

# Honoring Texas Victims

FAMILY VIOLENCE FATALITIES IN 2015



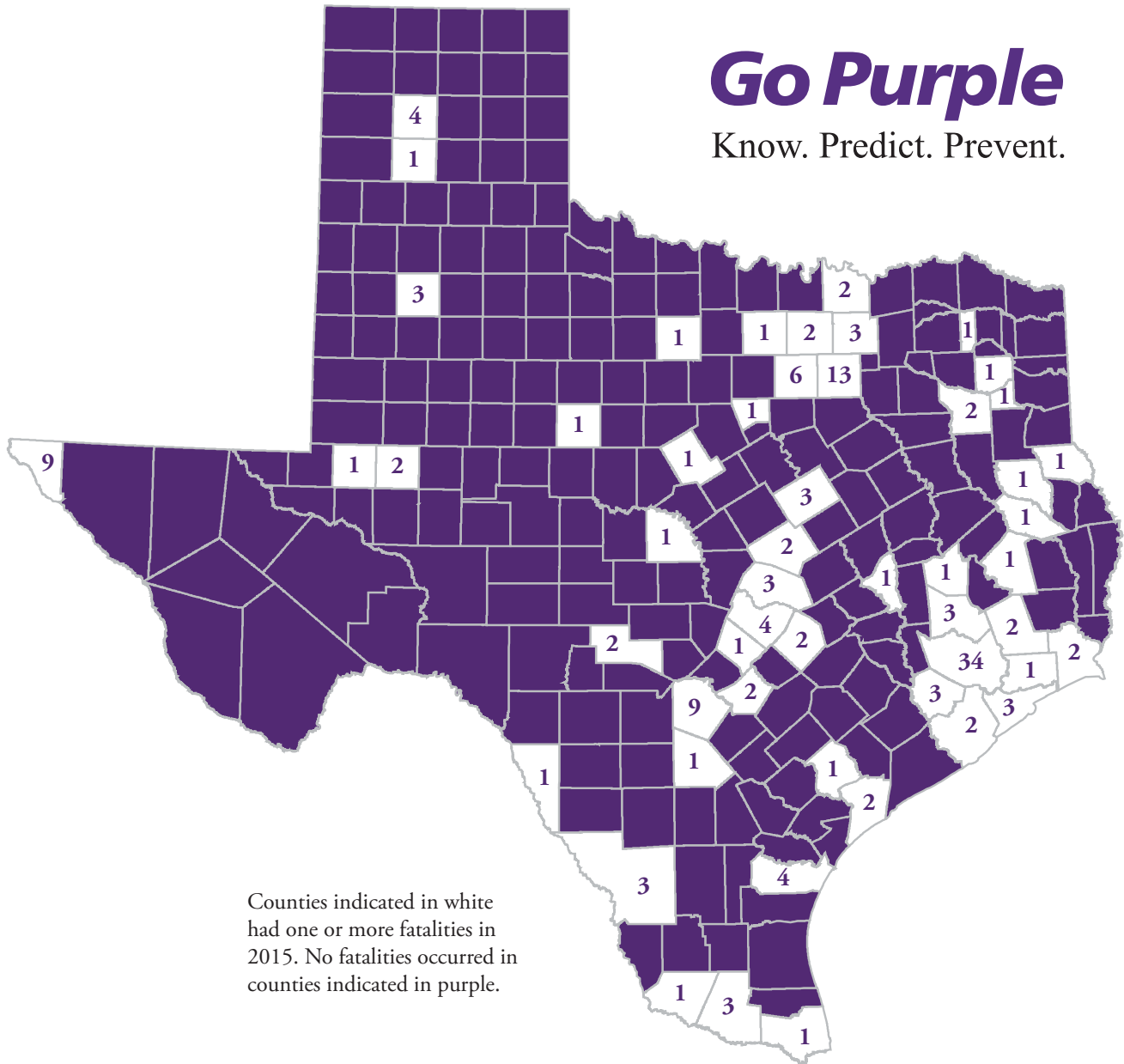
Texas Council On  
FAMILY VIOLENCE



# 158 Women Killed in 2015

# Go Purple

Know. Predict. Prevent.



Counties indicated in white had one or more fatalities in 2015. No fatalities occurred in counties indicated in purple.

# Go Purple

For over 25 years since TCFV began tracking the number of women killed by their male intimate partner in Texas, we have observed more than 100 women killed annually.<sup>1</sup> In 2015, perpetrators killed 158 women in 53 counties across the state.

**How do we prevent these tragedies?** TCFV posits a three-fold strategy for solutions:

**Know:** This reports helps our state come to know individual stories and statewide information of intimate partner homicides.

**Predict:** Equipped with knowledge, TCFV informs the policies and practices that enhances our first responders' and others' abilities to predict when violence may escalate.

**Prevent:** Communities can work together to intervene in potentially lethal cases and form a true commitment to addressing the core societal norms and realities that allow violence to occur.

**Know. Predict. Prevent.** The map on the left and those TCFV has produced for the last several years supports this idea. It marks the current reality of the number of women killed, allows for comparison over time, and offers a vision for a Texas in which all counties report zero fatalities and thereby **GO PURPLE**.

Want to participate in helping Texas Go Purple? We know preventing domestic violence fatalities requires a strong commitment to offering victims safe alternatives including access to family violence centers. Join TCFV's advocacy efforts for full funding for these life-saving centers by submitting a **Purple Postcard** at [TCFV.org/PurplePostcard](http://TCFV.org/PurplePostcard). Come together with thousands of Texans in calling on legislators to support survivors and service providers in our state.

## About Texas Council on Family Violence

**Texas Council on Family Violence** (TCFV) is the only statewide nonprofit in Texas dedicated solely to creating safer communities and freedom from family violence. With the collective strength of more than 1,000 members, TCFV shapes public policy, equips service providers, and initiates strategic prevention efforts with state-wide reach and direct local impact.

Since 1978, TCFV has been regarded as the statewide expert, think tank and training entity for domestic violence programs and intersecting systems, including civil and criminal justice, child support and welfare, economic and workforce organizations, healthcare and the general public. In 2015, TCFV conducted 32 statewide training events, 40 regional trainings and 104 individualized consultations and customized trainings.

**Mission:** Texas Council on Family Violence promotes safe and healthy relationships by supporting service providers, facilitating strategic prevention efforts, and creating opportunities for freedom from domestic violence.



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<sup>1</sup> Available at <http://tcfv.org/resource-center/honoring-texas-victims/>.

## *Honoring Texas Victims Report Methodology*

Each year, TCFV publishes Honoring Texas Victims: Family Violence Fatalities revealing the stories of women killed by their intimate partners in Texas and offering data analysis on the nature of the femicides as they occurred in the previous year. In order to identify all female victims of intimate violence homicides in 2015, TCFV monitored media reports in all 254 Texas counties and reviewed law enforcement and County and District Attorneys' communication releases. In addition, TCFV researched each femicide case with local community partners. TCFV requested police reports from 33 law enforcement agencies and directly contacted 82 law enforcement departments including sheriff's offices and homicide, special crimes, and domestic violence units. To collect any missing information TCFV contacted law enforcement and victim counselors to request police reports via the Public Information Act for the domestic violence murder-suicide cases and cases where authorities charged offenders. TCFV contacted prosecutors and victim assistance coordinators to obtain more information for cases in which prosecution occurred. TCFV further contacted family violence programs and reviewed obituaries and social media. As a final review point, TCFV closely examined the Unified Crime Report (UCR) data from the Texas Department of Public Safety. The UCR validated our research and identified an additional 15 female victims reported by specific precincts. TCFV verified the data for the narratives and analysis with the information from official public records and direct communication with local partners. All of these contacts and the breadth of information gathered enriched the detail and depth of our knowledge.



Throughout this Honoring Texas Victims Report we have included quotations from some of the women's stories as a way to honor their legacy.

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*“Active member of the community.  
Committed her life to showing kindness to those around her.”*

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# The Tragic Reality of Domestic Violence in Texas

Each year, TCFV presents the stories of women killed by their male intimate partners with care and consideration towards both the women killed and their families. In addition, we derive lessons learned from an extensive review of the demographic information and additional pieces of data. The report continues to offer a deeper dive into the following areas: the ages of victims and offenders, the relationship between the victims and the offenders, the location of the murder, the method used to commit the crime, the frequency of fatalities for each month, counties with fatalities, offenders' involvement within the criminal justice system, murder-suicide and familicide, children and adult witnesses and other related homicides.

Key data points regarding intimate partner homicides in Texas in 2015:

- 158 women killed by their intimate partners represents a 20% increase in intimate partner homicides in just one year and the highest increase on record.
- A man killed his current or former female intimate partner every 2.3 days in Texas.
- Fatalities occurred in 53 counties across the state; 35 counties experienced an increase in the number of fatalities from 2014.
- The county with the highest number of deaths was Harris (34), followed by Dallas (13) Bexar (9), El Paso (9), and Tarrant (6).
- Victims' ages ranged from 16 to 93; fifteen victims were 70 or older, a 250% increase in elderly victims from 2014.
- 61% of perpetrators used a firearm.
- 78% of perpetrators killed their partners in a home.

These data points illustrate that we know a great deal about intimate partner femicides in Texas. We use these pieces to further employ statewide and community-based approaches to begin to predict lethality and ultimately working to prevent violence.

**Know. Predict. Prevent.**

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*“Lovable, caring and full of life.  
She was the glue who kept her family together.”*

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# Texas Family Violence in 2015

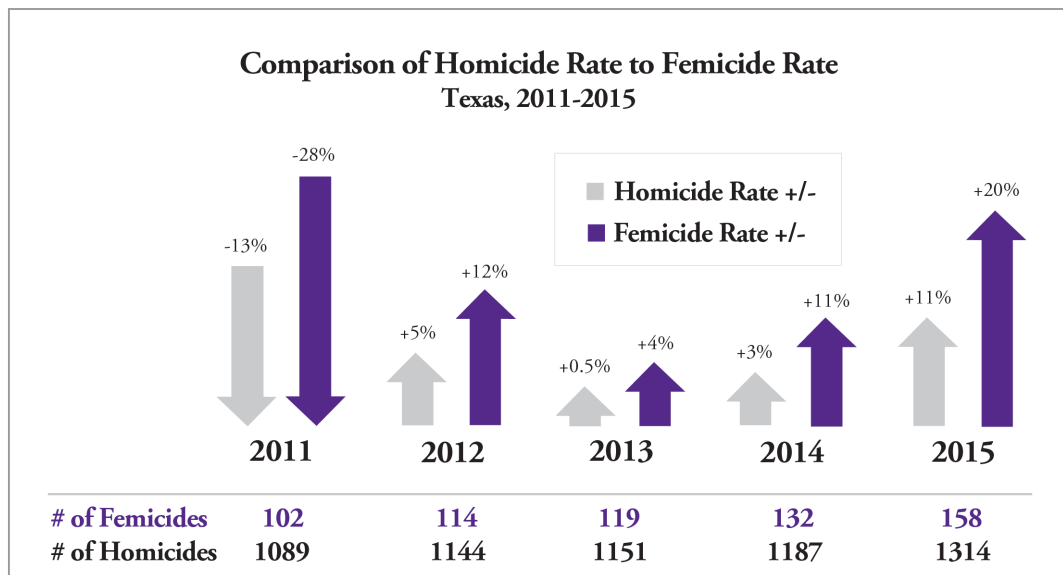
Clearly and unfortunately, family violence in Texas continues to rise across a variety of markers, from law enforcement response to shelter services to the number of women killed. In 2015, law enforcement responded to more than 500 family violence incidents per day.<sup>1</sup> The total number of reported family violence incidents in Texas last year was 194,872, representing a 4.9% increase from 2014. These incidents involved 211,301 victims and 205,154 offenders. The age group with the highest number of victims was 20 to 24 years.<sup>2</sup>

Along with the law enforcement response, consider that Texas family violence programs served 69,107 adults and children by providing shelter for 24,391 adults and children and nonresidential services to 45,478 adults and children in 2015. 15,869 requests for shelter went unmet due to lack of space, a 7.2% increase from 2014. Contacts to the National Domestic Violence Hotline from Texas residents increased by 28% from 13,298 in 2014 to 17,774 in 2015.<sup>3</sup>

In Texas in 2015, there were 1,314 total homicides, 12% of which were intimate partner femicides by male partners (158). Forty-nine percent of all female homicide victims in Texas were killed by a male intimate partner.<sup>4</sup>

For every femicide in the U.S., there are 8-9 attempted femicides.<sup>5</sup>

Nationwide women are most often killed by a family member or an intimate partner.<sup>6</sup> In fact, women experience a 16 times greater likelihood of murder by a male acquaintance than by a male stranger.<sup>7</sup> In Texas, women face considerably more likelihood of murder by an intimate partner as compared to men.



<sup>1</sup> Texas Department of Public Safety, The Texas Uniform Crime Reporting Program (2015), available at <https://www.txdps.state.tx.us/crimereports/15/citCh5.pdf> (last visited Oct. 10, 2016).

<sup>2</sup> *Id.*

<sup>3</sup> National Domestic Violence Hotline, Texas State Report (2014 and 2015), available at <http://tcfv.org/resource-center/learn-the-facts/> (last visited Oct. 10, 2016).

<sup>4</sup> Texas Department of Public Safety, The Texas Uniform Crime Reporting Program (2015), available at <https://www.txdps.state.tx.us/crimereports/15/citCh5.pdf> (last visited Oct. 10, 2016).

<sup>5</sup> Jacqueline Campbell, Intimate Partner Violence Risk & Lethality Assessment & Risk Management: A Collaborative Community System, Presented at Texas Council on Family Violence, Tools for Transformation BIPP Conference, April 2, 2016.

<sup>6</sup> Shannan Catalano, Erica Smith, Howard Snyder, and Michael Rand, Department of Justice, Bureau of Justice Statistics, Female Victims of Violence (2009), available at <http://www.bjs.gov/content/pub/pdf/fvv.pdf>

<sup>7</sup> Violence Policy Center, When Men Murder Women: An Analysis of 2010 Homicide Data: Females Murdered by Males in Single Victim/Single Offender Incidents (2012), available at <http://www.vpc.org/studies/wmmw2012.pdf>.

Comparing changes in the overall homicide rate with the intimate partner femicides illustrates that when violent crime increases in the state overall, lethal violence against women increases even more significantly, often increasing as much as two to three times the homicide rate. In the previous chart, note that in 2015, Texas experienced an 11% increase in all homicides compared to a 20% increase in homicides of women killed by their intimate partners. Contrastingly, in 2014, when homicides increased by 3%, homicides of women killed by their intimate partners increased 11%. Similar trends repeat in 2012-2013.

## Risk and Attaining Safety from Abusive Partners

### *Relationship Status*

In 2015, the most common relationship between perpetrator and victim was husband and wife (48%) followed by boyfriend and girlfriend (32%). Former boyfriend-girlfriend relationships comprised 17% of the represented relationships, consistent with 2014, and divorced couples represented 3%.

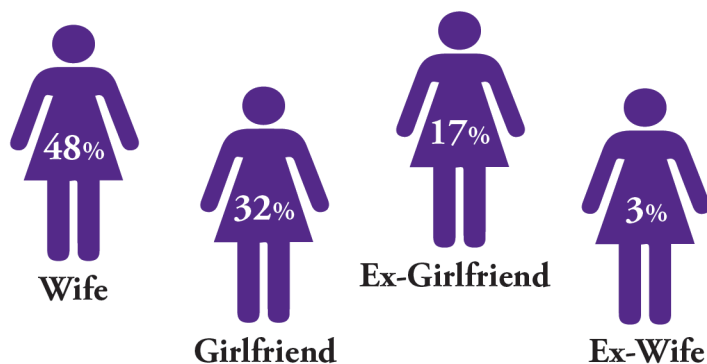
Women are in the most danger when they decide to leave.<sup>8</sup>

The majority of victims were still married or in a dating relationship with the men who killed them, and 37% of the women had ended or taken steps to end their relationships. This figure includes the 27 ex-girlfriends, five ex-wives, and 19 married women who were leaving or separated from their husbands and seven women who were in the process of leaving their boyfriends when killed.

In 2015, five women seeking divorce completed the process prior to their murders; this report lists these victims as 'ex-wives'. This follows similar patterns over the past ten years. On average, 'ex-wives' comprise 4.5% of victims each year.<sup>9</sup> A more thorough examination of why the number of divorced men who kill their partners is significantly lower than men in other stages of their relationship would help inform an understanding of what risk factors exist for women leaving relationships and the distinctive circumstances of fatalities when ex-husbands kill their former partners.

Compared to other women in abusive relationships, women who leave their abusive partners are 3.6 times more likely to be killed in the period of time immediately after their separation.<sup>10</sup> After three months and then again after one year from separation, the risk of lethal violence decreases.<sup>11</sup> All abusive relationships pose some level of risk and dangerousness whether the relationship has ended or not and despite the amount of time that has passed.<sup>12</sup>

### Relationship Status



<sup>8</sup> Jacqueline Campbell, Daniel Webster, Jane Koziol-McLain, et. al. Risk Factors for Femicide in Abusive Relationships: Results From a Multisite Case Control Study (2003), American Journal of Public Health, available at <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC1447915/> (last visited Oct. 10, 2016).

<sup>9</sup> Analysis of data collected in Honoring Texas Victims Report between 2006-2015.

<sup>10</sup> Jacqueline Campbell, Daniel Webster, Jane Koziol-McLain, et. al. Risk Factors for Femicide in Abusive Relationships: Results From a Multisite Case Control Study (2003), American Journal of Public Health, available at <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC1447915/> (last visited Oct. 10, 2016).

<sup>11</sup> *Id.*

<sup>12</sup> *Id.*

Although overall risk of femicide decreases as time from separation passes, previous *Honoring* reports documented cases of women killed by the ex-husbands after years of separation. Those working with survivors should always listen and respond to the survivor's own assessments of risk and safety concerns.

Simply leaving or ending the relationship does not automatically equate to safety.

Reports of intimate partner fatalities do not routinely indicate whether the victims sought services through domestic violence programs or pursued civil or criminal legal remedies to address safety concerns. Although TCFV does not have a complete picture of the number of victims who sought services before death, we have critical details on decisions the women made about their relationships and the escalating responses of their abusive partners. The *2015 Honoring Report* documents:

- Ten perpetrators killed their partners during the victims' early planning process to end the relationship.
- Three perpetrators killed their partners as the victims fled their homes to protect themselves.
- In 16 cases, law enforcement responded to domestic violence calls days and weeks before the fatalities. In some cases, calls were made the day of the murders.
- In at least 10 cases, the perpetrators had pending charges or investigations for previous assaults against the women they ultimately killed.
- Seven women had sought family violence services.
- Two perpetrators killed their partners immediately after the women refused to reunite with their abusive ex-partners.
- Eleven men killed their partners during custody exchanges and other post-separation contacts.

Victims may remain in contact with abusive partners either by choice or by necessity.<sup>13</sup>

Women have valid and logical reasons to maintain contact with their abusive ex-partners. Some survivors may have determined that contact with their abusive partner/ex-partner could enhance their safety; for example when a survivor spends time with the batterer, she knows where he is and what he is doing during that period. Decision making around children or legally mandated requirements in custody agreements also play a significant role in ongoing contact. In 2015, 11 men killed their partners during custody exchanges and other post-separation contacts. Some of the women had attempted to increase their safety by meeting for the custody exchanges in public places like restaurants, convenient stores, or neutral places such as family members' homes.

### ***Ultimate Expressions of Power and Control: Firearms, Strangulation and Escalating Physical Violence***

Nationwide, women killed by their intimate partners are more likely to be murdered with a firearm than with all other means combined.<sup>14</sup> This continues to be true in Texas as well. In 2015, 96 men (61%) used firearms to kill their intimate partners. Twenty-three men (14%) stabbed and killed their partners, 19 men (12%) assaulted their partners with their hands or other objects, and 11 men (7%) strangled and killed their partners. Four men suffocated their partners, four men used their vehicles to kill their partners and one man drowned his partner. Seven of these attacks involved multiple means of assault.

13 Advocacy Beyond Leaving: Helping Women in Contact with Current or Former Partners (2009), Greater Hartford Legal Aid, National Resource Center on Domestic Violence and Futures Without Violence, available at [https://www.futureswithoutviolence.org/userfiles/file/Children\\_and\\_Families/Advocates%20Guide\(1\).pdf](https://www.futureswithoutviolence.org/userfiles/file/Children_and_Families/Advocates%20Guide(1).pdf) (last visited Oct. 10, 2016).

14 Violence Policy Center, When Men Murder Women: An Analysis of 2010 Homicide Data: Females Murdered by Males in Single Victim/Single Offender Incidents (2012), available at <http://www.vpc.org/studies/wmmw2016.pdf> (last visited Oct. 10, 2016).

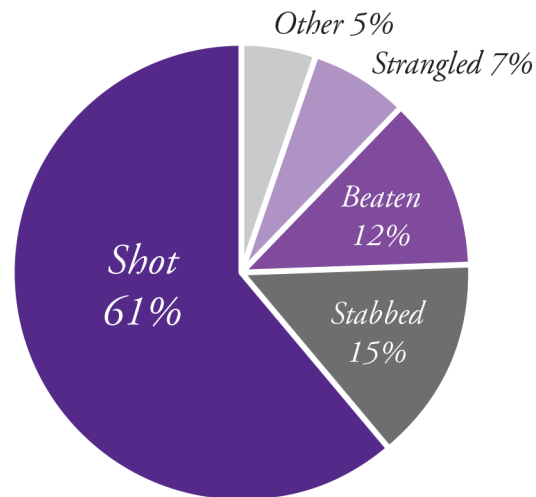


Women who survive strangulation are at significantly higher risk of being the victim of homicide or attempted homicide.<sup>15</sup>

Physical violence and threats of physical violence reinforce the emotional, verbal, and financial tactics of control that batterers use to maintain power over their partners. The primary risk factor for intimate partner femicide is physical violence against the victim.<sup>16</sup> Strangulation is also a significant lethality risk factor. Victims who experience strangulation are at much higher risk of death by their abusive partners.<sup>17</sup> Some studies indicate that strangulation occurs in later stages of abusive relationships as violence escalates.<sup>18</sup>

A recent study documents the extent to which batterers use firearms to intimidate and coerce their partners. Four and a half million women reported that their abusive partners threatened them with a gun in order to coerce or force their compliance and one million women have been shot and wounded.<sup>19</sup>

### Means of Death



4.5 million women in the U.S. have been threatened with a firearm by their intimate partners.<sup>20</sup>

In a survey of callers to the National Domestic Violence Hotline, 22% of women reported that their partners had threatened to use a gun to kill them, a family member, friend, or pet, or threatened to use a firearm to commit suicide and 10% said their partner had fired a gun during an argument.<sup>21</sup>

Women experiencing domestic violence are eight times more likely to be killed if there is a gun in the home.<sup>22</sup>

15 Nancy Glass, Kathryn Laughon, Jacqueline Campbell, et.al., Non-fatal Strangulation Is an Important Risk Factor for Homicide of Women (2008), *Journal of Emergency Medicine*, available at <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC2573025/> (last visited Oct. 10, 2016).

16 Jacqueline Campbell, Daniel Webster, Jane Koziol-McLain, et. al. Risk Factors for Femicide in Abusive Relationships: Results From a Multisite Case Control Study (2003), *American Journal of Public Health*, available at <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC1447915/> (last visited Oct. 10, 2016).

17 Nancy Glass, Kathryn Laughon, Jacqueline Campbell, et.al., Non-fatal Strangulation Is an Important Risk Factor for Homicide of Women (2008), *Journal of Emergency Medicine*, available at <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC2573025/> (last visited Oct. 10, 2016).

18 Lee Wilbur, Michelle Higley, Jason Hatfield, et.al., Survey Results of Women Who Have Been Strangled While in an Abusive Relationship (2001), *Journal of Emergency Medicine*, available at <https://secure.jbs.elsevierhealth.com/action/showCitFormats?pii=S0736-4679%2801%2900398-5&doi=10.1016%2FS0736-4679%2801%2900398-5&code=jem-site> (last visited: Oct. 10, 2016).

19 *Id.*

20 S. Sorenson, and R. Schut, Nonfatal Gun Use in Intimate Partner Violence: A Systematic Review of the Literature, *Trauma Violence Abuse* (2016), available at <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/27630138> (last visited Oct.10, 2016).

21 National Domestic Violence Hotline, Hotline Firearms Focus Survey (2014), available at [http://www.thehotline.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/10/Hotline\\_Firearms\\_Survey.pdf](http://www.thehotline.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/10/Hotline_Firearms_Survey.pdf) (last visited Oct. 10, 2016).

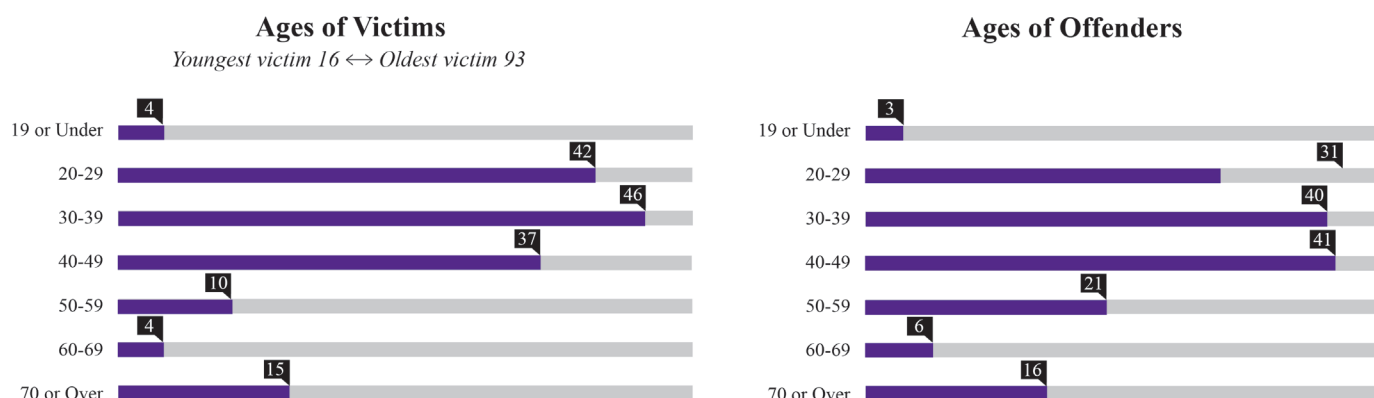
22 Melissa Jeltsen, Laura Acevez, Domestic Abuse Victim, Failed By Lax Gun Laws, *The Huffington Post*, Feb. 5, 2013, [http://www.huffingtonpost.com/2013/02/05/domestic-abuse-guns\\_n\\_2625377.html](http://www.huffingtonpost.com/2013/02/05/domestic-abuse-guns_n_2625377.html) (last visited Oct. 10, 2016).

Preventing domestic violence perpetrators from having access to firearms reduces a threat to the larger public. Point of fact: an analysis of mass shootings between 2009 and 2015 indicates that the perpetrator killed an intimate partner or other family member in 57% of the cases. In 15% of the cases, the perpetrator had a prior domestic violence charge.<sup>23</sup> Moreover, firearms and domestic violence pose a significant risk to responding law enforcement officers. Between 2010 and 2014, 22% of officer deaths in the line of duty occurred while responding to domestic violence calls, making them the most dangerous type of call officers received.<sup>24</sup>

## *Ages of Victims and Offenders*

The ages of women killed by their intimate partners in 2015 cross the lifespan; the youngest victim was 16 and the oldest victim was 93. Seventy-two percent of victims (114) were younger than 45; 44 victims were older than 45. Victims ages 30-39 (46) represent the most prevalent age group, followed by victims ages 20-29 (42) and then by victims ages 40-49 (37).

The youngest perpetrator of intimate partner femicide in 2015 was 17; the oldest was 93. Offenders ages 40-49 (41) represent the most prevalent age group, followed by offenders ages 30-39 (40) and then by offenders ages 20-29 (31).



In aggregate, the age ranges of perpetrators tends to peak in older ages than those of victims. When broken down into five-year increments, the number of victims in each age category exceeds the number of offenders before age 40-44. Then from age 45 the number of offenders in each age category is equal to or exceeds the number of victims, with the exception of the ages 70-74. One hundred offenders were older than the women they killed, with 55% of them five or more years older. Twenty-eight percent of victims (44) were older than the offender who killed them. Fourteen victims were the same age as the offender who killed them.

Compared with other age groups, there is a significant increase of intimate partner homicides from teen to young adult years. In 2015 perpetrators killed four women under the age of 19 and 18 women between the ages of 20-24. Twelve victims under the age of 24 were younger than their perpetrators; eight of those perpetrators were nine to 25 years older than their victims. On average victims under 24 were five years younger than their perpetrator while overall victims were on average 3.25 years younger than their perpetrators.

These figures support the reality that efforts taken to reduce intimate partner homicides necessitate an understanding of risk factors related to age.

<sup>23</sup> Every Town for Gun Safety, Analysis of Mass Shootings (2015), available at <http://everytownresearch.org/reports/mass-shootings-analysis/> (last visited Oct. 10, 2016).

<sup>24</sup> National Law Enforcement Officers Memorial Fund, Deadly Calls and Fatal Encounters (2016), available at <http://www.nleomf.org/programs/cops/cops-report.html?refer-r=http://www.nytimes.com/2016/07/30/us/politics/study-proposes-steps-to-better-ensure-police-officers-safety.html> (last visited Oct. 10, 2016).

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*“Never afraid to follow her dreams.”*

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The number of women killed by their intimate partners continues to spike into late twenties, thirties and early forties, with significant decreases after age 50. Some factors that could influence higher rates of homicides between the ages of 20-49 are pregnancy, child-rearing, and likelihood of divorce.

Survivors experience a range of pressure, coercion, threats and violence from their abusive partners related to pregnancy.<sup>25</sup> Homicides represent the leading cause of death during pregnancy and the first year post-partum; current or former intimate partners commit 54% of homicides of pregnant women, with these femicides most often occurring in the first trimester of pregnancy.<sup>26</sup> In 2015, six Texas victims (3.7%) were pregnant when the perpetrators killed them. They ranged in ages from 18 to 35. In two of the cases, the perpetrators attempted to pressure the victims to end their pregnancies and the motive for the murders centered on the offenders not wanting the pregnancy to continue. Nine victims, ranging in ages from 21 to 38, were in their first year post-partum, including one victim who placed her newborn with an adoptive parent because her abusive partner did not want to be a parent. This data further illustrates that incorporating universal education about healthy and unhealthy relationships<sup>27</sup> combined with client-centered domestic violence screening practices within healthcare settings can offer life-saving interventions and improve maternal and child health outcomes.<sup>28</sup>

Raising children is another lifespan issue that factors into a survivor's decision making about staying in or leaving abusive relationships and often requires remaining in contact with their abusive partners. In 2015, 108 women were mothers to 281 minor and adult children.

Of the 108 mothers, 79 women were mothers to 188 minor and young adult children.

Mothers of minor and young adult children ranged in ages from 18 to 49 and account for 61% of all victims killed. One victim was 18, 28 victims were between the ages of 20-29, 44 women were between the ages of 30-39, and 16 women were between the ages of 40-49.

Given that the risk of lethal violence increases for women who leave abusive partners,<sup>29</sup> we examined the correlation between the age of women seeking divorces in Texas and the age of women who are killed by their intimate partners. Within the general Texas population, women between the ages of 25-49 were more likely to seek a divorce than women in other age groups.<sup>30</sup> In Texas, 75% of women who were granted a divorce and 68% of women

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25 Linda Chamberlain and Rebecca Levenson, Addressing Intimate Partner Violence, Reproductive, and Sexual Coercion (2013), Futures Without Violence, available at <https://www.futureswithoutviolence.org/addressing-intimate-partner-violence/> (last Visited Oct. 10, 2016).

26 Diana Cheng, MD and Isabelle L. Horon, DrPH, Intimate Partner Homicide Among Pregnant and Postpartum Women, *Obstetrics & Gynecology*, 1181-1186, Vol. 115, No. 6 (2010).

27 Futures Without Violence provides extensive resources for healthcare providers and domestic violence advocacy programs at <https://www.futureswithoutviolence.org/health/>.

28 For more information on this see the Task Force on Domestic Violence Report required by HB 2620 and produced by the Health and Human Services Commission in September 2015, available at <https://hhs.texas.gov/sites/hhs/files/task-force-on-domestic-violence-report.pdf>. More information is also available through TCFV's Health Summit, available at <http://tcfv.org/trainings-conferences/beyond-screening/>

29 Jacqueline Campbell, Daniel Webster, Jane Koziol-McLain, et. al. Risk Factors for Femicide in Abusive Relationships: Results From a Multisite Case Control Study (2003), *American Journal of Public Health*, available at <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC1447915/> (last visited Oct. 10, 2016).

30 Texas Department of State Health Services, Vital Statistics Annual Reports, Divorces by Age of Wife and Age of Husband, (2014), available at <https://dshs.texas.gov/chs/vstat/annrpts.shtm>. (last visited Oct. 10, 2016).

who were killed by their intimate partners (107) were between the ages of 25 and 49.<sup>31</sup> Our analysis of relationship status in the previous section indicates that women whose divorces are finalized are less likely to be victims of intimate partner femicide than women in other stages of their relationships. However, the rise in the divorce rate in women ages 25-49 suggests that this is a time of life when more women are likely to end their relationships. There is no formal data collection of women who end dating relationships; therefore, we are unable to determine if unmarried women in this age group are more likely to end their relationships as well. Decision making about staying in or ending an abusive relationship is likely a significant factor in the higher rates of women killed in their 20s, 30s, and 40s.

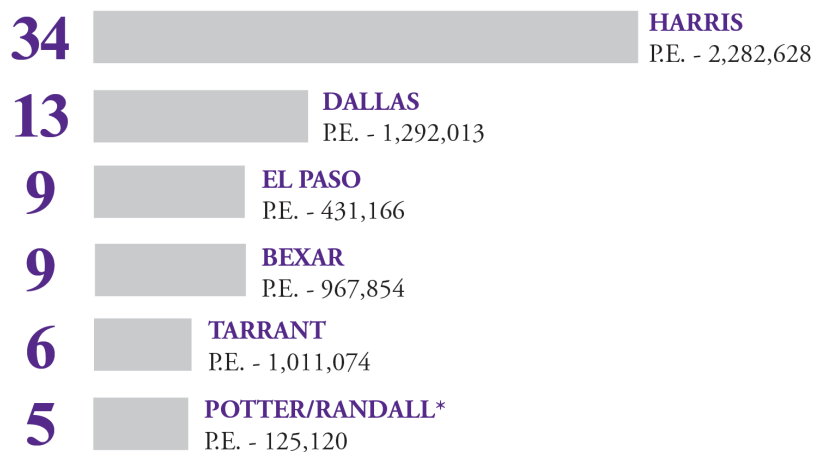
The number of victims killed over the age of 70 elevates the need to consider issues faced by the elderly. In 2015, 15 victims were 70 or older, a 250% increase from 2014. In 13 of these homicides, the perpetrators also killed themselves. In six of these cases, either the victims or the perpetrators experienced terminal illnesses or other significant health concerns. In those cases, family members indicated that the couple's relationships did not have signs of domestic violence. They are included because the husband killed his intimate partner and to highlight the need to provide better options and support for the aging population. Domestic violence awareness efforts and community outreach should include comprehensive and tailored services to elderly adult victims and perpetrators.

## Counties where IPV Femicides Occurred

In 2015, intimate partner femicides occurred in 53 counties in Texas. Harris County, which includes the city of Houston, had 34 femicides, the largest number in any county this year. This represents an increase from 2014 when Harris had 23 femicides. Dallas County, which includes the city of Dallas, had 13 femicides in 2015. This represents an increase from 10 in 2014. Bexar County, which includes the city of San Antonio and El Paso County, which includes the city of El Paso, each had nine femicides, representing an increase of four fatalities in each of those communities. Tarrant County, which includes the cities of Arlington and Fort Worth, had six femicides in 2015, a decrease from 10 in 2014. No femicides occurred in Arlington, a city that normally records two to three fatalities each year.

Seventy-five percent of intimate partner femicides in 2015 (118) occurred in urbanized areas across the state that have populations of more than 200,000 and include the following counties: Bell (2), Bexar (9), Brazoria (2), Brazos (1), Cameron (1), Collin (3), Dallas (13), Denton (2), El Paso (9), Fort Bend (3), Galveston (3), Harris (34), Hidalgo (3), Jefferson (2), Lubbock (3), McLennan (3), Montgomery (3), Nueces (4), Smith (2), Tarrant (6), Webb (3), Travis (4), and Williamson (3). Fifteen fatalities occurred in areas of the state that have populations of 100,000 to 200,000, including the counties of: Ector (1), Grayson (2), Gregg (1), Guadalupe (2), Hays (1), Midland (2), Potter/Randall<sup>32</sup> (5), and Taylor (1).

## Counties with the Most Fatalities



P.E. = 2015 Female Population Estimate

31 Texas Department of State Health Services, Vital Statistics Annual Reports, Divorces by Age of Wife and Age of Husband, (2014), available at <https://dshs.texas.gov/chs/vstat/annrpts.shtm>. (last visited Oct. 10, 2016).

32 Potter and Randall Counties are listed together because they include the city of Amarillo.

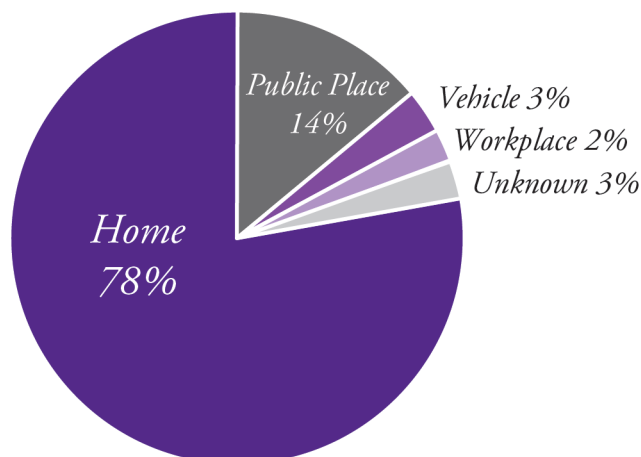
Together, fatalities in areas of the state with populations over 100,000 account for four out of every five Texas femicides in 2015. Given that the majority of femicides occur in the parts of the state with the highest population concentrations, we can anticipate that as population density increases, the number of intimate partner homicides will rise. In order to prevent continued increases of intimate partner fatalities in Texas, efforts must focus on solutions for urban communities while not losing sight of the particular needs of rural communities.

## Further Points of Analysis

### Location

In 2015, 123 of the 158 perpetrators (78%) killed their partners or ex-partners in a home. In the majority of cases the specific area of the house was not reported. Of the cases where this specific information was available, the most common location within the home was the bedroom. Twenty-two fatalities occurred in public places including nursing homes and hospitals, parking lots, streets and highways, and remote areas such as creeks and rural roads. Five fatalities occurred in vehicles and four fatalities occurred in workplaces. Locations of four fatalities were not disclosed or determined.

### Location of Murder

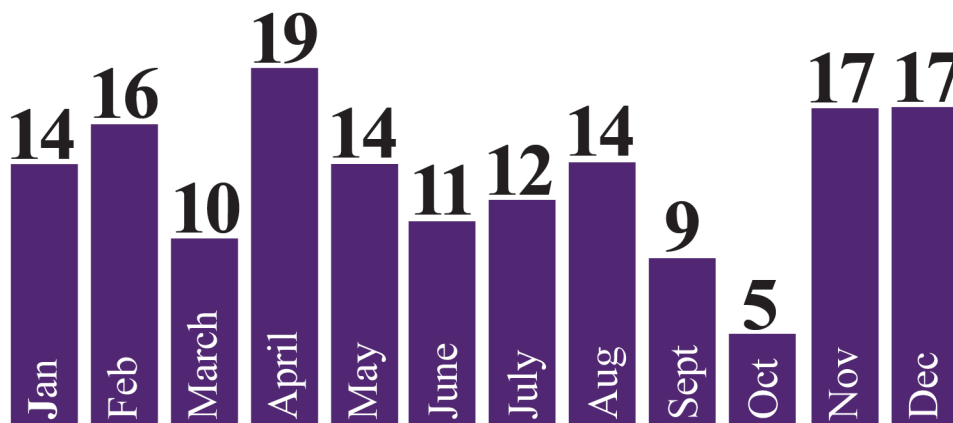


### Month

On average a man killed his female intimate partner every 2.3 days in Texas in 2015. The highest number of fatalities in 2015 occurred in April (19), followed by November and December (17). The least amount of fatalities occurred in October (5), followed by September (9) and March (10). Seven fatalities occurred in the third week of April; this is the highest number of fatalities in any one week in 2015. Some homicides clustered around holidays in 2015. Six fatalities occurred the week of Memorial Day at the end of May, five fatalities occurred on and immediately following Thanksgiving in November, and seven homicides occurred the last two weeks of December during the period of winter holidays.

In a comparison of data from 2011-2015, December emerges as a month with a higher rate of fatalities and September as the month with the lower numbers of fatalities. December was the month with the highest number of fatalities in 2014 and 2012 and the month with the second highest number of fatalities in 2011, 2013, 2014, and 2015.

### Number of Fatalities by Month - 2015



## Offender Status

Fifty-eight percent of perpetrators (92) are or were involved in the criminal justice system. Of those, 15 have been sentenced or convicted and 77 have been charged. Thirty-six percent of perpetrators (58) committed suicide. This represents a 5% decrease from 2014 and more closely matches the rate reported in 2013, when 35% of perpetrators committed suicide. Law enforcement officers killed two perpetrators and six perpetrators remain at large. Thirty-one percent of perpetrators (49) had a known history of violence.



## Murder/Suicide

In this report, TCFV defines murder-suicide as incidents where perpetrators kill their intimate partners and then kill themselves. Familicide describes incidents when a perpetrator kills his current or former intimate partner and one or more of the couple's children before committing suicide. In 2015, 36% of perpetrators (58) committed murder-suicides. Three other offenders attempted suicide and survived their injuries. No familicides occurred in 2015, since perpetrators who killed their current or former partners as well as one or more children did not commit suicide and instead were apprehended and charged.

## Intimate Partner Abuse Impacts the Entire Community

In 2015, perpetrators killed 108 women who were mothers; 281 children and adults lost their mothers. Of the 281, 61% were children, teens and young adult children.

Most media reports of intimate partner murders do not report the exact number of witnesses present and this information can prove difficult to capture from other sources. With this in mind, we confirm at least 101 adults and children witnessed perpetrators attack and kill their intimate partners. In addition, perpetrators injured nine family members and friends who witnessed the murders.

Perpetrators also killed 19 family members and friends, demonstrating that intimate partner murders carry with them a broader impact. We list these victims by their name, age, and relation to the woman killed.

**With care and respect, TCFV acknowledges the immense loss of each of these lives:**

**Linda Farina**, 31, Neighbor of Dawn Giffa  
**Larry Guzman**, 40, Neighbor of Dawn Giffa  
**Regina Culbert**, 24, Sister of Jacquelyn Morrell  
**Ashley Garcia**, 26, Sister of perpetrator's former girlfriend  
**Linette Cano**, 1, Daughter of Veronica Mercado  
**Zavier Camacho**, 4, Son of Dulce Cumpean-Camacho  
**Ciara Camacho**, 1, Daughter of Dulce Cumpean-Camacho  
**Faith Camacho**, 2 months, Daughter of  
Dulce Cumpean-Camacho  
**Jorge Guevara**, 52, Boyfriend of Fanny Perez

**David Miranda**, 30, Friend of Maria Cuellar  
**Nathaniel Conley**, 13, Son of Valerie Jackson  
**Honesty Jackson**, 11, Daughter of Valerie Jackson  
**Dwayne Jackson Jr.**, 10, Son of Valerie Jackson  
**Caleb Jackson**, 9, Son of Valerie Jackson  
**Trinity Jackson**, 7, Daughter of Valerie Jackson  
**Jonah Jackson**, 6, Son of Valerie Jackson  
**Dwayne Jackson**, 50, Husband of Valerie Jackson  
**Albert Martinez**, 30, Boyfriend of Jennifer Cruz  
**Shawn Summers**, 37, Boyfriend of Jessica Payton



# Key Practices to Accomplish Access for Survivors with Limited English Proficiency

Survivors with limited English proficiency face additional barriers when attempting to access legal remedies. A national survey found that this often includes a delay in process, misunderstandings about the survivor's statements, and the survivor not receiving key information.<sup>33</sup> Given that 34.9% of Texas's population speaks a language other than English at home, this represents a critical access consideration for victims of family violence.<sup>34</sup> We know that in 2015 one of the victims in this report faced language access barriers when she attempted to obtain a protective order, an important safety tool. Without interpreter services she did not understand the process to obtain a protective order.

The lack of assistance this victim received represents an all too common reality. The lack of certified interpreters provided to LEP victims exacerbates this problem; some jurisdictions even require the victim to pay for her own interpreter or use her advocate or a family member - sometimes unfortunately including the child of the parties. Without meaningful interpretive access, victims face participation in a confusing and non-transparent system, in a language they do not understand.

Communities should come together to develop policies and procedures in line with providing equal access to LEP victims. This report offers the following strategies to employ in addressing these challenges.

First off, make sure all community partners understand the law. Recipients of federal funds must comply with federal law. Relevant in this setting, most counties and by extension criminal justice system officials in Texas including courts and prosecutors obtain federal funding which carries with it the requirement to offer people with LEP equal access to interpretation, translation and auxiliary aids.

- Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 prohibits discrimination on the basis of national origin. Disparate treatment of LEP system participants may be a type of national origin discrimination.
- Executive Order 13166, issued in 2000 requires meaningful compliance with Title VI by developing a plan for effective serving LEP survivors.
- The Americans With Disabilities Act mandates providing American Sign Language (ASL) interpreters or auxiliary aids to ensure effective communication with D/deaf and hard of hearing individuals.

More specifically all agencies that receive funding through Violence Against Women Act grants must certify that they do not charge a family violence victim "any costs associated" with protective orders. Further, Texas law explicitly states that no fees can be charged to an applicant by any government official or employee, which should include interpreters. Texas statutes also require the court to assess all protective order costs against the abusers in most cases, which would include meaningful interpretive access to guarantee equal access to justice.

In working within the criminal and civil justice system, explaining these federal and state requirements helps to contextualize the importance our country and state place on LEP access. Consistent with these requirements, the Victims of Crime Act, VAWA and other federal and state funding streams support LEP victim services across a variety of contexts. For more on these opportunities, contact TCFV.

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<sup>33</sup> National Latino Network, Increasing Language Access in Courts Toolkit (2015), available at [http://nationallatinonetwork.org/images/files/Increasing\\_Language\\_Access\\_in\\_Courts\\_ToolKit\\_Eng\\_FINAL.pdf](http://nationallatinonetwork.org/images/files/Increasing_Language_Access_in_Courts_ToolKit_Eng_FINAL.pdf) (last visited Oct. 10, 2016).

<sup>34</sup> U.S. Census Bureau, State & County Quick Facts, available at <http://www.census.gov/quickfacts/table/PST045215/48> (last visited Oct. 10, 2016).

# Promising Practices

## *Collaborations Between CPS and Family Violence Programs*

Often abused parents find their families in the child welfare system or other systems designed to advocate for children in harm's way. Nationally, families in which one parent is a victim of family violence are twice as likely to have a substantiated case of child abuse compared to families without family violence. In Texas, over one-third of confirmed Child Protective Services (CPS) investigations in 2015 included a history of family violence<sup>1</sup> - a statistic that has remained unchanged for the last three years.

We know that survivors of family violence and their children need tailored advocacy and safety planning to promote healing, resiliency, and family safety. We also know that perpetrators of family violence require specialized parenting and family violence intervention programs to promote behavioral and cognitive changes that support family stability.<sup>2</sup> Thus, over the last several years, TCFV has doubled efforts to proactively partner with CPS at the state and local levels. This work aims to reach and support CPS liaisons at local programs and offer ongoing technical assistance to enhance the role of the liaison and bolster programs' work with survivor parents and their children.

Partnership between the domestic violence community and CPS has propelled specific and long awaited policies forward. Disposition Guidelines pertaining to the investigative findings in CPS cases involving domestic violence went into effect in May of 2015. Following this, CPS leadership and every front line worker across the state received training on the new guidelines. In addition, for the first time, the Texas Administrative Code rules regarding CPS Investigations explicitly address cases involving survivor parents, providing clear direction on where responsibility and accountability falls in families where a parent is a perpetrator of domestic violence.

Strategic efforts to elevate advocacy with survivor parents and their children include support to four pilot sites in Texas: Denton, Rio Grande Valley, Austin and El Paso, to enhance collaboration with CPS in their communities. The first year evaluation of the work of these pilot sites found that CPS staff in these communities gained a better understanding of the dynamics of domestic violence, particularly around the reasons a survivor parent might stay in an abusive relationship and how this parent's actions can be protective to her children. Further, the evaluation emphasized the promising approach of an Enhanced CPS Liaison playing a key role in improving collaboration between the domestic violence program and CPS.<sup>3</sup>

Moving forward, TCFV continues efforts at the statewide level to bring new policy and effective promising practices to scale and equip advocates throughout Texas with training and tools to serve families and advocate with community partners to increase survivor parent and child safety.

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***“Enjoyed dancing to music, and playing volleyball and baseball.  
Loved playing softball with her daughter and cars with her son.”***

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1 Texas Department of Family and Protective Services, Annual Report and Data Book (2015), 37, available at [https://www.dfps.state.tx.us/About\\_DFPS/Annual\\_Reports\\_and\\_Data\\_Books/2015/default.asp](https://www.dfps.state.tx.us/About_DFPS/Annual_Reports_and_Data_Books/2015/default.asp) (last visited Dec. 20, 2016).

2 Taskforce to Address the Relationship between Domestic Violence and Child Abuse and Neglect Report (Submitted to the Legislature by the Texas Health and Human Services Commission, September 1, 2012), and Susan Schechter & Jeffrey Edelson, National Council of Juvenile and Family Court Judges, Effective Intervention in Domestic Violence & Child Maltreatment Cases: Guidelines for Policy and Practice (1999)

3 Child and Family Research Partnership, University of Texas, Engaging Domestic Violence and Child Protective Services Staff in Collaborative Practices: Evaluation of the Project S.A.F.E. Pilot, Year One (2016).



## *Safe Custody Exchanges*

As women attempt to navigate an abusive relationship with a partner they share children with they frequently face several difficult choices. Women who have made a decision to leave an abusive partner receive mixed messages in this context with some institutions like courts and agencies that prioritize child support encouraging and even mandating a relationship with batterer fathers.<sup>4</sup> Our state can improve the level of resources and support systems available to keep the women and children safe in the process, helping to avoid increasing danger and sometimes lethal outcomes. Because court systems cannot offer ongoing protection for victims and their children during court ordered custody exchanges and visitation requirements, for many women navigating the custody, visitation, and exchange process within the legal system represents a daunting task with tremendous risks.

In communities without safe visitation centers, advocates suggest child visitation exchanges occur in public places or police stations; however, we know that even exchanges in public do not guarantee safety. In fact, two of the five murders in Texas in 2015 that involved a custody exchange occurred in public places: a restaurant and gas station. Overall, eleven children witnessed their mother's murder during custody exchanges. Clearly women and children need better, safer solutions for custody exchanges with their abusive partners.

PlanetSafe in Austin and Faith and Liberty's Place Family Center based in Dallas stand as model examples of communities with safe places for custody exchanges. A collaborative with SAFE and Travis County, PlanetSafe concentrates on families in which a parent has a history of family violence, stalking, and/or sexual assault. Fourteen local stakeholders in Austin and Travis County came together to create the model for PlanetSafe with the visitation center opening in 2013. Families that have determined either through the courts or on their own that they need a third party to supervise or facilitate exchanges pay nothing for the service. PlanetSafe offers staggered arrival and departure times, separate entrances and waiting rooms, security personnel, and a child friendly space. In 2015, PlanetSafe served 74 families and provided 400 supervised visits and 298 exchanges. Ninety percent of victims reported feeling safe using the PlanetSafe service.<sup>5</sup>

The Faith and Liberty Place Family Center likewise creates a safe, child-centered environment where trained professionals facilitate supervised child visitation and monitor exchanges with the non-custodial parents. The referrals come directly from the Dallas Family Courts, primarily from child custody cases in which one parent has a history of abusive behaviors toward the other parent and/or child. Staff trained on the dynamics of family violence, victim safety, and offender accountability provide one on one monitoring and observation of parenting time. Staff starts by completing in-person interviews and orientations with both parents as well as the children who will utilize their services. The staff thoroughly examines family dynamics, safety and risk factors. The facility also operates as a supportive visitation center and provides parents life skills and parenting techniques. In 2015, they served 153 families and 591 individuals. Evaluations from the Center demonstrate 86% of victims felt safe while they were at Center and 91% of the children felt the visitation was a positive experience.<sup>6</sup>

From lessons learned at these service providers and in other communities, advocates have come to understand that victims of family violence need access to supervised child visitation and exchange centers. Moreover, centers must train staff on the complexities and dangers of family violence and provide onsite security, separate entrances, and staggered arrival times for the victim and the offender. TCFV stands ready to support communities as they seek resources and solutions for safe visitation and custody exchanges.

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4 Mo'Therese Hannah, Ph.D., and Barry Goldstein, J.D., *Domestic Violence, Abuse, and Child Custody: Legal Strategies and Policy Issues* (2016), and Lundy Bancroft, *The batterer as a parent*, *Synergy*, 6(1), 6-8, (2002), Newsletter of the National Council of Juvenile and Family Court Judges.

5 Information provided by SAFE Austin.

6 Information provided by The Family Place, Dallas.

## ***Beyond Screening: Engaging Healthcare Professionals at the Texas Health Summit***

This year's report tells the stories of the six pregnant women who were killed by their intimate partner. Additionally, over 25% of the women in this report left behind young children. While we know that pregnancy is a pivotal time for a woman to interact with the healthcare system, we also know that women across the life spectrum engage with the health care system for themselves and their children. Knowing this, domestic violence advocates have increasingly utilized this distinctive intersection to support the health care community in promoting healthy, violence free relationships and in intervening when relationships are unsafe.

For instance, TCFV has prioritized engaging the health care community on a statewide level in order to align medical systems and domestic violence advocacy in supporting domestic violence victims and their young children. *The 2014 Honoring Texas Victims Report*, chronicled the work of a legislatively mandated task force (The House Bill 2620 Task Force) charged with examining the intersections of health and domestic violence. That task force report<sup>7</sup> outlined several recommendations for health care providers, health care systems, domestic violence advocates, and other community stakeholders. It also included findings from a survey developed to gauge the state of domestic violence education in health care settings as well as a white paper outlining the state of the research around domestic violence and healthcare.

Building on the momentum established through participation in the Task Force, TCFV convened a group of nurses, practitioners, advocates, researchers, educators, and other stakeholders in two days of learning and action planning associated with implementing the Task Force's recommendations. *Beyond Screening: Texas Health Summit* offered an opportunity for individuals representing diverse perspectives in healthcare to come together for one common purpose: intervening in cases of domestic violence and preventing violence from occurring in the first place. Using the Task Force report as the starting point, three working groups, education, research, and services, identified a path forward for statewide work in their respective areas.

- 1) Education: The education working group committed to the idea that curricula in medical schools and residency programs should include topics related to domestic violence as well as included in regular continuing education opportunities for health care practitioners. The group focused much of its discussion on next steps including follow up surveys to medical schools and the development of educational materials.
- 2) Research: The research working group primarily recognized the need for research that integrated primary prevention principles and strategies into the health care-family violence discourse. They discussed ways to prioritize increased collaboration in developing research agendas and collecting data and committed to identifying opportunities for these collaborative efforts.
- 3) Services: The services working group identified a variety of forums, opportunities, and models already in place and discussed the need for new kinds of systems that would focus on comprehensive care. Some of the key discussions included: 1) incorporating domestic violence on regional advisory councils on trauma, 2) creating a network of survivor health advocates, 3) working on ways to transfer information from one provider to another and, 4) working with health care settings in identifying gaps in training and information.

Participants in all three groups agreed to continuing this work for the long haul and working toward implementing the actions items they identified. The infusing of information about the prevention and intervention of domestic violence into health care practices ranks as a longer term effort requiring the commitment and passion of various stakeholders in the health care community. *Beyond Screening: The Texas Health Summit* stands as a shining example of how bringing multiple and diverse stakeholders together for "big thinking" can lead to new and fresh ideas and positions Texas well to better respond to and prevent domestic violence across our state.

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<sup>7</sup> Available at <https://hhs.texas.gov/sites/hhs/files/task-force-on-domestic-violence-report.pdf>

### ***Use of Cameras to Assist Prosecution of Family Violence Incidents***

For some time now, TCFV has increasingly focused on working with prosecutors to facilitate and guide conversations amongst those Texas professionals related to the way that they address family violence in their everyday work (see previous Promising Practice, *Next to the Jury Box: A Summit for Prosecutors* from the 2013 Honoring Texas Victims Report for more detail). In that effort, a few significant or promising approaches to prosecuting family violence have emerged, chief of which include “victimless prosecution”. Advocates and victims have long agreed that participation in the criminal justice process too often re-victimizes or at least re-traumatizes victims.

With this in mind, prosecutors have increasingly identified the use of video camera recordings of family violence victims’ stories at the scene of the crime to capture her experience and reality as close to the occurrence of the offense as possible. A few particular prosecutors including El Paso’s Jaime Esparza, New Braunfels’ Jennifer Tharp, College Station’s Jarvis Parsons and Corpus Christi’s Mark Skurka have for a few years now incorporated this new tool into their efforts at holding offenders accountable. Working with law enforcement, these and other prosecutors developed protocols and approaches for implementing the use of the cameras into investigation and ultimately prosecution, which other prosecutors can adapt and use in their own communities. For instance, they worked through how to collaborate with law enforcement in regular and continued training, when and how to interview the victim and witnesses, how to download the recordings and various other practical pieces. Importantly, these recordings have spurred more pleas of guilty regardless of whether the victim participates in the criminal prosecution process, a result that increases safety for her and fosters her long-term ability to move forward from abuse while the system holds the offender accountable.

These practices continue to gain support in that the Governor’s Office has lifted up the use of hand held video cameras in family violence on-scene investigation as a promising practice across the state. In support of this effort the Governor has funded cameras for prosecutors and supported formal research on outcomes stemming from their increasing usage. Jurisdictions as diverse as Ector, Hidalgo amongst others received 435 cameras for 18 different jurisdictions, representing 27 counties across the state.

Importantly, the use of video recordings of family violence victims continues to evolve. Although the practice has yielded important positive results, TCFV and its allied prosecutors continue to grapple with and work through how best to protect victim privacy, the length and scope of questions at the scene, and whether and how such recordings actually come into evidence at trial. That said, weighing all of these considerations, this victimless prosecution approach has contributed to a significant paradigm shift for family violence prosecution in Texas.

### ***Coordinated Community Response Efforts***

The narratives in this edition of *Honoring Texas Victims* include the stories of women killed by their male intimate partners even after they came into contact with various systems that respond to family violence. These systems include everything from law enforcement and prosecution to education and Child Protective Services. In all of these cases we are left wondering what could have been done differently to support these women before it was too late. How can systems work together to craft responses that leverage the strengths of the various parts of our criminal and civil justice system, social services, education, business community, communities of faith and any other potential touch points for a victim of domestic violence, her family and her batterer? One answer: *coordinated community response* (CCR) that seeks better connection between the various systems in order to better identify and intervene in cases of family violence. Although many kinds of CCR exist, Texas has highlighted four specific approaches.

### **Domestic Violence High Risk Teams**

During the election in the fall of 2014, then candidate and now Governor Abbott highlighted Domestic Violence High Risk Teams (DVHRT) in his campaign platform; once in office, the Governor, accomplished, with TCFV’s support, an appropriation and codification of DVHRT’s in Texas law. In this version of a CCR, response partners

including law enforcement, prosecutors, the courts, advocates, and other relevant partners come together on a regular basis to assess the degree of risk in a given case (using an assessment tool), to appropriately share information regarding the victim and offender and the case overall, and to fashion intervention strategies for keeping the victim safe and accomplishing offender accountability. In other parts of the country, communities have provided data for evidence-based review of DVHRTs with significantly positive results. A new idea for Texas, TCFV stands poised to use the funding from the Governor as well as other available funding streams to foster the promulgation of DVHRTs in the coming months and years.

### **Lethality Assessment Programs**

Across the state of Texas, several communities have adopted Lethality Assessment Programs (LAP). First created by the Maryland Network Against Domestic Violence, LAP has proven useful in key communities in Texas including Dallas, Corpus Christi, Plano, and College Station. In a nutshell, law enforcement uses a tool for assessing lethality at the scene of the investigation of the offense. Law enforcement then immediately contacts the local family violence center in order to offer real time help from domestic violence advocates for victims that complete the assessment and score above a threshold amount. Moreover, the protocols call for prioritized entrance into a domestic violence shelter or other resources like counseling for victims who score high on the LAP. The implementation of this approach requires in-depth coordination primarily between law enforcement and family violence centers and also includes support from prosecutors, the courts and other community stakeholders.

### **Domestic Violence Fatality Review**

Of the CCRs covered here, Domestic Violence Fatality Reviews (DVFR) represents the one used in Texas for the longest period. After passage of legislation in the year 2000, communities created DVFR to review fatalities in a non-judgmental and supportive environment. DVFRs have the express purpose of identifying and implementing potential changes to the manner in which various systems handle family violence. Communities across Texas have made important changes to the way they handle cases including earlier and more comprehensive interventions, connecting the dots of abuse across contexts, and recognizing the importance of shelter and resource access in reducing the likelihood of domestic violence escalation. This important effort requires significant and long-term collaboration.

### **Firearms Surrender Protocols**

Finally, the introduction of Firearms Surrender Protocols represents an emerging trend in Texas. As a threshold matter, misdemeanor family violence offenders and respondents in protective orders may not legally possess firearms. Although judges, prosecutors, law enforcement and probation officers all possess varying legal abilities to do so, the state law does not specifically cover this. A few communities have determined that developing a community response to firearms surrender, provides the best opportunity for success. Dallas, Travis and Bexar Counties have taken this life saving effort to heart and created varying levels of surrender protocols based on best practices developed across the country and in El Paso specifically.<sup>8</sup> Additional communities continue to explore how to implement protocols as well.

The four CCR approaches offer a glimpse into the current state of community based interventions in Texas. Look to TCFV for resources and support in helping to implement these strategies or others that have developed organically in your community.

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*“Passionate about the welfare of others, always seeking to enhance others, always lending a helping hand, ensuring all were treated fairly.”*

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8 Battered Women's Justice Project, El Paso, Texas: A Coordinated Effort to Remove Firearms from Domestic Abusers, (2014), available at [www.bwjp.org](http://www.bwjp.org) (last visited October 18, 2016). lly

## Women Killed by Their Intimate Partner in Texas in 2015



The Texas Council on Family Violence lists with great respect the names of each victim of intimate partner femicide in 2015. As TCFV gathered data, we took care to confirm the accuracy of information through various means, primarily law enforcement, Department of Public Safety, media, and family violence programs in Texas. Each confirmed fatality includes the date of the woman's death and the city in which she was killed, followed by a short description of the circumstances. To increase awareness of lethality risk factors, TCFV includes additional relevant information when available through media and law enforcement reports. The narratives list victims in order by county where the femicide occurred.

### ANGELINA COUNTY

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#### **Jennifer Ingram, 29**

Lufkin // February 5, 2015

Joshua Ingram, 31, shot and killed his wife Jennifer in the bedroom of their home. Ingram fled the scene, contacted his mother, and confessed to killing Jennifer. Ingram's mother notified authorities, who then discovered Jennifer's body and later arrested and charged Ingram with murder. Authorities also found Jennifer's infant son on the bed next to her, unharmed. Jennifer is survived by her three sons, ages 3 months, 4, and 8.

### ATASCOSA COUNTY

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#### **Ariel Fernandez, 24**

Poteet // December 13, 2015

Joe Perez, 23, stabbed and killed his girlfriend Ariel in her home. Perez attacked Ariel as she tried to stop him from assaulting her brother, Richard Luebano, 28. Richard sustained non-life threatening injuries in the attack. Authorities arrested and charged Perez for Ariel's murder and aggravated assault for stabbing Richard.

### BASTROP COUNTY

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#### **Samantha Dean, 29**

Bastrop // February 4, 2015

VonTrey Clark, 32, hired Kevin Watson to shoot and kill his ex-girlfriend Samantha. Clark drove Samantha to a parking lot where Watson shot and killed Samantha. Samantha was seven months pregnant and Clark had pressured her to end the pregnancy. Following the murder, Clark fled to Indonesia, where he was later captured and returned. Authorities charged both Clark and Watson with capital murder.

#### **Diocelina Duarte-Diaz, 36**

Del Valle // December 6, 2015

Antonio Diaz-Jaimes, 50, shot and killed his wife Diocelina near her vehicle in front of his home. Diaz-Jaimes also threatened to shoot Diocelina's daughter, age 17. Diocelina's son, age 20, intervened and removed Diaz-Jaimes' gun. Prior to the murder, Diocelina had ended the relationship and filed for divorce. Authorities arrested Diaz-Jaimes and charged him with murder. Diocelina is survived by her two sons and her daughter.

## BELL COUNTY

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### **Dawn Giffa, 28**

Killeen // February 22, 2015

Ata-se Giffa, 30, shot and killed his wife Dawn in their home. Prior to her murder, Dawn fled her home and sought safety inside a neighbor's home. Giffa went to the neighbor's home where he shot Christina Guzman, 41, who survived her injuries. He also shot and killed Linda Farina, 31 and Larry Guzman, 40. Giffa forced Dawn to return to their home where he shot her, and then killed himself. Giffa had a history of violence towards Dawn. Law enforcement responded to the home two weeks prior to the murder. Dawn is survived by her son, age 3.

### **Jacquelyn Morrell, 38**

Killeen // August 9, 2015

Wiley Morrell, 38, shot and killed his wife Jacquelyn inside their home. Morell also shot and killed Jacquelyn's sister, Regina Culbert, 24, before shooting and killing himself. Four children witnessed the murders. Jacquelyn is survived by her teen and young adult children, three sons and one daughter.

## BEXAR COUNTY

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### **Esther Locascio, 59**

Helotes // December 3, 2015

Charles Locascio, 54, strangled and killed his wife Esther in their home. Locascio then contacted police and confessed to killing Esther. Authorities arrested Locascio and charged him with murder. Esther is survived by her three sons and one daughter.

### **Jodie Salinas, 30**

Live Oak // June 2, 2015

Victor Salinas Yanes, 32, strangled, beat and killed his wife Jodie inside the bedroom of his home. Yanes attacked Jodie when she arrived for a custody exchange. Two days prior to the murder, Jodie ended the relationship and sought a divorce. After the murder, Yanes attempted suicide by drinking a mixture of bleach and weed killer. Authorities arrested and charged Yanes with murder. Yanes has a history of abuse and had threatened to kill Jodie and the children. Jodie is survived by her daughter, age 10, and two sons, ages 2 and 7.

### **Magdalena Aguayo Garcia, 49**

San Antonio // March 18, 2015

Filiberto Mendoza, 54, stabbed, shot and killed his wife Magdalena inside their home. As their son, age 14, intervened to protect Magdalena, Mendoza stabbed him. Their son then fled to get help. After killing Magdalena, Mendoza shot and killed himself. The couple's son was critically injured but survived his injuries. Magdalena is survived by her two daughters and her son.



## BEXAR COUNTY continued

### **Katrina Geryk, 24**

San Antonio // March 18, 2015

Jonathan Geryk, 24, strangled and killed his wife Katrina in the bedroom of their home. The couple's two small children were home during the incident. Geryk's father convinced him to turn himself in and took him to a police station. While officers questioned Geryk, he removed an officer's gun from the holster and threatened to shoot himself. Officers tackled Geryk and recovered the gun. Authorities arrested and charged Geryk with murder. Katrina is survived by her son, age 5, and daughter, age 2.

### **Jody Hernandez, 31**

San Antonio // May 9, 2015

Daniel Hernandez, 33, shot and killed his wife Jody in the living room of their home. Hernandez informed law enforcement that Jody was suicidal and that she asked him to kill her because of her chronic health problems. Authorities initially charged Hernandez with murder, but he later accepted a plea deal on a charge of assisted suicide. Hernandez received a sentence of five years of probation and a \$1,500 fine.

### **Debora Kelly, 48**

San Antonio // October 10, 2015

Lars Itzo, 48, shot and killed his wife Deborah in the living room of their home. Itzo told police he mistook Deborah for an intruder in the home. Authorities arrested Itzo and a grand jury indicted him for one count of murder and one count of manslaughter.

### **Amy Rangel, 21**

San Antonio // July 21, 2015

Shaquille Lawdins, 21, shot his girlfriend Amy inside her home. A neighbor heard the gunshots and contacted law enforcement. Before she was transported to the hospital, Amy informed police that Lawdins shot her; she died while in surgery. Authorities arrested Lawdins and charged him with murder and with felon in possession of a firearm. Amy is survived by her three young children.

### **Leticia Salcedo, 47**

San Antonio // February 2, 2015

Felipe Quiroga, 52, intentionally crashed his vehicle while driving at a high rate of speed on a public road, killing his girlfriend, Leticia. Quiroga died instantly and Leticia died at a local hospital an hour after the accident. Law enforcement stated Quiroga had reported earlier he was going to kill himself and upon further investigation, found he intentionally crashed the vehicle into a concrete barrier. Leticia is survived by her two adult sons and 7-year-old daughter.

**Dawanna Thomas, 18**

San Antonio // February 14, 2015

Courtney Velasques, 19, drowned and killed his girlfriend Dawanna in a creek. Velasques then removed her body from the creek and set it on fire. Dawanna was four months pregnant with Velasques' child. Velasques repeatedly pressured her to have an abortion and had a history of violent behavior during their relationship. Velasques confessed to law enforcement and received a sentence of life in prison for capital murder.

**BRAZORIA COUNTY**

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**Zenia Smith, 45**

Angleton // August 17, 2015

Basel Hooker, 49, beat and killed his girlfriend Zenia in their home. Police found Zenia's body after getting a call for a welfare check. Hooker fled to Florida, where authorities arrested and charged him with murder. Hooker has a history of family violence, including pending cases for domestic violence assault and violating a protective order.

**Tansey Escobar, 31**

Pearland // September 25, 2015

Oscar Escobar, 32, shot and killed his wife Tansey in their home. He then shot and killed himself. A man and child in the home witnessed the shooting. Prior to the murder, Tansey had planned to separate from Oscar. Tansey is survived by her daughter.

**BRAZOS COUNTY**

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**Vanessa Gonzales, 30**

Bryan // May 15, 2015

Daniel Diaz, 30, pushed his girlfriend Vanessa out of a moving vehicle on a rural road. He then ran over Vanessa and killed her. Diaz then went to the home of a former girlfriend's sister, Ashley Garcia, 26. Diaz attacked and killed Ashley with a machete. A family member saw Diaz in Ashley's car and contacted authorities. After a pursuit, authorities arrested Diaz. Diaz has a history of family violence. Vanessa is survived by her three sons, ages 7, 11, and 13, and her daughter, age 9.

**CALHOUN COUNTY**

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**Dulce Cumpean-Camacho, 23**

Port Lavaca // January 12, 2015

Jonathan Camacho, 23, stabbed and killed his wife Dulce in their home. He then stabbed and killed their three children, ages 2 months, 1 and 4. Camacho set fire to the home and fled the scene. The day of the murder, Dulce had planned to end the relationship and called police to the home to get assistance to leave with the children. Camacho destroyed Dulce's phone. Camacho pled guilty to capital murder and received a sentence of life in prison.



## CALHOUN COUNTY continued

### **Joyce Morris, 72**

Seadrift // January 28, 2015

Bobby Hill, 68, shot and killed his wife Joyce in their recreational vehicle in a camp. After killing Joyce, Hill called police and confessed. Hill left the scene. Police traced his location using pings from his cell phone and apprehended him. Hill received a sentence of 38 years in prison for Joyce's murder. Joyce is survived by her two adult children.

## CAMERON COUNTY

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### **Maria Aracely Cabrera, 40**

La Feria // November 5, 2015

Isaias Cabrera, 44, shot and killed his wife Maria in their home. After killing Maria, Cabrera sent a text message to his brother indicating that he killed Maria and planned to commit suicide. He then shot and killed himself. The family member informed authorities, who discovered their bodies. Maria is survived by her four children.

## CHAMBERS COUNTY

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### **April Forney, 38**

Wallisville // June 16, 2015

Kenneth Williams, 33, strangled, cut, and killed his ex-girlfriend April, leaving her body near a bridge in a wildlife refuge area. Williams fled to Missouri with Alexandria Barnes, 22. Williams has a history of family violence. In 2011, Williams pled guilty to aggravated assault with a deadly weapon and was ordered to probation and to attend a battering intervention program. Williams failed to comply. Authorities arrested Williams for murder and Barnes for hindering apprehension in Missouri. April is survived by her four children, ages 1, 5, 12 and 15.

## COLLIN COUNTY

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### **Anna Moses, 43**

Frisco // January 14, 2015

Robert Moses, 63, shot and killed his ex-wife Anna in the garage of her home. In an attempt to make the murder look like it was connected to a robbery, Moses took Anna's car. When Anna did not report to work, authorities performed a welfare check. After completing an investigation, authorities arrested Moses six weeks later and charged him with Anna's murder. Anna is survived by her adult son.

### **Mishell Jones, 49**

McKinney // May 5, 2015

James Jones, 44, stabbed his wife Mishell in her vehicle in a store parking lot. Jones then walked into the store and admitted to killing Mishell. Emergency responders transported Mishell to the hospital where she died of the injuries. Authorities arrested and charged Jones with murder. Jones confessed that he had planned to kill Mishell for five months and he attacked her that day with knives hidden in the vehicle after she told him to move out of the home. Jones has a history of violence. Mishell is survived by her four adult children.

**Elaine Young, 54**

Wylie // December 18, 2015

Sam Young, 59, shot and killed his wife Elaine in their home. Young called 911 and reported the murder and then shot and killed himself. One of the couple's sons escaped the home to get help from a neighbor. Elaine is survived by her two adult sons.

**COMANCHE COUNTY**

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**Alicia Suniga, 48**

Comanche // June 22, 2015

Fernando Elizondo, 65, shot and killed his wife Alicia in their home. Elizondo then shot and killed himself.

**DALLAS COUNTY**

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**Ceaira Ford, 28**

Dallas // June 22, 2015

Jonathan Edelen, 34, suffocated and killed his wife Ceaira in the bedroom of their home. Ceaira's young children were in the home. A neighbor called 911; authorities responded and then left after assessing the situation. Authorities discovered Ceaira's body two days later, when Edelen confessed to suffocating her. They then arrested and charged Edelen with murder. He received a sentence of 11 years in prison for a conviction of manslaughter. Edelen has a history of family violence; Ceaira had told family members she feared for her life. Ceaira is survived by her son, age 6 and her daughter, age 4.

**Betty Mills, 91**

Dallas // August 27, 2015

A.J. Mills, 93, shot and killed his wife Betty at the nursing home where she lived. Mills then shot and killed himself. Betty is survived by her two adult daughters.

**Blessing Okereke, 30**

Dallas // August 29, 2015

David Thompson, 34, shot and killed his wife Blessing at his workplace. Thompson then called police and reported he shot Blessing in self-defense. Authorities arrested and charged Thompson with Blessing's murder.

**Patricia Tinajero, 33**

Dallas // January 4, 2015

Roberto Planas-Ruiz, 24, shot and killed his girlfriend Patricia in her home. Planas-Ruiz then shot and killed himself. Authorities found a two-year-old child unharmed in the same room where they found Patricia's body. Patricia is survived by her two sons and her two daughters.

## DALLAS COUNTY continued

### **Sparkle Watson, 34**

Dallas // April 17, 2015

Michael Jackson, 35, shot and killed his ex-wife Sparkle in her home. Jackson then shot and killed himself. Neighbors called 911 and reported hearing gunfire. Law enforcement discovered their bodies. Jackson had a history of abusive and violent behavior towards Sparkle. Sparkle is survived by her son, age 12.

### **Charlene Smith, 81**

Garland // March 3, 2015

Arthur Smith, 85, shot and killed his wife Charlene in her room in the nursing home where they lived. Smith then shot and killed himself. Police and paramedics arrived to the nursing home and found Charlene's and Smith's bodies. Charlene is survived by her four adult children, three daughters and one son.

### **Misty Fallis, 39**

Grand Prairie // November 22, 2015

David Zamudio, 38, shot and killed his girlfriend Misty in their home. Zamudio then shot himself. Witnesses called police. When the police arrived, they found Misty's body. Emergency responders transported Zamudio to a hospital where he died.

### **Isela Sanchez, 22**

Grand Prairie // December 9, 2015

John Stover, 20, stabbed his ex-girlfriend Isela in her parents' home. Isela fled to the front yard where a passerby saw her and called 911. Emergency responders transported Isela to a hospital, where she died from the injuries. Stover fled the scene. In the weeks prior to the murder, Isela had ended her relationship and moved to her parents' home. Authorities apprehended Stover and charged him with murder.

### **Breanca McBride, 25**

Irving // May 17, 2015

Shane Nelson, 26, shot and killed his ex-girlfriend Breanca in his apartment. After killing Breanca, Nelson fled and later turned himself in to authorities. Breanca had recently ended the relationship and gone to his apartment to collect her belongings. Authorities arrested and charged Nelson with murder. Breanca is survived by her son, age 5.

### **Fanny Perez, 41**

Irving // March 11, 2015

Marvin Monge, 44, shot and killed his wife Fanny in her home. Fanny had separated from Monge and began dating someone else. After killing Fanny, Monge shot and killed Fanny's boyfriend Jorge Guevara, 52. He then shot and killed himself. Fanny's daughter-in-law called 911. Fanny's mother and two teenage children were also in the home at the time of the murders. Monge had stalked Fanny before the murders. Fanny is survived by her four sons.

**Racheal Wiest, 16**

Irving // May 25, 2015

Jacob Boyd, 17, strangled and killed his ex-girlfriend Racheal at a friend's home. Racheal had ended the relationship two weeks prior to her murder. Racheal agreed to meet with Boyd to discuss their relationship and attempted to leave when Boyd tried to coerce her to have sex. As Racheal was leaving, Boyd blocked her, took away her phone and then put her in a chokehold. Authorities charged Boyd for Rachel's murder and a jury sentenced him to 80 years in prison. Rachel was a high school student with many aspirations.

**Laura Grillo, 37**

Rowlett // November 13, 2015

John Makris, 38, hired Jesus Trevino to shoot and kill his fiancé Laura in her home. Authorities arrested Makris and Trevino. A grand jury indicted three men, Makris, Trevino and James Villeda, for capital murder in Laura's death. Villeda was an accomplice for driving Trevino. Laura is survived by her two daughters and her son, ages 3, 10, and 13.

**Lori Brocuglio Valenti, 49**

Seagoville // November 28, 2015

Kevin Close, 50, assaulted and killed his girlfriend Lori in their home. Close called 911 and confessed to Lori's murder. When police arrived on the scene, Close charged at them and they shot and killed him. Lori is survived by her three daughters and two sons.

**DENTON COUNTY**

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**Ke'Nicqua Cherry, 21**

Denton // March 7, 2015

Leonard Stansberry, 46, shot and killed his girlfriend Ke'Nicqua in the hallway by the bedroom of their home. Stansberry then called 911 and attempted to stage the scene as a suicide. First responders transported Ke'Nicqua to the hospital where she was pronounced dead. Authorities arrested Stansberry three months later and charged him with murder. Ke'Nicqua is survived by her son, age 2.

**Ericka Santibañez, 41**

Denton // May 26, 2015

Paulo Santibañez, 47, shot his ex-wife Ericka in a car in a parking lot. Emergency responders transported Ericka to the hospital where she died later that morning. Santibañez shot and killed himself at the scene. Ericka had filed for divorce in January. Ericka is survived by her two sons, ages 8 and 14.

## ECTOR COUNTY

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### **Monica Deming, 32**

Odessa // November 29, 2015

Brandon Leyva, 38, shot and killed his ex-girlfriend Monica in her home. Leyva then shot himself. Emergency responders transported Leyva to the hospital, where he later died. Leyva had a history of violence against other women and had stalked Monica when she ended the relationship. She sought assistance from a family violence program and was in the process of filing for a protective order. Monica is survived by her son, age 8.

## EL PASO COUNTY

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### **Tonya Brewer Hamlin, 38**

El Paso // June 6, 2015

Eddie Estep, 45, assaulted and killed his girlfriend Tonya near a gas station. A passerby saw Estep standing over Tonya's body and notified authorities. Emergency responders transported Tonya to the hospital where she died from the injuries. Authorities arrested and charged Estep with murder. Tonya is survived by her son and daughter, both teenagers.

### **Maria Cuellar, 37**

Fabens // December 7, 2015

Vicente Cuellar, 37, shot and killed his wife Maria and then placed her body in the trunk of his car before setting it on fire in a remote location. Cuellar also shot and killed Maria's friend David Miranda, 30. Authorities arrested Cuellar and an accomplice, Allen Fraire, and charged them with capital murder of multiple persons. Maria had filed for divorce shortly before her murder.

### **Maria Gallardo De Moncloa, 73**

El Paso // April 15, 2015

Anastacio Moncloa, 83, shot and killed his wife Maria in the kitchen of their home. Moncloa then shot and killed himself. Neighbors heard gunshots and called family members, who then found Maria and Moncloa's bodies.

### **Evelyn Harvey, 93**

El Paso // December 6, 2015

Nelson Harvey, 91, shot and killed his wife Evelyn inside their room in their retirement home. Harvey then went to sleep nearby. Home healthcare agency staff found Evelyn's body during a routine bed check. Once awoken, Harvey retrieved the weapon and handed it to the caretakers. Authorities arrested and charged Harvey with murder.

**Elva Melendez, 63**

El Paso // April 16, 2015

Victor Melendez, 72, stabbed and killed his wife Elva in the kitchen of their home. Melendez then went to the backyard and shot and killed himself. Police responded to a family violence call and found Elva's and Melendez' bodies. Elva had separated from Melendez. Elva is survived by her three adult children.

**Cecilia Olivas, 47**

El Paso // April 1, 2015

Jose Olivas, 58, shot and killed his wife Cecilia in the living room of their home. Olivas then shot and killed himself. A friend requested a welfare check. Authorities found Cecilia on the couch and Olivas in the bedroom with the gun beside him.

**Blanca Rivera, 29**

El Paso // July 30, 2015

Steve Quinteros-Rios, 25, shot and killed his wife Blanca inside their home. Neighbors witnessed Quinteros-Rios assaulting Blanca in the garage and attempted to intervene before he pulled her inside the house. Blanca's daughter was present. Authorities arrested and charged Quinteros-Rios with murder. Quinteros-Rios has a history of abusive behavior towards Blanca. Blanca is survived by her daughter, age 8.

**Karyna Rodriguez, 24**

El Paso // February 15, 2015

Chico Fierro, 24, assaulted and killed his girlfriend Karyna in the bedroom of their apartment. Fierro called authorities the day after she died and reported that he found her unconscious when he woke up. Authorities determined that Fierro caused her death and arrested and charged him with murder.

**Deanna Stewart, 38**

El Paso // April 10, 2015

Greg Dudley, 49, shot and killed his wife Deanna in the living room of their home. When Deanna's teenage daughter returned home from school, Dudley told her that Deanna left the home and he drove her daughter to Deanna's sister's home. Deanna's sister and daughter returned to the home two days later and discovered her body. Authorities arrested Dudley and charged him with murder. Dudley has a history of family violence towards Deanna and had sent her threatening text messages prior to her death. Deanna is survived by her two daughters.

## **FORT BEND COUNTY**

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### **Evelyne Ebane Epiepang, 52**

Mission Bend // April 8, 2015

Osa Alohanke, 56, stabbed and killed his fiancé Evelyne in their home. He also stabbed and injured Evelyne's sister. Another family friend was also at the home, but was not hurt. Deputies first responded when Evelyne called to report an earlier assault and Alohanke's threats to kill her. When the deputies arrived, Alohanke was not home. A few hours later, when Evelyne and her sister returned home, Alohanke attacked them. Authorities arrested and charged Alohanke with murder and aggravated assault.

### **Maria Delcarmen Ramirez, 63**

Mission Bend // February 6, 2015

Reinaldo Ramirez, 58, shot and killed his wife Maria in their home. Ramirez then shot and killed himself. At the time of the murder, Maria and Reinaldo were watching their four grandchildren, ages 2, 4, 9 and 14. The children escaped to seek help from neighbors and called 911. Authorities responded to the scene and discovered Maria and Ramirez' bodies.

### **Elizabeth Martin, 30**

Rosenberg // January 28, 2015

Cody Karasek, 26, shot and killed his ex-girlfriend Elizabeth in her home. Karasek also shot Elizabeth's friend Jeffrey Obersteller, 29. To increase her safety, Elizabeth had asked Jeffrey to stay with her. Elizabeth's three children were in the home during the shooting. Karasek fled the scene and led authorities on a pursuit before they shot and killed him. Elizabeth is survived by her three children, all under the age of 10.

## **FRANKLIN COUNTY**

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### **Wendy Gale Anders, 36**

Mount Vernon // May 10, 2015

Christopher Allen, 25, stabbed and killed his ex-girlfriend Wendy inside her bedroom in their home. Allen then contacted authorities and confessed to killing Wendy. Allen has a history of family violence with other partners including his ex-wife. A jury convicted Allen of murder and sentenced him to 50 years in jail. Wendy is survived by her three sons and two daughters.

## **GALVESTON COUNTY**

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### **Dee Parke Salyer, 84**

Friendswood // April 19, 2015

James Lee Salyer, 88, shot and killed his wife Dee in their retirement home. Salyer then shot and killed himself. Dee is survived by her 2 adult children.

**Stephanie Falcon, 26**

La Marque // December 28, 2015

Agustin Calderone, 29, strangled and killed his pregnant girlfriend Stephanie in their home. He then fled the scene. Bystanders in a public location called 911 to report Calderone behaving erratically. Authorities detained Calderone and after discovering Stephanie's body, charged him with capital murder.

**Raquel Mynon Howard, 28**

Texas City // April 17, 2015

Lorenzo May, 46, stabbed and killed his ex-girlfriend Raquel in her home. Her 3-year-old daughter was in the home. After May killed Raquel, he fled in her car. A person driving by the complex later saw Raquel's daughter outside of the home unaccompanied and took her to a nearby daycare center. Daycare staff notified authorities, who discovered Raquel's body. May later turned himself in to police. Authorities charged May with Raquel's murder. Raquel is survived by her daughter.

**GRAYSON COUNTY**

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**Rebecca Allen, 80**

Denison // September 17, 2015

Robert Allen, 77, shot and killed his wife Rebecca at their home. Allen then shot and killed himself. A relative requested a welfare check. Authorities discovered Allen's body in the driveway and Rebecca's body in the home. Rebecca is survived by two daughters and three sons.

**Maria Lupita Ventura, 25**

Sherman // June 30, 2015

Jimmy Wallace, 31, shot his girlfriend Maria and then drove her and her two young children, ages 2 and 3, in her vehicle. Wallace stopped at a gas station next to an ambulance and asked paramedics for help. Maria died from the injuries shortly after arriving at the hospital. Prior to her murder, Maria had planned to end her relationship with Wallace and expressed fear for her safety. Wallace has a history of violence, including a conviction for aggravated assault with a deadly weapon. Authorities arrested and charged Wallace with murder. Maria is survived by her three children.

**GREGG COUNTY**

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**LaDonna McWhinney, 41**

Longview // February 9, 2015

Patrick McWhinney, 44, shot and killed his wife LaDonna in their home. McWhinney then shot and killed himself. Neighbors reported hearing loud disturbance from the home during the night. Authorities responded to a welfare check and discovered their bodies. LaDonna is survived by her two adult daughters.



## GUADALUPE COUNTY

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### **Marcela Barrientos, 38**

Schertz // August 19, 2015

Eduardo Velazquez, 40, stabbed and killed his wife Marcela inside his home. He then stabbed and killed himself. Two of their children were in the home. A neighbor later found the children unattended in the neighborhood. When the neighbor contacted authorities, the children led them back to the home where they discovered Velazquez and Marcela's bodies. Marcela had separated from Velazquez and relocated out of state. Marcela had returned to Schertz to visit. Marcela is survived by her four children, three daughters, ages 3, 5, and 10, and one son, age 16.

### **Vivian Cases, 30**

Seguin // April 2, 2015

Michael Arce, 30, beat and killed his girlfriend Vivian in a brushy area near railroad tracks. Earlier in the day family and friends had called 911 when they witnessed Arce assaulting Vivian. Arce left with Vivian before authorities responded. Vivian's father filed a missing person's report. When authorities discovered Vivian's body three days later, they arrested and charged Arce with capital murder. Vivian is survived by her two daughters and one son.

## HARRIS COUNTY

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### **Angel McClosky, 44**

Baytown // November 13, 2015

John Orr, 45, shot and killed his wife, Angel in their home. He then shot and killed himself.

### **Linda Howell, 73**

Cypress // November 4, 2015

John Howell, 77, shot and killed his wife Linda in their home. He then shot and killed himself. His son tried to intervene and was injured by the bullet and a caretaker standing nearby was also shot; both survived their injuries. Linda is survived by her adult children.

### **Maria Alvarado, 33**

Houston // August 30, 2015

Juan Macedo, 38, shot and killed his wife Maria. He transported Maria's body to the hospital claiming she was killed in a drive-by shooting. Authorities arrested Macedo and charged him with murder.

### **Amanda Baird, 33**

Houston // June 2, 2015

Esteven Golightly, 43, beat and killed his ex-girlfriend Amanda in her home. Amanda's youngest daughter witnessed the assault. Golightly fled the scene and later that day he hung and killed himself. Amanda's roommate found her body and her daughter alone in the home. Golightly had a history of abusive behavior towards Amanda. Amanda is survived by her two daughters, ages 4 and 10.

**Monica Balderas, 33**

Houston // December 21, 2015

Abelardo Narvaez, 38, stabbed and killed his girlfriend Monica in the hotel room where they were staying. Monica's two teenage sons attempted to intervene and one of them restrained Narvaez as the other ran for help. Monica had contacted law enforcement in the past and reported being assaulted numerous times during their relationship. Authorities arrested and charged Narvaez with murder. Monica is survived by her sons, ages 16 and 18.

**Erika Benitez-Romero, 26**

Houston // May 13, 2015

Rutilio Aguirre, 41, shot his ex-girlfriend Erika in the bedroom of their home. Erika's child, age 1, was in the house at the time. Aguirre called his sister and told her to come to the home. Aguirre then shot himself. Police responded to a welfare check and found Erika and Aguirre. Emergency responders transported Ericka to the hospital where she died of the injuries. Aguirre was also transported to the hospital, where he died of his injuries. Erika is survived by her two children.

**Dominique Thibodeaux Carter, 27**

Houston // November 9, 2015

Lloyd Gibson Carter, 34, shot and killed his ex-wife Dominique outside of her mother's home. Carter fled the scene. Dominique had divorced Carter and sought services from a domestic violence program. Dominique met Carter at her mother's home that day to discuss visitation in a neutral location. Authorities apprehended, arrested and charged Gibson with murder. Dominique is survived by her daughter, age 2.

**Lesa Maria Davis, 43**

Houston // August 3, 2015

Felip Carrillo, 28, shot and killed his girlfriend Lesa in the driveway of her home. Neighbors reported hearing yelling and gunshots and a neighbor found Lesa's body on the driveway at the corner of one of the apartment buildings. Authorities arrested and charged Carrillo with murder.

**Blanca De Leon-Mazariegos, 44**

Houston // August 9, 2015

Felix Lozano-Hernandez, 56, shot and killed his ex-girlfriend Blanca in her home. Lozano-Hernandez fled the scene. Authorities charged Lozano-Hernandez with Blanca's murder; he remains at large.

**Veronica Flores, 38**

Houston // April 26, 2015

Benicio Lopez, 55, shot his wife Veronica in their home. Lopez then shot and killed himself. Emergency responders transported Veronica to the hospital where she died from the injuries. Prior to the shooting, Veronica had ended their relationship and sought a divorce. Veronica is survived by her two sons.

## HARRIS COUNTY continued

### **Vivette Foster, 53**

Houston // May 29, 2015

Donald Foster, 56, stabbed and killed his wife Vivette in their home. Vivette's daughter was on the phone with her when she died; her daughter called 911 requesting medical attention after the call went silent. Foster fled the scene and attempted to kill himself and survived his injuries. Authorities arrested and charged Foster with murder. Vivette is survived by her 2 adult children.

### **Maria Gomez, 43**

Houston // July 20, 2015

Lorenzo Gomez, 41, shot and killed his wife Maria in their home. Gomez then shot and killed himself. Police responded to a shooting in progress call and found their bodies. Maria is survived by her two daughters and her two sons.

### **Heidi Guerra, 29**

Houston // November 29, 2015

Jaime Reynoso, 23, strangled and killed his girlfriend Heidi. He then left Heidi's body in a ditch. An area resident discovered her body. After being questioned by investigators, Reynoso confessed to killing Heidi. Authorities arrested and charged him with murder.

### **Ebony Harris, 28**

Houston // February 25, 2015

Marcus Murphy, 29, stabbed and killed his girlfriend Ebony in her bedroom. A maintenance worker found Ebony's body and called the police. Three months later, authorities arrested and charged Murphy with murder. Ebony is survived by her two sons, ages 4 and 11.

### **Estela Hernandez, 53**

Houston // November 10, 2015

Teodoro Maldonado, 52, shot and killed his wife Estela in the bedroom of their home. He then shot and killed himself. Their daughter called 911 when she was unable to reach them or enter their home. Estela is survived by her two daughters and her son.

**Valerie Jackson, 40**

Houston // August 8, 2015

David Conley, 48, shot his ex-girlfriend Valerie in her home. Conley broke into Valerie's home through a window and shot and killed Valerie's husband, Dwayne Jackson, 50, and six of Valerie's seven children, ages 6, 7, 9, 10, 11, and 13 years. During a standoff, Conley fired shots at officers and eventually surrendered. Authorities arrested and charged him with capital murder with multiple victims and capital murder of a victim under 6 years old. He is being held without bail, Conley has a long history of severe family violence, including two previous convictions for assaulting Valerie and her son. One month before the murders, authorities had arrested and charged Conley for assaulting Valerie. Valerie is survived by her 15-year-old daughter.

**Elizabeth Jacquot, 47**

Houston // April 2, 2015

Austin Birdow, 44, shot his ex-girlfriend Elizabeth near her vehicle as she was leaving her workplace. When Elizabeth refused to reunite with Birdow, he shot her multiple times and fled the scene. Emergency responders transported Elizabeth to the hospital. Four days later she died from the injuries. Authorities located Birdow in Round Rock at a friend's apartment, then arrested him for aggravated assault and transported him back to Houston. After Elizabeth's death, authorities charged Birdow with murder.

**Tamara Lane-Barnard, 38**

Houston // January 24, 2015

James Barnard, 47, shot and killed his wife Tamara in the kitchen of their home. Three family members witnessed the shooting; one of Tamara's children fled to ask the apartment office manager for help. Authorities transported Barnard to the hospital for treatment of injuries, and arrested and charged him with murder. Tamara is survived by her two daughters and one son, all teenagers.

**Armandina Leach, 44**

Houston // July 1, 2015

Aaron Leach-Veliz, 42, shot and killed his wife Armandina in the driveway of their home. Armandina was meeting Leach-Veliz to drop off her son for a visitation when he shot her. Leach-Veliz hid outside the home and shot Armandina multiple times. Leach-Veliz fled the scene. A week before the murder, Armandina moved out of the home and sought a divorce, Authorities apprehended Leach-Veliz in Nuevo Laredo, Mexico a week later and charged him with murder. Armandina is survived by her daughter, age 11, and her son, age 16.

**Scherry McFarland, 26**

Houston // February 19, 2015

Victor Williams, 39, stabbed and killed his girlfriend Scherry in her bedroom and then hid her body in a closet. Williams called a family member and confessed to killing Scherry; he then fled the scene. Scherry's family reports they were not dating, however authorities reported that they were in a dating relationship. Authorities arrested and charged Williams with murder. Sherry is survived by her son, age 8.

## HARRIS COUNTY continued

### **Takita Mathieu, 26**

Houston // February 18, 2015

Marcus Crocker, 36, shot and killed his ex-girlfriend Takita at her workplace. Crocker then shot himself. Emergency responders transported Crocker to the hospital where he died two days later. Crocker had a history of family violence. Four months prior to her murder, Takita had ended the relationship and reported to police and family that Crocker stalked, threatened and harassed her. The day of the murder, Takita made an additional report that she feared for her life. Takita is survived by her daughter, age 2.

### **Veronica Mercado, 26**

Houston // November 6, 2015

Jonathan Figueroa, 23, shot and killed his ex-girlfriend Veronica in her home. Figueroa also shot and killed Veronica's daughter, age 1. Figueroa fled the scene. Figueroa had made statements to a friend that caused concern and the friend asked for a welfare check. When police arrived they found the front door forced open. Prior to the murder, Veronica had ended the relationship. Figueroa had a history of violence towards Veronica. Authorities charged Figueroa with capital murder; he remains at large. Veronica is survived by her son, age 10 and her daughter, age 6.

### **Caroline Minjares, 36**

Houston // May 21, 2015

Richard Deluna, 40, stabbed and killed his girlfriend Caroline in the bathroom of her home. Deluna broke into Caroline's house while she slept and killed her. He remained in the house and answered the phone when Caroline's mother called. He then hung and killed himself. A family member discovered their bodies and called 911. Prior to the murder, Caroline told family members she feared for her safety and decided to end their relationship. Caroline is survived by her two daughters, ages 5 and 14.

### **Aileen Nava, 23**

Houston // August 18, 2015

Mario Ramirez, 23, shot and killed his girlfriend Aileen in her home. When police arrived, Mario claimed that Aileen shot herself. Upon further investigation, authorities arrested and charged Ramirez for murder; he pled guilty and received a sentence of 40 years in prison. Aileen is survived by her two daughters and her son.

### **Sheila Nicholson, 54**

Houston // November 16, 2015

Jessie Nicholson, 59, shot his ex-wife Sheila in the parking lot of a grocery store. Nicholson fled the scene. Emergency responders transported Sheila to the hospital, where she died from the injuries. Authorities charged and arrested Nicholson for murder.

**Brianca Marie Noel, 19**

Houston // June 1, 2015

Christopher Hollie, 18, shot and killed his girlfriend Brianca in her home. Authorities arrested and charged Hollie with manslaughter. Brianca was a high school senior with many aspirations.

**Consuelo Pena, 57**

Houston // July 27, 2015

Juan Lopez, 51, stabbed and killed his girlfriend Consuelo inside their home. He then fled the scene. Consuelo's children found her body and contacted police. Prior to the murder, Consuelo feared for her safety and had attempted to obtain a protective order. Authorities charged Lopez with murder; he remains at large. Consuelo is survived by her adult children.

**Nancy Romeus, 23**

Houston // December 23, 2015

Jarrell Darrington, 26, stabbed and killed his girlfriend Nancy in his aunt's house. Darrington and Nancy were visiting for the holidays from out of state. The aunt called 911. Nancy's son was in the house. Darrington fled the scene, but after a short search authorities apprehended, arrested, and charged him with murder. Nancy is survived by her son, age 3.

**Melva Smoke, 79**

Houston // July 11, 2015

William Smoke, 89, shot and killed his wife Melva in their bedroom. He then shot and killed himself. The couple's adult daughter, upon not hearing from her parents, obtained a key to their home and found them deceased. Melva is survived by her adult daughter.

**Linda Vu, 24**

Houston // January 27, 2015

Dante Thomas, 20, stabbed and killed his girlfriend Linda in the bedroom of her home. Linda's two children were present. Later Linda's roommate found her children in the home and Linda's body. Authorities arrested and charged Thomas with murder. Linda is survived by her son and daughter, ages 4 and 6.

**Nishena Ware, 30**

Houston // July 20, 2015

Robbin Clay, 25, beat his girlfriend Nishena. The assault caused Nishena to become comatose. While Nishena was in hospice care, Clay attempted to suffocate her. Nishena ultimately died from the injuries. Authorities arrested and charged Clay with murder.

## HARRIS COUNTY continued

### **Michelle West, 38**

Houston // April 26, 2015

Kenneth Jones, 58, shot and killed his girlfriend Michelle in the bedroom of their home. He then shot and killed himself. Before the shooting, Michelle called a friend, requesting help. Michelle's friend alerted authorities. Jones called a friend before killing himself and confessed to killing Michelle. Police arrived and heard shots fired. A month prior to the murder, Michelle gave birth to a son; because Jones did not want children, she arranged an open adoption for him.

### **Melissa Morden, 36**

Humble // October 10, 2015

Troy Clay II, 42, stabbed and killed his girlfriend Melissa in her home. Clay confessed to murdering her to Melissa's mother and then fled to Mexico. Melissa's mother called police. Authorities apprehended Clay. Clay has a history of violence against former dating partners. Clay pled guilty and received a sentence of 55 years in prison.

### **Leola Carter, 71**

Kingwood // May 21, 2015

Emanuel Carter, 70, shot and killed his wife Leola in the bedroom of their home. He then shot and killed himself. Authorities discovered their bodies when they responded to a reported suicide call.

## HAYS COUNTY

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### **Joyce Chamness, 85**

San Marcos // June 9, 2015

Ben Chamness, 87, shot and killed his wife Joyce in her hospital room. He then shot and killed himself. Their daughter discovered them in the room and notified authorities. Joyce was in the hospital being treated for a serious illness. Joyce is survived by her adult son and adult daughter.

## HIDALGO COUNTY

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### **Maria de Lourdes Garcia, 35**

Edinburg // March 8, 2015

Wilton Guardiola-Barahona 29, stabbed and killed his girlfriend Maria in their home. Authorities charged Guardiola-Barahona with murder; however he remains at large. Maria is survived by three children.

### **Mary Lou Dominguez, 32**

Hidalgo // April 3, 2015

Manuel Dominguez Mercado, 47, beat, cut and killed his wife Mary Lou and placed her body in a vehicle he abandoned near the Mexico border. He then absconded to Mexico. Authorities charged Dominguez Mercado with Mary Lou's murder; he remains at large.

**Janet Williams, 66**

McAllen // April 5, 2015

Thomas Williams, 66, shot and killed his wife Janet in their home. Williams then shot and killed himself. A friend became concerned after not hearing from Janet, went to their home, discovered their bodies, and called the police. Janet is survived by her two sons.

## HOOD COUNTY

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**LaVera Dooley, 65**

Granbury // February 12, 2015

Tommy Dooley, 51, shot and killed his wife LaVera in her vehicle in her driveway. LaVera called 911 and was killed while on the call. Dooley then called 911 to confess. A jury found Dooley guilty of capital murder and sentenced him to life in prison. Dooley had a history of violence towards LaVera. LaVera is survived by her three adult children.

## JEFFERSON COUNTY

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**Kayla Huertas-Castaneda, 24**

Beaumont // March 15, 2015

Raul Ramirez-Castaneda, 41, shot and killed his wife Kayla in her living room. Two of their children were present. Ramirez-Castaneda left the scene, then returned to get his car keys. Authorities arrested and charged Ramirez-Castaneda with murder; he pled guilty to murder and received a sentence of 50 years in prison. Prior to the murder, Kayla separated from Ramirez-Castaneda. Kayla is survived by her three children.

**Reggie Jokodola, 38**

Beaumont // September 12, 2015

Sean Laverne, 27, stabbed his girlfriend Reggie in the living room of her home. Laverne then set fire to Reggie's body. Neighbors heard Reggie screaming that night and called 911. Authorities arrested and charged Laverne with murder.

## KERR COUNTY

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**Melissa Arreola, 32**

Kerrville // November 16, 2015

Eric Fabro, 41, stabbed his girlfriend Melissa inside their home. Authorities responded to a 911 call and found Fabro. Emergency responders transported Melissa to a local hospital where she died from the injuries. Fabro confessed to stabbing Melissa. Authorities arrested and charged Fabro with first degree murder. Melissa is survived by her three children.



## KERR COUNTY continued

### **Rhonda Masters, 44**

Kerrville // February 1, 2015

Cody Smith, 49, shot and killed his girlfriend Rhonda in the bedroom of their home. Two days before Rhonda's murder, police responded to their home twice. On the second response, they found Rhonda in her car with her dog and encouraged her to stay with family, which she did. Later, Rhonda returned to the home she shared with Smith, and police responded to a welfare check request and confirmed Rhonda was safe inside the home. Hours later Smith confessed to shooting Rhonda, claiming that it was an accident; authorities arrested and charged Smith with murder. Smith was on probation at the time of the murder.

## LIBERTY COUNTY

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### **Angela Porter Russell, 45**

Cleveland // January 24, 2015

Orville Russell, 70, shot and killed his wife Angela and left her body in a field. Family reported Angela missing when she stopped responding to their attempts to contact her. Weeks after her murder, Russell confessed and led investigators to her body. Russell received a 75-year sentence after being convicted of murder. Angela is survived by her five teen and young adult children.

### **Ethel Hall, 73**

Dayton // September 20, 2015

James Hall, 75, shot and killed his wife Ethel in the bedroom of their home. Hall then shot and killed himself. The couple's son became concerned when he was unable to reach them, discovered their bodies and called 911. Ethel is survived by her two adult sons.

## LUBBOCK COUNTY

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### **Jennifer Cruz, 27**

Lubbock // April 18, 2015

David Carrillo, 29, shot and killed his ex-girlfriend Jennifer in her bedroom. When Carrillo broke in to her home, Jennifer called 911. Carrillo also shot and killed Jennifer's boyfriend, Albert Martinez, 30. Carrillo then fled the scene. Authorities arrested and charged Carrillo with two counts of capital murder. Jennifer had ended the relationship with Carrillo a few months earlier. Jennifer is survived by her two children.

### **Jessica Payton, 35**

Lubbock // October 31, 2015

Mark Bethel, 53, shot and killed his ex-girlfriend Jessica in their home. Bethel's cousin, Dave Bethel, also shot and killed Jessica's boyfriend Shawn Summers, 37. Authorities discovered Jessica's body in a creek weighed down by cinder blocks and Shawn's body in a burnt vehicle. Authorities arrested and charged Mark Bethel for Jessica and Shawn's murders and Dave Bethel for Shawn's murder. Jessica was pregnant at the time of her murder. Jessica is survived by her 3 teenage children.

**Denise Rardeen, 53**

Lubbock // December 29, 2015

Enrique Cuvillier, 30, strangled and killed his ex-girlfriend Denise in her home. A family member found Denise's body and called police. Authorities arrested and charged Cuvillier with murder and parole violation. Denise is survived by her five adult children.

**MAVERICK COUNTY**

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**Maria Pesina Rodriguez, 42**

Eagle Pass // December 24, 2015

Juan Ruiz, 51, shot and killed his wife Maria in her home. Maria's children were home. Prior to the shooting, Maria had ended the relationship and sought assistance and protection from local resources. Authorities arrested and charged Ruiz with murder. Maria is survived by her seven children.

**MCLENNAN COUNTY**

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**Laura Patschke, 47**

Crawford // July 6, 2015

James Brossett, 48, shot and killed his ex-girlfriend Laura in the bedroom of her home. Brossett broke into the home through the garage. Laura's son, age 18, attempted to intervene, and Brossett shot and injured him. Laura's two sons fled for help while her daughter hid in her bedroom as Brossett fled the scene. Several months prior to the murder, Laura had ended the relationship. Brossett has an extensive family violence history, including stalking and violating protective orders. Days before her murder, authorities issued an arrest warrant for stalking because Brossett had sent Laura repeated text messages and calls. Authorities arrested Brossett and charged with capital murder and attempted capital murder. Laura is survived by her two sons, ages 17 and 18, and her daughter age 13.

**Theresa Palomo, 44**

Waco // January 12, 2015

Jimmy Rosales, 45, strangled and beat his girlfriend Theresa inside her home. A family member found her body and called 911. Three days later, authorities arrested and charged Rosales with murder. A grand jury indicted Rosales on a murder charge. Theresa is survived by her four children.

**Rebecca Penix, 52**

Waco // September 13, 2015

Michael Penix, 52, shot and killed his wife Rebecca in the bedroom of their home. Penix contacted law enforcement and confessed to killing Rebecca. Authorities arrested and charged Penix with murder. Rebecca is survived by her adult daughter and son.

## MIDLAND COUNTY

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### **Amanda Hankins, 26**

Midland // June 11, 2015

Brandin Conley, 21, shot and killed his girlfriend Amanda in their home. After the shooting, Conley asked a friend Brandon Hampton, 22, to help him bury Amanda's body on his property. Amanda's grandfather reported her missing. Prior to her murder, Amanda had packed her belongings and planned to leave but returned home because her vehicle had a flat tire. Authorities arrested and charged Conley with murder. Conley pled guilty to murder and received a sentence of 49 years in prison.

### **Jennifer Sockey, 55**

Midland // April 27, 2015

Johnny Robertson, 50, beat and then burned his girlfriend Jennifer in the bedroom of her home. He left her partially conscious and burnt the house down by pouring lighter fluid in the kitchen. Police found Robertson nearby and arrested and charged him with murder. Jennifer is survived by her two daughters and son.

## MONTGOMERY COUNTY

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### **Michelle Becker, 33**

New Caney // August 6, 2015

John Weter, 31, stabbed and beat his girlfriend Michelle in the front yard of their home. Neighbors called the police when they saw Becker attacking Michelle. Michelle died in transport to a hospital. Michelle's two daughters were present and asked neighbors for help. Weter fled the scene. Authorities arrested and charged Weter with murder. Weter was indicted on first degree murder. Michelle is survived by her two daughters, ages 7 and 8.

### **Rachel Mt. Joy, 44**

The Woodlands // September 23, 2015

Billy Wischnewsky, 44, shot and killed his wife Rachel in their home. Wischnewsky then shot and killed himself. Earlier, Rachel called a family member to pick up their young child. After the child was picked up, another family member went to the home to check on Rachel and found both bodies. Rachel is survived by her two daughters, ages 5 and 12 years.

### **Sheri Roberts, 35**

The Woodlands // August 6, 2015

Drayton Norwood, 44, shot his wife Sheri while conducting a custody exchange at a gas station. Norwood then shot and killed himself. Sheri's sons were present. Emergency responders transported Sheri to the hospital where she was pronounced dead. Sheri had recently separated from Norwood and sought a divorce. Sheri is survived by her sons, ages 11 and 14.

## NACOGDOCHES COUNTY

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### **Dawn Bradley Lang, 72**

Garrison // July 16, 2015

Clifton Burgay, 81, shot and killed his wife Dawn in the living room of their home. Burgay confessed to a family member before shooting and killing himself. The family member contacted the authorities, who then found their bodies. Dawn is survived by her five adult sons.

## NUECES COUNTY

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### **Susanna Eguia, 30**

Corpus Christi // May 29, 2015

Arturo Garza, 30, kidnapped, beat and killed his pregnant girlfriend Susanna in an abandoned home. A local resident heard screams and called 911. When the police arrived they found Susanna's body in the garage. Garza has been convicted twice on assault charges. Authorities arrested and charged Garza with capital murder. Susanna is survived by her two children.

### **Denise Delgado, 28**

Corpus Christi // June 21, 2015

Luis Nieto, 29, stabbed and killed his wife Denise in their apartment. Nieto then stabbed and killed himself. The couple's two children were home at the time. Denise's son called 911 to report the murder-suicide. Denise is survived by her two sons, ages 6 and 9.

### **Heather Coglaiti, 33**

Flour Bluff // February 3, 2015

Jose Calderon, 46, shot and killed his ex-girlfriend Heather in her home. Calderon also shot and injured Heather's brother, Angelo Coglaiti. Calderon then shot and killed himself. The morning of her murder, Heather made a report to police that Calderon vandalized her vehicle and sent her threatening texts. Police then interviewed and released Calderon. Heather is survived by her two daughters and one son.

### **Lorraine Garcia, 41**

Robstown // September 17, 2015

Oscar Garcia, 45, shot and killed his wife Lorraine in the backyard of their home. Garcia then fled to Kingsville. Family members discovered Lorraine's body. Authorities later arrested and charged Garcia with murder. He pled guilty to murder and received a sentence of 45 years in prison. He has a history of domestic violence towards Lorraine and made multiple threats to kill her. Lorraine is survived by her two adult sons and two adult daughters.

## POLK COUNTY

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### **Andrea Piwko, 25**

Livingston // July 30, 2015

Christopher Williams, 39, beat and killed his girlfriend Andrea in their cabin. Williams then fled the scene. Williams' roommate called 911 but left prior to first responders arriving. Authorities arrested and charged Williams with first degree murder. A jury found Williams guilty of Andrea's murder and sentenced him to life in prison. Andrea is survived by her son, age 18 months.

## POTTER COUNTY

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### **Monica Barrientos, 29**

Amarillo // January 16, 2015

Joe Martinez Jr., 38, shot and killed his wife Monica in their home. Their three children were in the house at the time. When authorities arrived, Martinez pointed his gun at an officer, and fled. Then Martinez shot and killed himself in a neighbor's driveway. Monica is survived by her three young children.

### **Kendal Gisch, 22**

Amarillo // November 30, 2015

David Gisch, 22, shot and killed his wife Kendal in the business they owned together. Gisch then shot and killed himself. Two employees from a neighboring business discovered Kendal's and Gisch's bodies.

### **Joanna Salinas Olivas, 23**

Amarillo // January 24, 2015

Luis Alberto Olivas, 24, strangled his wife Joanna in their home. He then fled the scene. Emergency responders transported Joanna to the hospital, where she died from the injuries. Authorities arrested and charged Olivas with aggravated assault, and later charged him with murder. Joanna is survived by her four children.

### **Tammy Strout, 31**

Amarillo // November 9, 2015

Kameron Peaks, 30, ran over his ex-girlfriend Tammy with his vehicle on a highway. Peaks then drove Tammy to the hospital where she died from the injuries. Peaks confessed to striking Tammy intentionally; authorities charged him with manslaughter. Tammy is survived by her son.

## RANDALL COUNTY

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### **Joyce Taylor, 26**

Amarillo // August 17, 2015

Allen Taylor, 45, suffocated his pregnant wife in the bedroom of their home. He then hid her body in the bedroom. When authorities responded to a welfare check request from Joyce's mother, they discovered Joyce's body. They arrested and charged Taylor with tampering with evidence and capital murder of multiple persons. Joyce is survived by her son.

## SAN SABA COUNTY

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### **Maria De Los Angeles Ramirez, 18**

San Saba // February 11, 2015

Bernardo Ramirez, 27, ran over and killed his ex-girlfriend Maria with his vehicle outside her home. Maria's parents heard Ramirez verbally assaulting Maria and found her in the street. Ramirez then fled the scene. Prior to the murder, Maria had ended the relationship with Ramirez. Authorities charged Ramirez with murder and conducted a manhunt but were unable to apprehend him. He remains at large. Maria is survived by her son, age 3, and her daughter, age 1.

## SHELBY COUNTY

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### **Nicole Perry, 40**

Tenaha // November 27, 2015

Porter Perry, 42, shot and killed his wife Nicole in the driveway of her home. Perry then shot and killed himself. Perry had a history of violence and Nicole had separated from him. The murder occurred while Perry was visiting Nicole's home for the Thanksgiving holiday. Their adult son witnessed the shooting. Nicole is survived by her four children, two young adult sons and two teenage daughters.

## SMITH COUNTY

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### **Mechelle Hall-Bell, 35**

Tyler // January 15, 2015

Delithro Bell, 41, shot and killed his wife Mechelle on a rural county road. Bell then shot and killed himself. A bystander witnessed the shooting and contacted authorities. Prior to the murder, Mechelle had separated from Brown. Brown had a history of violence in previous relationships. Mechelle is survived by three teen and young adult daughters and one teen son.

### **Ty Underwood, 24**

Tyler // January 26, 2015

Carlton Champion, 21, shot and killed his ex-girlfriend Ty inside her car on a city road. A bystander heard gun shots, witnessed the car hit a utility pole, and contacted authorities. Prior to the shooting, Ty had ended the relationship, but Champion convinced Ty to meet him. Authorities arrested, charged and sentenced Champion to life in prison.

## STARR COUNTY

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### **Maribel Garza, 41**

Rio Grande City // October 5, 2015

Luz Marroquin, 37, shot and killed his wife Maribel in the home they shared. After killing Maribel, Marroquin shot and killed himself. Maribel's children were home at the time of the murder and called 911. Maribel is survived by her two teen children.

## TARRANT COUNTY

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### **Minerva Cisneros, 30**

Fort Worth // December 25, 2015

Arturo Sigala-Villavicencio, 28, shot and killed his girlfriend Minerva in the bedroom of their home. Minerva's children were in the home at the time. After killing Minerva, Sigala-Villavicencio fled to Mexico. A few months later, authorities arrested and charged Sigala-Villavicencio with murder. In August 2014, authorities arrested Sigala-Villavicencio for strangling Minerva, but a grand jury "no billed" him, which meant that the case did not proceed. Minerva is survived by her two daughters, ages 1 and 5, and her son, age 3.

### **Gracie Enriquez, 34**

Fort Worth // October 9, 2015

Erwin Butler, 36, shot and killed his wife Gracie in a parking lot of a fast food restaurant. Butler then shot and killed himself. In the months prior to the murder, Gracie had ended the relationship and sought a protective order. Gracie met Butler at the fast food restaurant for a custody exchange. Gracie's daughters, ages 9 and 13, witnessed the event. Gracie is survived by her three daughters.

### **Britney Eylar, 22**

Fort Worth // January 9, 2015

Jim Opry, 39, assaulted his girlfriend Britney with a caulk gun in front of their home. Britney died from the injuries eight days later. At the time of the assault, Britney ended the relationship and was packing her belongings. Opry has a history of violence towards former dating partners and had also been sentenced in 1992 to 10 years for the fatal shooting of a 14-year old girl. A jury sentenced Opry to 85 years in prison for manslaughter for Britney's death. Britney is survived by her three children.

### **Laurice Hampton, 48**

Fort Worth // March 28, 2015

Terry Martin, 46, shot his girlfriend Laurice in the bedroom of their home. Martin then shot and killed himself. Although critically injured, Laurice was able to call 911 and ask for help. Emergency responders took Laurice to the hospital where she died of the injuries. Martin had a history of violence towards Laurice and had been arrested previously for assaulting her. Laurice is survived by two daughters and a son.



**Patricia Spencer, 76**

Fort Worth // March 17, 2015

Bryce Spencer, 72, shot and killed his wife Patricia in their home. Spencer then shot and killed himself. Patricia is survived by two adult children, a son and daughter.

**Laura Cummings, 43**

Hurst // April 17, 2015

Randy Cummings, 42, strangled and killed his wife Laura at her home. Prior to the murder, Laura started the process of getting a divorce. She also obtained an emergency protective order against Cummings after he assaulted her in a church parking lot. The day of Laura's murder, she had a meeting to obtain a permanent protective order against Cummings. Authorities discovered Laura's body when they responded to a welfare check request. Authorities arrested and charged Cummings with capital murder as well as assault causing bodily injury and family violence for a previous offense.

**TAYLOR COUNTY**

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**Alexis Baker, 26**

Abilene // May 30, 2015

Cody Alvarez, 32, beat and killed his girlfriend Alexis with a blunt object in her home. Alexis' mother discovered her body and alerted authorities. The night before Alvarez murdered Alexis, he assaulted another woman. When authorities arrested him and another man for aggravated assault with a deadly weapon for that case, Alvarez confessed to killing Alexis. Alvarez has a history of violence against women he dated. He pled guilty to Alexis' murder and received a sentence of 60 years in prison.

**TRAVIS COUNTY**

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**Elizabeth Adame-Gaspar, 32**

Austin // April 12, 2015

Miguel Aguinaga-Rodriguez, 33, beat and killed his wife Elizabeth in her home. A babysitter contacted Elizabeth's friend when Elizabeth did not pick up her children. The friend found Elizabeth unconscious. Authorities arrested and charged Aguinaga-Rodriguez with first degree felony offense and assault charge for assaulting Elizabeth a week before the murder. Elizabeth is survived by her children.

**Catherine Dyer, 31**

Austin // November 16, 2015

Kevin Waguespack, 32, beat and killed his girlfriend Catherine in the bedroom of their home. Waguespack called a friend, then called 911 and confessed to killing Catherine and fled to Mississippi. Catherine's friend went to check on her after receiving a phone call from Waguespack. Authorities arrested and charged him with murder.

## TRAVIS COUNTY continued

### **Jeanine Keenan, 79**

Austin // December 6, 2015

Roy Keenan, 82, suffocated and killed his wife Jeanine inside their home. Keenan contacted authorities and stated he had killed Jeanine and planned to kill himself. When police arrived they found Jeanine and Keenan, deceased; their family dog was also dead.

### **Jeanne Crews, 46**

Leander // June 22, 2015

Charles McElreath Jr., 47, shot and killed his girlfriend Jeanne inside their home. He then shot and killed himself. McElreath's brother requested a welfare check when he was unable to reach him. When authorities responded they found their bodies. McElreath had a history of violence towards Jeanne. Jeanne is survived by her two daughters and one son, all adults.

## UPSHUR COUNTY

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### **Angela Mullins, 24**

Gilmer // October 3, 2015

Roger Mullins, 33, shot and killed his wife Angela in their home. Deputies responded after receiving calls about a disturbance regarding a man with a gun and became involved in a standoff with Mullins. After Mullins was arrested, authorities discovered Angela's body. Mullins has a history of violence and was charged a few months prior to Angela's murder with terroristic threat of a family member. Authorities arrested and charged Mullins with murder and a grand jury indicted Mullins.

## VICTORIA COUNTY

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### **Sonya Gutierrez, 43**

Victoria // July 25, 2015

Raul Gutierrez, 37, beat and killed his wife Sonya in their home. After killing Sonya, Gutierrez fled. Prior to the murder, Sonya had separated from Gutierrez and gone to the home to collect her belongings when he attacked her. Gutierrez later died after deliberately causing an accident in his vehicle. Sonya is survived by her son, age 9.

## WALKER COUNTY

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### **Timeshia Franklin, 34**

Huntsville // December 6, 2015

Earnest Utley, 63, shot and killed his ex-girlfriend Timeshia on the side of a busy road. Utley followed Timeshia while she was a passenger in another car. Utley pulled in front of her car, causing it to stop in the road. When Timeshia exited the vehicle, Utley shot her. Timeshia's friend who was driving the car escaped and called the police. Timeshia had recently ended the relationship. Authorities arrested Utley and charged him with murder. Timeshia is survived by her son.

## WEBB COUNTY

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### **Anjelica Martinez, 27**

Laredo // July 2, 2015

Juan Francisco De Luna-Vasquez, 33, beat, strangled and killed his wife Angelica in her home. De Luna-Vasquez ordered his children out of the home. After murdering Anjelica he took the children to a relative's house. He then fled, wrote a confession, attempted suicide and survived his injuries. De Luna-Vasquez had a history of family violence. Earlier in the year, Anjelica had separated from De Luna-Vasquez. Authorities arrested and charged De Luna-Vasquez with Angelica's murder. Angelica is survived by her three children, ages 3, 8 and 9.

### **Rosa Martinez, 49**

Laredo // August 2, 2015

Jose Dominguez, 68, beat his girlfriend Rosa after leaving a nightclub. Rosa went to a hospital for abdominal pain and died there from the injuries. Months later, authorities arrested and charged Dominguez with murder.

### **Amalia Elizabeth Perez, 38**

Laredo // April 30, 2015

Erick Tavares, 40, shot and killed his wife Amalia in their home. Tavares then shot himself. Amalia's mother called the police and went to their home after not being able to communicate with Amalia. Emergency responders transported Tavares to the hospital where he later died. Tavares had a history of family violence. Amalia had begun the separation process. Amalia is survived by her daughter, 10 years old.

## WILLIAMSON COUNTY

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### **Katie Eager, 24**

Cedar Park // February 17, 2015

Adam Solis, 31, shot and killed his girlfriend Katie in their home. Solis then fled to his parents' home in San Antonio. The next day Solis notified police that he had found Katie's body. Police arrested Solis at his family's home in San Antonio. Neighbors informed the police they heard a man screaming loudly during the time of Katie's death. Authorities arrested and charged Solis with Katie's murder.

### **Nury Valez-Derivera, 47**

Leander // September 5, 2015

Mauno Alcantara, 48, shot and killed his girlfriend Nury in the bedroom of her home. He then shot himself and died in route to the hospital. Nury's adult son, wife and their child were home during the time of the murder and contacted law enforcement. Alcantara had a history of violence towards Nury. Nury had recently ended the relationship. Nury is survived by her two adult sons.

## WILLIAMSON COUNTY continued

### **Jessica Hope Buzan, 43**

Taylor // March 9, 2015

Ryan Grace, 37, shot and killed his wife Jessica in the bedroom of their home. Grace then shot and killed himself. Before killing himself, Grace sent a text message to ask his father to check on them at home. Grace's father went to their home and discovered their bodies. Jessica is survived by her son, age 15.

## WISE COUNTY

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### **Socorro Taylor, 43**

Boyd // December 21, 2015

Jake Abel, 28, beat, cut, and killed his girlfriend Socorro in their home. Abel then moved Socorro's body and buried her in a shallow grave near his relative's property. Abel had a history of violence against Socorro. Authorities arrested Abel at his mother's home in Decatur for parole violation and charged Abel with first degree felony murder and second degree felony tampering with evidence.

## YOUNG COUNTY

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### **Leah Martin, 23**

Graham // May 28, 2015

Elton Blaire, 43, kidnapped, suffocated and killed his ex-girlfriend Leah near their workplace. Two other men, Billy Minkley Jr., and Ross Hellams, assisted Blaire in hiding Leah's body. Leah had been missing for two and half months before her body was found. Authorities arrested Blaire, Minkley, and Hellams and charged them with capital murder. Prior to her murder, Leah had ended her relationship with Blaire. Leah received threatening calls from an unknown woman hired by Blaire. Leah is survived by her daughter, age 2.

# **Go Purple**

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