

Domestic Violence Claimed 47 Lives in Wisconsin in 2018



***Wisconsin Domestic Violence
Homicide Report
2018***

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Foreword

This is the seventeenth edition of the *Wisconsin Domestic Violence Homicide Report*. End Domestic Abuse Wisconsin (End Abuse) has been tracking and analyzing all incidents of domestic violence homicide that have occurred in Wisconsin since 2000. This report documents fatalities from 2018.

Through our years of gathering and reporting homicide data, we have come to realize how challenging it is to fully illustrate the scope of domestic violence homicide. The fatal consequences of domestic abuse extend beyond the particular cases that meet the criteria for inclusion in our reports. Domestic abuse is a pervasive epidemic that has directly victimized well over one million Wisconsinites. We acknowledge that this report in no way captures all of the various ways domestic abuse has life and death implications in our state.

Our past homicide reports include an analysis around trends we have noticed in our state's domestic violence homicide data, and attempt to provide the reader with new information or considerations regarding the unique and disparate impact of domestic violence on particular groups. The "Topic Index to Previous Reports" on page 39 indicates the topics we have covered in the past, many of which are also pertinent and applicable to 2018 domestic violence homicide cases. However, we wanted this year's report to set a more uplifting tone. This homicide report is End Abuse's first to highlight an aspect of our organization's work that makes us the most hopeful - our Prevention Initiative.

End Abuse is fortunate to have three Youth Outreach Specialists on our staff whose leadership and enthusiasm are inspiring. Preventing domestic violence homicides starts with preventing domestic violence. We know that unlearning unhealthy ways of being in relationships takes time, and we are excited to see the long-term impact of this work.

Executive Summary

Since 2000, End Domestic Abuse Wisconsin has chronicled deaths due to domestic violence in our state. In 2018, individuals died in Wisconsin due to domestic violence at a rate of 1 death every 7.5 days. The basic findings contained in this report are outlined below.

2018 compared to 2017	2018	2017
Incidents of domestic violence homicide	37	40
Victims of domestic violence homicide (excluding by legal intervention)	38	45
Homicides by legal intervention (responding law enforcement)	1	3
All domestic violence-related homicides	39	48
Perpetrator suicide (excluding by legal intervention)	7	13
Attempted homicide incidents with perpetrator suicide	1	1
Total deaths (victim and perpetrator)	47	62

Other findings in the *2018 Wisconsin Domestic Violence Homicide Report* include:

- Perpetrators of domestic violence homicide incidents were overwhelmingly male. In 2018, 79% of perpetrators were male. This figure excludes the one homicide that occurred during legal intervention. This incident has also been excluded from other perpetrator demographic statistics.
- In 2018, at least 37% of the victims of intimate partner homicide were killed after the relationship ended or when one person in the relationship was taking steps to end the relationship. This figure demonstrates that leaving does not equate to 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.
- 60% of the victims included in this report were not an intimate partner of the perpetrator. There were 16 intimate partner homicide victims in 2018.
- The ages of victims in this report range from 18 years old to 74 years old. The average age of victims was 38 years old. Perpetrators' ages ranged from 19 to 62 years old. The average age for perpetrators was 36 years old.

- In 2018, homicides were committed in 19 counties in Wisconsin. Since we began tracking this statistic, 2018 is the first year where rural areas experienced a greater percentage of domestic violence homicides than urban areas in Wisconsin. About 54% of the homicide incidents happened in rural communities and about 46% occurred in urban areas.
- Consistent with the findings throughout this report's history, firearms remain the most common means of perpetrating domestic violence homicides. In 2018, firearms were the weapons used in 65% of domestic violence homicide incidents, excluding the homicide by legal intervention. In at least seven of the 24 domestic violence shooting deaths in 2018, the gunmen were legally prohibited from possessing firearms.
- Many of the 2018 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.

National and Historical Context

According to the Bureau of Justice Statistics, from 1980 to 2005, intimate partner homicides declined by 44% and homicides among other family members decreased by 26%. Similarly, nonfatal domestic violence has decreased by about 63% from 1994 to 2010. However, the decline has varied significantly for different populations. The data from the BJS 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%.” This downward trend has been attributed to increased awareness, services, and intervention.¹

In 2017, the Centers for Disease Control released an analysis on the prevalence and circumstances surrounding female homicide deaths in the United States. Their study analyzed the deaths of 10,018 women from 18 states between the years 2003 and 2014 by looking at data from the National Violent Death Reporting System. In addition to the finding that over half of female homicides in the US are intimate partner violence (IPV) related and perpetrated with a firearm, the study found that non-Hispanic black and American Indian/Alaska Native women are killed at nearly three times the rate of non-Hispanic white women.²

1 National Institute of Justice, “The Decline of Intimate Partner Homicide,” July 1, 2005, [nij.ojp.gov](http://nij.ojp.gov/topics/articles/decline-intimate-partner-homicide): <http://nij.ojp.gov/topics/articles/decline-intimate-partner-homicide>

2 Petrosky E, Blair JM, Betz CJ, Fowler KA, Jack SP, Lyons BH. Racial and Ethnic Differences in Homicides of Adult Women and the Role of Intimate Partner Violence — United States, 2003–2014. *MMWR Morb Mortal Wkly Rep* 2017;66:741–746. DOI: <http://dx.doi.org/10.15585/mmwr.mm6628a1External>

2018 Key Findings

Overview

	2018
Domestic violence homicide incidents	37
Victims of domestic violence homicide (excluding by legal intervention)	38
Homicides by legal intervention (responding law enforcement)*	1
All domestic violence-related homicides	39
Homicide incidents with perpetrator suicides	7
Attempted homicide incidents with perpetrator suicides*	1
Total deaths (victims and perpetrators)	48
Homicide incidents with two or more victims	2
Homicide incidents with two or more perpetrators	2
Female victims	16
Male victims	23
Female perpetrators	8
Male perpetrators	31

*These perpetrator demographics are not included in the rest of the tables and percentages found elsewhere in this report.

Relationship of victim to female perpetrator

When perpetrator was female, victim was:	2018
Current male partner	6
Dating the same man as perpetrator	1
Step-father	1

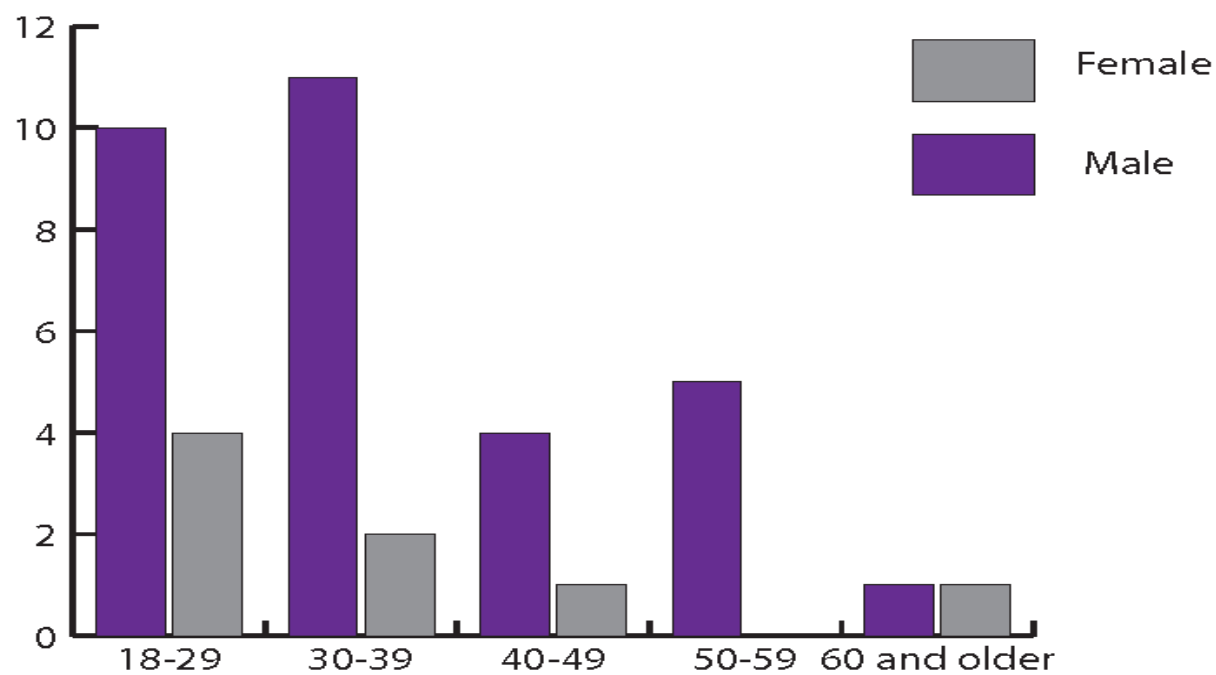
Relationship of victim to male perpetrator

When perpetrator was male, victim was:	2018
Current female partner	7
Former or estranged female partner	7
Current male partner	1
Former or estranged male partner	1
Current male partner of perpetrator's current or former female partner	3
Male friend of perpetrator's estranged female partner	1
Grandparent of the perpetrator	2
Step-father of the perpetrator	1
Responding law enforcement officer	1
Ex-boyfriend of perpetrator's daughter	1
Father of perpetrator's ex-girlfriend	1
Ex-boyfriend of perpetrator's girlfriend	1
Boyfriend of perpetrator's female friend	1
Other male vying for the same woman as the perpetrator	1
Ex-boyfriend of woman currently dating perpetrator's cousin	1
Bystander	1

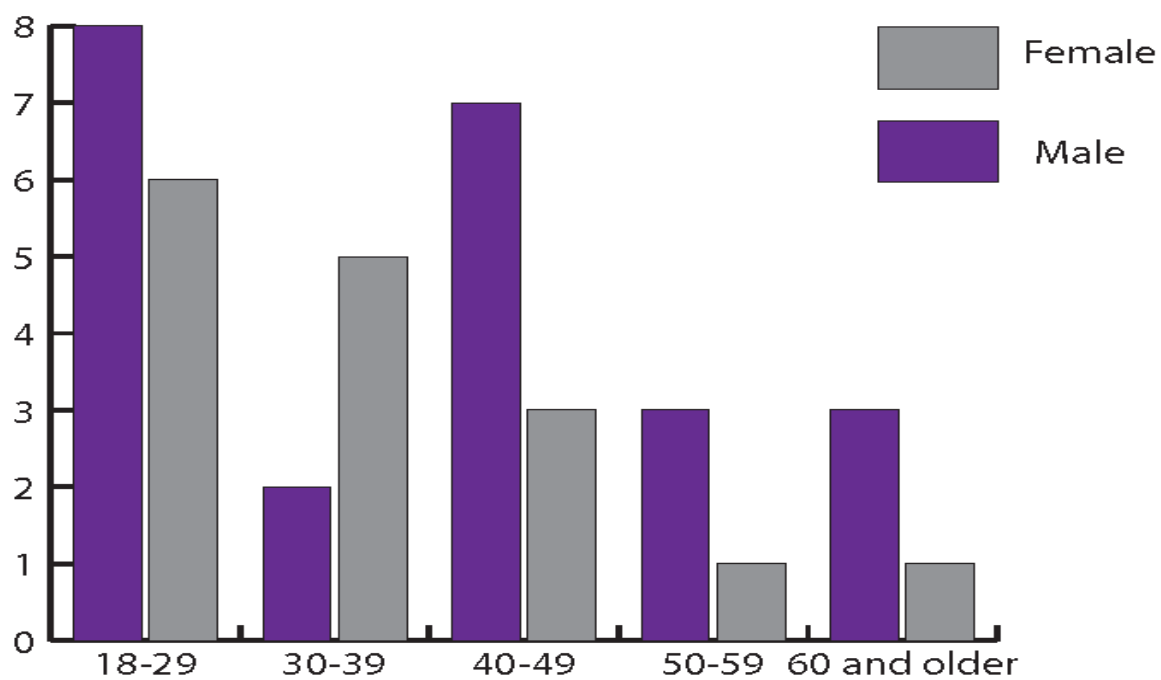
Perpetrator suicide

	2018
Homicide incidents with perpetrator suicide	8
Homicide-suicide incidents involving firearms	8
Male perpetrators of homicide-suicide	8

Age and gender of perpetrators



Age and gender of victims



Method of homicide

Firearm	24	65%	Since 2005, firearms have accounted 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.ⁱ The presence of a gun in domestic violence situations increases the risk of homicide for women by 500%.ⁱⁱ There are 46% fewer female intimate partner gun homicides in states that require background checks for private handgun sales than in states, like Wisconsin, which do not.ⁱⁱⁱ 29% of the perpetrators in 2018 who used a gun to commit a domestic violence homicide were legally prohibited from possessing a firearm.
Stabbing or Cutting	6	16%	
Blunt Force	3	8%	
Fire	2	5.4%	
Strangulation or Suffocation	1	2.7%	
Unknown	1	2.7%	

i. 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.

ii. Campbell, Jacquelyn C., Daniel Webster, Jane Koziol-McLain, Carolyn Block, Doris Campbell, Mary Ann Curry, Faye Gary et al. "Risk Factors for Femicide in Abusive Relationships: Results from a Multisite Case Control Study." American Journal of Public Health 93, no. 7 (2003): 1089-1097.

iii. Everytown for Gun Safety. *State Background Check Requirements and Rates of Domestic Violence Homicide*. 2014. Accessed September 20, 2016. <http://everytown.org/1y3kxCb>.

Location of homicide incidents

	2018
Home of the victim and/or perpetrator	25
Public space	8
Home of a third party	2
Victim's workplace	2

Race and gender of victims

	White	Black	Latinx	Native American	Asian	Unknown
Male	14	7	1	1	0	0
Female	7	6	1	0	0	2

Race and gender of perpetrators

	White	Black	Latinx	Native American	Asian	Unknown
Male	13	13	2	1	1	1
Female	7	1	0	0	0	0

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 involve a parent or grandparent killed by an adult child or grandchild, as well as adult step-children or step-grandchildren killing a step-parent or step-grandparent. 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. See next page for an extended explanation of this criteria.
- 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 their children in order to exact revenge on their partner, it is considered 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.

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. Our summaries of domestic violence homicides 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.

We use Uniform Crime Report (UCR) data submitted to DOJ and, if available for the year in question, information from the Bureau of Health Information (BHI) of 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.

Methodology

A Note about Wisconsin Residents Killed Outside of Wisconsin

Our homicide report details domestic violence homicides that occur in the state of Wisconsin almost exclusively. Exceptions in past reports have been to include deaths of Wisconsin residents that occur within hours or minutes of leaving Wisconsin. Often domestic violence-related deaths of Wisconsin residents who are killed outside of our state do not end up on our radar. There have undoubtedly been homicides that fit this definition that our limited research for producing this report would not have captured. We know that domestic violence is not confined by state lines and abuse does not take a vacation when Wisconsin residents do.

This can be best demonstrated through discussion of the murder of Jessica Johnson, 32, and her 1-year-old daughter Gabriela Farias in 2018, which was highly visible in the media locally and nationally. Johnson lived in Holmen, Wisconsin with her daughter. On March 10th, 2018, Jessica and Gabriela were found dead in the Ocala National Forest in Florida. Jessica's boyfriend and Gabriela's father, 27-year-old Kevin Benjamin Olesen Farias, shot Jessica once in the head and Gabriela twice in the head with a .22-caliber rifle. Farias then shot himself in the head with the same rifle and was found barely alive at the scene. He died two days later. Detectives interviewed friends and family of the couple, and no one knew exactly why the couple came to Florida or why they were in the Ocala National Forest. Family members of both Johnson and Farias said they hadn't heard from them for at least a month prior to this incident.

Most states produce similar reports to ours; however, the methodology and criteria for inclusion in such reports varies widely from state to state. Fortunately, situations like the case described above, where the incident involves Wisconsin residents but happens while spending time in another state, are a relatively rare circumstance.

A Note about the Expanded 2010 Definition

As noted on the previous page, beginning with the report for 2010, we also include cases that involve a parent or grandparent killed by an adult child or grandchild, as well as adult step-children or step-grandchildren killing a step-parent or step-grandparent. 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.

We chose to include these cases in 2010 at the urging of advocates for victims of elder abuse, particularly by our colleagues at the National Clearinghouse on Abuse in Later Life, which is an initiative of End Domestic Abuse Wisconsin. We included these types of cases in our report because the preceding dynamics of violence in families in which adult parents or grandparents are killed by their adult children or grandchildren often exhibit similar characteristics of power and control. The perpetrator's ongoing abuse often relies on tactics of coercion, intimidation, and unique vulnerabilities inherent in the close familial relationship. Because our original motivation to systemically include these cases stemmed from an acknowledgement that power and control is a pattern in family abuse outside of intimate partner relationships, we have excluded cases in which there is a clear indicator that mental health issues were a predominant factor in the homicide. Therefore, we have excluded cases in which the defendant was found not guilty by reason of mental illness or lacked the capacity to stand trial.

In attempting to make these distinctions, we have become aware of the ways in which our attempt to categorize homicides is always imperfect, and it will necessarily exclude cases that could illuminate potentially significant aspects of violence that happens in families.

Methodology

For instance, our definition does not include situations in which an adult parent or step-parent causes the death of an adult child or step-child. These types of homicides appear to be relatively rare and therefore difficult to generalize about; however, we would be challenged to give a satisfying reason as to why one type of case is included and the other is not. In addition, our exclusion of patricide and matricide cases that seem closely related to mental illness reflects our belief that the analogous cases of intimate partner homicide—that is, intimate partner violence homicides primarily caused by mental illness—are relatively rare. We know from research and experience that mental illness alone rarely explains why an abusive person kills their partner; however, we also acknowledge that these efforts to conceptually cordon off cases that are closely connected to mental illness from those that are not may prevent us from attending to the complex etiologies of domestic violence homicide.

A Note about Child Homicides

We include as domestic violence homicides child killings 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 their children in order to exact revenge on their partner, it is considered domestic violence-related.

We believe our limited ability to recognize these cases likely results in an undercount of these types of homicides. 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. Each year, there are a number of homicides of children we do not include, but in which domestic abuse appears to be a salient characteristic or risk factor. These cases are not included because we lack the information necessary to link the killings to intimate partner violence (and thus to the report's definition of domestic violence homicide).

2018 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."

It is far too easy to reduce individuals' lives to a sensational story or a dry statistic, so the accounts of the homicides included in this report should be read with these words from surviving family members in mind.

Our 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, co-workers, communities, and those responding and attempting to help during the immediate event or in the time preceding it.

NOTE: Case status reflects information available at the time of publication of this report. The current status of an open case can be found via Wisconsin Circuit Court Access at: <http://wcca.wicourts.gov>

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

County

In the death of...

CALUMET

Sara Schmidt, 40, Harrison - January 9th, 2018

After a period of escalating violence and just days after his wife filed for divorce, Robert Schmidt, 49, shot and killed Sara Schmidt in her van in the driveway of his parents' home before fatally shooting himself. Robert's parents attempted to intervene. They were able to get the couple's three children out of the van, and safely into their home prior to the shooting. At the time of the murder-suicide, Robert was out on bond for an assault he perpetrated against Sara on December 31st in which he tied her up and raped her. In Sara's conversations with police about this incident, she noted that Robert had become increasingly jealous and controlling in the previous two months, even placing a GPS monitoring device on her car. After finding the GPS device, Sara told Robert that she wanted a divorce. Later that same day he attempted suicide. As conditions of Robert's bond for the charges stemming from the December 31st incident, he was ordered to not have contact with Sara or possess a firearm.

Amanda Sobiech, 42, New Holstein - January 10th, 2018

Family members suspect that a string of health issues and monetary problems were the catalyst in this murder-suicide where Patrick Kaegi, 60, shot and killed his girlfriend, Amanda Sobiech, before fatally shooting himself in the chest. Notes were left at Sobiech and Kaegi's shared residence where their bodies were found, indicating that this was a decision they made together.

DANE

Rayshawn Jackson, 24, Madison - May 16th, 2018

Antonio Gentry, 36, and Rayshawn Jackson were reportedly involved in an ongoing dispute over a woman. In the early evening hours of May 16th, the two crossed paths in an apartment complex parking lot and Gentry pointed a gun at Jackson and demanded that he leave. Jackson turned away from Gentry, and Gentry shot Jackson once in the back of the head at close range, killing him. Afterwards, Gentry emptied Jackson's pockets and spit in his face while he lay motionless on the ground. People who witnessed the incident said that Gentry "started to go crazy," and tried to shoot Jackson's cousin and other witnesses. As a convicted felon, Gentry was legally prohibited from possessing a firearm at the time of this incident. Gentry is charged with first-degree intentional homicide, attempted first-degree intentional homicide, possession of a firearm by a convicted felon, three counts of armed robbery, attempted armed robbery, and two counts of second-degree recklessly endangering safety. The case has not concluded.

Sherry Waller, 34, Madison - September 29th, 2018

James Sykes, 39, shot and killed his girlfriend, Sherry Waller, at their shared residence before turning the gun on himself. Two of her five children were in the home at the time. Sykes had a domestic violence felony conviction on his record involving a previous partner and therefore was not allowed to possess a firearm at the time of this incident. There were no past phone calls to police involving domestic violence against Waller, but family members said they had suspicions that she was being abused. Court records indicate that Sykes had a documented history of perpetrating domestic abuse dating back to 2009.

Dalton Ziegler, 24, Dane - October 30th, 2018

Dalton Ziegler and his girlfriend, McKayla Tracy, 20, were drinking with friends at their residence on October 30th. At one point in the evening, Ziegler and a female that was present decided to go to sleep because they both had work in the morning. Ziegler went upstairs to bed and the female friend was going to sleep on the couch. However, because Tracy and others were still being loud, Ziegler invited the female friend to sleep in the bed with him. Tracy, who suspected that something sexual was happening, called her friends Drew Lubber, 21, and Jacob Johnson, 24, to come over. When Lubber and Johnson arrived, they forced entry into the room where Ziegler and the female friend were in bed. Johnson started punching Ziegler in the face while Lubber held him. Tracy did not attempt to intervene, nor did she call 911. Ziegler ultimately died from injuries he suffered during the attack. Tracy, Johnson and Lubber were all charged with felony murder, party to a crime. Johnson pleaded guilty and was sentenced to seven years in prison and five years of extended supervision. Lubber pleaded guilty and was sentenced to six years in prison and four years of extended supervision. Tracy's case has not concluded.

DUNN

Alexander Woodworth, 24, Spring Brook - March 22nd, 2018

Ezra McCandless, 20, drove to Alexander Woodworth's residence to return some items to him. The two had been involved in an intimate relationship. McCandless told police that she and Woodworth wanted to talk, so they decided to go for a drive and ended up getting stuck in mud on a dirt road. McCandless claimed that Woodworth attacked her in the vehicle and carved the word "boy" into her arm. McCandless was able to get a hold of the knife, and stabbed Woodworth 16 times resulting in his death. She later admitted that the wound on her arm was self-inflicted after she stabbed Woodworth. McCandless was charged with first-degree intentional homicide. The case has not concluded.

John Likeness, 54, Menomonie - December 30th, 2018

Richard Seehaver, 52, lived with John Likeness, whom Seehaver referred to as his "common-law husband." On December 30th, Seehaver shot Likeness in the chest with a crossbow, and when the crossbow did not immediately kill him, proceeded to slit his throat. When questioned about the incident by authorities, Seehaver said that he felt sorry for Likeness, and so he "put him out of his misery." Seehaver also admitted to smoking methamphetamine the day before this incident but denied having done so the day of. Seehaver has a lengthy criminal history of drug possession and battery convictions. For this incident, Seehaver was charged with first-degree intentional homicide. The case has not concluded.

IOWA

Robin Reeson, 46, Ridgeway - March 24th, 2018

Robin Reeson and his wife, Melanie, were out drinking and returned to their residence in the early morning hours of March 24th where they lived with Melanie's son, Austin Valdez, 19. Robin returned home before Melanie and fell asleep on the couch. A short time after his mother returned home, Valdez reported hearing the fish tank break and glass shattering. Melanie told officers that Robin pulled a 2x4 off the wall and smashed the fish tank asking Melanie "where the fuck were you?" Robin grabbed Melanie's jaw with one hand and pushed her down on the couch. Valdez grabbed his loaded rifle and went downstairs where he allegedly saw Robin hitting or choking Melanie. Valdez yelled "Robin that's enough," and then Robin took three steps toward Valdez before Valdez shot Robin once in the chest, killing him. Valdez admitted that there had been no past violence between Melanie and Robin or between Robin and himself. Melanie told officers she did not believe Robin would kill either her or Valdez but did know Robin could do them harm. Valdez was charged with first-degree reckless homicide. The case has not concluded.

JEFFERSON

Maribel Yessenia Ruiz Flores, 36, Fort Atkinson - January 31st, 2018

Silvestre Ramirez Linares, 36, shot and killed Maribel Yessenia Ruiz Flores in her vehicle outside an apartment complex. The shooting took place after Ramirez Linares followed Ruiz Flores as she was driving a male co-worker home from work. Ramirez Linares climbed into the passenger side of the vehicle over the male co-worker and shot Ruiz Flores while her car was still in drive, causing the car to crash into the garage of the apartment complex. Ramirez Linares fled the scene but later that day was found dead in his vehicle, having died by suicide. The couple was not legally married but had been together for 18 years and had two minor children.

KENOSHA

Robert Garcia, 60, Kenosha - October 29th, 2018

Dawn McDermid, 62, called police on October 29th claiming that she returned home after spending the day in Chicago to find that her husband had died by suicide. However, she later told authorities that upon finding Garcia unconscious in her garage, she put on latex gloves and cut Garcia's wrists with a razor. McDermid claimed Garcia told her he couldn't survive in jail and mentioned suicide several times. At the time of his death, Garcia was out on bond for domestic violence charges stemming from an incident with McDermid, and as a condition of his bond, Garcia was to have no contact with her. He was supposed to be in court the day he died. Toxicology results show that Garcia died from a combination of carbon monoxide poisoning and a drug overdose along with his slit wrists. McDermid was charged with first-degree reckless homicide, assisting suicide, and two other charges related to the incident. The case has not concluded.

LA CROSSE

Erin Somvilai, 35, La Crosse - June 3rd, 2018

On June 17, 2018, Erin Somvilai's body was found floating in a lake in Vernon County with ropes tied around her waist connected to concrete blocks. Erik Sackett, 38, an ex-dating partner of Somvilai's, had a family cabin on the shore of the lake where she was found. Sackett was at Somvilai's residence for several hours on June 3rd and on June 4th she was reported missing by her father. Text messages sent from Somvilai to Sackett on June 3rd indicated she was distraught over Sackett's new relationship and she was threatening to kill herself if Sackett did not come over to her residence. A neighbor reported hearing a loud thud coming from Somvilai's residence after 11:00 pm the night before she was reported missing. The autopsy concluded that the cause of Somvilai's death was "homicidal violence" and Sackett was charged with first-degree intentional homicide. The case has not concluded.

MANITOWOC

Randy Loze, 49, Manitowoc - April 20th, 2018

Felicia Kuehnl, 24, shot her stepfather, Randy Loze, in the head resulting in his death. Kuehnl drove to her mother's house and told her before fleeing, and she was arrested later that day after leading police on a high-speed pursuit. When Kuehnl was arrested she was recorded saying "I should have shot myself" and "I should be dead" when she was in the back of the police car. Kuehnl was charged with first-degree intentional homicide, second degree recklessly endangering safety, and fleeing an officer. The case has not concluded.

MARATHON

Cierra Hardrath, 21, and Duane Lopez Jr., 25, Abbotsford - January 21st, 2018

Cierra Hardrath and Tyler Zimmerman, 26, had been dating for approximately four years and lived together. According to Zimmerman, Hardrath had been unfaithful in the past and on January 21st, when Hardrath said she was going to watch a movie at a friend's house, he didn't believe her. Using the Find my iPhone app on Hardrath's iPad, Zimmerman was able to determine that Hardrath was not at the residence she stated she would be at, and he followed the app to her location. After seeing Hardrath's vehicle parked outside, Zimmerman knocked on the door of the residence and demanded he be allowed inside to see Hardrath. Zimmerman found Hardrath asleep upstairs and the two engaged in a short verbal exchange before he fatally shot her in the head. Zimmerman then shot and killed Lopez, who lived at the residence and was the roommate of the male that Hardrath went to visit that evening. Zimmerman also shot Lopez's girlfriend, who he also did not know, but she escaped with non-life-threatening injuries. Zimmerman was charged with two counts of first-degree intentional homicide to which he pleaded guilty. He was sentenced to life in prison.

Lyle Leith, 77, Wausau - February 19th, 2018

Lyle Leith was beaten to death with a pipe by 56-year-old Lee Franck, a man whom Leith's daughter had been seeing on and off. Two days prior to this incident, Leith was present during an argument in which Leith's daughter demanded that Franck move out and Leith stepped in to assist his daughter. According to police, Franck then threatened Leith and his daughter, both in person and by phone and text message, saying things like, "I hope you die" and "I'm going to hurt you to the point you can't return from it." On February 19th, Leith's daughter reported the harassing messages to the police. An officer made contact with Franck and told him to refrain from contacting Leith's daughter, and that she was going to get a restraining order against him. That same day, Leith's daughter told Leith how afraid she was due to Franck's escalating behaviors. Then on the morning of February 20th, Leith was found dead on the floor of his garage, covered in bleach and blood coming from his head. Franck was charged with first-degree intentional homicide and two

MARATHON

counts of disorderly conduct with domestic abuse modifiers. The case has not concluded. Franck had a history of domestic abuse, including previous domestic abuse-related criminal convictions in 2008 and 2013.

MILWAUKEE

Kiara Brown, 18, Milwaukee - March 26th, 2018

Marvin Patterson, 19, fatally shot his girlfriend, Kiara Brown, in a vehicle on March 26th, 2018. He then drove the car into an alley and left the scene. The criminal complaint in this case states that when Patterson turned himself in the following day, he told investigators he and Brown were sitting in the vehicle and at one point, he decided to point the gun at Brown's head and when he did so, the gun went off accidentally. Patterson told detectives he didn't intend to kill Brown. Patterson later changed his account of what happened. He said he took a firearm out of the glove compartment and put it in the cup holder. Brown picked up the firearm, which went off as Patterson tried to take it away from her. Patterson was initially charged with first-degree reckless homicide; however, in June 2019, Patterson was released from jail on a signature bond after the state's essential witness failed to appear for the jury trial. The charge was amended to homicide by negligent handling of dangerous weapon and the case has not concluded.

Shannon Mani, 21, and unborn child, Milwaukee - April 13th, 2018

Shannon Mani's parents went to the Waukesha Police Department to report their daughter missing after she failed to pick up her younger brother from school and failed to show up to work, both of which were uncharacteristic of her. Mani's 27-year-old ex-boyfriend, Quentin Neal, initially denied seeing her but later admitted that on April 13th, Mani came over to his residence and they got into an argument. Neal told police that he showed Mani the gun he had gotten for protection and Mani allegedly grabbed the gun from him and pulled the trigger. Neal said the gun failed to go off because the safety was on, so he took the gun away from Mani and shot her twice in the head, causing her to fall down the basement stairs. Neal claimed Mani then came at him again with a knife, so he took the knife from her and cut her. Neal admitted that after he killed Mani, he put her body in a suitcase, took it to a storage locker, and then disposed of her personal items and the gun he used. Mani was approximately four months pregnant with Neal's child at the time of her death. Neal was charged with first-degree intentional homicide and first-degree intentional homicide of an unborn child. He pleaded guilty to both charges and was sentenced to two concurrent life sentences in prison.

MILWAUKEE

Iris Carter, 74, and Willie Carter, 71, Milwaukee - May 14th, 2018

At 3:10am, Milwaukee Fire and Police personnel responded to a house fire. Upon entering the house, they found two adults, later identified as Iris and Willie Carter, deceased. A few days later, police received an anonymous phone tip that the couple's grandson, named Darren, set the fire. A couple weeks after the first tip came in, police received a second anonymous tip that Darren had gotten into an argument with his grandfather, Willie Carter, over an allegation that Darren had stolen several hundred dollars in cash, during which his grandfather pulled a gun on him. Later, during an interview with the detective, defendant, Darren Carter, 23, admitted to stealing from his grandparents. He stated that during the confrontation with his grandparents about the stolen money, his grandfather pulled a gun on him, which scared him. He told police that he started the fire to scare them the way they scared him earlier. Darren Carter was charged with two counts of felony murder and found guilty at a jury trial. He was sentenced to 32 years in prison and 20 years on extended supervision.

Debra Hammond, 52, Milwaukee - May 15th, 2018

Debra Hammond was found deceased with multiple stab wounds in the residence she shared with her longtime boyfriend, Jimmy Reed Bates, 59. Hammond's cousin told authorities that the last time he spoke with Hammond on the phone she was whispering so Bates would not overhear. Hammond told her cousin that Bates was acting crazy and she had begun keeping her car at her mother's house because she feared Bates would tamper with or damage it. It's suspected that Bates killed Hammond on May 14th or 15th. Family members started to become concerned when they hadn't heard from her, so they reported her missing. Police quickly questioned Bates, who was telling Hammond's family members that she went away because she "needed a break." When questioned, Bates told police he suspected Hammond was having sexual relationships with other men, so he would pretend to go to work and then returned to the residence to spy on Hammond. He told police that he witnessed Hammond having sex with another man and armed himself, intending to kill them both, but was "able to restrain himself." He told police that the last time he saw Hammond, on May 14th or 15th, he and Hammond got into a heated argument where Hammond was scratching and trying to hit Bates while her dog tried to bite him. Bates claimed he was able to push them both away and leave the residence. He was charged and convicted of first-degree reckless homicide for his role in Debra's death and was sentenced to 28 years in prison with 12 years of extended supervision.

MILWAUKEE

Michael Neal, 40, Milwaukee - May 26th, 2018

Michael Neal's wife told authorities that she thought they were on their way to a birthday party, but instead her husband, Michael Neal, drove them to 21-year-old Charles Richard's residence, who was Neal's daughter's ex-boyfriend. Earlier that day, a group of girls had broken a window at Neal's residence, and Neal told his wife that he wanted to talk to Richard about it. Once they arrived at Richard's residence, Richard came outside and said, "What do you want?" to which Neal responded, "You said come over so we could talk." Richard told Neal to leave and when Neal didn't, Richard approached the car and started shooting, hitting Neal. Richard told police that his intention with shooting the gun was to scare Neal away and he wasn't trying to hit the car or anyone inside. Richard was charged with first-degree reckless homicide and sentenced to 20 years in prison with 5 years of extended supervision.

Michael Michalski, 52, Milwaukee - July 25th, 2018

Jonathan Copeland Jr., 30, was wanted on an open arrest warrant for felony drug crimes and for absconding from Department of Corrections supervision. He was spotted entering a residence and police officers, including Milwaukee Police Officer Michael Michalski, went to the location to arrest him. The officers split up to search the house and Copeland ran up the stairs to avoid the police. He hid and then shot Michalski in the head as the officer began to close in.

On the morning of July 25th, the defendant sent a series of text messages to his wife including "Police can't save u fyi," and threatening to shoot police if they come after him. Two days prior, Copeland's wife called police to report that he was threatening to shoot up her house because she refused to reimburse him for an expense he had incurred. Copeland, who is a convicted felon, was not permitted to have a firearm at the time he killed Michalski. Copeland was charged with first-degree intentional homicide, to which he pleaded guilty. He was sentenced to life in prison without the possibility of parole.

Mark Batory, 54, Milwaukee - August 22nd, 2018

40-year-old Henri Washington had been in a relationship with Mark Batory for a year, but it had recently deteriorated due to issues with drugs, money and sex. Batory was having lunch with his 13-year old son at his home on August 22nd when Washington showed up, and Batory told his son to wait outside. Batory's son heard two loud pops and saw his father through a window, lying motionless. Batory and Washington were both found dead, Washington with a gunshot wound to the back of the head and Batory with a gunshot wound to the mouth. According to a friend of Batory's, Washington insisted he could have multiple sexual partners, but Batory could only be

MILWAUKEE

with Washington. The friend said Washington became violent after finding out Batory had cheated and dislocated Batory's eye socket. Washington's current boyfriend told police that he realized his firearm was missing after he got home the night of the killings. He also had a letter he claimed was from Washington, admitting he had taken the firearm.

Quantrell Ross, 38, Milwaukee - September 3rd, 2018

Danielle Latham, 33, fatally stabbed her boyfriend, Quantrell Ross, with a large kitchen knife. A witness told police that it appeared Ross was trying to walk away but Latham would not let him pass. When officers responded, they found Latham in the apartment building lobby with blood on her hands and clothes. Ross was found by Milwaukee Fire Department personnel unresponsive on the living room floor of the apartment with multiple stab wounds. Latham claimed that Ross had been punching her so she grabbed the kitchen knife and "jabbed" him. Circuit court records indicate Latham had a history of violence, with previous battery and disorderly convictions. In the death of Ross, Latham was charged with disorderly conduct and first-degree reckless homicide. The case has not concluded.

Dorwhitem Johnson, 31, Milwaukee - September 25th, 2018

On September 25th, Dorwhitem Johnson's husband, Archie Griffin, 40, called 911 saying he and his wife had gotten into a fight and that she needed medical assistance. He could be heard talking to Johnson on the 911 call as if she was still alive. However, when first responders got to the residence, they found Johnson in bed, already deceased. Upon further examination of the body, it was determined that Johnson had been deceased for approximately 10-12 hours when first responders arrived. She was found with discoloration around her mouth and on her cheeks that was consistent with a chemical burn. There were bruises and healing lacerations to Johnson's chin, inner thighs, abdomen, and back. Additionally, Johnson had cigarette burns on her body, discoloration to her neck and bite marks on her shoulders.

Griffin told investigators that he believed his wife was being unfaithful and admitted that "he lost it" and inflicted the fatal injuries to Johnson. He estimated the beating happened a week or two prior to the day he called 911 and it lasted about two hours. Afterwards, he tried to nurse Johnson back to health. Griffin stated that Johnson was able to get up, go to the bathroom, and eat for the first week after the attack, but that eventually stopped. Griffin told authorities he could tell something was wrong, but claimed she did not want to go to the hospital. Griffin pleaded guilty to charges of mayhem, aggravated battery and first-degree recklessly endangering safety, and was sentenced to 25 years in prison. Prosecutors said Griffin had been a fugitive for decades at the time of Johnson's death, evading charges from a 1998 case involving allegations of domestic abuse.

MILWAUKEE

Elaina Rookard, 19, Milwaukee - November 11th, 2018

Elaina Rookard and Misti Kruchten, 37, were both dating the same man. On November 11th, 2018, Rookard was driving in a car with her friend when they spotted Rookard's boyfriend's vehicle. Suspecting her boyfriend was with another woman, Rookard followed the car. When it stopped, Rookard got out of her vehicle and got into an argument with her boyfriend who had exited his vehicle. Kruchten then exited the vehicle and got into a physical altercation with Rookard. Their boyfriend and Rookard's friend tried to break up the fight. Kruchten returned to the vehicle, retrieved a gun, and shot Rookard once in the head, causing her death. Kruchten was charged with first-degree intentional homicide, which was dismissed when the state's essential witness failed to appear for the jury trial.

MONROE

Skyler Burnette, 21, Sparta - January 7th, 2018

On the morning of January 7th, 2018, a woman called 911 reporting that her boyfriend and the father of her children was unwelcome at her residence asking to see the kids, and she told dispatch that he would "only stop if he sees his kids." When police responded they found Skyler Burnette armed with a knife threatening his girlfriend. Officers attempted to de-escalate the situation and negotiate with Burnette. However, Burnette changed the position of the knife, looking like he was about to attack his girlfriend. At this time, a sheriff's deputy shot Burnette once in the head and he died at the scene. Burnette's girlfriend told authorities she believed Burnette planned to kill her. The Monroe County District Attorney reviewed the case and found that the deputy's use of deadly force was justified.

Israel Alcantara, 25, Cashton - January 12th, 2018

Adalberto Quinonez Lopez, 35, took a rifle and ammunition from the dairy farm where he worked and drove to a nearby farm where Israel Alcantara worked. Lopez and his wife had been separated for a short time and his wife was dating and living with Alcantara. Lopez told police he waited for Alcantara to come outside, and when Alcantara approached Lopez's car, Lopez grabbed the rifle and shot Alcantara once. With Lopez following, Alcantara ran back inside but quickly fell down. Lopez then fled the scene and crashed his car before it broke down in Juneau County, where he was apprehended by police. Lopez pleaded guilty to charges of first-degree intentional homicide and stalking, and was sentenced to life in prison.

Rhonda Woods, 43, La Grange - December 12th, 2018

Patrick Woods, 54, and his wife Rhonda were in the process of a divorce. On December 12th, 2018, Patrick shot Rhonda outside of their residence before going inside and turning the gun on himself. Records show that two months

MONROE

prior to this incident, Patrick called the police following an argument where he alleged that Rhonda grabbed his wrist, poked him in the chest and grabbed his head and shook it. Two days prior to this incident, Patrick called police again to report that his wife threw her wedding ring at him. Court records indicate there was a telephone conference related to the divorce that happened either the day of or the day before the murder-suicide.

OUTAGAMIE

Laurie Colon, 37, Kimberly - July 13th, 2018

Laurie Colon and her husband Greg Colon, 42, were in the process of a divorce when Greg fatally shot Laurie before turning the gun on himself. Greg had been abusive towards Laurie in the past. Laurie told a friend the week prior to her death that she had finally decided to file for divorce and move to Pennsylvania in late July. She told the friend she would rather be alone than deal with Greg's temper any longer.

PORTAGE

Donald Brewer, 45, Almond - May 5th, 2018

31-year-old Steven Breneman's estranged wife was having an affair with Donald Brewer, which her husband had known about for months. When he initially found out about the affair, and periodically afterwards, Breneman told his wife he wanted to kill Brewer. Two days before this incident at a couple's counseling session, Breneman tried to convince his wife to reconcile, and she told him that she wanted to stay separated. He again told her that if she left him, he was going to kill Brewer. She told police she shared this with Brewer, who told her he was not afraid of Breneman.

At 6:00 pm on the day of the homicide, Breneman's wife received a call from her husband at work, and he asked her to tell him if Brewer was at her apartment that day. According to the criminal complaint, about 20 minutes later she received another call from her husband who told her, "Don's gone, I'm next. I told you that I couldn't lose you and now you will be alone." She told police that Breneman had texted Brewer violent threats before but had never confronted him in person. Breneman's wife told authorities that her husband had been manipulative and controlling throughout their marriage. Breneman was charged with first-degree intentional homicide and a jury found him guilty. He was sentenced to life in prison with the possibility of parole after 25 years.

RACINE

Tremayne Brown, 40, Racine - March 18th, 2018

Tremayne Brown went over to his ex-girlfriend's house on March 18th, 2018, after she called him to say that he could come pick up some of his belongings. While there, Brown got into a physical altercation with 34-year-old Michael Lyons Jr., who had been staying with Brown's ex-girlfriend for the past few

RACINE

days. Brown's ex-girlfriend told police that Brown hit Lyons over the head with a beer bottle and then left, stating that he would be back. Lyons then called his cousin, 32-year-old Cedric Gray, to come over. Video footage from a nearby location shows Brown driving past Lyons and Gray, and one of the men firing a round at Brown's van as it passes. Lyons appeared to have walked off before the van returned to the area. Gray walked up to the window of the van and appeared to be talking to the driver before firing two shots into the vehicle. Brown was found deceased in his vehicle which had crashed into the yard of a nearby residence. Both Lyons and Gray were previously convicted of felonies and therefore neither were legally permitted to have a firearm. Lyons and Gray were charged with first-degree intentional homicide. The cases have not yet concluded.

ROCK

Robert Thomas Jr., 26, Janesville - August 21st, 2018

Robert Thomas Jr. was fatally stabbed in a parking lot outside an apartment complex by his girlfriend, Sarina Stone, 20. Stone told police that Thomas hit her during an argument before she stabbed him once in the chest. Stone then drove Thomas to a nearby hospital where he died. Later that day, Stone was arrested on a tentative charge of first-degree reckless homicide; however, the Rock County District Attorney ultimately decided to not move forward with the charge. An investigation into the homicide revealed numerous prior instances of violence in which Thomas was the aggressor against Stone.

WALWORTH

William Swift, 48, Darien - December 2nd, 2018

Steven Kohs, 34, broke into his estranged wife's friend's apartment and opened fire, killing William Swift, a friend of his wife's. Court records show that Rebecca Kohs, 39, filed for divorce on February 5th, 2018, but the case was dismissed the following month; however, according to Rebecca's friend, Rebecca had planned to re-file and had discussed that with Steven the night before this incident. On December 1st, 2018, Rebecca and her two kids went to the friend's apartment to watch Christmas movies, and after the kids fell asleep, William Swift came over. Steven called Rebecca, first saying there was something wrong with his dad, but then he asked why Swift was at the apartment. Rebecca then heard the front doorknob jiggle and Steven entered the apartment and announced he was going to kill everyone. Steven shot Swift eight times and Rebecca once in the head, but she survived. Responding officers found Steven dead from self-inflicted gunshot wounds laying near his van outside. Rebecca's friend said that Steven had threatened Rebecca before this incident and threatened to kill himself.

WAUKESHA

Dontrel Burnett, 24, Menomonee Falls - January 26th, 2018

On January 26, 2018, Dontrel Burnett was driving the ex-girlfriend of 23-year-old Demetrius Gordon to work, and Gordon was tracking the car. According to a second passenger in Burnett's car, at one point Burnett pulled over and Gordon pulled up behind him. Burnett exited the car and started walking towards Gordon's vehicle. The witness in Burnett's car told authorities he saw Gordon reach over with his right hand. Burnett then started running away from both cars, and Gordon started shooting. Burnett stopped and fell and was later pronounced dead at the scene. Gordon was charged with second-degree intentional homicide and sentenced to 20 years in prison and 10 years extended supervision.

James Bell, 46, Waukesha - April 6th, 2018

Tracy Bell, 45, shot her husband, James Bell, once in the chest in self-defense, killing him. Tracy told police that James had dragged her down the stairs by her feet, threw her to the ground, and threw a television remote at her face, resulting in a large cut on her forehead. When Tracy tried to flee the house, James grabbed her by her hair and slammed her against the door. Fearing for her life, Tracy grabbed her gun from her purse and pointed it at James. James reached for it and Tracy told police that she feared he would shoot her if he got a hold of the gun, so she fired it. After shooting James, Tracy called 911 and performed CPR, but he ultimately died.

Tracy was physically assaulted on multiple occasions in the past at the hands of her husband. According to statements that Tracy made to law enforcement after the homicide, during one incident, James pushed her down the stairs, resulting in fractured ribs. She also told authorities that on multiple occasions, she had to pull a gun on James to get him to stop assaulting her. Her statements about the abuse were corroborated by many others who knew the couple. Tracy was not charged in her husband's death due to the history of domestic violence and the immediate threat that James was posing to Tracy at the time she shot him.

Attempted homicide-suicide, Brookfield - August 20, 2018

In this attempted homicide-suicide, a 54-year-old man badly bludgeoned his wife with a dumbbell, then closed the garage door on his face causing injuries resulting in his death three days later. According to media coverage from the Journal Sentinel, the couple's 22-year-old daughter was home at the time and heard several thuds and the garage door close, and then heard her 52-year-old mother screaming, so she called 911. The mother was found bloodied with teeth missing. Responding officers found the husband lying on the ground in the garage with his head underneath the overhead garage door. According to online court documents, the couple filed for divorce in January but suspended proceedings in July to try and reconcile.

WAUKESHA

Madeline Kim, 27, Brookfield - November 18th, 2018

Sometime between November 15th and November 18th, 2018, Madeline Kim's estranged husband, 29-year-old Sunkeun Kim, strangled and physically assaulted her, causing her death. On November 18th, Madeline's roommate returned home to find the apartment door ajar and Madeline dead in her bedroom with red marks on her neck and dried blood around her lips. There was a known history of domestic abuse in the relationship, which seemed to be escalating in the months prior to the homicide. On September 24th, Sunkeun was charged with strangulation and suffocation, false imprisonment, battery and disorderly conduct, all for violence he committed against Madeline. As a condition of bond for these crimes, Sunkeun was to have no contact with Madeline and was required to wear a GPS tracking device. Sunkeun violated these conditions on October 10th when he made contact with Madeline at the UW-Milwaukee student union. Madeline filed for divorce on October 29th and told investigators Sunkeun had threatened to kill her, the dog and himself, and showed investigators pictures from late August when he physically assaulted her during an argument about finances.

Madeline's mother indicated Sunkeun moved a large sum of money out of the couple's joint bank account during the first week of November and noted that her daughter was scared of Sunkeun and afraid he would kill her. Sunkeun was charged with first-degree intentional homicide. The case has not concluded.

WINNEBAGO

Ashley Mielke, 27, Clayton - May 1st, 2018

On May 1st, 2018, two bodies, later identified as Ashley Mielke and Jeremy Wallenfang, 36, were found in Wallenfang's house, which had been destroyed by a fire. An investigation led authorities to believe that Wallenfang fatally shot Mielke and set the house on fire before shooting himself. The two were in a romantic relationship and according to witness statements, Wallenfang had threatened to kill Mielke and burn the house down in the months leading up to the incident. He had a lengthy criminal history including both drug charges and violent offenses.

WOOD

Christopher Race, 39, Wisconsin Rapids - March 24th, 2018

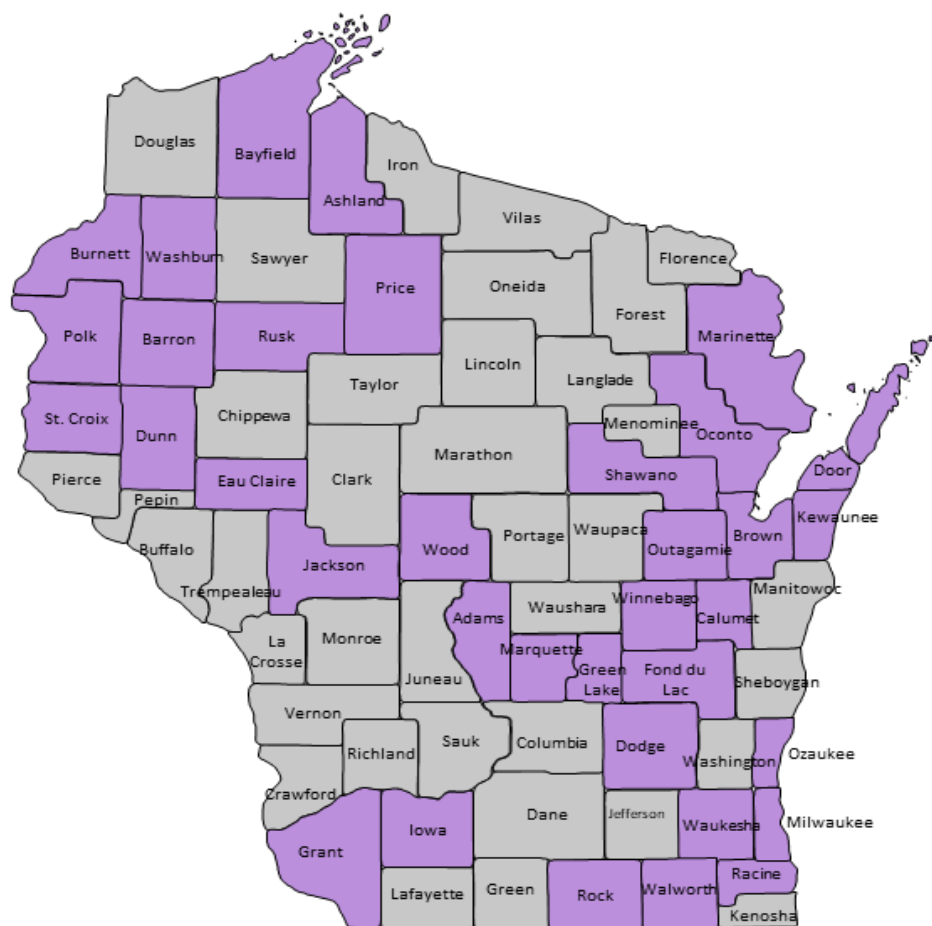
Christopher Race was working in a bakery with his two children present when Gary Bohman, 59, came in and appeared to order something from the bakery case. Then Bohman, the ex-husband of Race's wife, raised a pistol, fired one shot at Race, and watched him fall to the ground. Bohman was charged with first-degree intentional homicide and sentenced to life in prison. When asked about a motive, Bohman said that he wanted his ex-wife's family to hurt the way he was hurt when he lost his family, presumably referring to his ex-wife and his children's relationship with Race.

Homicide Prevention Program Update

Since July 2017, End Domestic Abuse Wisconsin has received support from the Wisconsin Department of Justice to fund our Homicide Prevention Program. In the two years since we have had this funding, at least one law enforcement agency in 23 counties (55 agencies total) and 18 domestic violence programs around the state have participated in Lethality Assessment Program (LAP) training. Prior to receiving funding for this project, only 11 counties in Wisconsin had some level of participation in the LAP. Notably, we conducted six LAP train-the-trainer sessions in year two of this grant.

Other major accomplishments in our second year of this project included:

- Developing a LAP database (allowing us to track and analyze data from LAP-implementing communities and provide more targeted technical assistance),
- Revisions to the first edition and re-release of the [*Domestic Violence Homicide Response Plan: A Toolkit for Domestic Violence Programs*](#), and
- Producing a number of LAP implementation tools and resources in response to demand from the field, including a LAP training and informational video for Wisconsin.



Wisconsin Counties with at least one law enforcement agency trained in the Lethality Assessment Program (LAP) - Maryland Model are shaded in purple.

In our third year of this demonstration project, we intend to continue expanding and supporting the network of LAP implementers, while also further advancing the use of domestic violence high-risk teams in Wisconsin, which is the only other nationally recognized evidence-based domestic violence homicide prevention strategy in the United States aside from the LAP. There are templates of successful high-risk teams in Wisconsin, and we hope to facilitate the use of peer learning and mentorship from existing high-risk teams with developing teams.

High-risk teams complement what is currently being done in communities that are implementing LAP, as law enforcement and advocates already have a process for identifying the cases they encounter that have the greatest potential to result in a homicide. Essentially, high-risk teams create a wrap-around response to the most dangerous cases as they move through the criminal justice system to ensure victim safety and perpetrator accountability. The use of both approaches in tandem maximizes the impact communities will see as a result of their efforts and the impact homicide prevention efforts will have in Wisconsin over the long term.

Preventing Domestic Violence Homicides: Measuring the Lethality Assessment Program's Impact and Effectiveness

Contributed by Adrienne Roach, End Abuse's former Policy and Research Program Director

Most programming is intended to produce an outcome. In the area of domestic abuse services, successful program outcomes mean that DV survivors are safe and healing, or on the path to healing from traumatic experiences. The Lethality Assessment Program (LAP), like other programming, also aims for successful outcomes. The LAP aims to quickly direct victims at a high-risk of lethality to safety.

The LAP screen is an evidence-based tool used by law enforcement to assess the lethality risk of a victim's situation on the scene of an incident. Accompanied by a strong and supportive relationship with the local domestic abuse program, law enforcement can provide resources and information to victims to raise their awareness and get them access to quality services quickly. Without this evidence-based method, victims may be unaware of the severity of their situation and/or the availability or accessibility of domestic abuse services in their communities. Most critically, the goal of the LAP is to prevent domestic violence homicide.

Over 125 communities across Wisconsin have been trained in the LAP in the hopes of meeting this important goal. As communities across Wisconsin implement this program, how can we ensure its effectiveness? How can we provide support to implementing communities, and, ultimately, how can we gauge the impact and effectiveness of this program over time?

At End Abuse, our answer to these questions is the Lethality Assessment Program Data Hub (www.wilap.org). Each month, implementing LAP communities enter data into the database. Then, End Abuse's Homicide Prevention Team reviews this data to evaluate trends and analyze where elements of the program may be lacking. This allows the team to provide higher-quality technical assistance to improve the LAP process and ensure its integrity. The team also conducts a broader analysis, cross-tabulating LAP data with other sources such as End Abuse's DV homicide data and the Wisconsin Department of Justice's DV Incident data. This broader analysis helps the team direct their outreach efforts to communities that could benefit from LAP implementation. Although it will take several years to collect enough information to evaluate the LAP's effectiveness fully, the work being done by law enforcement and DV programs every month will go a long way to building reliable time-series data. The LAP Data Hub is already telling interesting stories about the LAP's impact on Wisconsin communities.

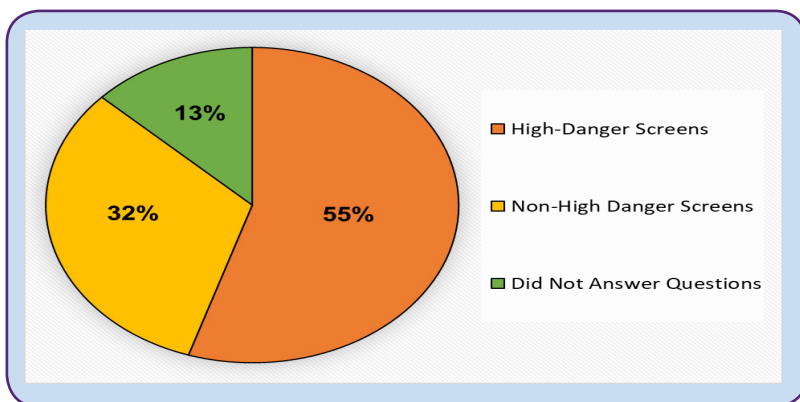


Figure 1. LAP Screens (January-June 2019)

n=1355 total LAP screens (746 High-Danger Screens (55%), 439 Non-High Danger Screens (32%), and 170 screens with no answers (13%))

End Abuse, in collaboration with LAP implementing communities, began collecting data in January of 2019. In the first six months, we found that more than half of all screens were high danger or were high risk of DV homicide (55%). This is a frightening statistic. Having the knowledge of these high-risk incidents is powerful in and of itself. However, LAP data gives us more than just knowledge about the lethality risk of DV cases in Wisconsin; it tells us how many of the victims in these cases are connecting with a DV hotline and/or DV services.

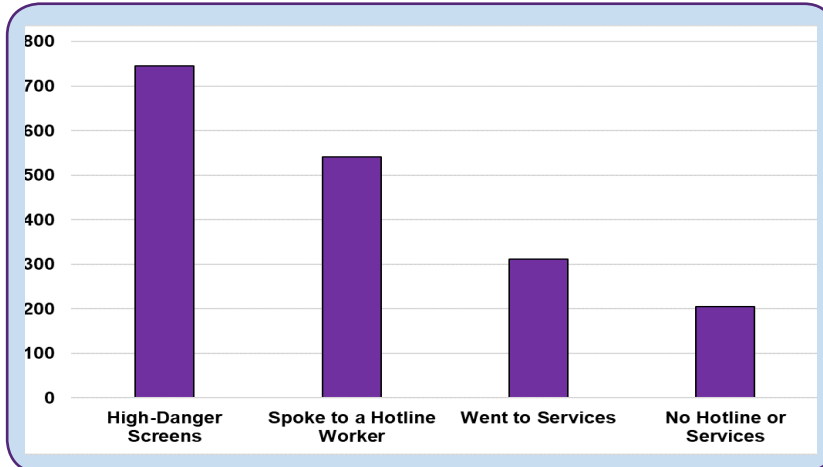


Figure 2. High-Danger Screen Victims Connecting with Services (January-June 2019)

n=746 High-Danger LAP Screens (541 spoke with a hotline worker, 312 went to services, and 205 did not connect with a hotline worker or go to services)

From this data, we know that 73% of victims who law enforcement identified as High-Danger on the LAP screen spoke with a DV hotline worker immediately after the incident. For those who are not familiar with the details of the LAP screen, one way the High-Danger LAP protocol is triggered is if a victim answers “yes” to any of the following questions:

Has (the abuser) ever used a weapon against you or threatened you with a weapon?

Has (the abuser) threatened to kill you or the children?

Do you think (the abuser) might try to kill you?

Clearly, these cases are severe and at high-risk of DV homicide. Connecting these victims to safety and services as soon as possible is imperative. Thankfully, the LAP data also tells us that more than half of all victims who spoke to a hotline worker (58%) went on to access services from the local DV program. It is difficult to measure how many victims would have sought services without the LAP protocol; this is something we hope to measure in time. However, we do know that the LAP facilitated access to services for over 300 victims at high risk of DV lethality over the first six months of 2019. That is an incredible statistic and speaks volumes for the LAP’s early impact in Wisconsin. That said, over 200 High-Danger Screen victims over that same six-month period did not speak to a hotline worker or seek DV services. Although a 100% success rate is neither expected nor possible, we hope to improve the LAP to connect more victims to vital DV services in the future.

Across communities, service providers, and systems, we must work together to connect victims to safety and healing services, and, ultimately, to prevent DV homicide. The LAP is an important tool for making those connections. For this reason, evaluating its impact and effectiveness over time will be critical to saving lives throughout Wisconsin.

Pursuing Legislation for Fatality Review

Adapted from Fatality Review Legislative Proposal written by End Domestic Abuse Wisconsin's former Public Policy Coordinator, Chase Tarrier

One way to prevent future domestic violence homicides is to establish robust homicide review procedures so that local law enforcement agencies, court systems, domestic violence advocacy organizations, and other stakeholders can collaborate to determine currently existing systemic barriers that preclude victims of abuse from getting assistance before it is too late. This lack of collaboration, particularly in the wake of domestic violence homicides, often pits court systems, local law enforcement, and advocacy organizations against one another when attempting to establish the cause of the homicide. Rather than evaluate system structures and community tools for homicide prevention, local stakeholders are forced to defend their practices to avoid blame for a tragic and traumatizing event.

When local stakeholders fail to meaningfully address the underlying barriers that lead to a domestic violence homicide, surviving family members, friends, and others affiliated with the case are often caught in the ensuing crossfire. This means that, for many families across Wisconsin who experience a domestic violence-related death, the grief and trauma of their situation is compounded by a lack of explanation for what occurred, long delays in establishing accountability, years-long court procedures that are not trauma-informed, and a lack of justice for the victim and surviving family members. Thirty-two states around the country (and Washington, D.C.) have enacted state legislation to establish homicide review teams and procedures for deaths that occur in the context of domestic abuse. In 2019, End Abuse began urging the Wisconsin legislature to adopt similar legislation to establish parameters and guidelines for communities to undertake systematic homicide reviews.

*Excerpted Language from End Domestic Abuse Wisconsin's Fatality Review Legislative Proposal**

Domestic fatality review teams: purpose. (1) A domestic violence fatality review team may be established at a local or regional level in order to review fatal and near-fatal incidents of domestic abuse as defined in 813.12(1)(am), related domestic abuse matters, and suicides. The review may include a review of events leading up to the domestic violence incident, available community resources, current laws and policies, actions taken by systems and individuals related to the incident and the parties, and any information or action deemed relevant by the team, including a review of public records and records for which public records exemptions are granted. The purpose of the teams is to learn how to prevent domestic violence by intervening early and improving the response of an individual and the system to domestic violence. The structure and activities of a team shall be determined at the local level.

Actions of the Review Team. (2)(a) A local domestic violence fatality review team may do any of the following: (1) Assist a local agency in identifying and reviewing a homicide or suicide that results from domestic violence. (2) Develop recommendations for coordinated community prevention and intervention strategies to prevent future homicides or suicides resulting from domestic violence. (3) Collect data related to a death resulting from domestic violence.

*Adapted from other states' statutes

Spectrum of Prevention

Contributed by Cody Warner, LGBTQ and Youth Program Director, and Stephanie Ortiz, Director of Prevention and Outreach

Preventing domestic violence requires a multifaceted approach. End Domestic Abuse Wisconsin has been leading primary prevention efforts related to domestic violence in our state since 2002. In this edition of the *Wisconsin Domestic Violence Homicide Report*, we would like to highlight the spectrum of prevention work End Abuse engages in – from primary prevention to homicide prevention – and how they intersect and complement each other. Preventing violence before it takes root is also homicide prevention, as it interrupts the conditions that contribute to unhealthy views about oneself and relationships. If these conditions are not interrupted, they become reinforced and internalized and, therefore, harder to unlearn.

We are inspired by the [Prevention Institute](#) to define prevention as “a systematic process that promotes healthy environments and behaviors and reduces the likelihood or frequency” of gender-based violence from occurring. To do this, we focus on rethinking and reframing our anti-domestic violence work to address root causes, shift culture, build leadership, and promote healthy relationships.

As illustrated in the graphic below, End Abuse’s homicide prevention work, like expanding use of the Lethality Assessment Program (LAP), is considered secondary prevention as it is one way to respond after a violent incident has already occurred to prevent future harm and, ultimately, domestic violence-related homicides. The Statewide Domestic Violence Prevention Initiative (Prevention Initiative) is considered primary prevention because it supports youth programs in learning about healthy relationships long before any harm has occurred. The Prevention Initiative also works to improve the conditions that give rise to hierarchical structures of domination, extraction, and violence. While we strive for primary prevention, secondary and tertiary prevention are important as well for supporting victims and survivors as they begin their healing journey. Secondary and tertiary responses are also of benefit for perpetrators of violence to help prevent recidivism. Often, perpetrators of violence have their own past trauma to unpack and process before being able to fully understand and integrate a healthier way of being in relationships with others.

Primary	Secondary	Tertiary
• Interventions that take place before intimate partner violence or sexual violence has occurred. • To prevent initial perpetration or victimization.	• Immediate responses after the intimate partner violence or sexual violence has occurred. • Deals with the short-term consequences of the experienced type(s) of violence.	• Long-term response after intimate partner violence or sexual violence has occurred. • Deals with the lasting consequences of violence. • Includes prevention of recidivism.
Example: A multiple-session program with 8 th graders focusing on bystander intervention and exploring healthy relationships.	Example: The immediate response to a victim on a hotline call, helping them leave a violent situation and determine safety plans and next steps.	Example: The ongoing support that may be provided to a victim of sexual or intimate partner violence by participating in a group or individual therapy sessions.

End Domestic Abuse Wisconsin's Prevention Initiative

In 2016, End Abuse was chosen to manage the \$1 million per year Statewide Domestic Violence Prevention Initiative. This initiative is issued by the Wisconsin Department of Children and Families (DCF), Division of Safety and Permanence, Bureau of Safety and Well-Being. The three main components of this initiative are illustrated in Figure 2 below.

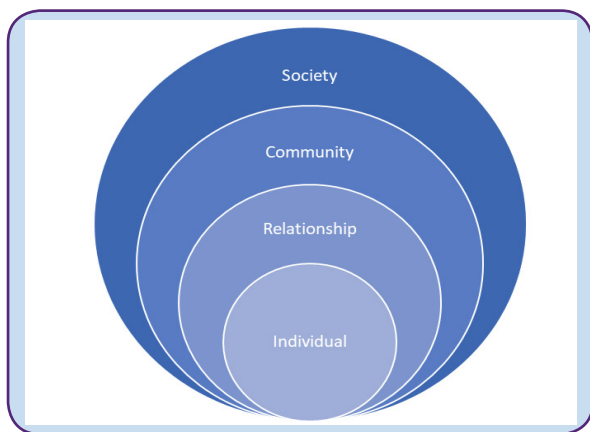


Figure 1.



Figure 2.

The socio-ecological model (Figure 1, above) can help explain the rationale behind our primary prevention work's three major facets. The model acknowledges that violence is reinforced by factors at multiple levels, and that effectively preventing violence requires focusing efforts at all four levels, ideally simultaneously. Each of the three major tenets of our prevention work address the prevention of violence at multiple levels.

Dare2Know (D2K) Campaign



Our D2K campaign gives young people tools to lead the change we need, and it works to prevent violent cycles before they begin. By emphasizing the power of youth when they value their own voices, persuade their peers that everyone deserves dignity, and connect with their community to foster healthy relationships, D2K aims to normalize healthy relationships and build a better future.

D2K Youth Outreach Specialists

End Domestic Abuse Wisconsin was fortunate over the past year to have some talented youth join our staff to support the D2K initiative and overall coordination of the campaign.

- **Simone Lewis-Turner** lives in the Milwaukee area and believes in a world where we can learn from each other and grow closer together!
- **Kwnwahta Smith** lives in the Oneida/Green Bay area and believes in a world where privilege is acknowledged, the roots of oppression are addressed, and the cycle of violence ends!
- **Cia Siab Vang** lives in the Stevens Point area and believes in a world where people aren't criminalized for trying to survive!

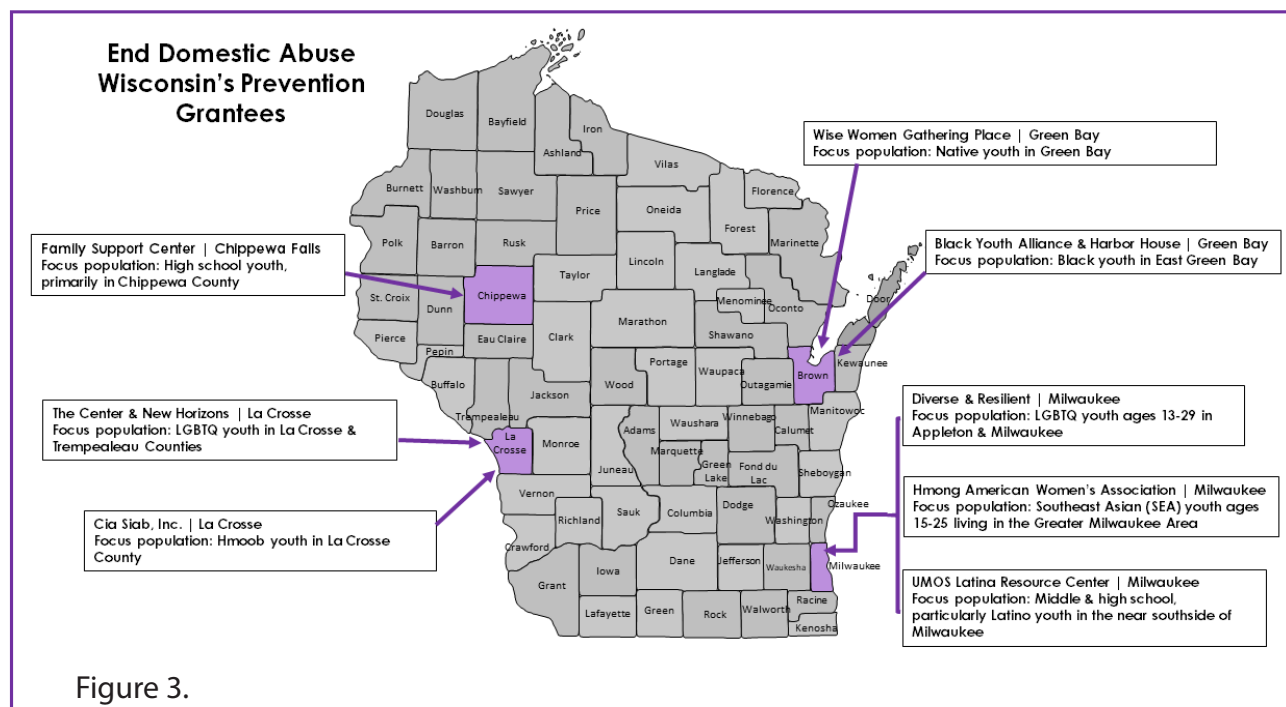


Dare2Know Youth Outreach Specialists

Pictured left to right: Simone Lewis-Turner, Kwnwahta Smith, and Cia Siab Vang

Prevention Grant Program

One component of our prevention program involves providing intensive technical assistance and support to eight grantee organizations around the state. Figure 3 below indicates where these prevention grantees are located. These programs have designed their own unique outcomes and evaluation methods for their work. Some examples of what these projects are striving for with young people include increasing knowledge of gender violence and healthy relationships, and enhancing leadership skills and the ability to solve problems non-violently. Many projects also have a component of exploring the dynamics of gender-based violence through the lens of their specific cultural community.



Annual Teen Summit & Teen Council



TEEN SUMMIT

The annual Teen Summit is End Domestic Abuse Wisconsin's largest training. It brings youth, parents, educators, activists, and mentors from all over Wisconsin to learn about healthy relationships, teen dating violence, and sexual assault within a larger anti-oppression framework. It is a celebration of our many successes, as well as a time to revive and strengthen ourselves and our movement. We welcome attendees to challenge preconceived notions and learn new strategies for successful prevention and education on teen issues.



Photo Collage of 2019 Teen Summit (Left top: Keynote Lah Tere, Left middle: Teen participants engaging in an evening water pong tournament, Left bottom: Teen participants at the evening dance party; Middle: Teen Keynote Ajani Carr, Right top: Keynote Rosa Clemente, Right middle: Teen Summit participants in one of the workshops, Right bottom: Teen Summit participants collaborating in affinity groups that reflect their identities)



Photo of End Abuse's statewide Teen Council with Teen Summit's First Ever Teen Keynote, Ajani Carr

Our Teen Council focuses on developing teen leaders. The group advises End Abuse on programming and public awareness including social media and toolkit development and provides critical input for the Teen Summit. End Abuse staff facilitate leadership activities with the Teen Council that promote personal agency and explore the root causes of violence.

For more information on End Domestic Abuse Wisconsin's Prevention Program and the initiatives described here, please visit www.endabusewi.org/our-work/prevention

Human Trafficking-Related Homicide: The Chrystul Kizer Case

On June 5th, 2018, 17-year-old Chrystul Kizer shot and killed 34-year-old Randall Volar III in Kenosha and started his house on fire before stealing his car and fleeing. At the time of his death, Volar had been under investigation for producing child pornography and sexual abuse, with Kizer being one of the girls involved. Kenosha Police had evidence that Volar was producing child pornography and transporting girls from Milwaukee to Kenosha for the purposes of sexual abuse. When questioned about the homicide of Volar, Kizer eventually admitted to police that Volar “helped her with money and places to stay,” and that the day of the homicide, she got upset and was tired of Volar touching her, which prompted her to shoot him. Kizer’s boyfriend told police that he had purchased the firearm for Kizer to protect herself from Volar.

On April 3rd, 2019, End Domestic Abuse Wisconsin made a public statement showing our support of Chrystul, as did many other social and racial justice organizations across the state and nation.

End Domestic Abuse Wisconsin is in solidarity with Chrystul Kizer, the #FreeChrystul Defense Committee, and all those throughout Milwaukee, Kenosha, Wisconsin, and the nation who are calling on the district attorney to drop his charges against Chrystul. Chrystul is a survivor of sex trafficking, who is now facing a life sentence for that survival. As advocates for survivors of gender-based violence, we are compelled to raise our voices against this and all instances of criminalizing Girls and Women of Color for their courageous perseverance.

The failure to protect Girls of Color is stark and shameful. African-American children are arrested for prostitution more often than all other racial groups combined. Their involvement with the criminal justice system because of their victimization further compounds their trauma and barriers to healthy lives. For Girls of Color, the astonishingly high rates of sexual abuse feeds what some have called “The Sexual Abuse to Prison Pipeline.” Girls of Color make up approximately two-thirds of all girls who are incarcerated. The disparities continue into adulthood. African-American women represent 30 percent of all incarcerated women in this country, but they make up only 13 percent of all women in the U.S.

The state is trying to turn Chrystul into another statistic, and we need to speak up to prevent this injustice. Chrystul was a victim of child abuse and child sex trafficking. A minor child cannot be guilty of “prostitution.” Any humane system would be working to give her the resources and support to heal. But like for so many other Girls of Color, racism and state violence are intertwining to cast Chrystul off to a life behind bars. We must not allow this to occur.

Our understanding of the parallels between human trafficking and domestic violence have become more sophisticated in the past several years. Most of us working in the domestic violence field are keyed into the fact that, like domestic violence perpetrators, traffickers also assert their power and control over victims in similar ways and prey on their victims’ vulnerabilities. Kizer continues to face five felony charges in Kenosha County related to the death of Volar including first-degree intentional homicide. We’re hopeful that the clemency recently granted to Cyntoia Brown in Tennessee sets a precedent for how cases involving minor victims of sex trafficking should be handled in the criminal justice system.

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. The report year is followed by the page number in parentheses. Each year's report is available at <http://www.endabusewi.org/homicide-reports>.

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

Bystander risk, 2002 (8), 2003 (10), 2004 (6), 2005 (11)

Child custody, connection to, 2001 (7), 2006/7 (23), 2009 (25), 2017 (37)

Children, impact on, 2003 (10), 2005 (10), 2006/7 (22), 2008 (18), 2009 (22), 2010 (27), 2011/12 (39), 2014 (28), 2016 (36)

Cold cases, 2017 (41)

Coordinated community response, 2010 (7), 2013 (30)

Dane County, a closer look, 2009 (21)

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

Family members, surviving, 2013 (32, 34), 2017 (28)

Fatality review, 2016 (39)

Gender differences, 2008 (21), 2006/7 (28), 2009 (30), 2011/12 (45), 2015 (30)

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), 2014 (30)

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)

Homicide prevention, 2011/2012 (33), 2013 (26), 2017 (35)

Immigrant survivors, 2016 (34)

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

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

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

Legislative process, connection to, 2017 (39)

Lethality Assessment Program, 2014 (37), 2015 (29), 2016 (29)

Lethality risk factors, 2014 (27)

LGBTQ communities, impact on, 2010 (30), 2011/12 (44), 2013 (43), 2015 (32)

Law enforcement, homicides by, 2010 (35)

Media coverage, 2001 (8), 2002 (9), 2003 (10), 2004 (10)

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), 2016 (38)

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

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

Prevention, 2010 (7)

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), 2014 (34)

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

Suicide, 2003 (9), 2005 (9), 2014 (35), 2016 (33)

Stalking, 2001 (6), 2002 (8), 2003 (8), 2005 (13), 2006/7 (27), 2008 (21), 2009 (27), 2010 (33), 2011/12 (34), 2014 (36)

Strangulation, 2005 (13), 2006/7 (29), 2008 (22), 2009 (29), 2010 (34), 2014 (32)

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)

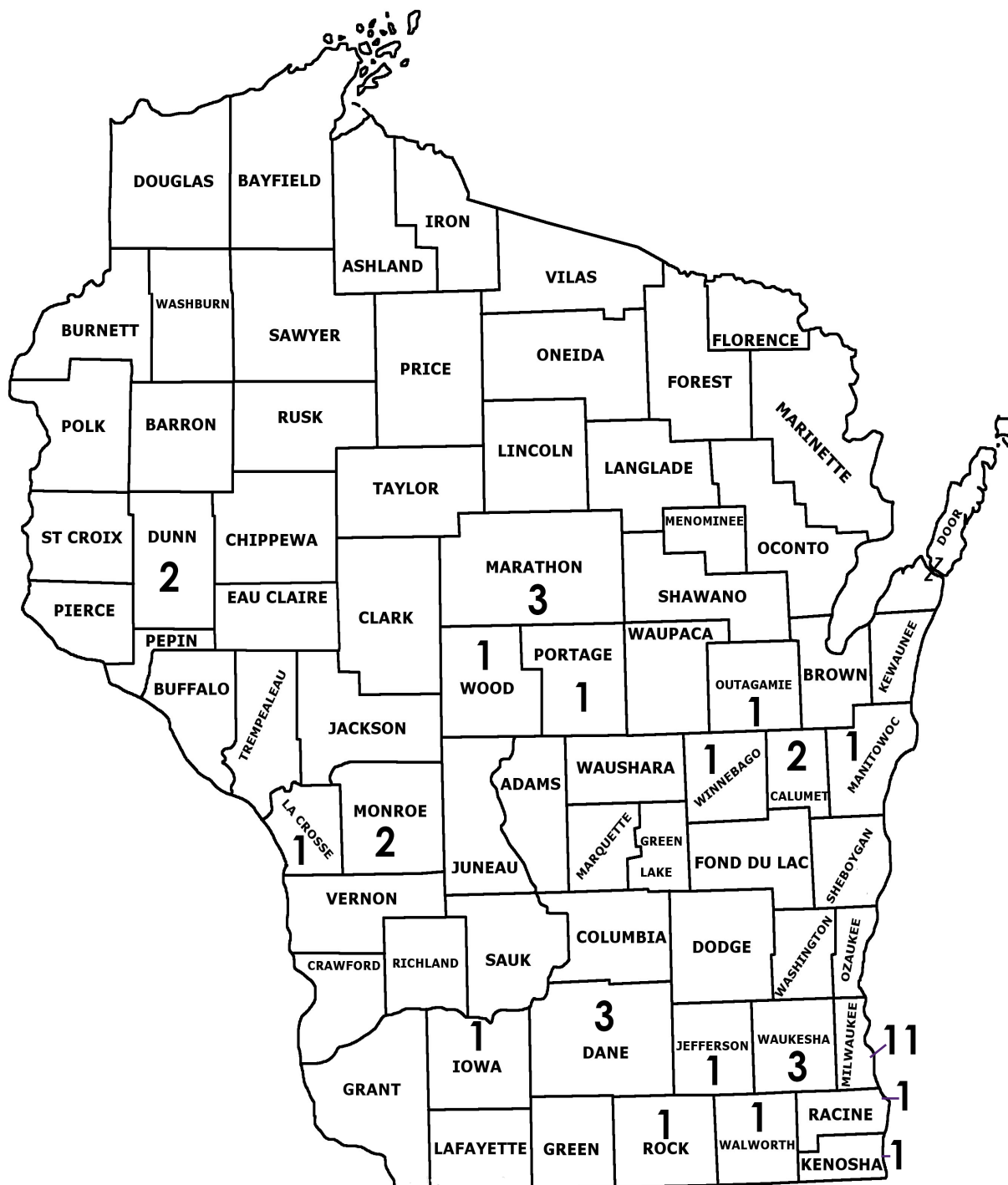
2000 to 2018 Totals

Year	Total Homicide Deaths	Homicides, Pre-2010 Definition*	Perpetrator Suicides	Total
2018	39	37	8	47
2017	48	44	14	62
2016	59	54	14	73
2015	49	43	9	58
2014	37	33	6	43
2013	43	41	12	55
2012	48	47	4	52
2011	34	29	3	37
2010	45	37	7	52
2009	52	52	15	67
2008	37	37	10	47
2007	41	41	10	51
2006	28	28	8	36
2005	40	40	6	46
2004	28	28	5	33
2003	45	45	16	61
2002	38	38	11	49
2001	33	33	9	42
2000	33	33	8	41
Totals	777	740	175	952

*see Methodology on page 13

2018 DV Homicide Map

Domestic violence homicide victims by county.



About End Domestic Abuse Wisconsin

For advocates, survivors, and allies, End Domestic Abuse Wisconsin is the only statewide coalition led by social policy advocates, attorneys, and experts working to support, connect, equip, empower, and lead organizations for social change to end domestic abuse, because everyone deserves dignity and safety.

Acknowledgements

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Finally, we want to acknowledge each and every individual life taken by domestic violence and their surviving families and communities.

www.endabusewi.org

End Domestic Abuse Wisconsin is non-profit organization that depends on grants and donations to create publications such as this. All donations are tax deductible. For more information or to make a donation please visit our website.