

Family
Violence
Fatalities
in 2016

HONORING
TEXAS
VICTIMS



CONTENTS

3	INTRODUCTION
6	IDENTIFYING TRENDS TO INFORM DOMESTIC VIOLENCE RESPONSES
6	<i>Where Batterers Killed Women: County Data</i>
9	<i>Risk Across a Lifespan: Ages of Victims and Offenders</i>
10	<i>How Batterers Killed Their Intimate Partners: Means of Death</i>
11	<i>Victim Relationship to Perpetrator</i>
12	<i>Offender Status: Charged, Convicted, Killed by Police or Suicide</i>
12	<i>Murder/Suicide</i>
13	<i>Familicide</i>
13	<i>The Impact on Family and Friends</i>
14	SURVIVOR SAFETY: LEARNING FROM TRAGIC OUTCOMES
14	<i>Community Collaboration to Address the Threat of Firearms</i>
15	<i>Understanding Crucial Periods for Intervention</i>
16	<i>Technology Facilitated Abuse</i>
16	INNOVATION: SOLUTIONS FOCUSED RESPONSES
16	<i>A New Day for Victims: Victim-Advocate Privilege</i>
17	<i>Champions for Change: Collaborations Between Athletic Communities and Family Violence Programs</i>
17	<i>Alternative Light Source Technology</i>
19	<i>Traumatic Brain Injury: Understanding Impact and Treatment</i>
20	<i>Behind Broken Doors: Effective Media Reporting on Community Domestic Violence Issues</i>
21	THEIR STORIES: NARRATIVES OF WOMEN KILLED BY THEIR INTIMATE PARTNER IN TEXAS IN 2016
51	HONORING TEXAS VICTIMS REPORT METHODOLOGY
51	ABOUT TEXAS COUNCIL ON FAMILY VIOLENCE



Honoring Texas Victims recognizes, cherishes, and venerates women of all ages and walks of life who have died at the hands of their current or ex-boyfriend or husband.

This report uses the tragic Texas reality to help us come to know a little about these mothers, grandmothers, sisters, aunts, friends, helpers, leaders, doers, and beautiful women; and help us identify patterns in their stories. Unlike a natural disaster, domestic violence is preventable through action.

With these thoughts in mind, TCFV offers the following areas of analysis in relation to these fatalities: 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.

- *146 women killed by their intimate partners signifies a 7.6% decrease in intimate partner homicides from the high count of 158 in 2015.*
- *A man killed his current or former female intimate partner every 2.5 days in Texas.*
- *Victims' ages ranged from 15 to 92; 82 women were between the ages of 20-39.*
- *Fatalities occurred in 55 counties across the state. The county with the highest number of deaths was Harris (28), followed by Dallas (13), Tarrant (13), Bexar (11), and Collin (6).*
- *68% of perpetrators used a firearm.*
- *77% of perpetrators killed their partners in a home.*

Consider these key pieces of information regarding intimate partner murders of women perpetrated by men in Texas in 2016.

In 2016, law enforcement responded to almost 200,000 family violence incidents in Texas, averaging over 530 family violence incidents per day. The total number of reported family violence incidents in Texas last year was 196,564, representing a 0.9% increase from 2015. These incidents involved 214,815 victims and 208,764 offenders.¹ Texas family violence programs responded to these increasing needs by serving 72,782 survivors of family violence and their families in fiscal year 2016, but disappointingly, 39% of victims seeking services were turned away due to lack of space or resources to serve them.² According to the National Network to End Domestic Violence's one-day census of domestic violence services, calls to family violence hotlines across the state averaged 62 per hour,³ in total, victims made 172,573 calls to Texas family violence hotlines.⁴ In addition, 17,251 Texas residents contacted the National Domestic Violence Hotline in 2016.⁵

1 Texas Department of Public Safety, The Texas Uniform Crime Reporting Program (2016), available at https://www.dps.texas.gov/administration/crime_records/pages/crimestatistics.htm (last visited October 24, 2017)

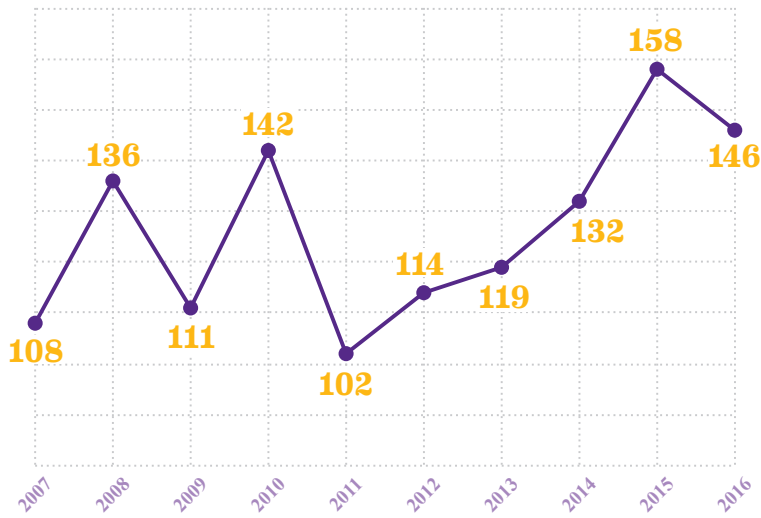
2 Texas Health and Human Service Commission Family Violence Program. *Texas Family Violence Program Statewide Report*. 2016. Available at <https://hhs.texas.gov/reports/2016/10/texas-family-violence-program-statewide-report-2016> (last accessed October 21, 2017).

3 National Network to End Domestic Violence, 11th Annual Domestic Violence Counts Census, Texas Summary (2016), available at https://nnedv.org/mdocs-posts/census_2016_handout_state-summary_texas/ (last visited October 24, 2017)

4 Texas Health and Human Services Commission Family Violence Program. *Family Violence Prevention Services Act Annual Federal Report*. 2016. Available upon request.

5 National Domestic Violence Hotline, Texas State Report (2016), available at <http://tcfv.org/resource-center/learn-the-facts/> (last visited October 24, 2017)

WOMEN KILLED IN DOMESTIC VIOLENCE HOMICIDES FROM 2007-2016

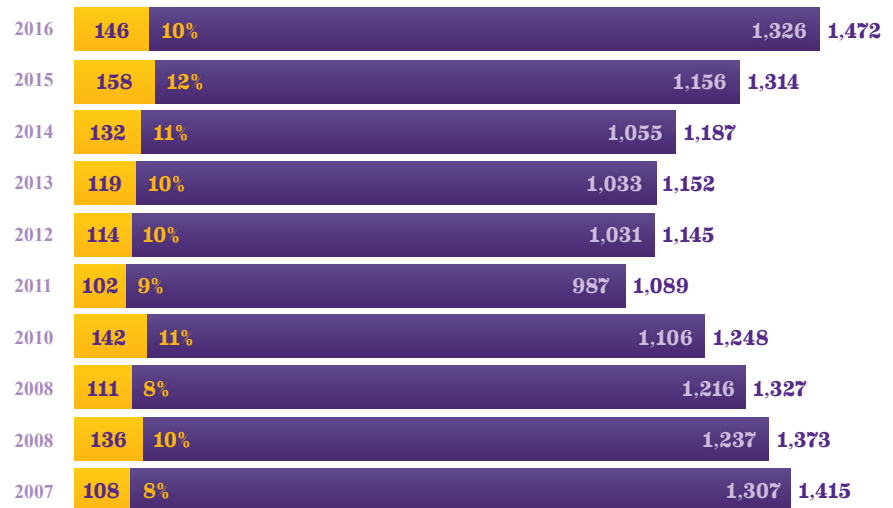


Although the number of women killed in domestic violence related homicides decreased 7.6% in 2016 from a high mark of 158 in 2015, 146 women killed represents the second highest year on record in the last 10 years.⁶

MALE PERPETRATED DOMESTIC VIOLENCE HOMICIDES COMPARED TO ALL HOMICIDES IN TEXAS FROM 2007-2016

Over the last ten years, one in every 10 homicides in Texas is perpetrated by a man killing his former or current female intimate partner.⁷

■ Women Killed by Intimate Partner
■ All Other Homicides in Texas
■ + ■ Total Homicides in Texas



Along with the narratives to follow, these patterns tell the individual and collective stories of the women killed. These data points offer a critical lens with which to examine domestic violence issues in the state of Texas and drive our response to predicting lethality and preventing violence. Communities across Texas are working towards sustaining time-tested responses like increasing victim safety and batterer accountability as well as implementing more effective approaches.

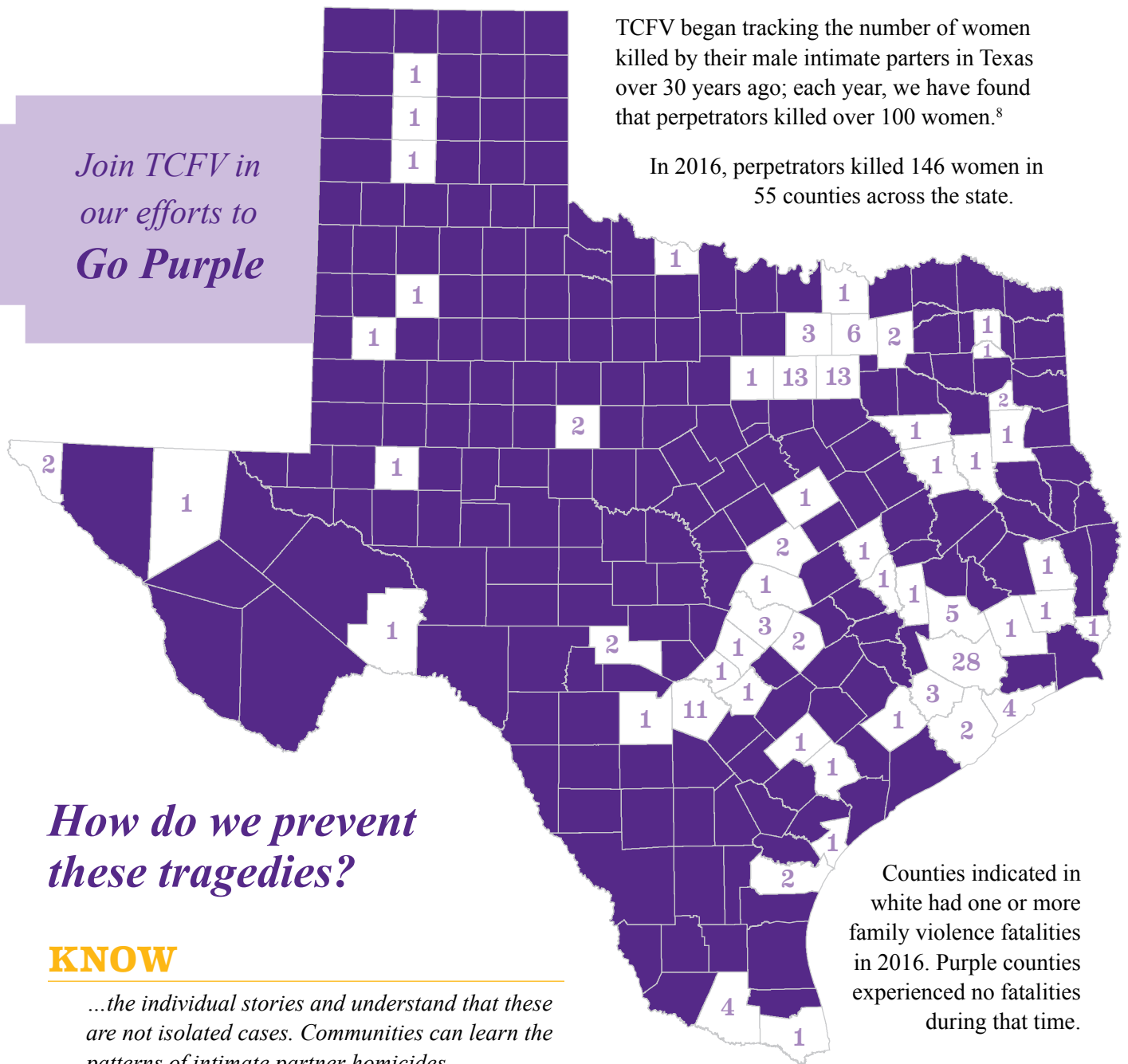
⁶ Analysis of data collected in TCFV's *Honoring Texas Victims Report* between 2007-2016.

⁷ Texas Department of Public Safety, The Texas Uniform Crime Reporting Program (2007- 2016), available at https://www.dps.texas.gov/administration/crime_records/pages/crimestatistics.htm (last visited October 24, 2017)

Join TCFV in
our efforts to
Go Purple

TCFV began tracking the number of women killed by their male intimate partners in Texas over 30 years ago; each year, we have found that perpetrators killed over 100 women.⁸

In 2016, perpetrators killed 146 women in 55 counties across the state.



How do we prevent these tragedies?

KNOW

...the individual stories and understand that these are not isolated cases. Communities can learn the patterns of intimate partner homicides.

PREDICT

...community members can equip themselves with knowledge 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 perpetuate intimate partner violence.

Participate in helping Texas Go Purple.

We know preventing family violence fatalities requires a strong commitment to offering victims safe alternatives, including access to family violence centers. Connect with us at www.tcfv.org.

8 Available at <http://tcfv.org/resource-center/honoring-texas-victims/>, (last visited October 24, 2017)

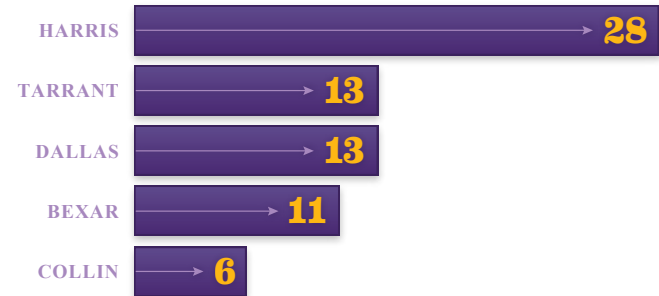
IDENTIFYING TRENDS TO INFORM DOMESTIC VIOLENCE RESPONSES

Where Batterers Killed Women: County Data

In 2016, intimate partner homicides occurred in 55 counties in Texas. Harris County, which includes the city of Houston had 28 homicides, ranking the highest among all Texas counties. The number of homicides in Harris County decreased in 2016, from 34 in 2015. Dallas County, which includes the city of Dallas, had 13 homicides in 2016. Tarrant County, which includes the cities of Fort Worth and Arlington,

experienced an increase from 6 homicides in 2015 to 13 homicides in 2016. Bexar County, which includes the city of San Antonio, experienced an increase from 9 homicides in 2015 to 11 homicides in 2016. Collin County, which includes the city of Plano, experienced an increase from 3 homicides in 2015 to 6 homicides in 2016.

2016 FATALITIES BY COUNTY



The chart below includes all counties with populations over 500,000 where at least one family violence homicide occurred in 2016, listed in order of population size. ▼

The majority of homicides occurred in the largest population centers of the state. In 2016, 63% of fatalities (92) occurred in counties with populations of 500,000 or more. Among large urban counties, homicides decreased in El Paso County, which includes the city of El Paso, from 9 in 2015 to 2 in 2016 and Williamson County, which includes the city of Round Rock, from 4 in 2015 to 1 in 2016.⁹ Counties with the highest per capita occurrence of family violence homicides in 2016 include: Montgomery (one homicide for every 56,065 female residents), Tarrant (one homicide for every 79,279 female residents) and Collin (one homicide for every 79,708 female residents).

Counties with Population Over 500,000	2016	2015	2014	2013	2012	5-year Total	2016 Population	2016 Prevalence (per capita female population)
HARRIS	28	34	23	20	30	135	4,589,928	1:82,455
DALLAS	13	13	10	20	9	65	2,574,984	1:100,622
TARRANT	13	6	10	11	6	46	2,016,872	1:79,279
BEXAR	11	9	5	7	5	37	1,928,680	1:88,895
TRAVIS	3	4	2	5	3	17	1,199,323	1:198,288
COLLIN	6	3	1	3	1	14	939,585	1:79,708
HIDALGO	4	3	3	1	4	15	849,843	1:108,567
EL PASO	2	9	5	2	4	22	837,918	1:213,250
FORT BEND	3	3	2	2	0	10	741,237	1:125,516
DENTON	3	2	2	2	3	12	662,614	1:112,203
MONTGOMERY	5	3	2	0	2	12	556,203	1:56,065
WILLIAMSON	1	4	0	1	0	6	528,718	1:268,589

⁹ Any decrease in domestic violence homicides in a community is promising; though more assessment over the coming years will be necessary to evaluate if these decreases represent a positive trend, and if so, what factors contribute to the sustained decrease.

For additional context regarding homicide rates in less populous counties, consider this five-year historical data for all counties where homicides occurred in 2016. Over the last five years, 21% of domestic violence homicides occurred in mid-sized counties with populations over 100,000 and less than 500,000. In 2016, four fatalities occurred in Galveston County, a prevalence rate of one homicide for every 41,755 female residents. Several mid-sized counties experienced significant decreases in the number of fatalities from 2015 to 2016. Among them: one fatality occurred in Potter County (a decrease from four in 2015), one fatality occurred in both McLennan and Lubbock County (both of which experienced three fatalities the prior two years), and Nueces experienced two fatalities (a decrease from four fatalities the prior two years). Nueces County recorded the highest number of fatalities over the last five years (13).

The chart below includes all counties with populations between 100,000 and 500,000 where at least one family violence homicide occurred in 2016, listed in order of population size. ▼

Counties with Population Between 100,000-500,000	2016	2015	2014	2013	2012	5-year Total	2016 Population	2016 Prevalence (per capita female population)
CAMERON	1	1	1	2	3	8	422,135	1:219,088
NUECES	2	4	4	2	1	13	361,350	1:91,602
BRAZORIA	2	2	4	1	0	9	354,195	1:87,486
BELL	2	2	2	2	1	9	340,411	1:85,443
GALVESTON	4	3	2	1	2	12	329,431	1:41,755
LUBBOCK	1	3	3	1	2	10	303,137	1:153,690
McLENNAN	1	3	3	1	2	10	247,934	1:126,942
BRAZOS	1	1	0	0	0	2	220,417	1:108,666
HAYS	1	1	1	1	0	4	204,470	1:102,848
MIDLAND	1	1	3	1	1	7	162,565	1:80,795
GUADALUPE	1	2	0	0	0	3	155,265	1:78,564
TAYLOR	2	1	1	0	0	4	136,535	1:34,816
COMAL	1	0	1	1	1	4	134,788	1:68,338
RANDALL	1	1	0	0	0	2	132,501	1:67,311
WICHITA	1	0	1	0	1	3	131,838	1:63,678
PARKER	1	0	0	0	0	1	129,441	1:64,979
GRAYSON	1	2	1	1	1	6	128,235	1:65,528
GREGG	2	1	1	0	1	5	123,745	1:31,617
POTTER	1	4	1	1	2	9	120,832	1:58,482

The chart below includes all counties with populations under 100,000 where at least one family violence homicide occurred in 2016, listed in order of population size. ▼

In 2016, 28 fatalities occurred in counties with populations less than 100,000 residents. Among them, Kerr and Bastrop Counties have experienced the highest number of fatalities over the last five years. In Kerr County, two homicides have occurred for three of the last five years, a 2016 prevalence rate of one homicide for every 13,340 female residents. In Bastrop County, two homicides occurred each year in 2015 and 2016, and one homicide occurred each year in 2013 and 2014. The prevalence rate in Bastrop County in 2016 is one homicide for every 20,352 female residents.

Counties with Population Under 100,000	2016	2015	2014	2013	2012	5-year Total	2016 Population	2016 Prevalence (per capita female population)
VICTORIA	1	1	1	0	1	4	92,467	1:47,066
HUNT	2	0	0	0	0	2	92,073	1:23,294
ORANGE	1	0	0	0	0	1	84,964	1:42,907
BASTROP	2	2	1	1	0	6	82,733	1:20,352
LIBERTY	1	2	0	0	0	3	81,704	1:41,342
HENDERSON	1	0	1	0	0	2	79,901	1:40,909
ANDERSON	1	0	1	0	0	2	57,734	1:22,459
HARDIN	1	0	1	0	0	2	56,322	1:28,499
RUSK	1	0	1	0	0	2	52,732	1:25,048
CHEROKEE	1	0	1	0	0	2	51,668	1:25,266
KERR	2	2	0	2	0	6	51,504	1:13,340
MEDINA	1	0	0	0	0	1	49,283	1:23,754
WHARTON	1	0	1	1	0	3	41,735	1:21,285
TITUS	1	0	0	0	0	1	32,592	1:16,524
GRIMES	1	0	2	0	0	3	27,671	1:12,590
ARANSAS	1	0	0	1	0	2	25,721	1:12,963
MOORE	1	0	0	0	1	2	22,120	1:10,618
TYLER	1	0	1	0	0	2	21,320	1:9,807
DEWITT	1	0	0	0	0	1	20,865	1:9,932
ROBERTSON	1	0	0	0	0	1	16,751	1:8,493
CAMP	1	0	0	0	0	1	12,867	1:6,614
TERRY	1	0	0	0	0	1	12,799	1:5,990
CULBERSON	1	0	0	0	0	1	2,198	1:1,112
TERRELL	1	0	0	0	0	1	812	1:404

Although the prevalence of homicides appears greater in rural communities than in more urban communities, the homicides do not occur annually in most rural communities as is the case in most of the urban communities. The average of each of three groups of counties produces a more similar prevalence rate. The average prevalence rate in counties with populations under 100,000 is one if every 89,084 women; the average prevalence rate in counties with populations between 100 and 500,000 is one in every 76,652 women; and the average prevalence rate in counties with populations over 500,000 is one in 94,706 women.

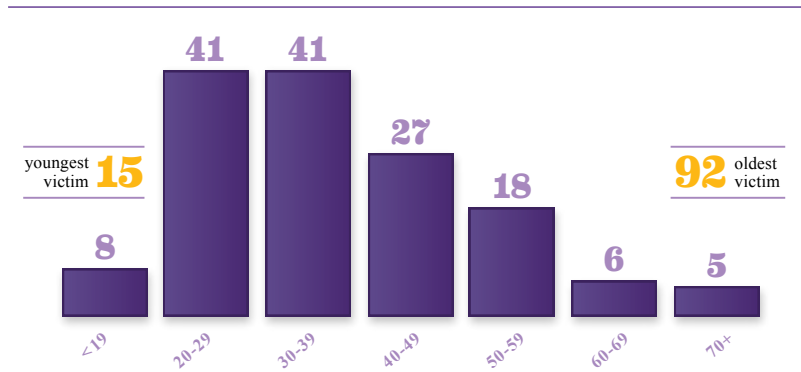
*Risk Across a Lifespan:
Ages of Victims and Offenders*

The ages of women killed by their intimate partners in 2016 range from the youngest teen victim at age 15 to the oldest victim at age 92. Victims between the ages of 20-29 (41) and 30-39 (41) comprise the highest percentage of victims. Victims between the ages of 15-19 increased from 4 in 2015 to 8 in 2016. There was a significant decrease in victims over the age of 70 from a high mark in 2015 of 15 to 5 in 2016.

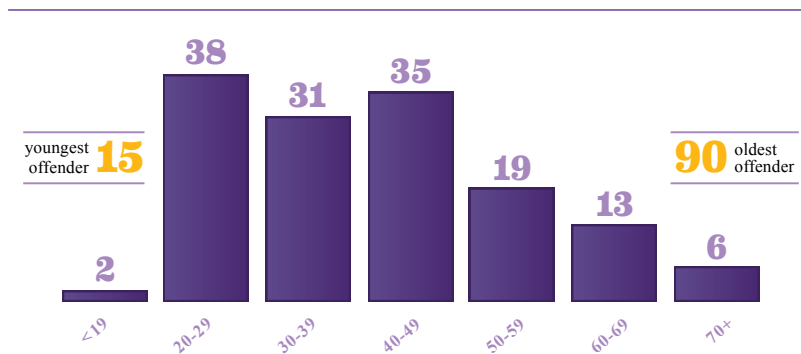
The youngest perpetrator of intimate partner homicide in 2016 was 15 and the oldest perpetrator was 90. Offenders ages 20-29 (38) represent the most prevalent age group, followed by offenders ages 40-49 (35), and then by offenders ages 30-39 (31).

Women in their 20s and 30s represent the majority of victims. As noted below, women between the ages of 30-39 represented the highest number of victims in 2010-2013 and again in 2015. However, the difference between the number of victims between the ages of 20-29 and 30-39 have become more similar over the last seven years. Specifically, women between the ages of 25-34 seem to be at increased risk. In 2016, one third of victims (50) were between the ages of 25-34.¹⁰ According to a report from the National Domestic Violence Hotline, the largest portion of contacts from Texas in 2016 are between the ages of 25-36 (40.6%).¹¹ This period of life appears to represent a time when women experience a significant increased risk for family violence injury or homicide and a time when they seek help to mitigate the risks.

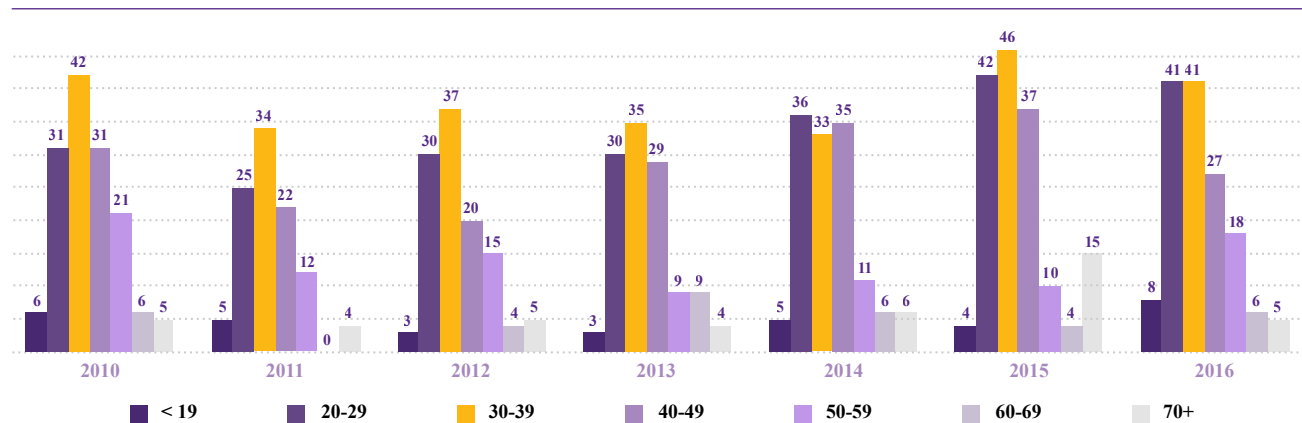
VICTIM AGE: 2016



OFFENDER AGE: 2016



COMPARISON OF VICTIM AGE CATEGORIES FROM 2010-2016

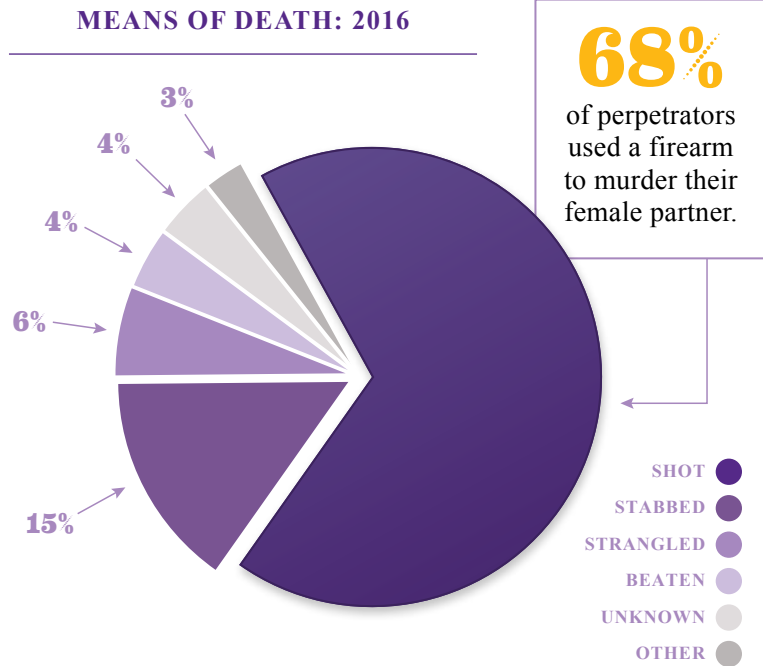


10 Analysis of data collected in TCFV's *Honoring Texas Victims Report* between 2012-2016.

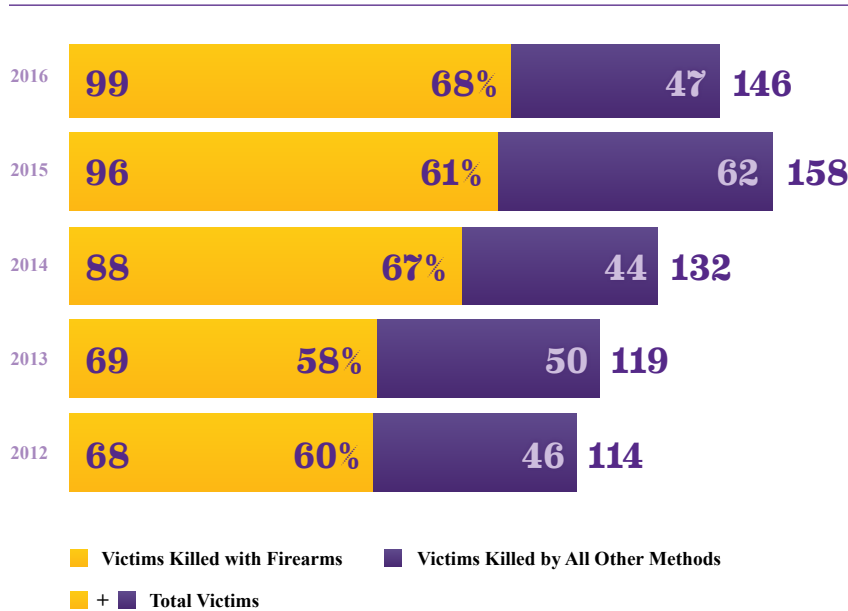
11 National Domestic Violence Hotline, Texas State Report (2016), available at <http://tcfv.org/resource-center/learn-the-facts/> (last visited October 24, 2017)

How Batterers Killed Their Intimate Partners: Means of Death

In 2016, 99 men (68%) used firearms to kill their current or former intimate partners. Twenty-two men (15%) stabbed and killed their partners, nine men (6%) strangled and killed their partners, and six men (4%) assaulted their partners with their hands or other objects. Three men used their vehicles to kill their partners and one man drowned his partner. In six cases, the method of murder was undetermined or undisclosed because of the extended length of time the victims were missing after the homicides occurred.



VICTIMS KILLED WITH FIREARMS COMPARED TO TOTAL NUMBER OF VICTIMS FROM 2012-2016



The increase in the number of intimate partner homicides over the last five years is accounted for by an increase in victims killed by firearms. In 2012, 68 perpetrators used firearms to kill their intimate partners; the total number of women killed the same year was 114. In 2016, 99 perpetrators used firearms to kill their intimate partners; and the total number of women killed was 146. Gun deaths account for 97% of the entire increase of women killed between 2012 and 2016, from 114 to 146.¹²

Gun deaths account for 97% of the entire increase of women killed between 2012 and 2016.



Victim Relationship to Perpetrator

In 2016, the most common relationship between perpetrator and victim was husband and wife (47%), which includes relationships categorized as common-law marriages, as well as 12% of married victims and perpetrators who separated prior to the homicides. Boyfriend and girlfriend relationships comprised 32% and former boyfriend-girlfriend relationships comprised 18% of the represented relationships. Consistent with prior years, divorced couples represented the smallest portion of victims at 3%.

Forty percent of women killed in 2016 had made attempts to end their relationships or were in the process of ending the relationship when they were murdered. This includes women who had reconciled after prior attempts to end their relationships.

Where Murders Happen: Location

In 2016, 113 of the 146 perpetrators (77%) killed their partners or ex-partners in their home. Eleven fatalities occurred in public places and nine fatalities occurred in vehicles. Locations of nine murders were undisclosed or undetermined because the perpetrators attempted to hide the remains of the victims in secondary locations after the homicides occurred. In these cases, only the location of where law enforcement located the victims was reported.

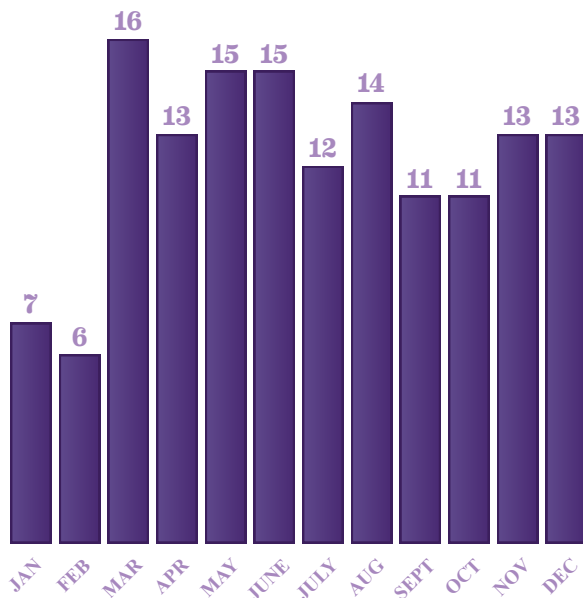
Leaving does not equal safety.

40% of women killed in 2016 had made attempts to end their relationships or were in the process of leaving when they were murdered.

Home and safety are not synonymous.

77% of perpetrators killed their partners in a home.

FATALITIES BY MONTH: 2016

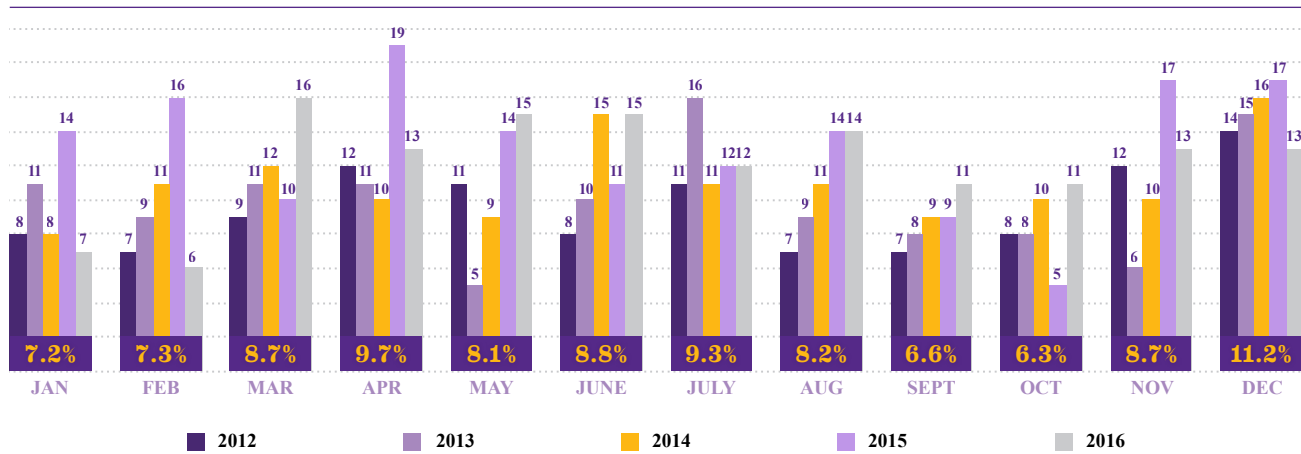


When Murders Occurred: Month and Date Information

On average, a man killed his female intimate partner every 2.5 days in Texas in 2016. The highest number of fatalities occurred in March (16), followed by May (15) and June (15). During each of these months, significant clusters of homicides occurred. Between March 14-20, 8 fatalities occurred, with two fatalities on March 14 and two fatalities on March 16, and then one fatality each day March 17-20. The single day with the most fatalities occurred in May, when four women were killed on May 18. In June, five fatalities occurred on June 16 and June 17. The least amount of fatalities occurred in February (6) followed by January (7). During these months, fatalities did not occur in clusters.

In a comparison of data from the last five years, December has more fatalities on average than any other month (11.2%), followed by July (9.3%). The fewest fatalities occur in October (6.3%) on average, followed by September (6.6%).¹³

FATALITIES BY MONTH: 2012-2016



Offender Status: Charged, Convicted, Killed by Police or Suicide

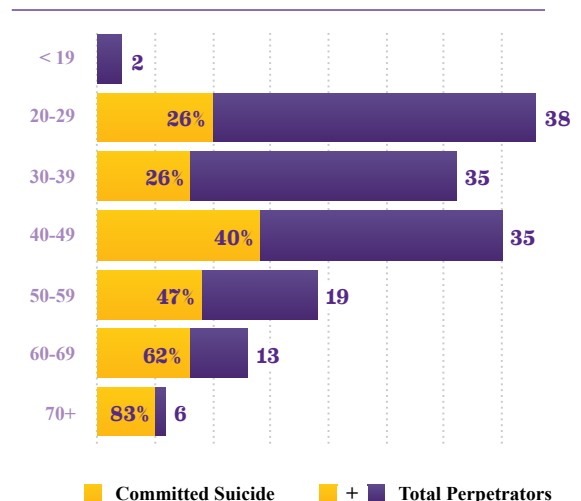
Ninety perpetrators (61%) have been involved in the criminal justice system since perpetrating the homicides. Of those, seven have been sentenced or convicted and 83 have been charged. Thirty-seven percent of perpetrators (54) committed suicide. Law enforcement officers killed two perpetrators and one remains at large. Forty-three percent (63) had a known history of violence.



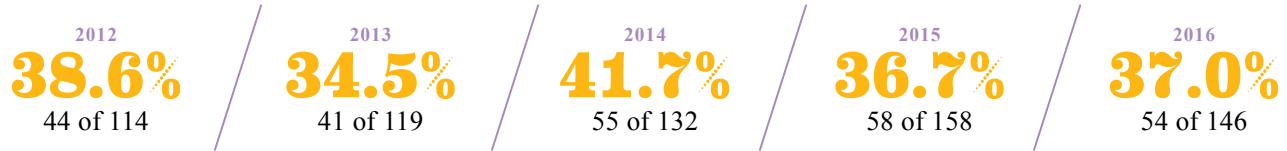
Murder/Suicide

Fifty-four perpetrators committed suicide at the time they murdered their current or former intimate partners. Ninety-one percent (49) of perpetrators who committed murder-suicides used a firearm to kill their current or former partners. Although the number of men who kill their partners decreases in older age categories, older men who do kill their partners are more likely to commit suicide at the time of the murder. No perpetrators under the age of 19 committed suicide. Twenty-six percent of perpetrators between the ages of 20-29 and 30-39 committed suicide. Compare that with 40% of men between the ages of 40-49 and 47% of men between the ages of 50-59. The likelihood of suicide increases significantly for men between the ages of 60-69, with 62% committing suicide, and again men over the age of 70, with 83% committing suicide.

MURDER-SUICIDE PREVALENCE BY AGE CATEGORY: 2016



Over the last five years in Texas, approximately one third of offenders have committed murder-suicides.



In the most recent national analysis of murder-suicides, Violence Policy Center estimates nearly 11 murder-suicide events occur in the United States every week. Of the 282 murder-suicide events reviewed in the report, 93% involved a firearm and 72% involved intimate partner violence; 93% of intimate partner victims were women.¹⁴

Familicide

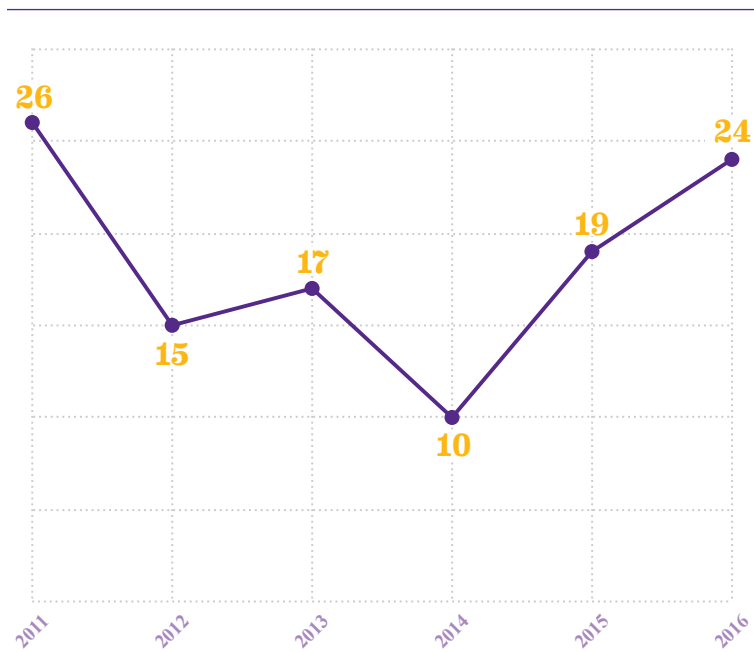
In this analysis, familicide describes incidents when the perpetrator kills his current or former intimate partner and one or more of the couple’s children prior to committing suicide. In 2016, Texas experienced eight incidents of familicide – a significant increase from the prior year total of zero. In addition to the eight women killed, familicide perpetrators also killed eight children ranging in age from 2 to 11 years old and two adults, ages 24 and 74. The youngest man to commit familicide in 2016 was 20 and the oldest was 90; the rest of the perpetrators ranged in ages from 37 to 58.

The Impact on Family and Friends

In 2016, perpetrators killed 99 women who were mothers resulting in 253 adults and minor children who lost their mothers. Of those, 183 (72%) were children, teens, and young adults. Sixty-two children were present at the time of the murders.

Perpetrators killed 24 family members and friends, including 13 children, during the murders of their current and former intimate partners. This represents the highest number of related victims counted since 2011 when perpetrators killed 26 family members and friends. On the following page, we list the 2016 victims by their name, age, and relationship to the woman killed.

FAMILY AND FRIENDS KILLED: 2011-2016



24
family members
and friends killed

4
family members
and friends injured

183
children lost
a parent

¹⁴ Violence Policy Center, American Roulette: Murder-Suicide in the United States (2015), available at <http://www.vpc.org/studies/amroul2015.pdf> (last visited October 24, 2017).

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

Alejandro Rodriguez, 3, son of Erica Rodriguez

Paula Nino, 20, friend of Erica Rodriguez

Ariel Ratliff, 14, daughter of Sandtrece Ratliff

Cynthia Morris, 37, mother of Kirsten Fritch

Breanna Pavlicek, 13, sister of Kirsten Fritch

Charles Morton, 96, father of Vicki Acker Flanery

Cheyenne Vinton, 15, daughter of Wanda Vinton

David Martinez, 24, boyfriend of Shania Ashbaker

Debra Lynn Echtle, 51, friend of Tylene Franklin

Diederik VanDeWege, 3 months, son of Shanna VanDeWege

Edris Edris, 24, stepson of Sofya Ali

James Tews, 20, boyfriend of Elizabeth Adams

Laing Russler, 7, son of Kelly Russler

Jayden Evans, 10, son of Kelly Russler

Jeremiah Cormier, 10, son of Candace Cormier

Johnel Francis, 24, boyfriend of Lakeisha Lewis

Kathy Boobar, 49, sister of Karen Bigham

Leroy "LJ" Friedel, 3, son of Jennifer Friedel

Madelyn Rychetski, 11, daughter of Brenda Luera Dolan

MJ Srinivasan, 2, son of Natalie Srinivasan

Sienna Srinivasan, 5, daughter of Natalie Srinivasan

Nanett Summerlin-Winfield, 74, daughter of Elizabeth Stokely

Nicholas Copeland, 27, boyfriend of Tina Carter

Vickie Ann Gonzales, 51, mother of Nicole Gonzales

SURVIVOR SAFETY: LEARNING FROM TRAGIC OUTCOMES

Community Collaboration to Address the Threat of Firearms

As noted above, Texas experienced a 46% increase in the number of perpetrators who used firearms to kill their intimate partners over the last five years.¹⁵ Nationwide, approximately 50 women are killed each month by an intimate partner using a gun¹⁶ with Texas victims represented disproportionately: the 99 Texas women killed with a firearm last year comprised 16.5% of all the women killed with a firearm by an intimate partner yet Texas comprises only 8.6% of the U.S. population.¹⁷

In addition to the lethal outcomes from the mix of firearms and domestic violence, perpetrators regularly use firearms to intimidate and threaten survivors and many survivors are at risk for non-fatal injuries from firearms. In a recent study, 4.5 million women reported that their abusive partners threatened them with a gun.¹⁸

Texas state and federal laws prohibit domestic violence offenders with misdemeanor family violence offenses or respondents in protective orders from legally possessing firearms. As noted in previous Honoring reports, coordinated community response systems in local communities must play a critical role in enforcing these critical life-saving legal provisions by establishing firearm surrender protocols. A few Texas communities have instituted formal, jurisdiction-wide policies; in others, dedicated individuals have instituted protocols and procedures in those cases over which they have control. That said, as we continue to support local communities and those working in the civil and criminal justice fields in these efforts, TCFV fosters training on the laws and practice, better incorporation of firearms-smart advocacy within family violence centers, and development by state agencies of a will and a way to address the overlap of firearms and domestic violence.

¹⁵ In 2012, 68 perpetrators used firearms to kill their partners; in 2016, that number rose to 99.

¹⁶ Everytown for Gun Safety, Guns and Domestic Violence Fact Sheet, Analysis of Federal Bureau of Investigation, Supplemental Homicide Report (2009-2013), available at: <https://everytownresearch.org/guns-domestic-violence/> (last visited October 24, 2017)

¹⁷ U.S. Department of Commerce, United States Census Bureau. Quick Facts: Texas (2016 estimates), available at: <https://www.census.gov/quickfacts/TX> (last visited October 24, 2017)

¹⁸ 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 October 23, 2017)

Lethality assessment protocols (LAPs) offer communities another opportunity to respond to the risk of lethal violence. LAPs provide law enforcement with a screening tool for lethality risk factors, particularly related to the risk posed by firearm access. The screening assessment most commonly used in LAPs asks survivors if the perpetrator has access to a gun, if the perpetrator has ever threatened them with a lethal weapon and if the survivor believes the perpetrator is capable of killing them.¹⁹ While the assessment tools examine other risk factors, these particular screening questions identify survivors whose risk is compounded by a perpetrator’s willingness to use lethal force and access to firearms. Cooperative working relationships between law enforcement agencies and family violence programs facilitate connections to advocacy services and access to shelter for survivors in danger. In point of fact, the year prior to implementing a LAP in Bryan, Texas, law enforcement agencies made two referrals to family violence services. In the first six months following LAP implementation, the number of referrals increased dramatically to 140.²⁰ Communities which institute LAPs should be sure to develop safe and effective firearm surrender protocols as well, as obtaining information about firearms without taking action increases the risk to the victims who are disclosing.

Working collaboratively across systems, communities can reduce the number of domestic violence homicides. For more on any of these approaches, consider contacting TCFV staff.

Understanding Crucial Periods for Intervention

In 2016, 40% of women killed by their intimate partners had attempted to end their relationships prior to their murders. Attempts to end relationships pose clear risks to survivor safety. Women who end their abusive relationships are at increased risk of being killed during the time period immediately following their separation attempt. The lethality risk decreases after three months and again after one year post-separation.²¹ Texas homicides in 2016 correspond to these national trends. For cases in this report where information about the timeline of separation was available, 15 women died within the first two weeks of ending their relationships; several of these women were killed the day they announced their plans to end the relationships. Five more women were killed in the first three months post separation.

Proximity in Time to Homicides	0-2 weeks	2-4 weeks	1-3 months	3-6 months	6 months-1 year	1-2 years	2 or more years
ENDED RELATIONSHIP	15	3	2	1	4	2	2
LAW ENFORCEMENT REPORTS	5	1	2	0	4	2	1

Perpetrators who killed their partners six months or more after separation typically had post-separation contact with survivors because of divorce proceedings, mediation, or custody arrangements. Often the homicides occurred in close proximity to a scheduled court date or other civil legal proceeding related to divorce or custody. Several narratives in this report describe safety planning strategies that survivors employed surrounding their separation, such as moving out or staying temporarily in places other than their own homes, asking friends or family to be present when the perpetrator picked up belongings, as well as making police reports and seeking protective orders. In at least four cases, perpetrators killed their partners in retaliation for making police reports or seeking a protective order.

Examining the timeline of separation underscores the need for safety planning that addresses both immediate and long-term risk factors and screens for lethality risk factors the perpetrator poses.

19 J. Campbell, D. Webster, and N. Glass, The Danger Assessment: Validation of Lethality Risk Assessment Instrument for Intimate Partner Femicide, *Journal of Interpersonal Violence* (2009), available at <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/18667689> (last visited October 24, 2017)

20 Information provided by Brazos County District Attorney’s Office and Twin City Mission in Bryan, Texas.

21 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 October 24, 2017)

Technology Facilitated Abuse

Technology continues to revolutionize access and enhance victims' ability to connect quickly to critical community services and ultimately to life-saving services. Unfortunately, the same technology that increases survivors' safety also serves as a tool for perpetrators to abuse, stalk and harass victims. Commonly referred to as technology facilitated abuse, it is often undetected allowing perpetrators to gain unsanctioned access to their current or former partners. Among the 2016 cases described in this report, at least six batterers engaged in technology facilitated abuse to monitor, track, harass, and/or impede the victim from accessing safety.

The technologies misused in these cases represent only a snapshot of the potential for technology facilitated abuse by perpetrators. With 97% of family violence programs reporting that abusers use technology to exert control over victims, we know that many other victims profiled in our report experienced technology misuse that went unreported. Technology facilitated abuse occurs often in the lives of survivors, for example, batterers create fake social media accounts to impersonate other individuals and gain information about a victim, as well as post nonconsensual information or images of a survivor and routinely utilize children's cellphones, social networks, and laptops to exert control over their intimate partners.²²

Law enforcement and advocates should assess for technology misuse with all survivors and employ safety planning strategies that bolster victim safety and maintain connection. Reviewing technology misuse helps survivors stay informed about the potential consequences.²³ TCFV staff are available to provide more on safety planning strategies that respond to the ever-changing nature of technology facilitated abuse.

INNOVATION: SOLUTIONS FOCUSED RESPONSES

A New Day for Victims: Victim-Advocate Privilege

Family violence affects one out of three Texans, much higher than the national average of one in four. In just one year, over 72,000 survivors and their families sought shelter or services from a family violence center in our state. These survivors know that seeking help is hard. Seeking help is even harder when you leave an abusive relationship where you may have been told that no one will believe you, that the violence is normal, or you have been cut off from your friends and family. We should all ask ourselves, "What can each of us do to help these survivors to seek help safely?"

TCFV worked with advocates, allies and others to determine how best to address this continuing challenge for survivors. Ultimately TCFV approached Representatives Abel Herrero and Todd Hunter and Senator Chuy Hinojosa during the 85th Texas Legislative Session to pass House Bill 3649, the Victim Information Privacy (VIP) Act. HB 3649 amended the Texas Family Code (TFC) to add Chapter 93 which creates a privilege related to confidential communications occurring between an advocate and a victim of family violence. This critical privacy enhancement underscores that confidentiality stands at the core of safely sharing the intimate details of the abusive relationship and ultimately in healing.

Chapter 93 specifically outlines that this privilege exists as to the communications, both oral and written, between a community-based advocate and a family violence victim. As outlined in the Chapter 93 (TFC), the law applies to a narrow list of advocates who work directly in one of the approximately 80 family violence centers across our state and who has attained at least 20 hours of training and work directly in a family violence center.

²² National Network to End Domestic Violence, Tech Safety (2014), available at: https://static1.squarespace.com/static/51dc541ce4b03ebab8c5c88c/t/54e3d1b6e4b08500fcb455a0/1424216502058/NNEDV_Glimpse+From+the+Field+-+2014.pdf (last visited October 6, 2017).

²³ *Id.*

Chapter 93 carries a few exceptions including a limited instance related to potential intersections with the justice system, specific exceptions within a family violence agency to share information within the advocacy process or to foster effective support groups, and mandatory reporting of child abuse or neglect and abuse, neglect, or exploitation of the elderly or disabled. To learn more about these specifically please contact TCFV.

As Texas implements this promising, watershed safety tool for victims, we must stand together as communities to honor this now privileged information. A collaborative approach across all systems to supporting this privacy protection will allow more victims to come forward and seek the services they need when they need it most. As one Texas survivor said, “Confidentiality is hope.”

*Confidentiality
is hope.*

Champions for Change: Collaborations Between Athletic Communities and Family Violence Programs

Athletic communities increasingly use strategic prevention efforts to address domestic violence before it begins. At the center of Texas athletic culture, high school football holds a rich legacy, and has historically promoted connection within communities. And as prominent influencers, coaches have the unique opportunity to create lasting impact on their teams and in their communities. By addressing family violence through education and spreading awareness, coaches can leverage their leadership to stop violence before it begins.

Increasingly, coaches have joined the effort to combat the negative narratives of athletes illustrated in the news and actively sought opportunities to determine their game plans within the movement. In 2017, the Texas State High School Coaches Association hosted a Leadership Summit where TCFV was represented at table. Coach Randy Barnes of Rains Independent School District approached TCFV in an attempt to reset the clock when it comes to the gender culture in his school district. Coach Barnes looked to implement violence prevention training with his athletes and ultimately decided to start with increasing educational opportunities and spreading awareness.

In connecting with TCFV, Coach Barnes eventually decided to train his entire coaching staff in the Coaching Boys into Men (CBIM) violence prevention curriculum and challenge them to implement it with all male athletes at the beginning of the 2017-2018 school year. TCFV also connected him with the local family violence center, Women in Need in Greenville, to further train his staff. As a direct result of that effort, Rains ISD invites Women in Need staff to table every home game and make announcements asking their fans to take a stand against family violence and allow ongoing prevention programming from the Women in Need prevention team.

This approach offers a great example of how football leaders can help to transform communities. TCFV certainly stands ready and able to offer resources and advice to others interested in implementing similar or different prevention approaches.

Alternative Light Source Technology

Ever hurt yourself by hitting your elbow? If so you know what advocates and survivors of violence also know: not all pain comes with a visible injury. Indeed batterers often purposely leave no visible injury by targeting certain parts of the body or use types violence less likely to leave a visible injury.

Nevertheless, the law does not require a visible injury; prosecutors only have to prove beyond a reasonable doubt that the victim felt pain.²⁴

24 See for example Texas Penal Code, Section 22.01 – Assault.

Even strangulation, one of the strongest indicators of lethality in domestic violence cases, can leave victims with only mild markings or none at all. In one study of 300 strangulation cases, researchers found that photographable injuries sufficient for use in court existed in only 15% of cases.²⁵ Although invisible to the human eye, alternative light source (ALS) technology could be the key to helping prosecutors enhance their cases from tenuous to compelling beyond a reasonable doubt.

ALS uses different wavelengths of light to illuminate bleeding beneath the skin. It works by applying a variety of filters to the light shining on the subject of the image to enhance clarity. These filters allow on-scene investigators to isolate specific wavelengths of light in order to determine which wavelength the sub-surface injury most readily absorbs, making it detectable to the human eye and not altering the injury in any way.²⁶ Instead, it compensates for the inability of white light – comprised of all wavelengths – to penetrate the surface of the skin, especially skin with darker pigmentation.²⁷ Because ALS applies uniform light to the entirety of the image being captured, it does not distort the accuracy of the photograph. Indeed, criminal courts have recently affirmed its validity as a reliable form of forensic technology and a best practice in the field.²⁸

In one study of 300 strangulation cases, only 15% produced photographable injuries sufficient for use in court.

For years, experts – especially forensic nurses – have used ALS in sexual assault cases, as the filtered light also helps illuminate bodily fluids and other markings indicative of rape and sexual violence. Just as in cases of sexual violence, in domestic violence cases visible manifestation of physical injuries may be temporary and many victims may delay reporting for safety or other reasons. Or the physical injury may have occurred below the surface, yet result in potentially life-threatening ramifications even days later.²⁹

A few jurisdictions currently use ALS in sexual assault response and several communities anticipate utilizing the still-new technology to improve investigation and ultimately to contribute to more successful prosecutions related more specifically to domestic violence. For instance, the Willmar Police Department in Willmar, Minnesota uses four such cameras in their squad cars; the Sheriff's Department also uses them.³⁰ The Indianapolis Police Department has also purchased 40 similar cameras using a VAWA grant and will launch a pilot project upon receiving these.³¹

As more law enforcement agencies acquire ALS and prosecutors become adept at using it in court, this legal intervention, coupled with prevention education, local program services, and holistic efforts in coordinated community response, could change the landscape of domestic violence prosecution in Texas.

25 Strack, Gael B., JD, McClane, George E. MD and Dean Hawley, MD. "A Review of 300 Attempted Strangulation Cases Part I: Criminal Legal Issues," *The Journal of Emergency Medicine*, Vol. 21, No 3, 2001.

26 *State v. Smith*, 868 S.W.2d 561 (Tenn. 1993)

27 Vance Jr., Cyrus R. (2016). *DA Vance announces release of 'Domestic Violence Initiative' task force report* [Press Release]. Retrieved from <http://manhattanda.org/press-release/da-vance-announces-release-%E2%80%9Cdomestic-violence-initiative%E2%80%9D-task-force-report>

28 Hermann, Peter. "New technology helps convict domestic abuse suspect." *The Baltimore Sun*. 22 Sept., 2010. http://www.baltimoresun.com/bs-mtblog-2010-09-new_technology_designed_to_det-story.html

29 Strack, McClane, and Hawley, *infra*; Funk, M. & Schuppel, J. (2003) Strangulation injuries. *Wisconsin Medical Journal*, 102(3), 41-45; also see The National Domestic Violence Hotline website at <http://www.thehotline.org/2016/03/15/the-dangers-of-strangulation/>.

30 They obtained their cameras from a commercial company called Crimes Science, Inc. For more about their products and services, go to crimesciencesinc.com.

31 TCFV thanks the El Paso District Attorney's Office for their further investigation regarding the use of ALS: the preceding information came from direct conversations between the El Paso DA's Office staff and staff from the mentioned communities in September 2017.

Traumatic Brain Injury: Understanding Impact and Treatment

Consider that in 2016, six percent of the Texas women killed by intimate partners were strangled, and four percent were beaten as means of death. Approximately 90% of family violence incidents of physical assaults involve injuries to the head and/or neck and pose the risk of traumatic brain injury that can be a serious, life altering, and sometimes lethal consequence of these assaults.³²

In light of this reality, although the intersection of traumatic brain injury and family violence represents a new area of discourse, clearly we must focus on the ways survivors of family violence may experience the effects of untreated traumatic brain injury.

Traumatic brain injury (TBI) is defined as an injury to the brain caused by external physical force; TBI can occur from penetrating injuries caused by a weapon or foreign object, closed head injuries caused by blows to the head or severe shaking, and cutting off of oxygen as the result of strangulation or suffocation. In 2015, the Fort Bend Women's Center began screening all clients who participate in the intake process for traumatic brain injury. They found that 75% of the 182 individuals screened reported an incident capable of causing a brain injury.³³

Approximately 90% of family violence incidents of physical assaults involve injuries to the head and/or neck and pose the risk of traumatic brain injury.

Symptoms of traumatic brain injury can pose significant problems to survivors. While dealing with a violent and controlling partner or any variety of challenging circumstances around the abuse experience, survivors may also have symptoms of TBI concurrently affecting them. Symptoms can include becoming overwhelmed easily and struggling to finish tasks or remember details. Other cognitive symptoms can include decreased attention span and inability to solve problems. These symptoms may cause a person to seem unmotivated or lacking initiative or ability because their brain cannot organize tasks, sustain motivation, interpret language, and maintain concentration.³⁴

TBI presents in behavioral and physical symptoms that can also be detrimental to a survivor's resilience. Behavior symptoms include volatility and aggression, inappropriately flat demeanors, changes in inhibition levels, and increased levels of impatience. Physically, they may experience headaches, neck pain, nausea and issues with their vision.³⁵ Obviously, symptoms of TBI can easily work against victims going through legal, criminal justice and child protective systems. These symptoms can negatively affect survivor's participation in the prosecution process, or victims may lose their rights to children to CPS or in a custody dispute due to the symptoms of their traumatic brain injury. In addition, depression, anxiety, substance abuse and suicide have a likelihood of co-occurring after a traumatic brain injury.

In groundbreaking response to these realities, the Fort Bend Women's Center has become a leader in Texas on this issue. Using the HELPS Brain Injury Screening Tool, the program integrated a short assessment for brain injury into their general intake process. The Center offers clients found to experience traumatic brain injury services specific to this issue; for instance, the Center offers a Neurofeedback Training Program, which they launched in 2014. Neurofeedback training, also called EEG biofeedback or neurotherapy, is a non-invasive process in which patients complete exercises that help train brainwaves back into patterns of cognitive functioning

³² Arosarena, O.A., Fritsch, T.A., Hsueh, Y., Aynehchi, B., & Haug, R. (2009). Maxillofacial injuries and violence against women, *Archives of Facial Plastic Surgery*

³³ Information provided by Fort Bend Women's Center.

³⁴ Webinar: Domestic Violence and Traumatic Brain Injury: Understanding the Link, held by the Texas Council on Family Violence, Monem, A. and Brown, J. (2015)

³⁵ *Id.*

and emotional self-regulation. The training involves sensors placed on the client's scalp while they are asked to relax and watch an animation on a screen. Through the use of positive reinforcement, animations and music continue to play while the brain moves toward a healthier state. The animations and music stop if the brainwaves indicate disruptive activity. This learning process requires 30-40 sessions of 30 minutes. The treatment program has shown positive results in reducing depression, anxiety, posttraumatic stress and TBI symptoms.³⁶

Behind Broken Doors: Effective Media Reporting on Community Domestic Violence Issues

In 2015, Corpus Christi Caller-Times embarked on a process of incorporating solutions journalism into their work with a specific focus on domestic violence in their community and launched the reporting project Behind Broken Doors. From the outset of the project, the Caller Times engaged community members responding to domestic violence including the Women's Center of South Texas, the Corpus Christi Police Department, Nueces County District Attorney, the Nueces County Sheriff's Office and local legislators as well as the TCFV.

In their reporting, the Caller-Times, a daily paper with a circulation of 45,000, examines local issues affecting domestic violence outcomes and covers nationally recognized models of successful domestic violence initiatives. Their coverage has included reports on the 24 Hour Initiative piloted in El Paso, as well as initiatives in New Haven, CT and St. Paul, MN.³⁷ In addition to promising initiatives the Caller Times reports on family violence homicide cases, systemic gaps, challenges victims experience and community solutions. Coverage also includes legislative updates, public awareness events and calls for action.

Nueces County had an active community-driven coalition to address domestic violence issues prior to the launch of this reporting project, but the attention and public awareness generated by Behind Broken Doors encouraged more community members to become a part of the coalition. One significant change that developed from the coalition meetings and occurred in response to articles profiling 2016 homicides was the expansion of the Corpus Christi Police Department's family violence unit. The unit is now staffed seven days a week and after business hours to allow for immediate follow up on domestic violence cases.³⁸

Moreover, the increased visibility of the issue in the community helped strongly influence the willingness of local legislators to take bills related to family violence in the 85th Legislative Session. Indeed, the trio of Representatives Abel Herrero and Todd Hunter and Senator Chuy Hinojosa took on the entirety of TCFV's Legislative Agenda. Certainly the visibility afforded by the Caller-Times contributed to this community commitment. In 2017, the Caller-Times received recognition for their reporting on domestic violence in the form of two statewide awards. The Freedom of Information Foundation of Texas awarded the paper the Nancy Monson Spirit of FOI Award. Two Caller-Times reporters, Natalia Contreras and Krista M. Torralva, received the Texas Gavel Award for their in-depth profile of a domestic violence homicide victim in the community and her attempts to attain safety from her abuser.³⁹

Too often media coverage of family violence sensationalizes tragic outcomes and offers little or no context to viewers or readers, leaving the impression that family violence is akin to a natural disaster. In reality, this is a cultural problem that can be solved. In contrast, the efforts of the Caller-Times generated responsible dialogue and community-based solutions to domestic violence, demonstrating that opportunities exist for media outlets to engage as partners in the work to end domestic violence in their communities.

36 Webinar: Domestic Violence and Traumatic Brain Injury: Understanding the Link, held by the Texas Council on Family Violence, Monem, A. and Brown, J. (2015)

37 K. Hammonds, Case study: 'Behind Broken Doors': How the Corpus Christi Caller Times moved the needle with its long-term reporting project on domestic violence (2016), available at: <https://thewholestory.solutionsjournalism.org/case-study-behind-broken-doors-d42f0dd02ea3> (last accessed October 24, 2017).

38 Corpus Christi Caller-Times, Police chief makes changes in light of family violence forums (2016), available at: <http://archive.caller.com/news/behind-broken-doors/police-chief-makes-changes-in-light-of-family-violence-forums-39aab156-6740-41fc-e053-0100007fccc-f--389675261.html> (last visited October 24, 2017)

39 Corpus Christi Caller-Times, Caller-Times wins Spirit of FOI, Texas Gavel awards for domestic violence coverage (2017), available at: <http://www.caller.com/story/news/local/2017/09/14/caller-times-wins-spirit-foi-award-domestic-violence-coverage/664145001/> (last visited October 24, 2017)

THEIR STORIES:

Narratives of women killed by their intimate partner in Texas in 2016



On the following pages, the Texas Council on Family Violence lists with great respect the names of each victim of intimate partner femicide in 2016.

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 with a focus on language that holds the offender accountable. TCFV includes additional relevant information when available through media and law enforcement reports that highlights lethality risk factors and other information that informs our best practices for enhancing survivor safety.

Intimate partner homicides end the lives of women who have roles as loving mothers, caring family members, and engaged community members. The women whose deaths are detailed here represent lives that left indelible marks on those around them. Many of them are remembered for the strong bonds they formed in their families and with their friends and for offering those around them kindness, compassion, encouragement and smiles that brightened rooms. Family members often described these women as the 'glue that held people together' and 'willing to do anything for anyone'. They took pride in their roles as mothers and in the work that they did as students and in their careers. TCFV joins their families, friends and communities in mourning their loss.

ANDERSON COUNTY

Maryl Matthews, 41

PALESTINE | OCTOBER 29, 2016

Michael Matthews, 41, shot and killed his wife Maryl inside their home. Matthews then shot and killed himself. Law enforcement responded to a family violence call, unsuccessfully attempted to reach someone inside the home, then entered the home and found their bodies.

ARANSAS COUNTY

Brenda Luera Dolan, 47

ARANSAS PASS | JUNE 29, 2016

Steven Dolan, 46, shot and killed his wife Brenda outside of their home. Dolan also shot Brenda's daughter, age 11, before shooting himself. Emergency responders transported Dolan and Brenda's daughter to the hospital where they each died from the injuries. Brenda's son and daughter were in the home at the time of the shootings. Brenda is survived by her adult son and daughter, age 13.

BASTROP COUNTY

Jennifer Friedel, 32

BASTROP | SEPTEMBER 10, 2016

Leroy Friedel, Jr., 40, shot and killed his wife Jennifer while she was inside their home. Friedel fired the shots from outside of the home through a window. Friedel also shot and killed their son, age 3. He then shot and killed himself. A concerned friend notified authorities. When authorities responded, they discovered their bodies.

Erica Rodriguez, 21

BASTROP | JULY 23, 2016

Alejandro Martinez, 20, shot and killed his girlfriend Erica outside her home. Martinez shot and killed their son, age 3, as well as Erica's friend Paula Nino, 20. Martinez also shot and injured Nino's daughter, age 2. Martinez then shot and killed himself. Neighbors heard the gunshots and called law enforcement.

BELL COUNTY

Angelica Nicole Santiago, 18

HARKER HEIGHTS | JULY 10, 2016

Matthew Stoddard, 22, shot and killed his girlfriend Angelica inside the bathroom of their home. Stoddard then contacted authorities and claimed that Angelica shot herself. Upon investigation, authorities arrested and charged Stoddard with murder.

BELL COUNTY *continued*

Erica Townsend-Whitfield, 22

KILLEEN | JULY 3, 2016

Angelo Townsend-Whitfield, 23, shot and killed his wife Erica inside her workplace. He then shot and killed himself. Several employees and customers were inside the store during the time of the murder. Townsend-Whitfield had a history of violence towards Erica. Erica and Townsend-Whitfield had lived in California. In order to escape the abuse, Erica had separated from him and relocated to Texas to stay with family.

BEXAR COUNTY

Abigail Winters, 37

LIVE OAK | MAY 18, 2016

Earl Otter, 48, shot and killed his girlfriend Abigail in the bedroom of their home. Otter then contacted law enforcement and stated Abigail committed suicide. After conducting their investigation, authorities arrested and charged Otter with murder. Abigail is survived by her son.

Kathy Ryder Chapple, 57

SAN ANTONIO | MAY 20, 2016

George Chapple, 60, shot his wife Kathy in their home. Emergency responders transported Kathy to a local hospital where she died. Chapple notified authorities and claimed Kathy entered the home after she was shot by someone else; however, after investigating, authorities determined Chapple was responsible for her death and arrested and charged him with murder.

Chrystal Espinosa, 29

SAN ANTONIO | JUNE 16, 2016

Charles Haltom, 29, stabbed and killed his girlfriend Chrystal inside their home. Chrystal's two sons were present at the time of the murder. Haltom contacted law enforcement and confessed to stabbing Chrystal. Chrystal was six months pregnant at the time of her death. Authorities arrested and charged Haltom with capital murder. Chrystal is survived by her sons, ages 8 and 11.

Shannon Gomez, 30

SAN ANTONIO | SEPTEMBER 3, 2016

Samuel Pereida, 30, stabbed and killed his girlfriend Shannon inside her home. Pereida then attempted to kill himself. Shannon's family requested two welfare checks when she did not pick up her three children from daycare. Officers responded the first day and were unable to enter the home lawfully. The following day, officers saw Shannon's body through a window and made entry into the home and located Pereida, locked in a bathroom. After transporting him to a hospital, authorities arrested and charged him with murder. Pereida has a history of violent behavior towards Shannon. Shannon had received three protective orders against Pereida. In 2014, Pereida received a sentence of three years in jail for assault causing bodily injury, family violence. Pereida was paroled before Shannon's murder even though his sentence was not set to expire until 2017. Shannon is survived by her three sons, ages 2, 3, and 7.

BEXAR COUNTY *continued*

Lori Ortiz, 33

SAN ANTONIO | MAY 18, 2016

Gabriel Martinez, 35, shot his wife Lori inside their home. He also attempted to shoot and kill himself. Law enforcement responded to the scene and transported Lori and Martinez to the hospital where Lori later died. Martinez survived his injuries and authorities charged him with murder. Lori had planned to end the relationship with Martinez. Lori is survived by her three children.

Eliyanis Ricard-Verdecia, 29

SAN ANTONIO | AUGUST 19, 2016

Jenny Fernandez Cabrera, 39, shot and killed his girlfriend Eliyanis inside their home. He then shot and killed himself. Police had previously responded to the home when neighbors reported Cabrera abusing Eliyanis. The day of the murder, a neighbor notified police of gunshots fired. Police officers responded and discovered the couple deceased in the apartment.

Rose Rodriquez, 45

SAN ANTONIO | JUNE 17, 2016

Robert Alcoser, 44, shot and killed his ex-girlfriend Rose in the driveway of her home. Alcoser waited for Rose to return home after a friend dropped her off and then shot her. Alcoser then shot and killed himself. Several months prior to the murder, Rose had ended the relationship and had filed harassment reports against Alcoser. Rose is survived by her two sons.

Casey Drawert, 42

SAN ANTONIO | MARCH 11, 2016

David Ross, 46, shot his wife Casey in the bedroom of her home. Casey had ended the relationship the day before the murder and had contacted a friend for help, asking her to come to the home as she feared Ross would harm her. When the friend arrived, she heard gun shots and entered the home. Ross, still alive, threatened to kill the friend and when she attempted to wrestle the gun away, Ross shot and killed himself. Emergency responders transported Casey to the hospital where she later died. Casey is survived by her son, age 7, and her daughter, age 10.

Kylie Warren, 26

SAN ANTONIO | OCTOBER 23, 2016

John Garza, 35, shot and killed his wife Kylie in the kitchen of her home. Kylie's mother requested a welfare check when she was unable to reach her. When law enforcement responded, they located Kylie's body inside the kitchen. Authorities arrested and charged Garza with murder. Garza had been abusive in the past and Kylie was in the process of filing for divorce. Kylie filed for protective orders against Garza in 2012 and in February 2016. Authorities had responded to the home three days before Kylie's murder. Kylie is survived by her four children, ages 2, 3, 4, and 8.

Sharon Wilbanks, 58

SAN ANTONIO | MAY 9, 2016

Albert Wilbanks, 57, shot and killed his wife Sharon in her car on the side of a road. Wilbanks had chased Sharon and struck her car, causing an accident. As Sharon exited the car, Wilbanks shot her. He then shot and killed himself. Sharon had separated from Wilbanks and filed for divorce eighteen days prior to her murder. She is survived by her adult daughter and son.

BEXAR COUNTY *continued*

Emilee Hurst, 18

SELMA | APRIL 11, 2016

Mark Villarreal, 20, shot and killed his ex-girlfriend Emilee inside her home. Villarreal then shot and killed himself. Another individual who was inside the home during the murder fled and contacted police. When law enforcement arrived, they found both bodies.

BRAZORIA COUNTY

Lindsey Canada, 28

ALVIN | JULY 29, 2016

Warren Murray, 33, shot and killed his ex-girlfriend Lindsey after he forced her out of his vehicle. He left her unconscious on the side of the road. Murray told law enforcement officers at a convenience store that he had shot Lindsey. Nearby residents found Lindsey and called 911, and an ambulance transported her to the hospital. Lindsey died 9 days later. Authorities arrested Murray and charged him with aggravated assault, and corrected the charge to murder when she died. A jury sentenced Murray to 60 years in prison. Lindsey is survived by her three children, ages 3, 5, and 7.

Ernestina Lara Chaires, 44

PEARLAND | NOVEMBER 29, 2016

Rodolfo Chaires Jr., 47, shot and killed his wife Ernestina in her home. Ernestina's two young children and one grandchild were present. One of the children called 911. Chaires then fled the scene. Authorities arrested him later that evening and charged him with murder. Chaires has a history of family violence. Ernestina had recently separated from Chaires and relocated to Pearland to escape his abuse, but Chaires found Ernestina in her new home. Ernestina is survived by her two children, under age 13, and her two adult children.

BRAZOS COUNTY

Maricarmen Quiroz-Octaviano, 21

COLLEGE STATION | SEPTEMBER 17, 2016

Victor Garcia-Loyo, 22, shot and killed his girlfriend Maricarmen inside her home. Garcia-Loyo fled the scene, contacted a friend of Maricarmen's and told him about the shooting. When officers responded, they located Maricarmen's body inside her apartment. Authorities later located and arrested Garcia-Loyo in Fort Worth, charging him with murder. During the investigation, Garcia-Loyo confessed to killing Maricarmen.

CAMERON COUNTY

Donna Zamarron, 19

BROWNSVILLE | SEPTEMBER 5, 2016

Mario Rodriguez, 26, stabbed his girlfriend Donna outside of her home. Witnesses called the police after hearing the attack. Rodriguez confessed to family members that he stabbed Donna and then fled. Emergency responders transported Donna to the hospital, where she died four days later. Rodriguez turned himself in and confessed. Authorities arrested and charged Rodriguez with murder.

CAMP COUNTY

Maryuri Mendoza, 20

PITTSBURG | AUGUST 17, 2016

Saaed Aqel, 20, assaulted his girlfriend Maryuri. Aqel brought Maryuri to the hospital with severe head trauma and authorities arrested and charged him with aggravated assault. Maryuri died from her injuries two days later. Authorities charged Aqel with murder.

CHEROKEE COUNTY

Patricia Garner, 58

RUSK | OCTOBER 24, 2016

James Garner, 61, shot and killed his wife Patricia in the yard of their home. He then shot and killed himself. Patricia's sons were home at the time of the murder. Patricia had recently separated from Garner. Patricia is survived by her two adult sons.

COLLIN COUNTY

Karen Bigham, 49

McKINNEY | JUNE 20, 2016

Kelley Bigham, 50, shot and killed his wife Karen in her home office. Bigham then shot and killed Karen's twin sister, Kathy Boobar, 49. Karen had separated from Bigham six months prior to the murder and filed for divorce. A few days before Bigham killed Karen, he went to her home and threatened her with a gun. The day of the murder, Karen asked her daughter and sister to be at the home with her while Bigham picked up some of his belongings. Bigham threatened their daughter with a gun and told her to leave the house with her son. As she fled, she called the police. Authorities arrested Bigham in a nearby county and charged him with capital murder; he received a sentence of life in prison. Karen is survived by her adult son and two adult daughters.

Kayley Winburn, 20

McKINNEY | OCTOBER 30, 2016

Jordan Sullivan, 21, shot and killed his wife Kayley in their home. Authorities arrested Sullivan and charged him with murder. The couple had married a few months prior to the murder. Sullivan is awaiting trial for murder.

COLLIN COUNTY *continued*

Karen Ann Rolston, 33

MELISSA | AUGUST 9, 2016

John Gaynor, 41, shot and killed his girlfriend Karen in their home. Gaynor then shot and killed himself. Officers discovered their bodies when they responded to a welfare check.

Noshin Chambers, 41

PLANO | MARCH 17, 2016

Gardner Chambers, 45, shot his wife Noshin in their home. Chambers then shot and killed himself. Noshin's children were in the home at the time of the murder; her 17-year-old son called police while the younger children fled to a neighbor's home to get help. Emergency responders transported Noshin to a hospital where she later died. Noshin had feared for her safety and had filed for divorce prior to her death. The couple had a pending court hearing the week of the murder. Noshin is survived by two sons and one daughter.

Jennifer Spears, 43

PLANO | MAY 29, 2016

Kenneth Amyx, 45, stabbed and killed his girlfriend Jennifer in her apartment. Amyx posted photos of Jennifer's body on social media. After calling his father to admit to committing the crime, Amyx attempted to kill himself. Police found Amyx with non-life-threatening injuries. Authorities arrested Amyx and charged him with murder. Amyx confessed to killing Jennifer and received a sentence of life in prison.

Jessie Bardwell, 27

RICHARDSON | MAY 9, 2016

Jason Lowe, 27, assaulted and killed his girlfriend Jessie in their home. He then buried her body in Farmersville. After not hearing from Jessie for more than two weeks, Jessie's family drove to Texas to file a missing person report. Law enforcement conducted two welfare checks and began an investigation into her disappearance. Officers arrested Lowe on a drug possession charge and while searching his property found evidence of Jessie's murder. Authorities charged him with murder. Officers located Jessie's body ten days after Lowe's arrest. Lowe has a history of family violence. A jury convicted Lowe of Jessie's murder in September 2017 and a judge approved an agreed-upon sentence of 50 years in prison.

COMAL COUNTY

Gayle Hendry, 57

NEW BRAUNFELS | NOVEMBER 15, 2016

Gary Hendry, 60, shot and killed his wife Gayle inside their home. Hendry then set fire to the home and fled the state. Authorities arrested Hendry in Mississippi, extradited him to Texas and charged him with murder. He received a sentence of 50 years in prison. Hendry has a history of family violence. Gayle had recently filed for divorce. Gayle is survived by her adult daughter and adult son.

CULBERSON COUNTY

Graciela Ceniceros, 26

VAN HORN | OCTOBER 29, 2016

Luis Lopez, 21, stabbed his ex-girlfriend Graciela outside of her home. Lopez broke into her home, attacked Graciela, and later charged at the responding law enforcement officer. The officer shot Lopez. Emergency responders transported Graciela and Lopez to the hospital where they both died. Lopez had a history of family violence. In the days prior to the murder, Graciela had ended the relationship and obtained a protective order. The day of the murder Lopez had tracked and threatened Graciela and Graciela reported the threats to law enforcement. Graciela is survived by her two daughters, ages 2 and 3.

DALLAS COUNTY

Dania Riopedre, 22

BALCH SPRINGS | JUNE 1, 2016

Joaquin Saucedo, 29, strangled and killed his wife Dania in the home they shared. After killing Dania, Saucedo staged the scene to appear as a suicide and fled to Mexico with their 2-year-old son. Dania's son is now safe with extended family. Authorities charged Saucedo with murder. Saucedo remains at-large. Dania had separated from Saucedo prior to her murder. Dania is survived by her son.

Areli Brown, 52

CARROLLTON | AUGUST 18, 2016

Roy Brown, 46, shot his wife Areli in their home. Brown called his employer and confessed to the murder. Officers responded and after a standoff, Brown shot and killed himself. Authorities found Areli's body in the house. Areli is survived by two adult sons.

Marisol Espinosa, 34

DALLAS | MARCH 6, 2016

Faustino Valdez, 35, killed his ex-girlfriend Marisol and placed her body in a wooded area. Valdez reported seeing Marisol leave for work in late December 2015. Authorities considered her a missing person until her body was discovered about 10 weeks later. Valdez fled to Mexico shortly after Marisol's disappearance. Authorities in Mexico apprehended Valdez. He was extradited to Dallas County, where he faces murder charges. Valdez has a history of violence including strangling Marisol a year before her murder. In the month before her death, Valdez tried to pressure Marisol to reunite; she refused but moved in with him after a fire destroyed her home. Marisol is survived by her son and two daughters, ages 3, 5, and 8.

Kay Hoffmeister, 71

DALLAS | NOVEMBER 18, 2016

Robert Hoffmeister, 70, shot and killed his wife Kay at their home. Hoffmeister then shot and killed himself.

DALLAS COUNTY *continued*

Darlene Jones, 54

DALLAS | FEBRUARY 13, 2016

Zettie Minter, Jr., 55, stabbed and killed his girlfriend Darlene in her home. Minter then stole Darlene's vehicle and left the scene. A friend found Darlene's body and called the police. The next day, Minter stopped at a gas station in Hutchinson and confessed the murder to an attendant, who reported the confession to police. Authorities arrested and charged Minter with murder.

Veronica Smith, 30

DALLAS | NOVEMBER 24, 2016

Lendell Johnson, 45, shot and killed his girlfriend Veronica in her home. Johnson then called law enforcement and reported the murder. Authorities arrested him and charged him with murder. The day before the murder Veronica had called police to report that Johnson had assaulted her. Police arrived at Veronica's home but stated there was not enough evidence to arrest him for assault, and arrested him on a non-related outstanding charge. Veronica had made a report to police two months prior as well. Johnson informed police that he killed Veronica in retaliation for making the police report.

Nidia Gomez, 34

GRAND PRAIRIE | NOVEMBER 1, 2016

Mark Silva, 33, stabbed his wife Nidia in a vehicle parked in a store parking lot. Nidia went into a nearby store to ask for help. Emergency responders transported Nidia to a hospital where she died. Silva fled the scene and planned to cross into Mexico. Silva turned himself in at a port of entry in Eagle Pass. Authorities arrested and charged him with murder. Nidia is survived by two daughters and one son.

Desiree Morris, 17

GRAND PRAIRIE | APRIL 5, 2016

Ivan Arellano, 29, shot and killed his ex-girlfriend Desiree and placed her body in a wooded area behind his apartment. The next day, police located Arellano in a parking lot and, while they surrounded his vehicle, he shot and killed himself. Arellano had a history of violence against Desiree. She had reported three assaults to police officers, who attempted to locate and apprehend him in the weeks before Desiree's murder.

Maria Elizabeth Navarro, 32

GRAND PRAIRIE | NOVEMBER 3, 2016

Mitchell Chew, 26, shot and killed his ex-girlfriend Maria at her friend's home. Maria's friend ran to a neighbor's home and called police. Chew then shot and killed himself. Maria had ended the relationship with Chew and was staying with a friend. Maria is survived by her daughter, age 11.

Florencia Padilla, 20

GRAND PRAIRIE | APRIL 27, 2016

Anthony Marcus, 23, shot and killed his ex-girlfriend Florencia in his car. After Florencia ended their relationship in 2015, Marcus began stalking her and hacked into her phone to read her messages and to track her. The day of the murder, Marcus used the information to locate Florencia and picked her up from her college. Authorities arrested and charged Marcus with murder. Marcus pled guilty and received a sentence of 70 years in prison.

DALLAS COUNTY *continued*

Elizabeth Adams, 19

IRVING | MAY 18, 2016

Christopher Rubio, 20, shot and killed his ex-girlfriend Elizabeth in her mother's home. Rubio also shot and killed her friend James Tews, 20. Elizabeth's younger siblings were also in the home; Rubio threatened Elizabeth's 14-year-old brother with a gun. Rubio had a history of violence towards Elizabeth. Elizabeth had ended the relationship with Rubio; she confided in her mother about Rubio's abuse and moved with her children into her parents' home that morning. Officers arrested Rubio at his apartment and charged him with capital murder. Elizabeth is survived by her son and daughter, ages 1 and 2.

Charlitha Simon, 30

LANCASTER | JUNE 22, 2016

Markey Miles, 32, shot and killed his ex-girlfriend Charlitha in their home. Miles then shot and killed himself. Miles had a history of family violence against Charlitha. Prior to the murder, Charlitha had feared for her life and had ended the relationship with Miles, and he was awaiting trial for assaulting Charlitha in 2014. Charlitha is survived by her daughter and four sons, ranging in age from 6 to 10 years.

Hanan Seid, 26

RICHARDSON | OCTOBER 23, 2016

Ahmed Abdela, 36, shot and killed his wife Hanan outside of her apartment. Abdela waited in the parking lot of Hanan's apartment complex and attacked her when she returned with a friend. He also fired shots at Hanan's friend, who was unharmed. Abdela turned himself in; authorities arrested and charged him with murder and aggravated assault with a deadly weapon. Abdela had a history of violence towards Hanan. To escape the abuse, six months earlier, Hanan had separated from Abdela and moved into a new home. After Hanan moved, Abdela threatened her multiple times with weapons. Hanan is survived by two daughters, ages 18 months and 3 years.

DENTON COUNTY

Jacqueline Vandagriff, 24

GRAPEVINE | SEPTEMBER 14, 2016

Charles Bryant, Jr., 30, killed Jackie after meeting her on a date. Bryant dismembered and burned Jackie's body in a public park after killing her. Witnesses saw Bryant near the scene, but he fled. A few days later, investigators identified Bryant as the suspect in Jackie's murder and arrested and charged him with capital murder. Bryant has a history of stalking and harassment. At the time of the murder he was stalking his ex-girlfriend who had a protective order against him.

Anjanette Harris, 40

LITTLE ELM | MARCH 6, 2016

Daniel Greco, 34, strangled and killed his dating partner Anjanette in his home. Greco then moved Anjanette's body to a wooded area, where authorities later discovered her body. Investigating officers initially arrested Greco on a drug possession charge. Greco confessed to killing Anjanette and authorities charged him with capital murder; Anjanette was pregnant at the time of her death. Anjanette is survived by two adult sons.

DENTON COUNTY *continued*

Rhonda Holmes, 51

PILOT POINT | MARCH 16, 2016

Wilford Holmes, 50, shot his wife Rhonda in the driveway of her parent's home. Holmes drove his vehicle into the driveway and struck two vehicles, injuring Rhonda's mother, 69. After shooting Rhonda, Holmes physically assaulted her father, 83, before shooting himself. Emergency responders transported Rhonda and Holmes to a hospital where they later died. Rhonda is survived by her adult daughter and two adult sons.

DEWITT COUNTY

D'Metra Strait, 26

CUERO | DECEMBER 25, 2016

Quentin Darks, 27, shot and killed his ex-girlfriend D'Metra in her car. Darks had come to D'Metra's home to demand alternative child custody arrangements. Darks fled the scene with D'Metra's young sons. Law enforcement officers pursued Darks to Gonzales, where he crashed his vehicle. Emergency responders transported the children to the hospital. Officers arrested Darks and charged him with murder, abandoning or endangering a child, criminal negligence, evading arrest and unlawful possession of a firearm by a felon. D'Metra is survived by her two sons, ages 10 months and 3 years.

EL PASO COUNTY

Maria Holguin Flores, 35

EL PASO | MARCH 12, 2016

Juan Pedro Holguin, 42, shot and killed his wife Maria in their home. He then shot himself and later died from his injuries. Law enforcement was called to the scene after Maria's 5-year-old child came outside crying and told a neighbor that his parents were dead. Holguin had a history of family violence and had previously poured gasoline around the house and threatened to burn it down. Maria is survived by her four children, ranging in age from 5 to 14 years.

Linda Rosales, 67

SOCORRO | SEPTEMBER 24, 2016

Jose Rosales, 68, shot his wife Linda in the bedroom of their home. A witness attempted to intervene and made a report to police. Emergency responders transported Linda to a hospital, where she was pronounced dead. Officers arrested Rosales and charged him with murder.

FORT BEND COUNTY

Rokiesha Pete, 30

FRESNO | JULY 2, 2016

Jonas Nelson, 35, shot and killed his ex-girlfriend Rokiesha in her home. Nelson called his sister and admitted that he killed Rokiesha. He then shot and killed himself. A SWAT team responded and entered the home after hearing a gunshot. Nelson had a history of family violence. Rokiesha had recently ended the relationship and asked Nelson to pick up his belongings.

Natalie Altier Srinivasan, 35

KATY | APRIL 19, 2016

Jeremy Srinivasan, 37, shot and killed his wife Natalie in their home. He also shot and killed their two young children; a daughter, age 5, and son, age 2. Srinivasan then shot and killed himself. Before killing himself, Srinivasan texted his father, who alerted authorities. Law enforcement discovered all four bodies after responding to the call.

Sofya Ali, 33

RICHMOND | OCTOBER 11, 2016

Ali Edris, 58, shot and killed his wife Sofya in their home. He also shot and killed his son, Edris Edris, 24, before shooting himself. Sofya's eight-year-old son hid in the closet. After the shootings, he ran to a neighbor's home and they called 911. When authorities arrived, they discovered Sofya and her stepson's bodies. Emergency responders transported Edris to the hospital, where he died. Sofya is survived by her son.

GALVESTON COUNTY

Melissa Lynn Nall Cervantes, 34

LA MARQUE | SEPTEMBER 19, 2016

Marvin Martin, 23, shot and killed his ex-girlfriend Melissa in her home. Martin then fled, recklessly driving and evading officers through Houston before crashing his vehicle. Martin shot and killed himself in the vehicle. Melissa is survived by her son and daughter.

Gina Oliphant, 54

LA MARQUE | DECEMBER 20, 2016

Johnny Oliphant, 58, shot and killed his wife Gina in their home. Oliphant reported the shooting to police. When police arrived, Oliphant met them outside and directed them to Gina's body. Authorities arrested and charged Oliphant with murder. Gina is survived by her two adult sons.

GALVESTON COUNTY *continued*

Anne-Christine Johnson, 30

LEAGUE CITY | DECEMBER 8, 2016

Shaun Hardy, 32, stabbed and suffocated his ex-wife Anne-Christine in his home. He then hid her body in his garage. Anne-Christine had gone to Hardy's home to visit her five-year-old son, whom Hardy had won primary custody of in divorce proceedings. Family members reported Anne-Christine missing. Three weeks later, authorities conducted a search of Hardy's home and located Anne-Christine's remains. Hardy has a violent history of emotionally and physically abusing Anne-Christine. In the summer of 2015, Anne-Christine sought a protective order against Hardy after he strangled her, hit her with a gun, and tried to drug her. She stated in the hearing that she was afraid Hardy would kill her. Authorities arrested and charged Hardy with murder and tampering with evidence. Anne-Christine is survived by her two children, ages 5 and 8.

Kirsten Nicole Fritch, 16

TEXAS CITY | NOVEMBER 10, 2016

Jesse Dobbs, 21, stabbed and killed his girlfriend Kirsten. Dobbs then fled the scene. While conducting a welfare check, police found Kirsten's mother and sister deceased in their home. Police then issued an amber alert for Kirsten. After receiving tips from bystanders and Dobb's ex-girlfriend, authorities arrested Dobbs at bar in Texas City and charged him with murder. They discovered Kirsten's body nearby. Months before the killing, Dobbs was charged with family violence in another county against a former girlfriend.

GRAYSON COUNTY

Kelly Russler, 39

SHERMAN | MARCH 21, 2016

Malachi Russler, 39, shot and killed his wife Kelly in their home. Russler also shot and killed Kelly's two sons, ages 7 and 10, before shooting and killing himself. When Kelly did not report to work, her employer requested a welfare check. Authorities discovered the bodies. Kelly had separated from Russler and filed for divorce in December 2015. Kelly is survived by her daughter.

GREGG COUNTY

Alexis Bell, 26

LONGVIEW | AUGUST 30, 2016

GeKainnon Harris, 19, shot and killed his girlfriend Alexis in the bedroom of her home. Neighbors heard gunshots and witnessed Harris leaving Alexis' home with a child. Harris took the child to a friend's apartment in the same complex and returned to the scene where authorities detained him. Officers arrested and charged Harris with manslaughter. Harris has a history of family violence with other partners. Alexis is survived by her four daughters and one son.

Victorria Sam, 28

LONGVIEW | DECEMBER 19, 2016

Christopher Pleasant, 26, shot and killed his girlfriend Victorria inside her car on a residential street. Pleasant fled the scene. Neighbors notified police that they heard gunshots. Officers discovered Victorria's body in her car. Authorities arrested and charged Pleasant with murder. Victorria is survived by her four children, ages 2 months, 1, 5 and 9.

GRIMES COUNTY

Chala Densey, 34

NAVASOTA | NOVEMBER 15, 2016

Jason Sauls, 34, crashed his vehicle, killing his girlfriend Chala. Four children were in the vehicle at the time of the crash. Sauls emotionally abused and threatened Chala during the ride. Authorities arrested Sauls and charged him with intoxication manslaughter and abandoning or endangering a child. Chala is survived by three daughters.

GUADALUPE COUNTY

Monica Gallegos, 28

SEGUIN | APRIL 19, 2016

Estaban Piñon, 26, stabbed his girlfriend Monica in the front yard of her home. Monica's friend witnessed the murder and contacted authorities. Piñon fled the scene and officers located him hiding in a dumpster near the crime scene. Emergency responders transported Monica to a hospital where she later died. Authorities arrested and charged Piñon with murder. Piñon had a history of violence against Monica, including a previous arrest six months prior to the murder. Monica is survived by her daughter, age 8, and her son, age 11.

HARDIN COUNTY

Wendi Warner, 44

SILSBEE | JANUARY 10, 2016

Joseph Latulas, 40, stabbed and killed his ex-girlfriend Wendi in her home. Wendi's father discovered her body and notified authorities. Law enforcement located Latulas walking away from Wendi's home with blood on his clothing. Authorities arrested and charged him with murder. Wendi is survived by her adult son and daughter.

HARRIS COUNTY

Keyanna Gardiner, 29

BAYTOWN | MARCH 19, 2016

Allan Edwards, 36, shot and killed his ex-wife Keyanna in her vehicle. Edwards pursued Keyanna and her friend in their vehicle after finding them near his home. Edwards then stopped his vehicle in front of Keyanna's vehicle, causing Keyanna to crash. Edwards fired into the vehicle, killing Keyanna and injuring her friend Samone Massey. A constable that was nearby responded to the scene and arrested Edwards. Emergency responders transported Samone to the hospital. Authorities charged Edwards with murder.

HARRIS COUNTY *continued*

Elva Gonzalez, 41

BAYTOWN | OCTOBER 31, 2016

Elray Gonzalez, 39, shot and killed his wife Elva in front of her home. Officers responding to a disturbance call witnessed Gonzalez chase Elva out of the front door of her home. When Gonzalez fired at Elva, officers shot at him. Emergency responders transported Gonzalez to a hospital; authorities arrested and charged him with murder. Elva's children were home during the shooting. Elva had separated from Gonzalez a week before the murder. Elva had made a police report and had requested a protective order because Gonzalez posted threatening messages on social media. Elva is survived by her two children, ages 16 and 21.

Amalia Alexander, 32

CONROE | NOVEMBER 30, 2016

Jarvis Hickerson, 32, killed his ex-girlfriend Amalia and placed her body in a remote area in Montgomery County. Days before the murder, Hickerson assaulted Amalia, and she sought a protective order. Amalia was last seen leaving a family member's home with Hickerson, and when she did not attend work the following day, her family reported her missing. When authorities found and located her remains a month later, Hickerson was in jail for violating Amalia's protective order. Authorities suspected Hickerson of killing Amalia in retaliation for getting a protective order and charged him with capital murder.

Gloria Gardner, 66

HIGHLANDS | MARCH 29, 2016

Ronald Gardner, 55, shot and killed his wife Gloria in their home. He then shot and killed himself in their front yard. Before killing himself, Gardner called his adult son and told him that he had killed Gloria and was going to kill himself. His son called the police and a neighbor also called police to report seeing Ronald shoot and kill himself in his front yard. When police arrived, they found Gardner and Gloria deceased. Gloria is survived by her two adult children.

Vicki Acker Flanery, 63

HOUSTON | DECEMBER 30, 2016

David Flanery, Jr., 62, shot and killed his wife Vicki in their home. Flanery also shot and killed Vicki's father, Charles Morton, 96, in the garage apartment of the home. Flanery then set fire to the home and garage before shooting and killing himself in the yard. The home contained a significant cache of firearm ammunition, which began to explode. After firefighters extinguished the fire, authorities located the bodies of Vicki, Morton, and Flanery. Vicki is survived by her daughter.

Ada Alfaro, 33

HOUSTON | SEPTEMBER 24, 2016

Tereso Reyes, 39, stabbed and killed his girlfriend Ada in her home. Ada's two daughters were sleeping in the house during the attack. Reyes then fled the scene. One of Ada's daughters found Ada on the bedroom floor and called 911. Authorities arrested Reyes five days later and charged him with murder. After Ada informed Reyes that she wanted to end the relationship, Reyes had threatened to kill her. Ada is survived by her two daughters.

HARRIS COUNTY *continued*

Amanda Arceneaux, 59

HOUSTON | FEBRUARY 24, 2016

Brian Allen, 56, shot and killed his ex-girlfriend Amanda in her home. Prior to breaking into Amanda's home, Allen fired his gun at bystanders near the house. After murdering Amanda, Allen fled the scene and returned to his home. Neighbors called 911 and when authorities arrived they found Amanda's body. An officer went to Allen's home, where bystanders informed him that Allen was in his vehicle outside his home. Upon the officer's arrival, Allen shot and killed himself. Amanda had recently ended the relationship. Amanda is survived by two adult daughters and an adult son.

Dina Corpus Cardenas, 38

HOUSTON | AUGUST 25, 2016

Kenneth Dunn, 54, stabbed his girlfriend Dina in a vehicle in a parking lot. Dina fled the vehicle and ran towards a nearby medical clinic. Witnesses heard Dina scream for help and saw her run towards the building before collapsing and dying from the injuries. Authorities arrested and charged Dunn with murder. Dina is survived by her daughter and son.

Tina Carter, 38

HOUSTON | FEBRUARY 1, 2016

Patrick Denton, 48, shot and killed his ex-girlfriend Tina in her home. He also shot and killed Tina's boyfriend, Nicholas Copeland, 27. Denton fled the scene. Authorities arrested Denton three days later and charged him with capital murder.

Paula Contreras, 39

HOUSTON | MARCH 16, 2016

Ramon Contreras, 41, stabbed and killed his wife Paula and left her body in a drainage ditch across the street from their home. Contreras reported Paula missing a day after police discovered her body. A few days later, police received a call to check Contreras' welfare. When police arrived at the home they discovered he had killed himself. Paula is survived by her 3 children.

Courtney Joyce, 27

HOUSTON | JUNE 7, 2016

Michael Hamilton, 27, strangled and killed his girlfriend Courtney in a hotel room. He then shot himself. When the couple did not check out of the hotel room the following day, hotel management called police. Police arrived to find the room had been barricaded with furniture, and had to break through a window to enter and locate Courtney and Hamilton. Hamilton was transported to the hospital in critical condition; he died shortly thereafter. Courtney is survived by her child.

Lakeisha Lewis, 23

HOUSTON | JUNE 7, 2016

Darrell Mitchell, 28, shot and killed his ex-girlfriend Lakeisha in her home. Mitchell knocked on the door of Lakeisha's apartment during early morning hours and shot her when she opened the door. Mitchell then shot and stabbed her boyfriend Johnel Francis, 24. Emergency responders transported Johnel to the hospital where he later died. Mitchell immediately fled the scene; he posted on social media statements to justify his actions. Authorities arrested and charged Mitchell with capital murder. Lakeisha is survived by her three children, ages 1, 3, and 5 years.

HARRIS COUNTY *continued*

Karen Perez Marañon, 15

HOUSTON | MAY 30, 2016

Jesus Campos, 15, strangled and killed his girlfriend Karen in an abandoned apartment complex. Previously that day, Campos had sent Karen a text message threatening to kill her if she did not meet with him; Campos forced Karen to the abandoned complex where he recorded sexually assaulting and killing her. Karen's family reported her missing when she did not return home from school. Authorities found Karen's body a few days later. Campos' father turned him into police after Campos told him that Karen was dead. Authorities arrested and charged Campos with murder.

Esmeralda Martinez Yañez, 18

HOUSTON | MARCH 20, 2016

Johnathon Sanchez, 28, shot and killed his ex-girlfriend Esmeralda in her family's home, where she resided. Sanchez fled and began randomly shooting at people, homes, and cars in a residential area. When confronted by law enforcement, Sanchez threatened officers, who then shot him. Esmeralda was trying to end the relationship when Sanchez killed her. Esmeralda's mother found her body. Authorities arrested and charged Sanchez with murder and two counts of aggravated assault against a public servant.

Jessica Lynn Ramirez, 34

HOUSTON | MAY 27, 2016

Wilfredo Olla, 33, shot and killed his wife Jessica in her home. Olla then kidnapped Jessica's daughter, who was in the home at the time. Jessica's daughter called 911 and reported that Olla had shot her mother. Law enforcement later located Jessica's daughter. A month later, law enforcement apprehended Olla and transported him back to Houston. Authorities charged Olla with aggravated sexual assault and murder.

Sandtrece Latoya Ratliff, 44

HOUSTON | JUNE 16, 2016

Michael Ratliff, 43, shot his ex-wife Sandtrece in their home. Ratliff also shot their 14-year-old daughter, who died at the scene. Paramedics transported Sandtrece to the hospital where she later died. Ratliff called 911 and admitted he shot them, claiming self-defense. After further investigation, authorities arrested Ratliff and charged him with capital murder. Ratliff had a history of violence against Sandtrece and previous convictions for assault. Sandtrece is survived by her adult son.

Alma D. Rivera-Melendez, 28

HOUSTON | JUNE 11, 2016

Bryan Vega-Velez, 38, shot and killed his girlfriend Alma in their home. Alma's sister was in the home at the time and reported Vega-Velez verbally attacking Alma on the patio of their apartment and then hearing a gunshot. Vega-Velez told Alma's sister that he had killed Alma and then fled the scene. Authorities arrested and charged Vega-Velez with murder. The day of the murder, Vega-Velez had sent Alma numerous abusive texts.

Becky Schwintz, 60

HOUSTON | FEBRUARY 2, 2016

Gary Schwintz, 66, shot and killed his wife Becky in their home. He then shot and killed himself. The couple's adult son requested that Schwintz's former co-worker check on them and when the co-worker discovered Becky and Schwintz's bodies, he alerted authorities.

HARRIS COUNTY *continued*

Kumba Mariatu Sesay, 32

HOUSTON | JULY 3, 2016

Leroy Stoots, 43, assaulted, shot, and killed his girlfriend Kumba and left her body in a roadside ditch. Stoots had a prior murder conviction and was on parole at the time of Kumba's murder. Stoots remained free despite numerous parole violations. Authorities arrested and charged Stoots with Kumba's murder.

Elizabeth Stokely, 92

HOUSTON | SEPTEMBER 18, 2016

Arthur Stokely, 90, shot and killed his wife Elizabeth in the backyard of their home. Stokely also shot and killed Elizabeth's daughter, Nanette Summerlin-Winfield, 74, and then shot and killed himself. A relative found their bodies and notified police. Elizabeth is survived by an adult daughter.

Brenae Thompson, 22

HOUSTON | AUGUST 7, 2016

Dominique Curry, 25, shot and killed his ex-girlfriend Brenae outside of her apartment. Curry then fled the scene in Brenae's vehicle. Neighbors reported the shooting to police. Authorities arrested Curry in Austin County and charged him with murder.

Candice Willis, 21

HOUSTON | FEBRUARY 2, 2016

Tyrone Williams, 34, assaulted and killed his girlfriend Candice at an apartment. Days later, Williams reported her death to police. Authorities arrested and charged Williams with murder.

Elizabeth Ferrell, 29

HUMBLE | APRIL 23, 2016

Jonathan Allee, 28, strangled and killed his wife Elizabeth. He then drove her body to a remote area of Louisiana and threw her body from a bridge into the water. A fisherman located her body and alerted authorities. Iberville Parish Sheriff Deputies traveled to Humble to investigate Elizabeth's murder. Authorities arrested Allee and charged him with second degree murder. Allee has a history of violence towards Elizabeth. Elizabeth is survived by her two children, ages 1 and 5.

Alice Jeanette Lee, 41

HUMBLE | JULY 2, 2016

Gerald Green, 38, ran over his girlfriend Alice with his vehicle in a parking lot. He then fled the scene. Alice died in a hospital 11 days later. Authorities charged Green with murder, and Green surrendered to law enforcement three weeks later. Alice is survived by her two children.

Silvia Munoz Vazquez, 35

HUMBLE | OCTOBER 31, 2016

Rogelio Flores, 55, shot and killed his wife Silvia in their home. He then fled with their son, age 12. Flores called his brother and admitted to killing Silvia and said he was fleeing to Mexico. Flores' brother then called 911. Authorities apprehended and charged Flores with murder. Flores had a history of family violence, including neighbors witnessing Flores abuse Silvia. Silvia is survived by her two children, ages 12 and 15.

HARRIS COUNTY *continued*

Monique Thompson Philio, 43

HUMBLE | MARCH 18, 2016

Reginald Philio, 50, shot and killed his ex-wife Monique in the garage of her home. Monique's friend and neighbor heard approximately eight gunshots, ran to the home, and called 911. Authorities arrested Philio a few hours later at his home. Philio has a history of repeatedly abusing Monique. Monique is survived by her four children.

Ashley Anntonette Richardson-Ogunba, 31

KATY | NOVEMBER 15, 2016

Charles Lee Farris, Jr, 39, shot and killed his girlfriend Ashley in his mother's home. The night before he had been verbally abusive to Ashley; the next day he returned to the home and shot her. Farris threw the gun into a storm drain and was walking away from the home when police located, arrested and charged him with murder.

Gina Seale-Simms, 39

KATY | JANUARY 6, 2016

Darryl Simms, 48, shot and killed his wife Gina in their home. Simms then shot and killed himself. Before he shot himself, Simms texted Gina's ex-husband to pick up Gina's daughter. Because Gina's daughter and father were aware of Darryl's abuse toward Gina, they contacted police before entering the home. Police arrived and found Simms and Gina deceased. Gina is survived by her daughter, age 14.

HAYS COUNTY

Erin Wright, 39

KYLE | MARCH 26, 2016

James Keen, 49, shot and killed his girlfriend Erin in the front yard of their home. Three of Erin's children were inside the home; they fled to a neighbor's house for help. Authorities arrested and charged Keen with murder. Keen has a history of family violence. Erin is survived by four children.

HENDERSON COUNTY

Alicia Scott, 29

LOG CABIN | DECEMBER 27, 2016

Daniel Scott, 28, shot and killed his wife Alicia in the kitchen of their home. Authorities arrested Scott and charged him with murder. At the time of his arrest, Scott also had a pending warrant for assault. Alicia is survived by her son and her two daughters.

HIDALGO COUNTY

Maria Gallegos, 45

EDINBURG | AUGUST 17, 2016

William Fletcher, 41, killed his wife Maria by cutting her throat in the bedroom of their home, and then fled the scene. Maria's adult son called the police after finding his mother's body. Fletcher attempted to commit suicide. Authorities arraigned Fletcher at the hospital where he received treatment for his injuries. He confessed and was charged with murder. Maria is survived by her five children.

Maria Guadalupe Sobrevilla, 58

EDINBURG | NOVEMBER 21, 2016

Javier Sobrevilla, 58, shot and killed his wife Maria Guadalupe in the front yard of their home, and then fled to Mexico. Neighbors reported shots fired from the home. Authorities arrested Sobrevilla four days later when he attempted to re-enter the United States and charged him with murder. Maria Guadalupe had recently separated from Sobrevilla. Maria Guadalupe is survived by an adult daughter.

Glenda Wood, 77

MISSION | APRIL 19, 2016

Gerald Wood, 78, shot and killed his wife Glenda in their home. Wood then shot and killed himself.

Yolanda De Anda, 49

WESLACO | APRIL 4, 2016

Daniel De Anda, 50, shot his wife Yolanda in her home, and then fled the scene. Emergency responders transported Yolanda to a hospital where she died. Authorities located De Anda a few blocks from the home, and arrested and charged him with murder. Authorities also arrested and charged Jason Shaw, 38, with murder and failure to report a felony. Shaw drove De Anda to Yolanda's house to commit murder. Yolanda had separated from De Anda two years prior to the shooting. Yolanda is survived by her adult children.

HUNT COUNTY

Nicole Gonzales, 27

COMMERCE | JUNE 17, 2016

Tyrone Williams, 30, stabbed and killed his ex-girlfriend Nicole inside her home. Williams also stabbed and killed Nicole's mother, Vickie Gonzales, 51. Williams then fled the scene. Prior to killing Nicole and her mother, Williams broke into the home and waited for them to arrive. During the attack, Vickie called 911. When officers arrived, they found Nicole and her mother deceased and Nicole's two daughters in the home. Authorities arrested and charged Williams with capital murder. Williams has a history of violence and abuse against Nicole, including vandalism, theft, stalking and strangulation. Nicole had called law enforcement to intervene several times in the months prior to her death. Nicole is survived by her two daughters, ages 1 month and 18 months.

Maria Azucena Aguilar-Gomez, 32

FARMERSVILLE | AUGUST 8, 2016

Oscar Aguilar-Flores, 36, shot and killed his wife Maria in the front yard of their home. He then shot and killed himself. The couple's four children were at home at the time and the eldest child ran to a neighbor's home for help. Maria is survived by her four children, all under the age of 12.

KERR COUNTY

Angelica Jimenez, 34

COMFORT | OCTOBER 25, 2016

Isidro Jimenez, 53, killed his wife Angelica and left her body in a field in Kerr County. In October 2016, a crew clearing brush discovered Angelica's body. Authorities used cell phone records to determine that the murder occurred in November 2015 when Angelica lived in San Antonio. At the time, Angelica was attempting to leave Jimenez to escape his physical and emotional abuse. Authorities arrested and charged Jimenez with murder and tampering with physical evidence. Angelica is survived by her three sons and daughter.

Candace Cormier, 61

KERRVILLE | FEBRUARY 12, 2016

Mark Cormier, 54, shot and killed his wife Candace inside their home. Cormier also shot and killed their 10-year-old son. Cormier went to a neighbor's home, confessed to murdering Candace and their son, and then shot himself. Emergency responders transported Cormier to a local hospital, where he died four days later. Candace is survived by three adult children.

LIBERTY COUNTY

Latasha Evette Green, 36

CLEVELAND | AUGUST 15, 2016

Gerard Simmons, 28, killed his ex-girlfriend Latasha and then placed her body in a wooded area in Liberty County. Latasha's mother reported her missing. Simmons confessed to the murder and led authorities to the location of Latasha's body. Authorities arrested and charged him with murder. Latasha is survived by her five children.

LUBBOCK COUNTY

Edith Denise Ayers, 55

SLATON | JULY 22, 2016

Fred Melcher, 74, shot and killed his girlfriend Edith in their home. He then shot and killed himself. A family member found their bodies in the home and contacted police. Edith is survived by her two adult children.

McLENNAN COUNTY

Natasha Dazat, 21

BELLMEAD | AUGUST 25, 2016

Davie Dazat, 23, stabbed and beheaded his wife Natasha, killing her inside their home. Prior to the murder, Dazat called his brother, who became concerned and requested a welfare check. Authorities responded to the home and spoke to Dazat and Natasha and determined no further assistance was necessary. Two hours later Dazat's brother received a second phone call from Dazat, who confessed he had killed Natasha. When authorities responded, Dazat barricaded himself inside the home until a hostage negotiator convinced Dazat to come outside. Authorities arrested and charged Dazat with murder. The couple's three-year-old daughter and one-year-old son were inside the home. Dazat had a history of violence towards Natasha. Natasha is survived by her daughter and son.

MEDINA COUNTY

Tylene Ann Franklin, 41

CASTROVILLE | JANUARY 21, 2016

Brian Nixon, 48, shot and killed his girlfriend Tylene in her home. Nixon also shot and killed Tylene's roommate, Debra Echtle, 51. He then doused the home and Debra's daughter with gasoline. Nixon placed Tylene's body in the bed of his truck and fled the scene. Debra's daughter called 911 and authorities located Nixon's truck and attempted to pull him over. Nixon did not stop until deputies forced his truck off the road. Nixon threatened to shoot and kill himself. Deputies negotiated with Nixon for several hours before he eventually surrendered. Authorities charged Nixon with capital murder. Tylene is survived by her son and her daughter.

MIDLAND COUNTY

Kathy Lujan, 41

MIDLAND | MAY 11, 2016

Juan Gonzales, 44, killed his wife Kathy and then moved her body to another location in Midland County. Gonzales reported Kathy as missing three days later. Prior to the murder, Kathy had told co-workers that she feared for her life. The morning Kathy disappeared, she had confronted Gonzales about financial abuse and forged checks. After murdering her, Gonzales withdrew money from Kathy's account. Authorities arrested Gonzales for credit card abuse. During the investigation Gonzales disclosed the location Kathy's body. Authorities charged Gonzales with murder and tampering with physical evidence; a jury sentenced him to life in prison. Kathy is survived by her two sons.

MONTGOMERY COUNTY

Jakietha Wilson, 21

CONROE | MARCH 31, 2016

Orlando Williams, 27, shot and killed his fiancée Jakietha in a vehicle parked on his family's property where the couple lived. A relative called 911 after witnessing Williams act erratically and Jakietha was unresponsive in the vehicle. When police arrived, Williams shot and killed himself inside the home. Williams had a history of violence. Williams had previously threatened Jakietha with a gun, harassed her at her workplace, and attempted to run her over with a vehicle.

Liliam Morado, 27

MAGNOLIA | AUGUST 28, 2016

Jose Calderon, 31, shot and killed his girlfriend, Liliam outside their home. Calderon then shot and killed himself. Police located their bodies after neighbors made reports.

Carolyn Towery, 58

MAGNOLIA | SEPTEMBER 1, 2016

Robert Ogilvie, 60, shot and killed his wife Carolyn in their home. He then shot and killed himself. When Carolyn did not show up for work, her employer called her family member, who requested a welfare check and stopped by the home. When her family member arrived at the home, she discovered Carolyn and Ogilvie deceased. Deputies arrived shortly thereafter. Ogilvie had a history of violence towards Carolyn and she was in the process of ending the relationship when he killed her. Carolyn is survived by her two adult children.

Cheryl Hale, 53

THE WOODLANDS | JULY 2, 2016

Larry House, 60, shot and killed his girlfriend Cheryl in his bedroom. House called 911 to report two deceased bodies in the home, and then shot and killed himself.

Frances J. Bonham, 84

WILLIS | APRIL 16, 2016

Bobby Bonham, 85, shot and killed his wife Frances and then himself in a vehicle. Police discovered their bodies after responding to a request for a welfare check. Frances is survived by her adult son.

MOORE COUNTY

Ginger Michelle Rodriguez, 39

DUMAS | JANUARY 26, 2016

David Volk, 40, strangled and killed his wife Ginger on the property they shared. Ginger's father reported her missing in August 2015. Volk falsely claimed Ginger left the home, and he did not know where she went. Through further investigation and interviews with Volk, law enforcement located Ginger's body on the property in January 2016. Authorities then arrested and charged Volk with murder.

NUECES COUNTY

Carina Castellanos, 26

CORPUS CHRISTI | JULY 8, 2016

Nigel Green, 30, stabbed and killed his girlfriend Carina and abandoned her body in a rural area. Before killing her, Green strangled and assaulted her. Carina made a police report and the police transported her to a family violence shelter. After Carina left the shelter, her mother reported her missing. Authorities issued a warrant for Green and arrested him for aggravated assault family violence. After he was arrested, Green confessed to Carina's murder and led law enforcement to her body. Authorities charged Green with capital murder after determining that he killed Carina in retaliation for making a police report on the previous assault.

Noemi Villarreal, 45

CORPUS CHRISTI | JUNE 8, 2016

Lance Taylor, 28, strangled and killed his girlfriend Noemi before setting fire to her body inside a trash bin near his apartment. Prior to the murder, Taylor assaulted Noemi and held her hostage. He threatened to kill her if she reported him to the police. After he let her go home, Noemi called the police to make the report. Taylor had a history of violence against Noemi and was previously ordered to attend the BIPP for an assault against a former girlfriend. Authorities arrested and charged Taylor with murder. Noemi is survived by her adult son.

ORANGE COUNTY

Kara Marie Willingham, 27

BRIDGE CITY | SEPTEMBER 14, 2016

Jorge Elizalde-Sanchez, 40, assaulted and strangled his girlfriend Kara in their home. Kara's children were in the home at the time of the murder. Elizalde-Sanchez then fled with the children. Officers stopped his vehicle, arrested him, and charged him with murder. Elizalde-Sanchez pled guilty and was sentenced to 45 years in prison. He has a history of violence and abuse toward Kara. Kara is survived by her son, age 6, and her daughter, age 3.

PARKER COUNTY

Sarah Brewer, 28

SPRINGTOWN | MAY 2, 2016

Christopher Stanislawski, 27, shot and killed his girlfriend Sarah at the business location Stanislawski owned and where they worked and lived. Stanislawski then shot and killed himself. An employee of the company discovered their bodies when he arrived for work and alerted authorities. Sarah is survived by her son.

POTTER COUNTY

Kristen King, 27

AMARILLO | MARCH 14, 2016

Ralph Owens, 28, killed his girlfriend Kristen with his car on a public street. During the attack, Owens struck and injured another woman with his car and then fled the scene. Neighbors reported the assault to police; when the police arrived, they found Kristen's body under Owen's car. Officers arrested Owens the next day and charged Owens with murder and aggravated assault. While on bond, Owens absconded and evaded arrest for one year, turning himself into authorities in June 2017. Kristen is survived by her two sons and one daughter, ages 5, 6, and 7.

RANDALL COUNTY

Dana Rollins Atkins, 42

AMARILLO | JANUARY 28, 2016

Tyrone Titus, 45, strangled and asphyxiated his girlfriend Dana, killing her in their home. He then killed himself by drinking a poisonous chemical. Dana's daughter found their bodies and alerted authorities. Dana is survived by her three adult children.

ROBERTSON COUNTY

Wanda Vinton, 34

HEARNE | JANUARY 14, 2016

William Davenport, 45, killed his ex-girlfriend Wanda and her daughter, 15, before setting fire to her home. Davenport has a history of family violence and had recently threatened Wanda with a knife. To escape the abuse, Wanda and her daughter had just moved into a new home. Hours before the fire, law enforcement had responded to a call involving Davenport threatening Wanda. A grand jury indicted Davenport on two counts of arson, two counts of murder and aggravated assault with a deadly weapon.

RUSK COUNTY

Carol Ann Parks, 52

OVERTON | MAY 28, 2016

Nathan Parks, 43, shot and killed his wife Carol in the driveway of their home. Multiple neighbors heard the gun shots and called 911. Parks then fled the scene. Authorities apprehended, arrested, and charged Parks with murder.

TARRANT COUNTY

Heather Bruenig, 29

ARLINGTON | JUNE 19, 2016

Javier Vasquez, 25, stabbed and killed his girlfriend Heather in her home. Vasquez then fled in her vehicle. Heather's roommate found her body and called law enforcement. Law enforcement attempted to pull Vasquez over, but he led them on a high-speed chase and crashed the vehicle. Authorities arrested and charged him with murder.

Asma Zafar, 33

ARLINGTON | APRIL 16, 2016

Ghufran Zafar, 40, shot and killed his wife Asma in their home. Zafar then fled. While police investigated Asma's murder, they saw Zafar drive by the home and apprehended him. Zafar had a history of abusing Asma using cameras in the house to watch her movements, searching her cell phone data and texts, assaulting her while pregnant and threatening to kill her if she called 911. Zafar received a sentence of life in prison for murder. Asma is survived by her four children, ages 3 to 11 years.

Doris Jean Andrews, 43

AZLE | JANUARY 8, 2016

Mark Andrews, 45, assaulted and killed his wife Doris with an object in their bedroom. Andrews reported finding Doris dead. Doris' 9-year-old daughter, a nanny, and the nanny's husband were in the home at the time of the murder. Within hours of the report, police arrested Andrews and charged him with murder. A grand jury indicted Andrews for murder. Andrews has a history of family violence: in 2007, Andrews assaulted his ex-wife. Doris is survived by her three daughters, ages 9 to 20 years.

Elizabeth Arellano, 28

FORT WORTH | APRIL 16, 2016

Rudolfo Arellano, 34, drowned and killed his wife Elizabeth in Lake Worth after stalking and kidnapping her. Elizabeth's family reported her missing. A witness called police and reported he saw someone fall over the bridge. Police used cellphone records and other forensic evidence to arrest and charge Arellano with capital murder. Elizabeth had recently separated from Arellano and intended to obtain a divorce. Elizabeth is survived by her four children, ages 4 to 12 years.

Nicole Blahitka, 49

FORT WORTH | DECEMBER 30, 2016

Joshua Henry, 29, shot and killed his girlfriend Nicole in the bedroom of her home. Henry then left the scene. Nicole's son, age 12, and her housekeeper found her body the next day. Authorities arrested and charged Henry with murder after he confessed to killing her. A few weeks later, while Henry was released on bond, he engaged in an altercation with a police officer, who shot and killed him. Nicole is survived by her son and her daughter, age 17.

Jasmin Elizondo, 20

FORT WORTH | DECEMBER 10, 2016

Brandon Humes, 22, shot and killed his girlfriend Jasmin in her home. Humes then fled. Authorities located Humes in a hospital in Bexar County one month later and arrested and charged him with murder. Jasmin is survived by her two daughters.

TARRANT COUNTY *continued*

Irma Howard, 50

FORT WORTH | OCTOBER 17, 2016

Clark Griffin, 52, assaulted and killed his wife Irma in their home. Griffin then shot and killed himself. Neighbors requested a welfare check on the couple and authorities discovered their bodies in the home.

Shanna VanDeWege, 36

FORT WORTH | DECEMBER 15, 2016

Craig VanDeWege, 35, killed his wife Shanna by cutting her throat in the bedroom of their home. VanDeWege also killed their 3-month-old son. VanDeWege staged the house to look like a burglary. He called 911 to report the murders. He fled to Colorado where Colorado authorities stopped him for traffic violations, then arrested him. While in custody, Colorado law enforcement learned of the warrant for VanDeWege's arrest from Tarrant County and extradited him to Texas where he awaits trial for capital murder.

Blanca Vargas, 44

FORT WORTH | NOVEMBER 2, 2016

Rodolfo Vargas, 48, shot and killed his wife Blanca on a public street. Vargas then shot and killed himself. Blanca's daughter, age 8, and two other young children were in a nearby car when Vargas killed Blanca. Vargas had a long history of abusing Blanca. In the days before her murder, Vargas stalked her and attempted to suffocate her with a pillow. Blanca sought a protective order against Vargas. Blanca is survived by two adult sons, a young son and two young daughters.

Martha Kate Wiant, 38

FORT WORTH | AUGUST 14, 2016

Jeremy Wiant, 38, shot and killed his wife Kate in their home. After being shot, Kate ran outside with her daughter, age 5, to call 911. While calling for help, Kate died from the injuries. After shooting Kate, Wiant shot and killed himself. Kate's daughter reported the crime to responding officers. Kate is survived by her daughter.

Amy Short, 47

KENNEDALE | JULY 26, 2016

James Short, 46, shot and killed his wife Amy in their home. Short called his mother and then shot and killed himself. Short's mother contacted Amy's oldest son who arrived home at the same time as law enforcement. Law enforcement entered the home where they found both bodies and a confession written by Short. Amy is survived by her two adult sons, age 18 and 22, and her daughter, age 12.

Neeta Kharabanda, 58

SOUTHLAKE | APRIL 12, 2016

Anil Kharabanda, 62, shot and killed his wife Neeta in the bedroom of their home. Kharabanda then shot and killed himself. A family member found the couple's bodies and alerted law enforcement. Neeta had sought a divorce twice during their relationship. Neeta is survived by her adult daughter and son.

TARRANT COUNTY *continued*

Linda Martin, 55

SOUTHLAKE | MAY 31, 2016

Kenneth Martin, 52, shot his wife Linda in a busy intersection. Martin and Linda were attending a mediation session for their impending divorce. They left in separate vehicles. Martin followed Linda to an intersection, where he got out of his car and shot her. Emergency responders transported Linda to the hospital where she later died. Police arrived on the scene and arrested Martin for Linda's murder. Martin has a history of abusing and stalking Linda. Fearing for her safety, Linda had separated from him in 2015, filed for a protective order, hired personal security, and stayed at various hotels to elude Martin. Linda is survived by her two adult children.

TAYLOR COUNTY

Kendra Keppler, 27

ABILENE | MAY 18, 2016

Charles Newman, 36, shot and killed his girlfriend, Kendra. Law enforcement arrested and charged Newman with murder. Kendra is survived by her six children.

Soña Olivia Trucks, 40

ABILENE | MAY 23, 2016

Manuel Talavera, 45, shot and killed his girlfriend Soña in her home. One of Soña's daughters was present at the home and witnessed Talavera assault Soña with a gun before shooting her. The day of the murder, Soña's sister went to the home out of concern for Soña's safety. Law enforcement arrested Talavera the next day in Hamlin and charged him with murder. A grand jury indicted Talavera a few months later of first-degree murder. Soña is survived by her five daughters.

TERRELL COUNTY

Shania Lee Ashbaker, 20

SANDERSON | AUGUST 22, 2016

Zachary Hastings, 24, shot and killed his ex-girlfriend Shania in the bedroom of her home. Hastings also shot and killed Shania's boyfriend David Martinez, 24. Hastings broke into their home and shot them while they were sleeping. He then shot and killed himself. Shania had ended the relationship and Hastings was married to another woman at the time of the murder. Shania is survived by her infant daughter.

TERRY COUNTY

Veronica Garza, 35

BROWNFIELD | DECEMBER 10, 2016

Uriel Garza, 68, shot and killed his wife Veronica in the backyard of their home. Neighbors heard the shots, saw children running from the home, and called the police. When police arrived, Garza shot and killed himself. Garza had a history of emotional abuse and controlling behavior towards Veronica. Veronica is survived by her 10 children, ages 1 to 14.

TITUS COUNTY

Melva Sue Bond, 71

TALCO | JULY 16, 2016

George Bond, 75, shot and killed his wife Melva in their home. Officers responded to a call regarding a deceased person and located Melva's body. Authorities arrested Bond and charged him with murder. Bond has a history of abusing Melva; a month before killing her, Bond was arrested for assault family violence against Melva and interfering with an emergency telephone call. Melva is survived by her adult daughter and son.

TRAVIS COUNTY

Patricia Andrews, 61

AUSTIN | DECEMBER 10, 2016

Vinton Andrews, 68, shot and killed his wife Patricia inside their home. Andrews then shot and killed himself. A caretaker discovered their bodies and notified authorities.

Nicole Volmer, 40

AUSTIN | DECEMBER 18, 2016

Michael Volmer, 42, shot his wife Nicole in the bedroom of their home. The couple's 15-year-old daughter heard the gunshot and entered the bedroom where she found Volmer applying pressure to Nicole's wound. Volmer asked their daughter to call 911. Emergency responders transported Nicole to a hospital where she later died. Authorities arrested and charged Volmer with murder. Nicole is survived by her two sons, ages 7 and 24, and three daughters, ages 10, 12 and 15.

LaKeisha Nicole Glass, 39

PFLUGERVILLE | JUNE 26, 2016

Saladin McIntosh, 41, stabbed and killed his girlfriend LaKeisha in the stairwell of their home. McIntosh then shot and killed himself. LaKeisha's 8-year-old son was home during the murder; he informed police that LaKeisha had asked him to call 911 the night before and McIntosh stopped him from doing so. LaKeisha is survived by her son and her adult daughter.

TYLER COUNTY

Tonia Linscomb, 39

COLMESNEIL | MARCH 14, 2016

Andrew Linscomb, 41, shot and killed his wife Tonia inside their home. Linscomb notified law enforcement that he had killed his wife and planned to kill himself. He then shot himself and survived his injuries. When authorities arrived, they located Tonia and Linscomb's infant granddaughter in the doorway. Linscomb was airlifted to the hospital; authorities later charged him with murder. Tonia is survived by her daughter and two sons.

VICTORIA COUNTY

Roxana Menefee, 29

VICTORIA | APRIL 26, 2016

Jerome Ellis, 29, shot and killed his ex-girlfriend Roxana in her vehicle. Roxana had ended the relationship. Ellis had a history of abusing Roxana, and a few months before murdering her, Ellis assaulted her and smashed her car windows. Ellis killed Roxana days before she planned to marry her fiancé. Roxana is survived by her son, age 8.

WHARTON COUNTY

Cristal White Brown, 52

EL CAMPO | NOVEMBER 29, 2016

Arturo Tamez, 68, stabbed and killed his ex-girlfriend Cristal in her home. Authorities located Tamez and arrested and charged him with murder. Cristal is survived by her adult son.

WICHITA COUNTY

Helen Fletcher, 30

WICHITA FALLS | JUNE 17, 2016

Robert Fleeks, 66, shot his ex-girlfriend Helen outside his home. Helen then walked away from the home towards a nearby business and collapsed and died. An off-duty police officer found Helen's body in the parking lot of a health clinic and followed a blood trail which led back to Fleeks' home. Fleeks had a history of violence. Fleeks was arrested and charged with murder.

WILLIAMSON COUNTY

Van Chau, 47

ROUND ROCK | DECEMBER 29, 2016

Kiet Chau, 53, shot and killed his wife Van inside their bedroom. He then shot and killed himself. The couple's two sons were home during the murder, entered the bedroom after hearing the gunshots and then notified police. Van is survived by her five children, three sons and two daughters.

Honoring Texas Victims Report Methodology

Each year, TCFV publishes *Honoring Texas Victims: Family Violence Fatalities* revealing the stories of women killed by their male 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 2016, TCFV monitored media 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 and state partners. TCFV took care to confirm the accuracy of information through various means, primarily law enforcement, Department of Public Safety, media, victim advocates, and family violence programs.

About TCFV

Texas Council on Family Violence 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 1,300 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.

This project was funded by the Texas Health and Human Services Commission, the United States Department of Health and Human Services, and by Award No. 3073101 awarded by the Criminal Justice Division of the Office of the Governor.

The Texas Council on Family Violence statement on Sutherland Springs Mass Shooting

Make no mistake: domestic violence causes far reaching impact and devastation on Texas families and communities. Violence at home too often erupts into neighborhoods, workplaces and indeed places of worship. These heartbreaking domestic violence related murders over the weekend tear at the very fabric of Texas.

Points of fact: In an analysis of mass shootings nationally between 2009 and 2015, perpetrators killed intimate partners or other family members in 57% of the cases. In 15% of the cases, the perpetrator had a prior domestic violence charge. Moreover, in Texas in the last year, 146 women lost their lives at the hands of a male intimate partner; an additional 24 children and adults were killed in those 146 incidents. Also in 2016, Texas experienced eight incidents of familicide – a significant increase from the prior year total of zero, where perpetrators killed their children and partner before killing themselves. Additionally, firearms were used in 68% of the 146 incidents, 15% were stabbed, 10% were strangled and the remaining 7% involved other means of death.

We continue to underestimate the reach and devastation of domestic violence. Seeing it only as a microcosm, as something that happens privately between two people. Yet domestic violence thrives in the silence and obliviousness we give it.

Only when we confront the very conditions which allow domestic violence to exist will our homes, public spaces and places of worship be truly safe.

Texas Council on Family Violence



The 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.