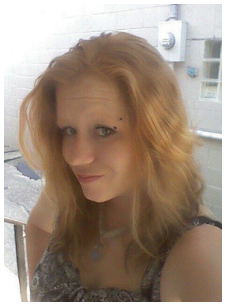

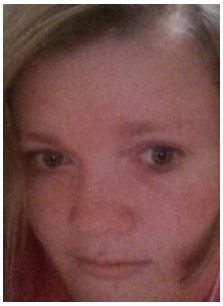

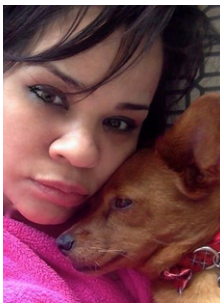
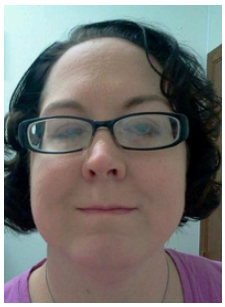

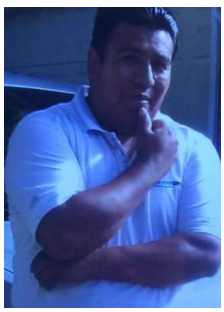
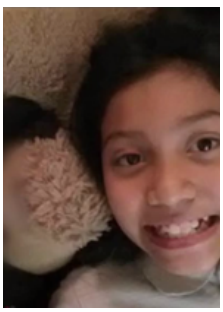
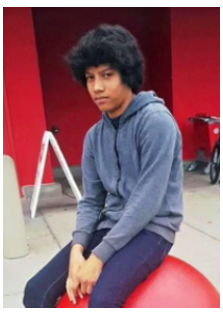
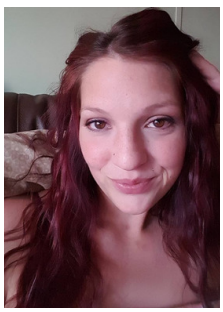

Women murdered in cases where the suspected, alleged, or convicted perpetrator was a current or former intimate partner:

Kimberly Hernandez

Age 48
Good Thunder
January 29, 2016

Kimberly Kay Hernandez, 48, was killed by her husband, Charles "Chuck" Hernandez, 60, at their home in Good Thunder on January 29. According to autopsy reports, Charles strangled Kimberly before committing suicide by suffocation. Kimberly was serving the last of her term on the Good Thunder city council.

Trisha Nelson

Age 28
Plymouth
February 12, 2016

Trisha Nelson, 28, was shot and run over with a car by her fiancé, 28 year-old Corey Perry, on February 12, in Plymouth. The Medical Examiner ruled that Trisha died from complex homicidal violence, including gunshot wounds. According to witnesses who were present at the scene of the homicide, Trisha exited a large vehicle and pleaded with occupants of a car for help as Corey chased her and fired as many as 20 shots in her direction. He then ran her over at a high speed. Corey fled to the apartment he shared with Trisha, a few miles away. Several people called the police from the apartment complex to report a man with a gun. When police arrived, gunshots were exchanged. Corey Perry was shot but autopsy showed he died of a self-inflicted gunshot wound. He was wearing tactical gear and was in possession of multiple weapons at the time of his death. While Corey did not have any documented history of abuse against Trisha, family and friends say he was abusive to her and his behavior had escalated in the last year. Corey also had a history of public violence, including use of his firearm, and was on felony probation at the time of the murder-suicide.

Tanya Skinaway

Age 23
Isle
March 2, 2016

Tanya Skinaway, 23, was killed by her abusive boyfriend, William Sayers Jr., 33, in a hit-and-run in Isle. Tanya's body was found on the side of the road early in the morning of March 2nd. According to reports from the medical examiner, Tanya was killed due to blunt force trauma, including "a large wound to the outside of her left knee and multiple small fragments of what appeared to be gray or silver paint within the wound." William Sayers has an extensive documented history of domestic violence, including several felony domestic assault charges and violations of protective orders. In 2012, William was convicted of gross misdemeanor Criminal Vehicular Homicide, as well as gross misdemeanor DWI, for which he served 120 days in local jail and received a supervised probation sentence. He is currently being charged with four counts of criminal vehicular homicide in Tanya's death. Tanya and William had a two month-old daughter together. She also leaves behind a minor son.

Courtney Monson

Age 28
Ramsey
April 22, 2016

Courtney Monson was shot and killed by her husband, 41 year-old Bryce Monson, with a semiautomatic firearm. Bryce subsequently committed suicide in their house on April 22. Law enforcement responded to a 911 call in which dispatchers could hear screaming and crying. Officials say that a "violent confrontation" took place during which Courtney sought safety in a room in the home's basement with three of her four minor children before Bryce shot and killed her. All four of Courtney's minor children, including two she had with Bryce, were present in the home at the time of the murder-suicide. Her older sons, aged 12 and 9, convinced Bryce to not kill the children or their dog. Friends say Bryce had a history of abusing Courtney, who was attempting to leave the relationship and was in fear for her life.

Barbara Wilson

Age 54
Mankato
April 26, 2016

Barbara Wilson, 54, was shot and killed by her husband Delbert Wilson, 56, on April 26 in their Mankato home. Delbert subsequently committed suicide. According to news reports, the couple had been married for less than a year. Delbert had a documented history of domestic violence but not against Barbara. He had a conviction of 5th degree assault in 1993 and had been charged with violating an order for protection in 1993 as well. Barbara was in the process of leaving Delbert and had arranged for a family member to pick her up the day after she was killed. The day before her homicide, Delbert had pointed a shotgun at her head, and then under his own chin. This incident was reported to family members but not the police. The day of the murder, Delbert called Barbara's daughter and said, "You don't need to come to the house tomorrow to get your mother, you can get her at the morgue." Family requested a welfare check and law enforcement found the bodies in the back room of the house. A semiautomatic handgun was found near the bodies and several spent and unspent semiautomatic cartridges were found throughout the home. Police also recovered other firearms and ammunition from the house.

Kyle Benjamin Allers, 23, killed his girlfriend, **Tasha Lynn Hanson**, 24, on or around May 12, in Winona County. According to the medical examiner, Kyle strangled and beat Tasha to death. Authorities were contacted by a family member of Kyle's who stated that he had shared that Tasha was "gone forever" and requested help to dispose of her body. Tasha and Kyle had two young children together, a 3 year-old son and a 1 year-old daughter. The criminal complaint against Kyle states that he has prior convictions of domestic assault and disorderly conduct stemming from abusive conduct against Tasha in 2011 and 2013. In the 2011 incident, Tasha had called the police after Kyle had strangled, assaulted, threatened to kill, and falsely imprisoned her. She reported to police that Kyle had told her he "should have tied her up and thrown her in the weeds." She was made to take a breathalyzer test, was arrested and convicted of misdemeanor domestic assault, alongside Kyle. On May 14, 2016, two days after Kyle killed Tasha, law enforcement found her body in the woods.

Tasha Lynn Hanson

Age 24
Lewiston
May 12, 2016

Lyuba Savenok

Age 23
Eden Prairie
May 14, 2016

Lyuba Savenok, 23, was stabbed and killed by her husband of six years, Eugene Savenok, in Eden Prairie on May 14. According to media reports, Lyuba was 26 weeks pregnant and had two children, a 3 year-old and a 4 year-old, with Eugene. There were prior domestic violence calls made by Lyuba to law enforcement, one of which resulted in charges against Eugene last August. He was to go to trial at the end of May. Eugene was charged with two counts of first degree murder.

Beverly Miller

Age 85
Woodbury
May 20, 2016

Beverly Miller, 85, was found dead in her bedroom of blunt force trauma to the head on May 20. According to law enforcement, her husband of 40 years, 72 year-old James Miller, caused the trauma and then hung himself in their Woodbury home. Police have confirmed this was a murder-suicide.

Ashley Hasti

Age 31
Brooklyn Park
June 2, 2016

Ashley Hasti, 31, was found dead on June 2nd in her Brooklyn Park home. Ashley was shot and killed by her estranged husband, Mainak Sarkar, 38, who then traveled to Los Angeles and killed a UCLA professor, William Klug. Mainak then committed suicide.

Melissa Norby

Age 35
Bemidji
June 22, 2016

Melissa Norby, 35, was found dead underneath a mattress with her hands and feet bound together in her home on June 22. An autopsy revealed that she died of homicidal violence before the blaze. Arson investigators with the State Fire Marshall's Office indicated an accelerant was used. The case is still under investigation and the only suspect in the case is a man with whom Melissa had a relationship.

Elizabeth Thompson

Age 68
Manohmen
August 9, 2016

Elizabeth "Betty" Thompson, 68, and her husband Lynn Thompson, 72, were found dead at home in Manohmen County on August 9. Law enforcement responded to reports of shootings and found both of them dead. The deaths were ruled a murder-suicide. The medical examiner found that Elizabeth was strangled and Lynn died of a self-inflicted gunshot wound. Elizabeth leaves behind 3 adult children.

Danielle Denney

Age 29
Hastings
August 15, 2016

On August 15, **Danielle Aimee Denney**, 29, was shot and killed by her boyfriend Justin Anderson, 34, in their Hastings home. Justin subsequently committed suicide.

Rebecca Drewlo

Age 34
Coon Rapids
August 18, 2016

Lucas Jablonski, 25, stabbed and killed **Rebecca "Becky" Drewlo**, 34, in her apartment on her birthday on August 18. According to court records, Rebecca had a developmental disability and was considered a vulnerable adult. In 2014, upon her family's request, a judge granted a Harassment Restraining Order (HRO) barring Lucas from having any contact with Rebecca. In the petition for the HRO, her family noted that Lucas had taken advantage of Rebecca and that she considered him her boyfriend. They also shared that Lucas had threatened to harm Rebecca and himself if he was barred from seeing her. Lucas was convicted of violating the restraining order twice in the last two years. In the weeks leading up to the murder, he was living with Rebecca at her apartment in Coon Rapids. An autopsy revealed bruises and signs of strangulation on Rebecca's body and confirmed that she died of stabbing.

Elisa Gomez

Age 47
Minneapolis
October 11, 2016

Elisa Gomez, 47, was found dead of ligature hanging on October 11, just hours after she married a man who has an extensive history of domestic violence. According to media reports, Elisa got married to a man in a sudden ceremony on October 10. At around 2 or 3 in the morning, one of her neighbors called the police because he heard some commotion and “the woman sounded very distraught.” Another 911 call brought officers back and they found Gomez dead. The man Elisa married was previously convicted of domestic assault, domestic assault by strangulation, and terroristic threats. According to court documents, in 2009, his former wife reported to police that he attempted to rape her and strangled her while stating he wanted to kill her. He has also been the subject of one protective order and two harassment restraining orders in the past. The manner of death in Elisa’s case is undetermined and this remains an open case at the Hennepin County Medical Examiner’s office and an open and active investigation with the Minneapolis Police Department.

Lynn Marie Josephson

Age 56
Apple Valley
November 3, 2016

On November 3, 56 year-old **Lynn Marie Josephson** was shot twice and killed by her 49 year-old husband Alan Lee Josephson who then fatally shot himself. Police officers found the bodies when they arrived to perform a welfare check at the Josephson's Apple Valley home the next morning. Police confirmed this a murder-suicide.

Margaret Flath

Age 27
Wadena
November 7, 2016

Margaret Flath, 27, was shot and killed by her husband, Antonio St. Marie, 26, on November 7. Earlier that day, Antonio St. Marie was charged with felony domestic assault against Margaret. He bailed out of jail a few hours prior to the shooting. Upon his release, Antonio posted on social media that he was angry and followed that post with another asking if anyone wanted to "make a quick $500." He then held Margaret, their three year old A.B., and Margaret's brother hostage as he threatened them with a firearm. After a few hours, Margaret effectively pleaded with Antonio to let her brother leave with A.B. After she hugged her brother and child good-bye, Antonio shot and killed her.

Antonio has a long documented history of domestic violence. In 2009, he directly and through social media, threatened to use a firearm to kill an ex-girlfriend's family members. He was convicted of felony Terroristic Threats in that case. In 2011, Antonio threatened to kill another ex-girlfriend, strangled her, and assaulted her and her family members with a knife. He was convicted of felony Domestic Assault in that case. Besides the domestic violence related charges and convictions, Antonio also has an extensive criminal history. A DANCO (Domestic Abuse No Contact Order) was in effect at the time Antonio killed Margaret. She leaves behind three minor children.

Amy Allwine

Age 43
Cottage Grove
November 13, 2016

Amy Allwine, 43, was allegedly shot and killed by her husband Stephen Allwine, 43, in Cottage Grove on November 13 who then staged Amy's death as a suicide. Investigators were able to retrieve evidence that suggests he had been planning Amy's murder for a few months and had attempted to recruit a hit-man through the Dark Web. An examination of Amy's blood after she was killed showed a concentration of Scopolamine, 40 times what would be prescribed in a therapeutic dose. Scopolamine is known to erase memory, rendering a person incapable of exercising free will. Stephen was arrested and charged with second degree murder in Amy's homicide on January 18, 2017.

Barbara Larson

Age 59
Faribault
December 23, 2016

On December 23, **Barbara Larson**, 59, was shot and killed at her work place, the Faribault Area Chamber of Commerce, her workplace, by her ex-husband Richard Larson, 61. Richard then committed suicide. Barbara was married to Richard for several years and divorced him in 2014. She was recently granted a Harassment Restraining Order (HRO) against Richard, which was served on the week of the murder. Barbara informed the courts of physical abuse and repeated, escalating stalking by Richard. Barbara had worked at the Chamber of Commerce for over a decade and Richard was a retired police officer. Barbara leaves behind two adult children.

Friends, Family Members & Bystanders murdered in domestic violence related situations:

Luis Ronquillo

Age 13
Minneapolis
September 30, 2016

Nahily Ronquillo

Age 10
Minneapolis
September 30, 2016

Luis Ronquillo, 13, and his sister, **Nahily Ronquillo**, 10, were shot and killed by their father, Luis Eduardo Ronquillo Alvarado, 39, in Minneapolis on September 30. Their mother was also shot and was transported to the hospital in critical condition and survived. Luis Eduardo Ronquillo Alvarado subsequently committed suicide.

Roberto Bernabe Cortez

Age 37
Minneapolis
October 24, 2016

On October 24, **Roberto Bernabe Cortez**, 37, died from injuries inflicted by Tristen Baier, 20. On October 22 Tristen was in Minneapolis smashing his ex-girlfriend's car windows when a witness intervened and tried to chase him away. Tristen climbed into a van and tried to hit the witness, who jumped out of the way. His van collided with a parked vehicle, but Tristen continued to drive away. At that time, Roberto and other bystanders came out of their residences to look at the damaged vehicle. Moments later, Tristen returned in the van and drove at the group, critically injuring Roberto, who died from his injuries two days later. Tristen told police that he was angry at his ex-girlfriend, so he smashed her car windows with a bat. He said he was still angry when he was chased away, so he drove around the block and drove at Roberto. Tristen has been charged with second-degree murder and first-degree assault.

ABOUT MCBW

The Minnesota Coalition for Battered Women was founded in 1978 to serve as a unifying voice for battered women and to link battered women's programs in the state with the common purpose of ending domestic violence.

MCBW is a statewide, member-based organization serving more than 80 local, regional, and statewide member organizations that advocate to end intimate partner violence. MCBW member programs include battered women's shelters and safe homes, community advocacy programs, criminal justice intervention projects, state and national training and technical assistance organizations, human rights organizations, homeless shelters and transitional housing programs. Members include 12 culturally specific and population specific programs serving differing communities.

MCBW is working to improve conditions for battered women and their families by increasing public awareness, impacting public policy and increasing the capacity of those who work directly with domestic violence victims and their families.

Mission Statement:
The mission of the Minnesota Coalition for Battered Women is to provide a voice for battered women and member programs; challenge systems and institutions so they respond more effectively to the needs of battered women and their children; promote social change; and support, educate, and connect member programs.

Vision Statement:
The vision of the Minnesota Coalition for Battered Women is to end violence against women and their children and to achieve social justice for all.

IN 2016, AT LEAST 21 MINNESOTANS LOST THEIR LIVES AS A RESULT OF DOMESTIC VIOLENCE.

We remember...

1. January 29, 2016 **Kimberly Kay Hernandez**, Good Thunder, died as a result of strangulation.
2. Feb. 12, 2016 **Trisha Lynn Nelson**, Plymouth, died as a result of gunshot wounds.
3. March 2, 2016 **Tanya Jean Skinaway**, Isle, died from vehicular homicide.
4. April 22, 2016 **Courtney Monson**, Ramsey, died as a result of gunshot wounds.
5. April 26, 2016 **Barbara Wilson**, Mankato, died as a result of gunshot wounds.
6. May 12, 2016 **Tasha Lynn Hanson**, Lewiston, died as a result of strangulation.
7. May 14, 2016 **Lyuba Savenok**, Eden Prairie, died as a result of stabbing.
8. May 20, 2016 **Beverly Miller**, Woodbury, died as a result of blunt force trauma.
9. June 2, 2016 **Ashley Hasti**, Brooklyn Park, died as a result of gunshot wounds.
10. June 22, 2016 **Melissa Norby**, Bemidji, died as a result of homicidal violence.
11. August 9, 2016 **Elizabeth Thompson**, Manohmen, died as a result of strangulation.
12. August 15, 2016 **Danielle Denney**, Hastings, died as a result of gunshot wounds.
13. August 18, 2016 **Rebecca Drewlo**, Coon Rapids, died as a result of stabbing.
14. Sept. 30, 2016 **Nahily Ronquillo**, Minneapolis, died as a result of gunshot wounds.
15. Sept. 30, 2016 **Luis Ronquillo**, Minneapolis, died as a result of gunshot wounds.
16. October 11, 2016 **Elisa Gomez**, Minneapolis, died as a result of strangulation.
17. October 24, 2016 **Roberto Bernabe Cortez**, Minneapolis, died as a result of vehicular homicide.
18. Nov. 3, 2016 **Lynn Marie Josephson**, Apple Valley, died as a result of gunshot wounds.
19. Nov. 7, 2016 **Margaret Flath**, Wadena, died as a result of gunshot wounds.
20. Nov. 13, 2016 **Amy Allwine**, Cottage Grove, died as a result of gunshot wounds.
21. Dec. 23, 2016 **Barbara Larson**, Faribault, died as a result of gunshot wounds.

The Minnesota Coalition for Battered Women publishes The Femicide Report, a report on those murdered in our state, to educate the public about the lethality of domestic violence. We report on the murders that occur at the hands of abusers to direct attention to the challenges faced by all of the women and children who are living with abuse and as a call to all Minnesotans to come together because it takes the entire community to end violence.

The 2016 Femicide Report is compiled from news accounts. Please contact MCBW if we have missed a death or if you have updated or more complete information on any femicide.

We ask that the Minnesota Coalition for Battered Women be credited when information from this report is used.

MCBW Minnesota Coalition for Battered Women

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If you are a victim experiencing abuse, contact Day One at **866-223-1111** *to connect with services.*

A MEMBER OF COMMUNITY SHARES MINNESOTA