

Domestic violence claimed

67 LIVES

in Wisconsin in 2006-07

**Wisconsin
Domestic Violence
Homicide Report
2006-2007**

Published September 2008



Social Change Through Action and Advocacy

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I. Executive Summary

Sometimes a domestic violence homicide occurs in the privacy of a home, with a single shot or stab. Sometimes it occurs in a street, an office, or other public space. Sometimes it occurs with the heightened brutality of severe beating, strangulation, and repeated shooting or stabbing. Sometimes it involves multiple killings and suicide. Regardless of the particular circumstances, domestic violence homicide casts a wide shadow and the impact and trauma run deeply for family members, friends, coworkers, and communities.

Continuing with the work launched in 2000 with publication of the Wisconsin Coalition Against Domestic Violence's first Wisconsin Domestic Violence Homicide Report, this edition details domestic violence-related homicides in calendar years 2006 and 2007.¹ This brief accounting in no way represents the victims' full lives. That would require a far more detailed inquiry, in-depth study of official case records, and conversations with family and friends left behind. Within the limitations of readily available public information, we have endeavored to construct as accurate a description as possible of key events and circumstances related to each homicide.²

The picture for 2006-2007 reflects both an initially hopeful sign that the numbers were declining and the reality that as a state we have not achieved a significant, lasting reduction in domestic violence homicides over the eight years that this report has been published.

2006 – 24 incidents resulting in 36 deaths: 27 murders, 1 in utero death as a result of a fatal attack on the mother, and 8 perpetrator suicides. This was a welcome drop from what had been a significant jump in domestic violence homicides between 2004 and 2005.³

2007 – 28 incidents resulting in 49 deaths: 37 murders, 2 in utero deaths as a result of attacks on the mothers (one fatal and one non-fatal), and 10 perpetrator suicides. The downward trend did not continue and domestic violence homicides in 2007 (39) were almost back to the 2005 level.⁴

1. Homicides were considered "domestic" if the victims and perpetrators were spouses or partners, former spouses or former partners, adults with children in common, adults related by blood and adults or teens who had been in a dating relationship. Homicides of others were also included if the circumstances of murder included obsessive control of the perpetrator's current or former partner that extended to her or his new partner or an attempt to protect a domestic violence victim from future harm. This report also details homicides of domestic violence perpetrators that occur as their victims acted in self-defense. Section VI, Methodology, contains additional information on definitions and criteria.

2. Primary sources include news media (print and Internet editions) and Wisconsin Circuit Court Access records.

3. The overall 2005 Wisconsin homicide rate (236) increased sharply from 2004 (149). The domestic violence homicide rate mirrored a similar increase, going from 28 victim deaths in 2004 to 40 in 2005, an increase of almost 43%.

4. The Bureau of Health Information Policy, WI Department of Health and Family Services, reports 194 deaths by homicide in 2006 and 200 in 2007, based on death certificates filed with the State Registrar, Vital Records Section. The Office of Justice Assistance, using Uniform Crime Report data submitted by law enforcement agencies, reports 165 murders in 2006 and 183 in 2007. See Section VI, Methodology.

Both years included several multiple homicide incidents. In 2006, 4 multiple incidents accounted for 8 of the 28 victim deaths. In 2007, 4 incidents accounted for 15 of the 39 victims.

Other aspects of domestic-violence-related homicide during 2006 and 2007 include:

- In 2006 there was an average of 2.3 domestic violence homicides per month in Wisconsin. When perpetrator suicides are included the rate is 3 domestic violence related deaths per month.
- In 2007 there was an average of 3.3 domestic violence homicides per month, with the rate of domestic violence related deaths (including perpetrator suicides) at 4.1 per month.
- In both years, perpetrators of domestic violence homicide incidents were overwhelmingly male: 87.5% in 2006 (21 of 24) and 85.7% in 2007(24 of 28).
- Most victims were female: 75% in 2006 (21 of 28) and 59.5% in 2007 (22 of 37).⁵ Most males who were murdered were killed by another male, either their father, in the case of child homicides, or in conjunction with an attack on a female partner who had left the relationship by divorce or separation.
- Intimate partner violence characterizes the domestic violence homicides included in this report. Victims were current or former partners, children or family members of a current or former partner, or bystanders present during the attack. The analysis for 2006-2007 did not find any incidents of non-intimate partner homicide (e.g., an adult child killing a parent) that met the definition and criteria used in the report.
- Nearly half of the homicides involved a victim or someone close to the victim who had left the relationship or was taking action to leave the relationship, such as moving out or filing for divorce.
- Victims reflected the span of life, from a few months gestation to 75 years, and were from 25 counties in all regions of the state.
- Fifty-eight minor children and 14 adult children were left orphaned or without a mother or father as a result of a domestic violence homicide. Of the minor children who lost one or both parents, 28 lost their mothers.
- Past history of domestic violence involving either the victim, a victim's family member (e.g., a daughter or sister) or friend, or another person remains largely unknown and unexplored in published accounts of domestic violence homicides.
- Where there was information about past arrests of a perpetrator for domestic abuse-related crimes, there was a pattern of battering, restraining order violation, and stalking charges dismissed or reduced to disorderly conduct.
- Firearms accounted for half of all domestic violence homicides.

While intimate partner homicide rates overall have declined nationally for all race and gender groups in the past twenty years, the decline has varied significantly for different populations, from a drop of 83%

5. The 2007 figure does not include two in utero deaths (as a result of an attack on the mother) where the sex was unknown.

for black males killed by female intimate partners to a drop of only 6% for white females. This downward trend has been attributed to increased awareness, services, and intervention. Nevertheless, the proportion of female victims of intimate partner homicide has increased over the past thirty years, from 55% to 78%.⁶

Several key themes emerged across the 2006-2007 cases and are addressed in detail in the report. These include: the reach and impact of domestic violence homicide, particularly in the multiple homicides and impact on children; the intersection of intimate partner violence and child abuse; the level of brutality in male-perpetrated domestic violence; the pervasiveness of stalking behavior and strangulation; and, the impact of domestic violence homicide on Hmong and Lao communities.

Our intent with this report is to honor the victims of domestic violence homicide and help Wisconsin communities create opportunities for intervention and prevention. We want to expand the understanding of the dynamics of domestic violence among Coordinated Community Response Teams, Elder Abuse Interdisciplinary Teams, and other critical systems where victims and perpetrators might seek help, assistance, support, and treatment. We hope to inspire community members to get involved in efforts to prevent domestic violence.

6. Bureau of Justice Statistics, *Homicide trends in the U.S., Intimate partner homicide*, available at <http://www.ojp.usdoj.gov/bjs/homicide/intimates.htm>. Data compiled from Federal Bureau of Investigation Supplementary Homicide Reports. It does not include the relationship categories of ex-girlfriend and ex-boyfriend. In 1976, 55% of intimate partner homicide victims were female (1,587 of 2,891); in 2005, 78% of victims were female (1,181 of 1,510).

II. Key Findings

The following tables provide snapshots of the number and characteristics of victims and perpetrators, homicide methods and location, and factors related to domestic violence homicide, such as prior history of domestic violence and whether the victim tried to leave the relationship.

Overview

	2006	2007	Total
Domestic violence homicides (incidents)	24	28	52
Victims of domestic violence homicide	28	39	67
Homicide incidents with two or more victims	4	4	8
Homicide incidents with perpetrator suicide	8	10	18
Total deaths (victim and perpetrator)	36	49	85
Female victims	21	22	43
Male victims	7	15	22
Female perpetrators	3	4	7
Male perpetrators	21	24	45

- In 2006, 4 multiple homicide incidents accounted for 8 of the 29 victims; in 2007, 4 incidents accounted for 15 of the 38 victims.
- The 2007 count by victim sex does not include two in utero deaths as a result of an attack on the mother (one fatal and one non-fatal) where the sex was unknown.
- The perpetrator count includes the person whose attack caused the death. One 2006 case involved a friend who drove the perpetrator from the scene. One 2007 case involved a cousin who acted as a lookout and helped hide the body. These are not included in the perpetrator count.

Age and gender of victims

	Female		Male		Total By Age	
	2006	2007	2006	2007	2006	2007
0-6 years	1	--	1	4	2	6
7-17	1	2	1	2	2	4
18-29	5	12	2	5	7	17
30-49	11	6	2	3	13	9
50 and over	3	2	1	1	4	3
Total	21	22	7	15	28	39

- Figure for 2006 includes one in utero death (sex known) as a result of a fatal attack on the mother.
- Total by age figure for 2007 includes two in utero deaths (sex unknown) as a result of an attack on the mother (one fatal and one non-fatal).

Age and gender of perpetrators

	Female		Male		Total By Age	
	2006	2007	2006	2007	2006	2007
Under 18 years	--	--	--	1	--	6
18-29	2	1	5	5	7	6
30-49	1	3	10	16	11	19
50 and over	--	--	6	2	6	2
Total	3	4	21	24	24	28

Race or ethnicity of victims and perpetrators

	Victims		Perpetrators	
	2006	2007	2006	2007
Caucasian	16	25	15	13
African American	4	6	6	7
Asian	3	3	2	4
Unknown	2	4	--	2
Latino or Hispanic	2	1	1	2
Native American	1	--	--	--

- Race and ethnicity listed according to identification in official record or news report.

Methods of killing

(by victim)	2006	2007	Total
Shot	12	21	33
Stabbed	7	7	14
Beaten or assaulted by being punched, pushed, bludgeoned	7	4	11
Strangled	1	3	4
Burned	--	1	1
Vehicle	1	--	1
Poison or drug	--	3	3

- A homicide often involved multiple methods of assault. These figures reflect the most likely cause of death.
- 22 of 52 homicide incidents involved a firearm as the method of killing.

Relationship of victim to male perpetrator

When perpetrator was male, victim was:	2006	2007	Total
Current female partner	17	10	27
Former or estranged female partner	1	6	7
Child of perpetrator's current female partner (different father from perpetrator or unknown)	1	1	2
Perpetrator's child (<i>and</i> child of current or former female partner)	1	7	8
Family member of former or estranged female partner	2	1	3
Friend of former or estranged female partners	--	7	7
New male partner of perpetrator's former or estranged female partner	1	1	2
Current female partner's ex-husband	--	1	1
Male acquaintance with perceived interest in the same woman	1	1	2
Bystander	1	--	1

Relationship of victim to female perpetrator

When perpetrator was female, victim was:	2006	2007	Total
Current male partner	--	3	3
Perpetrator's child (and child of current or former male partner)	1	1	2
Male roommate	2	--	2

Homicide-suicide

	2006	2007	Total
Homicide incidents with perpetrator suicide	8	10	18
Number of victims in homicide with perpetrator suicide	10	20	30
Homicide-suicide incidents involving firearms	6	6	12
Male perpetrator/suicide	8	9	17
Female perpetrator/suicide	--	1	1

- In 2006 there was 1 multiple homicide and suicide; in 2007 there were 4 multiple homicide cases with perpetrator suicide.
- Victims included current and former female partners, perpetrator's child, former partner's new male partner, and former partner's friends.
- The 2007 count includes 1 "suicide by police."

Multiple homicides

	2006	2007	Total
Multiple homicide incidents	4	4	8
Number of victims in multiple homicides	8	15	23
Multiple homicide incident with perpetrator suicide	1	4	5
Multiple homicide incidents involving firearms	2	3	5
Male perpetrator	4	4	8
Female perpetrator	--	--	--

- Victims included current and former female partners, perpetrator's child, former partner's new male partner and former partner's family and friends.

Impact on children

(under age 18)	2006	2007	Total
Children killed	4	10	14
Children at the scene of an adult homicide	16	6	22
Minor children orphaned	15	7	22
Adult children orphaned	6	--	6
Minor children left motherless	6	22	28
Adult children left motherless	3	5	8
Minor children left fatherless	4	4	8
Adult children left fatherless	--	--	--

- The number of children killed is most likely an undercount, as are the numbers of children left orphaned or without a parent. See the discussion in Section V, Impact on Children and Section VI, Methodology.

Prior history of domestic violence

	2006	2007	Total
Known prior history with homicide victim	5	5	10
Known prior history with other victims	2	8	10
Known prior history with victim or related party in this homicide and with other victims	--	1	1
Prior history unknown	17	14	31

Leaving the relationship

	2006	2007	Total
Married and no separation or pending divorce	5	3	8
Unmarried and no separation or action to leave	1	3	4
Divorced, pending divorce, or separation	6	9	15
Unmarried and separated or leaving the relationship	5	5	10
Unknown if action to leave or end the relationship	7	7	14
Not applicable	--	1	1

Location of homicide

	2006	2007	Total
Victim's home or shared home with perpetrator	14	13	27
Public location (e.g., street, park, workplace)	8	6	14
Perpetrator's home or business	2	7	9
Other (unknown and abandoned building)	--	2	2

III. 2006-2007 Homicides

Note: Perpetrators are identified according to news accounts and public records, including persons charged with a crime where the case remains open. Case status reflects information available at the time of publication of this report.⁷

County	In the death of...
Brown	Michelle Schmidt, 30, Green Bay – March 18, 2006 Stabbed twenty-nine times by her boyfriend, Juan Leon-Nava, 39, in front of her three young children. He then set fire to the home, leaving the children to find their own way out. The children survived. A jury found Leon-Nava guilty of first-degree intentional homicide and related charges. He was sentenced to life in prison with no eligibility for parole.
	Mai Bongxay, 59, Green Bay – December 4, 2007 Khamthong Bongxay, 65, was charged with first-degree intentional homicide in the shooting death of Mai. Prosecution has been suspended because he was declared unfit to stand trial and ordered to receive treatment. It will be resumed if he is declared competent.
	Kendy Lemmen, 46, Ashwaubenon – December 17, 2007 Shot by her husband, Randy Lemmen, 46, who then killed himself.
Calumet	Charlotte Kestell, 23, New Holstein – February 2, 2006 Stabbed by her boyfriend, Brent Johnke, 29, who killed himself with an overdose of prescription medicines.
Chippewa	Ralph Hakes, 51, LaFayette – June 13, 2007 Julie Birtzer, 49, was charged in the shooting death of her boyfriend. A jury trial is scheduled for December 2008.
Crawford	Gus D. Brown III, 43, Eastman – August 15, 2006 Shot by his roommate, Mona West, 43. She pled guilty to first-degree intentional homicide and was sentenced to life in prison with eligibility for parole after twenty-five years.

7. The current status of an open case is available through the Wisconsin Circuit Court Access site: <http://wcca.wicourts.gov/index.xsl>.

County**In the death of...****Dane****Denise Lowery, 46, Madison – August 5, 2006****James Fraser, 50**

Stabbed by her boyfriend, Alec Williams, 56. A jury found him guilty of two counts of first-degree intentional homicide. He was sentenced to two consecutive life sentences.

Kevin K. Cobbins, 26, Madison – July 28, 2007

James P. Bohanan, 26, was charged with first-degree intentional homicide in the shooting death of his former girlfriend's current boyfriend. A final pretrial hearing is scheduled in October 2008.

Yuliana Hernandez-Hernandez, 23, Fitchburg – October 17, 2007

Stabbed by her estranged husband, Julio C. Marin-Garcia, 28, hours after a no-contact order expired. He attempted suicide but survived. A jury found him guilty of first-degree intentional homicide. He was sentenced to life in prison; parole eligibility will be determined in October 2008.

Dodge**Sherry Asbury, 43, Fox Lake – March 11, 2007**

Strangled and beaten by her estranged husband, Jeffrey Asbury, 40, in the village municipal building. She ran into the building, which housed the police department, as he chased her. He was found guilty of first-degree reckless homicide (amended from first-degree intentional) after a no-contest plea. He was sentenced to thirty years in prison and fifteen years of extended supervision.

Fond du Lac**Dawn Moore, 43, Ripon – November 13, 2006**

Bludgeoned to death with a concrete cinder block by her husband, Kevin Moore, 45. A jury found him guilty of first-degree intentional homicide. He was sentenced to life in prison with no eligibility for parole.

Forest**Jordanne Murray, 18, Crandon – October 7, 2007****Katrina McCorkle, 18****Bradley Schultz, 20****Aaron Smith, 20****Lindsey Stahl, 14****Lianna Thomas, 18**

Shot multiple times by Jordanne's former boyfriend, Tyler Peterson, 20, with the assault rifle issued to him in his employment as a deputy sheriff. He committed suicide after a standoff with law enforcement. A seventh person was injured and survived.

County**In the death of...****Green****Charlotte M. Craft, 70, Clarno – December 24, 2006**

Shot by her husband, Lee E. Craft, 73, who then killed himself.

Christopher A. Shelton, 10 weeks, Broadhead – February 28, 2007

Christopher's father, Casey J. Shelton, 31, was charged with first-degree reckless homicide and physical abuse of a child after his son's death from head injuries. A jury trial is scheduled in January 2009.

Kenosha**Jennifer Lovell, 24, Kenosha – August 29, 2007**

Strangled by her husband, Thomas W. Lovell, Jr., 35, who then hanged himself. Her three-year-old son was alone in the home for several hours after his mother's death.

Marathon**June Zurkowski, 40, Spencer – March 24, 2006**

Beaten and strangled with a piece of broken glass stuffed down her throat by her husband, Patrick Zurkowski, 40. A jury found him guilty of first-degree intentional homicide and he was sentenced to life in prison without parole.

Padalina Thao, 29, Weston – September 13, 2006

Shot by her estranged husband, Chor Xiong, 39, who then killed himself. A second adult was shot in the stomach and survived.

Pa Houa Thao, 25, Marathon – August 28, 2007**Unnamed fetus of Pa Houa Thao**

Stabbed to death by her estranged husband, Chor Thao, 31, after breaking free from the duct tape that bound her wrists and fleeing her home. She died on a neighbor's lawn. Chor Thao committed suicide with the knife used to kill his wife.

Bryce Thewes, 11, Kronenwetter – September 18, 2007

Shot by his mother, Debra Thewes, 39, who then killed herself as police entered their home with a search warrant. She had failed to return Bryce to his father after a weekend visitation. Six weeks prior his father had been awarded sole custody.

Milwaukee**Michael Anderson, 29, Milwaukee – March 6, 2006**

Struck with a car and killed by the woman he lived with, Samantha Crump, 29. She was found guilty of second-degree reckless homicide (reduced from first-degree reckless) after a no-contest plea and was sentenced to eight years in prison and eight years of extended supervision.

Milwaukee**Margaret Meyer, 51, Franklin – March 15, 2006****Earl Meyer, 25**

Beaten with a baseball bat by Daniel Kohlman, 39, the former boyfriend of Margaret's daughter and Earl's sister. Kohlman also slit Earl's throat. He was found guilty of one count of first-degree intentional homicide and one count of second-degree intentional homicide after a no-contest plea. He was sentenced to forty years in prison and ten years extended supervision.

Lenora L. Eubanks, 24, Milwaukee – April 15, 2006

Stabbed multiple times by her boyfriend Michael Dumas, 24, who then committed suicide by setting himself on fire.

Alysha Adlam, 3, Milwaukee – May 13, 2006

Thrown against the faucet of a bathtub by her mother. Janet Adlam, 22, was found guilty after a no-contest plea of four child-abuse related felonies, including child neglect resulting in death. She was sentenced to twelve years in prison and eight years of extended supervision.

Raymundo Munoz-Silva, 31, Bayview – May 29, 2006**Julio C. Diaz-Guillen, 17**

Octaviano Juarez-Corro, 33, was charged with two counts of first-degree intentional homicide and three counts of attempted homicide for killing a man his estranged wife was dating and a bystander attending the same picnic. Juarez-Corro was also charged with shooting and injuring his estranged wife and two others. The attacks occurred in Bayview Park on Memorial Day weekend. An arrest warrant was issued in June 2006 and as of September 2008 he has not been apprehended.

Sheila Pearson, 43, Milwaukee – July 14, 2006

Fell off of a balcony after her boyfriend, Robert Townsend, 35, let go of her arm. She had climbed there to get away from him. He pled guilty to felony murder-false imprisonment and was sentenced to twelve years in prison and five years of extended supervision.

Betty A. Rogutich, 75, Wauwatosa – October 30, 2006

Stabbed with a butcher knife by her husband, Rudolph Rogutich, 79. He pled guilty to second-degree reckless homicide and was sentenced to four years in prison and three years of extended supervision. The sentence was stayed and he was placed on probation with electronic monitoring, with an order for psychiatric treatment and other conditions.

Milwaukee**Sihay Chittamath, 38, Milwaukee – January 22, 2007**

Cesar Sanchez-Dominguez, 23, has been charged with second-degree intentional homicide in the stabbing death of Chittamath. The victim, wearing brass knuckles, broke into Sanchez-Dominguez's home looking for his girlfriend, who was dating the defendant. A mistrial was declared in May 2008 and a jury trial is scheduled in November 2008.

Antoine Campbell, 26, Milwaukee – May 4, 2007

A jury found Tenesha S. Fields, 26, not-guilty of first-degree reckless homicide in the fatal stabbing of her boyfriend.

Deshon Tucker, 40, Milwaukee – August 11, 2007

Died from burns after her boyfriend, Martin Ray Fitzgerald, 43, sprayed her and her niece with gasoline and then set a newspaper on fire and threw it at them, igniting the gasoline. Her niece sustained burns over forty percent of her body and survived by jumping out of a window. Fitzgerald pled guilty to first-degree reckless homicide (amended from intentional), first-degree reckless injury, and related charges. He was sentenced to thirty-five years in prison and fifteen years of extended supervision.

Joseph Rogers, 18, Milwaukee – August 31, 2007

Shot by Terran C. Kess, 17, who cited an alleged relationship between the victim and a woman who was a mentor to both men. He pled guilty to first-degree reckless homicide (amended from first-degree intentional) and was sentenced to thirty-five years in prison and ten years of extended supervision.

Marvin Watson, 39, Milwaukee – September 3, 2007

Hit in the head with a table leg by his girlfriend, Vanessa Renee McKee, 42. She pled guilty to second-degree reckless homicide and was sentenced to four years in prison and five years of extended supervision.

Dekeyecha Harriott, 29, Milwaukee – September 8, 2007

Shot by her boyfriend, William Demajor Rogers, Jr., 30. He pled guilty to first-degree intentional homicide and related charges and was sentenced to fifty years in prison.

Andrea D. Shelby, 22, Milwaukee – September 29, 2007

Beaten by her boyfriend, Norbert Mathis, 46. He pled guilty to second-degree reckless homicide and was sentenced to fourteen years in state prison and five years of extended supervision.

County	In the death of...
Milwaukee	<p>Bao Vang, 28, Milwaukee – November 9, 2007 Pheng Yang, 33, has been charged with first-degree intentional homicide and hiding a corpse in connection with the beating death of his estranged wife. A status conference is scheduled in September 2008. A cousin, Kao Yang, has also been charged in connection with the homicide and a plea hearing is scheduled in October 2008.</p> <p>Tonya St. Clair, 36, Milwaukee – December 31, 2007 Stabbed by her boyfriend, Corey Hosni, 37, in the presence of their eleven-year-old daughter. Police fatally shot Hosni.</p>
Oconto	<p>Brenda Bradshaw, 43, Oconto – June 15, 2007 Shot to death by her husband, Timothy Bradshaw, 47, at the church where she worked. He was convicted of first-degree reckless homicide (amended from first-degree intentional) and other charges after a no-contest plea. He was sentenced to thirty years in prison and ten years of extended supervision.</p>
Outagamie	<p>Unnamed fetus of Darshana Patel, Appleton – September 30, 2007 Manishkumar Patel, 34, has been charged with first-degree intentional homicide of an unborn child, placing foreign objects in edibles, stalking, and other charges in connection with allegedly spiking his girlfriend's beverage with the drug RU-486 in order to cause a miscarriage. Patel failed to meet the conditions of a \$750,000 cash bond and a warrant was issued for his arrest. As of September 2008 he has not been apprehended.</p>
Ozaukee	<p>Sin Lam, 36, Mequon – January 4, 2006 Beaten and strangled by her husband, Stephen L. Trattner, 43. He was convicted of first-degree reckless homicide after a no-contest plea. He was sentenced to thirty-five years in prison and ten years of extended supervision.</p>
Polk	<p>Sue Weiland, 39, Star Prairie – August 20, 2006 Stabbed nineteen times by her boyfriend, Peter Gamble Whyte, 51. Police found Whyte with a large wound in his stomach. A jury convicted him of second-degree intentional homicide (amended from first-degree intentional). He was sentenced to forty years in prison and twenty years of extended supervision.</p>
Polk and Hennepin (MN)	<p>Zachary Wolfe, 7, Luck – February 14, 2007 Poisoned with antifreeze administered by his father, Jeffrey S. Wagner, 47, who then committed suicide by drinking antifreeze. Wolfe abducted Zachary while he was waiting at the bus stop. The homicide occurred at a motel in Richfield, MN.</p>

County	In the death of...
Racine	<p>Stefnee Goines, 22, Caledonia – January 14, 2006 Shot multiple times by her boyfriend, Vincent Cosey, 26. A jury convicted him of first-degree intentional homicide and related charges. He was sentenced to life in prison without parole.</p>
Shawano	<p>Michael Zrenner, 34, Shawano – December 30, 2007 Stabbed by Jeremiah Connour, 28, when he would not disclose the whereabouts of Connour's former girlfriend. A jury convicted Connour of first-degree intentional homicide and related charges. He was sentenced to life in prison without parole.</p>
Sheboygan	<p>Trisha L. Bergemann, 22, Sheboygan – March 23, 2006 Unnamed fetus of Trisha Bergemann Shot by her boyfriend, James Butler, 22. Butler left the scene in a car driven by his younger brother's girlfriend and killed himself as police attempted to pull over the vehicle.</p>
Trempealeau	<p>Laurie Gunderson, 49, Strum – May 13, 2006 Shot by her husband, Daniel J. Gunderson, 53. He was convicted of second-degree intentional homicide (amended from first-degree) after a no-contest plea. He was sentenced to twenty-five years in prison and fifteen years extended supervision.</p>
Walworth	<p>Nicole McAffee, 19, Delavan – June 9, 2007 Isaiah Analco, 7 months Argenis Analco, 7 months Ashley Huerta, 21 Vanessa Iverson, 19 Ambrosio Analco, 23, shot his former girlfriend, Nicole McAffee, their twin sons, her sister, and her friend. He shot Nicole last as she tried to flee with their twenty-month-old daughter. The girl survived a gunshot wound to her chest. Analco committed suicide.</p>
Washington	<p>Elizabeth Koser, 7, Kewaskum – June 4, 2006 Shot by her father, William J. Koser, 49, who then set fire to his house and shot and killed himself.</p>
Waukesha	<p>Cynthia Klipstein, 47, Waukesha – October 8, 2006 Shot by her husband, John Klipstein, 48, who then killed himself.</p>

County**In the death of...****Waukesha****Marjorie McDaniel, 50, Waukesha – September 24, 2007**

Shot by her husband, Carl J. McDaniel, 49. He was found guilty of second-degree reckless homicide (amended from first-degree intentional) after a no-contest plea. Sentencing pending at the time of this report.

Winnebago**Theresa Foster, 47, Oshkosh – March 31, 2007**

Strangled by her husband, David G. Stutz, 41, who killed himself with an overdose of prescription drugs.

Zia Yang, 36, Oshkosh – April 5, 2006

Shot by her husband, Yang Pao Lo, 37, who killed himself after an eleven-hour standoff with police. Up to sixteen family members were in the house at the time of the attack and one of Lo's cousins hid in an upstairs closet until police entered the house.

Jodee Thompson, 48, Oshkosh – October 1, 2006

Beaten by her boyfriend, James Delfosse, 37, who also cut her throat and attempted to cut up her body before starting a fire in the apartment. He was found guilty of first-degree reckless homicide (amended from first-degree intentional) and related charges after a no-contest plea. He was sentenced to forty years in prison and twenty years of extended supervision.

Wood**Caiden Tishim, 8, Marshfield – April 15, 2007****Darien Tishim, 4**

Marc Tishim, 54, shot his daughter, Caiden, in the head and killed his son, Darien, with a drug overdose. Before killing himself, he notified police and left a message on his estranged wife's cell phone.

IV. A Closer Look: Domestic Violence Homicide in North Central Wisconsin

In preparing this report we saw that 4 of the incidents occurred in a single county in central Wisconsin. Marathon County is the state's largest by area and tenth largest by population.⁸ It is a mix of rural farmland, forest land, small towns, and one small city, Wausau. The 4 domestic violence homicide incidents, 2 each in 2006 and 2007, resulted in 8 deaths: 5 homicide victims and 3 perpetrators who committed suicide. The numbers caught our attention not because domestic violence is necessarily more prevalent in this one county, but because outside of Milwaukee it had the highest number of domestic violence homicides in the two years under review.⁹ We went back to past WCADV homicide reports and discovered that between 2000 and 2005, there had been 3 more victims of domestic violence homicide in Marathon County.

In more rural counties with small urban centers, such as Marathon County and Wausau, people are often connected across nearby counties through work, school, and family. When we drew the circle wider and looked at the seven adjacent counties we saw more of the picture.¹⁰ Between 2000 and 2007 there have been 24 victims of domestic violence homicide in this region and at least 5 perpetrator suicides. This does not include the 'near-homicides' where someone survived an attack that was intended to kill, which have not been systematically identified in any way. At least 3 of the homicide incidents in this period involved individuals who survived the attack. Each victim's death, each near-homicide, and each perpetrator's suicide touched many people: surviving children, family members and friends, coworkers, neighbors, area domestic abuse service providers, responding police officers and medical personnel, and witnesses to the attack.

In addition to Marathon County, in 2007 two of the adjacent counties experienced domestic violence homicides: Wood and Shawano. These three counties in this one slice of the state illustrate many of the facets of domestic violence addressed in this report: the risks in leaving an abusive relationship (primarily to women in heterosexual relationships and their children); patterns of stalking; the ways in which children are drawn into adult domestic violence, in both living with and witnessing it; the brutality in many domestic violence homicides (in particular, male attacks on female partners or their children in common); the wide reach of multiple homicides and perpetrator suicides; and, the toll of domestic violence homicides on Hmong and Lao communities.

The following brief accounts of domestic violence homicides in north central Wisconsin are drawn from available public information.

8. Population of 130,223 (2006 Census Bureau estimate) and over 1,545 square miles in area. The largest city, Wausau, has a population of approximately 38,000.

9. See the statewide map included at the back of this report. After Milwaukee (16) and Marathon (4), the following counties each experienced 3 homicide incidents in 2006 and 2007: Brown, Dane, and Winnebago.

10. The adjacent counties include Clark, Langlade, Lincoln, Portage, Shawano, Wood, and Taylor. See the statewide map and figures at the back of this report. They are considerably smaller in population than Marathon County, ranging from about 20,000 (Clark) to 76,000 (Wood).

Marathon County

March 24, 2006 – June Zurkowski, 40, was beaten and suffocated to death by her husband, Patrick Zurkowski, 40. The autopsy showed that pieces of a glass candy dish were lodged in her throat and blocked her airway, most likely resulting in an agonizing death over ten to twenty minutes. Her lungs were filled with blood from a cut on her tongue. Bruising on her arms suggested that she was held down so that she would not survive. After June Zurkowski's death, her husband cleaned up the bloody floor and clothing and called a local funeral home to report her death. In the days preceding the murder he moved \$28,000 from their joint checking account to his individual account. The day before the murder he inquired about whether life insurance would pay off their home mortgage if one of them should die. A jury rejected Zurkowski's claim of self-defense and convicted him of first-degree intentional homicide. He was sentenced to life in prison without parole. The family of the victim has requested she be remembered by her maiden name, June Wehrman.

September 13, 2006 – Padalina Thao, 29, was shot in the head and killed by her estranged husband, Chor Xiong, 39, when she and her boyfriend went to pick up at least one of her children for school. After critically wounding Pao Chang, 41, in the stomach, Xiong committed suicide with the same shotgun. The events occurred in the front yard, with five of Thao and Xiong's seven children witnessing the attack and suicide. Neighbors heard the gunshots and discovered the bodies. Thao had sought help from at least one community service agency in the weeks prior to the homicide. The couple had met with a mediator from the Hmong community.

August 28, 2007 – Pa Houa Thao, 25, was stabbed to death by her estranged husband, Chor Thao, 31, after she broke free from the duct tape that bound her wrists and tried to escape. She died on a neighbor's lawn. Chor Thao later committed suicide with the same 12-inch ceremonial knife used to kill her. Pa Houa Thao's death also resulted in the death of the child she was carrying (gestation unknown). None of the couple's three children, ages four to eight, were home when the homicide occurred. Pa Houa Thao's family reported that her husband had been physically abusive to her in the past, on one occasion beating her and knocking out a tooth. Two days before the murder she contacted police to report a prowler. She suspected that Chor Thao had been spying on her for several months. In the previous month someone had entered her home while she was showering and stapled a pair of her underwear to the wall. The couple was in the midst of divorce proceedings, both in the Hmong community's process and in the Wisconsin legal system. They had met with Hmong clan leaders prior to the fatal attack and suicide.

September 18, 2007 – Bryce Thewes, 11, was shot and killed by his mother, Debra Thewes, 39, who shot herself as police officers entered her home to look for him. She died after transport to a hospital. Six weeks prior to the murder the boy's father had been awarded sole custody. Police came to the home with a search warrant after Thewes failed to return Bryce to his father after a weekend visitation and after he did not appear at school. Investigators indicated that journal entries she had written referencing the custody action suggested that she had planned the murder and suicide.

Shawano County

December 30, 2007 – Michael Zrenner, 34, was stabbed to death by Jeremiah Connour, 28, whom he had known since they were teenagers. The autopsy found that he bled to death after the knife went through his heart and punctured his lung. Prosecutors asserted that Zrenner was killed because he would not reveal the whereabouts of Connour's former girlfriend. Three months prior to the homicide, on two separate dates Connour was arrested and charged with domestic abuse related crimes, including battery. A no contact order was in effect. A jury convicted him of first-degree intentional homicide and rejected his testimony that his friend had stabbed himself to death after they had fought following a night of drinking. He was sentenced to life in prison without parole.

Wood County

April 15, 2007 - Caiden Tishim, 8, and Darien, 4, were killed by their father on Darien's birthday. Caiden was shot in the head and Darien was poisoned with a drug overdose. Mark Tishim, 54, then shot and killed himself. The homicides occurred two days before a scheduled divorce hearing. Before killing himself, Tishim left the following message on his estranged wife's cell phone: "Hi, I just called to say goodbye. The children have gone on before me and I'm going to join them now. You'll find us in Caiden's bedroom. Bye." He also called the county emergency number to report that his children were gone and he would soon follow them. Tishim's advance planning for the murders included mailing apology letters to relatives, co-workers, and his landlord. He sent \$200,000 to his sister and six months of rent to his landlord.

V. Key Themes and Policy Implications

The wide reach of domestic violence homicide

Multiple homicides

Multiple homicides, where a single perpetrator kills more than one person, immediately illustrate the wide-reaching harm caused by domestic violence. The circle of people directly touched by the attack and resulting deaths expands greatly and there is often much media attention to the event.¹¹ Sometimes family members and friends who have tried to help and support a victim are also the targets. Often the attack includes or is directed at the perpetrator's children. Almost always the homicides include or are directed at a current or former intimate partner, such as killing the children, but leaving their mother alive. Most multiple domestic violence homicides are perpetrated by men, as are most homicide-suicides.¹² In 2006-2007, male perpetrators committed all 8 multiple homicide cases, resulting in 23 deaths. The following examples from the 2006-2007 cases illustrate the impact of multiple homicides.

- Octaviano Juarez-Corro was charged with shooting and injuring his estranged wife and killing a man that she was dating, along with a bystander attending the same picnic. Two other people were injured. The attacks occurred at a public park on Memorial Day weekend. A warrant was issued for his arrest and as of the writing of this report he has not been apprehended.
- Marc Tishim shot his eight-year-old daughter and poisoned his four-year-old son with a drug overdose before shooting himself. He left a message on his estranged wife's cell phone telling her that her children were gone.
- Tyler Peterson killed his former girlfriend, plus five of her friends who had gathered to celebrate the high school's homecoming in their small town of 2,000. One person was seriously wounded, but survived, as did a responding police officer who was shot. Peterson was an off-duty deputy sheriff and part-time village police officer. He used his department-issued assault rifle in the attack. He killed himself after being wounded by a sniper during an armed standoff with fellow officers.
- Ambrosio Analco killed himself after shooting and killing his estranged girlfriend and their twin infant sons, plus her sister and a friend. One victim was shot in the back as she tried to flee. He shot his estranged girlfriend last and also tried to kill his two-year-old daughter. The child survived a near-fatal wound.

11. This media attention is often highly sensational and lacking in its understanding of domestic violence. Past editions of the *Wisconsin Domestic Violence Homicide Report* have paid specific attention to media accounts of domestic violence homicides (e.g., see the 2004 and 2003 reports). They identified the following issues in media coverage of domestic violence homicides: (1) the homicides are rarely labeled as or placed in the broader context of domestic violence; (2) coverage provides an inaccurate view of domestic violence and reinforces myths; and, (3) sources that shape the stories are often limited or poorly chosen.

12. See the discussion of intimate partner homicides and suicides in David Adams, *Why Do They Kill? Men Who Murder Their Intimate Partners*, Vanderbilt University Press, 2007.

'Near homicides'

While we did not track cases systematically, we began to notice the 'near homicides,' incidents where someone survived a nearly fatal attack. At least 4 of the 2006 and 2007 homicide cases included victims who survived because the gunshots did not kill them as intended and because they received prompt medical attention. If we could identify all near homicides that occur in Wisconsin, the range and impact of domestic violence would be even wider and more visible than it already is. For example: a woman survived a fire set by her husband by jumping from a window and breaking her hip; another woman survived an attempt to burn her to death, although her aunt did not; a woman was shot twice by her boyfriend as she was attempting to leave him; a woman survived after her boyfriend cut her throat; a woman successfully pushed the gun away after her husband discharged it next to her head; a woman survived a vehicle crash that was intended to kill her; a woman survived a repeated beating and strangulation; a woman survived a shooting as she shielded her grandchildren in an attack that ended with police shooting and killing her estranged son-in-law. For every assault that ends in homicide there are countless others that leave victims terrorized, severely hurt and traumatized.

Public places

While domestic violence homicide most often occurs 'behind closed doors,' as does the ongoing intimidation, coercion, and abuse that surrounds it, it can readily spill beyond those doors to draw in neighbors, coworkers, and bystanders. One of the multiple homicides described earlier occurred in a busy public park. Other cases from 2006-2007 illustrate the ways in which the violence has a wide reach.

- Samantha Crump used her car to kill the man she was living with. She accelerated without braking on a public street near an elementary school after a confrontation in the street. The incident occurred as school was ending for the day. Children and teachers leaving the school walked past a body bag with a foot sticking out.
- Jeffrey Asbury strangled and beat his estranged wife to death in the town's municipal building. After ramming her car with his vehicle, he chased her into the building lobby, as reported by a passerby. The municipal building housed the office of the local police department, which was unoccupied at the time, approximately 4:45 p.m. on a Sunday afternoon. Earlier in the day the couple's daughter had contacted police in a nearby community to report that her father had been at the home and was threatening her mother.
- Timothy Bradshaw shot his estranged wife to death in the church where she worked as an office manager. He then shot himself, but survived. Witnesses saw an armed man enter the church building and then heard three shots. Others were present in the church during the attack.
- Kevin Moore bludgeoned his wife to death with a forty-five-pound cinder block in the driveway outside their home.
- Chor Thao stabbed his estranged wife to death after she had broken free from duct tape that bound her wrists and fled the house. She died on a neighbor's lawn.
- Jeffrey Scott Wagner poisoned his seven-year-old son and himself in a motel room.
- Yang Pao Lo shot and killed his wife and then killed himself during an eleven-hour standoff with police. Neighbors heard gunshots and explosives as he fired on police (grazing one officer's helmet) and the SWAT team responded with "flash bangs," explosive devices used to distract the suspect as

they entered the house. Neighbors were ordered to stay in their homes. Between ten and sixteen family members were in the house and Lo's cousin hid in a closet while staying in contact with police via cell phone.

- After killing his former girlfriend and five other people, Tyler Peterson left the scene. As they heard the gunshots, neighbors in the small town flooded the emergency dispatch center with calls. Peterson shot at the first officer he encountered who radioed, "He is shooting to kill." Peterson was on the run for several hours. Residents continued to call the dispatch center, concerned for their safety. The dispatcher advised, "...stay in the residence and lock all the doors."

Impact on children: at the scene and losing parents

Living with domestic violence has a profound effect on children, particularly when it leads to homicide: the impact of seeing a parent murdered and perhaps seeing a parent commit suicide; the aftermath of losing a parent to homicide; and, attacks on children. Homicides that occur in a public setting may be witnessed by children who live next door, pass on the street, or play in the park.

At least 22 children were at the scene of many of the homicides in 2006 and 2007. This does not include those whose Memorial Day picnic was marked by gunfire and homicide, or children who may have seen a man run down with a car or passed his body as they left the school.

- Children ages four and two were present when their uncle shot and killed his girlfriend.
- Two children were in the house and apparently asleep when their father beat and strangled their mother in an attack that included slamming her head on the kitchen floor and throwing her against cabinets and furniture. He then covered her body with a blanket. The children walked past her body before their father took them to school the next morning. He told them their mother was sleeping.
- A four-year-old was apparently asleep in the house while his father beat his mother to death with a cinder block.
- Three boys, ages five, four, and two, saw their mother stabbed to death, in an attack that included as many as twenty-nine wounds. Their mother's boyfriend then set the house on fire and left the children to escape on their own.
- Five of a couple's seven children saw their father shoot their mother to death.
- Two children were in the backseat of their mother's car as she killed her boyfriend.
- A three-year-old was present when her father killed two people and shot and injured three others, including her mother.
- A toddler in her mother's arms survived a shooting that killed her mother, her twin brothers, her aunt, and her mother's friend.
- A three-year-old boy was alone in the home with his mother and stepfather's bodies for several hours after his stepfather strangled the boy's mother and then committed suicide by hanging.
- An eleven-year-old girl alerted her neighbors that her father was holding her mother at knifepoint. Her mother died in the street after being stabbed in the neck. Police fatally shot her father.

- A thirteen-year-old was in an adjacent room when a man stabbed his friend after he refused to disclose the whereabouts of the perpetrator's former girlfriend.

Domestic violence homicide also means that many children lose one or both parents through homicide and often a related suicide. While the tally is not exact, in 2006-2007 at least 22 minor children were orphaned, 28 were left without a mother, and 8 were left without a father.

Children are also sometimes killed or injured as bystanders during an attack that targets another person. As noted in the accounts of multiple homicides, in 2006 a seventeen-year-old attending a picnic with a coworker was shot and killed, allegedly by Octaviano Juarez-Corro when he attacked his wife and her companion. (The case remains open, and a warrant has been issued for Juarez-Corro's arrest.) In 2007 a fourteen-year-old was shot and killed by Tyler Peterson in his attack on his former girlfriend and her friends.

Impact on children: the intersection of domestic violence and child custody

There is a growing understanding of the ways in which batterers use children as a tactic of coercion and control against their mothers, including threats to abduct or kill the children, particularly if a woman tries to leave the relationship.¹³ Reporting often frames the problem as a "custody battle," without any closer examination of how killing a child is perhaps the most powerful form of coercion and control.

Despite the overall trend to recognize the seriousness of domestic violence, particularly within the criminal legal system, abusive men who fight for custody continue to win contested actions. In 2003, the state legislature enacted a law (2003 Act 130) aimed at addressing this problem. The new law created a rebuttable presumption that it is not in the best interest of children to be placed with a parent who is known to have engaged in domestic abuse. However, there is currently no centralized method for tracking the outcome of family law cases involving domestic abuse. There has also been no review of the extent to which the new law has been successfully implemented in family courts across the state. One of the few comprehensive studies of this issue, released by the federal Department of Justice in 1995, found that abusive men who fight for custody win 70% of contested actions, obtaining at least joint physical and legal custody or sole custody.¹⁴ Many family courts compound difficulties related to adult victim and child safety when they fail to recognize domestic abuse, its seriousness, and its profound effects on children. Many batterers pursue custody of the children as means to continue to exert control or to abuse their estranged partners. The existence of joint custody and visitation orders can provide a batterer with access to information about the child's mother, her location, who she is dating, and her activities. All of this can contribute to stalking and the risk of homicide.¹⁵

13. See Adams, *Why Do They Kill?* Also, Lundy Bancroft and Jay G. Silverman, *The Batterer as Parent: Addressing the Impact of Domestic Violence on Family Dynamics*, Sage Publications, 2002.

14. R. Bachman and L.E. Saltzman, *National Crime Victimization Survey, Violence Against Women: Estimates from the Redesigned Survey*, U.S. DOJ, Bureau of Justice Statistics, 1995. More recent studies show that raising allegations of abuse often hurts the abused or protective parent. The Leadership Council on Child Abuse and Interpersonal Violence provides an annotated review of research: <http://www.leadershipcouncil.org/1/pas/dv.html>.

15. See Bancroft and Silverman, *The Batterer as Parent*.

It is clear that separation and decisions related to custody and visitation are a volatile and dangerous time, as demonstrated in these examples from the 2006-2007 homicide cases.

- William Koser shot and killed his seven-year-old daughter, then set the house on fire and killed himself. He had told his former wife that “she wouldn’t get anything out of the divorce.”
- Jeffrey Scott Wagner poisoned his son with antifreeze and killed himself in the same way. He killed his son in a hotel room in Minnesota after abducting him from a school bus stop. His former wife reported her son missing later that day, but no official response occurred until the following day and no Amber Alert was issued. Four days before the abduction, the boy’s mother obtained a restraining order citing Wagner’s threats to take their son out of the state or country and fears that he would hurt their son to get at her.
- Debra Thewes shot and killed her eleven-year-old son after failing to return him to his father after a weekend visitation. She killed her son and herself as police entered the home in search of her son. The homicide occurred approximately six weeks after her former husband was awarded sole custody.
- Marc Tishim shot his eight-year-old daughter and poisoned his four-year-old son with a drug overdose before shooting himself. He left a message on his estranged wife’s cell phone telling her that her children were gone.

In reflecting on the impact of the murders of Caiden and Darien Tishim, a community advocate had this comment: “The worst fear of victims with children has occurred in their own community. This is the most powerful message an abuser can send. We have since had victims report that [abusers have threatened to take the same action].”

Impact on children: the intersection of domestic violence and child abuse

Various studies estimate that between three and ten million children are exposed to domestic violence annually. The U.S. Advisory Board on Child Abuse suggests that domestic violence may be the single major precursor to child abuse and neglect fatalities in the country.¹⁶ While not all of these homicides occur within the context of domestic violence, many do.

Each edition of this report includes many discussions back and forth between the researchers and authors about how and whether to include child abuse-related deaths. We include children who were killed as a direct result of a domestic violence incident. While we believe that a larger number of child deaths are directly related to an ongoing pattern of domestic abuse, our current methods of tracking homicides do not allow us to consistently identify children killed by perpetrators of domestic violence, or whether

16. Research cited by Family Violence Prevention Fund, *The Facts on Children and Domestic Violence*, <http://www.endabuse.org/resources/facts/Children.pdf>.

the actions of a mother who was being battered caused or contributed to a child's death. For 2006-2007 we omitted ten child abuse deaths where we could not definitively make the domestic violence link. We included the following two cases, which illustrate many of the dynamics and issues related to the intersection of child abuse and domestic violence.

- On May 13, 2006, Janet Adlam killed her three-year-old daughter by hitting her head against the faucet of a bathtub. In the investigation following her daughter's death, Adlam described hitting her with wet clothing, hitting her knuckles with hands or spoons, and pushing her down and knocking her to the ground. She also described abuse to her other children, including shaking the baby. At the time, she and her husband had two other children, a nine-month-old infant and a two-year-old. Since 2004 the parents had been reported several times for child abuse and were being supervised by case workers in three counties. Three months prior to the homicide, social workers in one county recommended that she seek counseling over verbal abuse and other issues related to her marriage. One month prior to the homicide, workers from two counties met with both parents and the children. Her husband was uncooperative and had not followed through on a requirement to address domestic violence issues. A review of published accounts of the case raises questions about the ways in which abuse directed at Adlam might have affected her judgment and response to her children. In addition to the direct references to verbal abuse and domestic violence issues, frequently changing residence can be a tactic of battering that reinforces isolation. Case notes described Adlam as "isolated." In the two months prior to the homicide she was with her husband, then in a shelter with her children, then in an apartment, and then with her husband. Multiple pregnancies and children can magnify the impact of ongoing domestic violence. Domestic violence, in turn, is one of the predictors for postpartum depression. Adlam, 22, had three pregnancies and children within four years.
- Casey Shelton was charged with first-degree reckless homicide in the death of his two-month-old son on February 28, 2007. He was also charged with injuring the surviving twin brother. As of the date of this report, the case has not been concluded. Shelton has pled not-guilty and a jury trial is scheduled for January 2009.

Court records and published accounts state that Shelton shook his son, causing his head to hit an unknown object and resulting in a fatal injury. The incident occurred while the child's mother, Shelton's girlfriend, was at work and he was caring for the children. Published accounts indicate that she was afraid to talk with detectives when interviewed at the hospital because he had been abusive to her. They also report that she described an earlier incident when he threw one of the children to the floor and refused to let her take him to the hospital. At the preliminary hearing she testified that Shelton criticized the way she cared for the children and would put blankets over their heads and dish rags in their mouths to keep them quiet. She testified that he was physically, mentally, and verbally abusive toward her and she was too afraid of him to seek help from the police. She said that he repeatedly threatened to kill her family or her. In the month prior to the homicide, she filed a temporary restraining order against Shelton, citing domestic abuse, and her parents filed a harassment restraining order against him. Wisconsin Circuit Court

Access records show a restraining order against him filed by another woman that was in effect at the time of the homicide. In an interview, the woman described how he had ordered her to have an abortion when she was pregnant and then punched her in the stomach, leading to a miscarriage. In 2004 Shelton was convicted of a domestic abuse-related charge involving this woman.¹⁷

Leaving does not equal safety

Every year thousands of battered women make decisions to leave their abusive partners and make new and better lives for themselves and their children. Leaving an abusive relationship is often a very difficult, complex, and dangerous process.

According to the National Crime Victimization Survey, the rate of domestic violence homicides by husbands was 25 times higher when women were separated from their husbands than when married and cohabitating.¹⁸ Other research has found that a woman's attempt to leave was the precipitating factor in 45% of intimate partner homicides of women.¹⁹ Leaving means weighing and reweighing threats to themselves and their loved ones. The frequency of such threats is related to an increased risk of violence for victims who had left their relationship.²⁰ The work of Jacquelyn Campbell and others shows that women whose partners threatened them with murder were 15 times more likely than other women to be killed.²¹ Nearly half of domestic violence homicides occur a month or more after a couple has separated.²²

Many of the homicides described earlier in this report, and in particular those in the sections on multiple homicides and public places, illustrate the frequent connection between leaving a relationship and homicide. Of the 52 incidents in 2006 and 2007, almost half (25/52) involved a marriage or other intimate partner relationship where a woman had ended or was taking action to leave the relationship. In nearly a quarter of the cases (12/52) victims were still in the relationship. In over a quarter (15/52) of the cases it was unknown whether a victim was still in the relationship or taking any steps to leave.

17. According to WCCA records, on November 24, 2003, Casey Shelton was charged with endangering safety by use of a dangerous weapon, battery, disorderly conduct, unlawful use of a phone, and stalking. On March 1, 2004, he pled no contest to unlawful use of a phone and the remaining charges were dismissed on the prosecutor's motion. The sentence included five years probation, six months jail (work release), an apology to and no contact with the victim, and domestic abuse counseling. It is unknown whether he completed that requirement. On May 1, 2004, probation was revoked and he was ordered to one year in jail.

18. Neal Websdale, *Understanding Domestic Homicide*, Northeastern University Press, 1999.

19. Carolyn Rebecca Block, "How Can Practitioners Help an Abused Woman Lower Her Risk of Death?" *NIJ Journal*, Issue 250, November 2003.

20. Ruth E. Fluery et al., "When Ending the Relationship Does Not End the Violence: Women's Experiences of Violence by Former Partners," *Violence Against Women*, December 2000.

21. Campbell et al., "Assessing Risk Factors."

22. Jacquelyn Campbell et al., "Risk Factors for Femicide in Abusive Relationships: Results from a Multi-site Case Control Study," *American Journal of Public Health*, 2003.

Stalking

Stalking has a lengthy legal definition under Wisconsin law.²³ To paraphrase, it is a pattern of unwanted conduct that carries an implied or explicit threat that causes fear in the person who is the target of the behavior. It can include “following me” and “checking up on me,” as battered women often describe such behavior. It can include repeated hang-up calls, e-mail, or appearing at someone’s place of work. It can include leaving a bouquet of flowers on a doorstep. In one study of victims of battering who survived a homicide attempt, every woman reported some kind of stalking behavior by the abusive partner with a significant escalation prior to the final assault. Other research has found that perpetrators of domestic violence homicide are twice as likely to have used stalking behaviors.²⁴ Stalking often escalates as a woman is trying to leave an abusive relationship.

The 2006-2007 homicides included several examples of stalking behavior. In the twenty-four hours prior to killing his former girlfriend, Tyler Peterson sent her twenty text messages. Juan Leon-Nava made twenty-four cell phone calls to his girlfriend before stabbing her to death in front of her children. The day before he killed his girlfriend, who had asked him to move out, Michael Dumas followed her in his car all day. According to court records and published accounts, before contaminating his girlfriend’s food or drink with RU-486 and causing her to abort a pregnancy, Manishkumar Patel entered her home while she was away. Police also found a GPS unit that he apparently used to track her movements.²⁵ Before strangling and beating his estranged wife to death, Jeffrey Asbury followed her and chased her down with his car. Earlier in the month he called her between ten and twenty times threatening to kill her, his children, his in-laws, and himself. Before poisoning his son to death with antifreeze, Jeffrey Wagner sent an e-mail to his former wife, the boy’s mother, threatening to take their son out of the state or country. At the time of the homicide, a domestic abuse restraining order against Wagner was in effect. Six days before her son was killed his former wife had also filed for a harassment restraining order, which was issued but never served. Chor Thao’s estranged wife suspected that her husband had been spying on her for months before he stabbed her to death. Two days before the murder she reported a prowler to police and the month prior, someone came into her house while she was in the shower and stapled a pair of her underwear to the wall.

23. §940.32, Wisconsin Statutes

24. Adams, *Why Do they Kill?*; and, Campbell et al., cited in Adams.

25. Manishkumar Patel has been charged with first-degree intentional homicide of an unborn child and other charges, including stalking. He posted \$750,000 cash bond and failed to meet its conditions. A warrant was issued on January 31, 2008, and he has not been apprehended.

Wider brutality and contrasts between male and female perpetrators

Beyond the overarching brutality of any method of killing someone, certain acts stand out. In 2006-2007 these included:

- Shooting a woman seven times in her back and leaving her in a ditch
- Bludgeoning a woman with a forty-five-pound concrete cinder block
- Stabbing a woman twenty-nine times in front of her young children, then setting fire to the house and leaving the children to escape on their own
- Beating a woman until unconscious, slitting her throat, starting to cut up her body and then setting fire to the house
- Stabbing a woman nineteen times
- Beating and strangling a woman by shoving a piece of a broken candy dish down her throat
- Stabbing a woman fifty-seven times in her face, throat, chest, arms, and hands
- Stabbing a man twenty-four times
- Beating a woman to death with a baseball bat
- Beating a man to death with a baseball bat and slitting his throat
- Poisoning a child with antifreeze
- Beating a man to death and breaking his ribs
- Spraying a woman with gasoline and setting her on fire
- Killing five people with multiple gun shots
- Killing six people with multiple gun shots from an assault rifle

There was a contrast between men and women as perpetrators in the level of brutality involved in the homicide. All of the above examples describe the actions of men. The victims were women, or men killed because of their relationship with or proximity to a woman who was the focus of the attack.²⁶

The 7 homicides committed by women were characterized by a single act of violence and not the repeated assault or mutilation described above. A single gunshot or single stab wound was the method of killing in three of the homicides committed by women; a fourth involved two shots. One woman used a table leg to hit her boyfriend in the head. One hit her boyfriend with a car. One of two women who killed her child threw her into a bathtub faucet and the other shot her son. One woman was found not guilty of killing her boyfriend. None of the women committed multiple homicides. One woman killed herself after killing her child.

26. Adams makes this observation: "Our research suggests that killers denigrate and blame their partners even more than abusers who don't kill. Perhaps the most surprising single finding about these men was how much rage they still held toward the women they had killed." *Why Do They Kill?* 30.

In the 5 cases where women killed a male partner or roommate there are factors that suggest the possibility of elements of self-defense or resistive violence.

- Mona West shot the man she described as her roommate once in the back of his head and once in the top. She accused him of beating and raping her. She said that she shot him because she feared that he was going to rape her after she told him that she was going to move in with one of his friends. West said that he tried to force her into performing oral sex and when she broke free, she shot him. That account differed from what she told coworkers shortly after the homicide. She was convicted of first-degree intentional homicide and sentenced to twenty-five years in prison.
- Samantha Crump used her car to strike and kill the man she lived with. She said that prior to the homicide he pulled up behind her and ordered her into his car. She said that when she refused, he got out of his car and slapped her. Crump waved down police while the two were arguing in the street and while they attempted to track him down, she went after him in her car. She then left her car and began kicking him in the head, yelling, “you ain’t gonna beat me no more.” Crump pled no contest to second-degree reckless homicide and was sentenced to eight years in prison and eight years of extended supervision upon release.
- A jury found Tenesha Fields not guilty in the fatal stabbing of her boyfriend. Published accounts indicate that Fields had a history of being abused by him. Following the homicide she told investigators that it was an accident that happened when “he walked into the knife” as he came toward her and “came to give me a hug” when she was starting to cut up his clothing.
- Julie Birtzer has been charged with first-degree intentional homicide in the death of her boyfriend, with whom she has two children in common. He died from a single shotgun wound to the chest. A jury trial is scheduled for December 2008. According to published reports, the couple “started having problems,” and “the situation got worse the next day.” Investigators indicated that there had been repeated law enforcement calls to the home for various reasons and that they had more than a dozen contacts with Birtzer and more than one hundred with the victim. According to court records, the victim had been convicted of sexual assault and was the subject of several domestic abuse and harassment restraining orders requested by someone other than Birtzer. He had several past battery and restraining order charges that were dismissed or amended to disorderly conduct.
- Vanessa McKee killed her boyfriend with blows from a table leg. She told investigators that he had been hitting and strangling her. She pled guilty to a charge of second-degree reckless homicide and was sentenced to four years in prison and eight years of extended supervision.

Strangulation

Strangulation is a tactic of battering that can signal severe or fatal violence. Block and Campbell have found that past attempts to strangle (or, as victims often refer to this kind of attack, “choke”) are key indicators of risk.²⁷ When strangulation is the cause of a domestic violence homicide, it is unlikely to be

27. Block, *How Can Practitioners Help?*; Campbell, *Assessing Risk Factors*. Investigators make a distinction between “strangulation,” as external force applied to someone’s throat, and “choking” as an obstruction in the airway. Common usage does not distinguish, however, and the words are often used synonymously.

the first occurrence. Three of the homicides in 2006-2007 were due to strangulation, two of which were also in conjunction with a severe beating. All of the victims were women. The brother of a woman who was stabbed almost twenty times reported noticing bruises around his sister's neck in the months prior to her death. In another case, three days before her husband stabbed her to death, police responded to a call and documented "a handprint on her neck."

Impact on Hmong and Lao communities

In 2006-2007, 5 domestic violence homicides occurred in Wisconsin Hmong and Lao communities.²⁸ Two occurred in Marathon County, as described earlier in this report (see Section IV, A Closer Look). In Winnebago County, Yang Pao Lo shot and killed his wife who was taking steps to leave the relationship. Sometime during an eleven-hour standoff with police, Lo killed himself. Police used explosive devices to distract him as they entered the house and Lo fired on them, grazing one officer's helmet. Up to sixteen family members were in the house when the attack began. One of Lo's cousins was unable to flee and hid in an upstairs closet until police entered and cleared the home.

In Brown County, Khamthong Bongxay has been charged with first-degree intentional homicide in the shooting death of his estranged wife.²⁹ According to court documents, about an hour before the attack his wife called an adult son saying, "He's going to kill me! He's going to kill me!" She was killed as she was getting ready to leave and stay with her son.

In Milwaukee County, Pheng Yang has been charged with first-degree intentional homicide and hiding a corpse for beating his estranged wife with a rubber mallet and hiding her body in the trunk of his car.³⁰ According to court documents, the homicide occurred at Yang's auto repair shop when the victim stopped by on her lunch hour. A cousin of Yang's, Kao Yang, has also been charged for his role in acting as a lookout and helping to hide the body.

Domestic violence homicide takes a particular toll on small, culturally distinct communities. There are strong connections among individuals, families, and neighborhoods. Hmong and Lao communities have faced several domestic violence homicides since their move to Wisconsin, often with the combination of homicide and suicide. Domestic violence is not necessarily more prevalent in Hmong communities, but

28. The Hmong resettled in Wisconsin from Laos after the Vietnam War. They had assisted the United States during the war when they were recruited by the CIA and feared retribution for that role. More than 300,000 fled to Thailand and from there have come to the United States. Recent estimates put the Hmong population of Wisconsin at around 50,000, the third largest population outside of Laos. Most Hmong residents of Wisconsin live in ten counties: Milwaukee, Marathon, Brown, Sheboygan, Outagamie, La Crosse, Dane, Winnebago, Eau Claire, and Manitowoc (in order of population). Sources for information about the history and experience of Hmong and Lao communities include: WWW Hmong Homepage at <http://www.hmongnet.org/intro.shtml> and the Lao Family Community of Minnesota, Inc. at <http://www.laofamily.org/home.htm>. A widely known book that explores the intersection of Hmong and American cultures is *The Spirit Catches You and You Fall Down: A Hmong Child, Her American Doctors, and the Collision of Two Cultures*, Anne Fadiman, Noonday Press, 1997.

29. The case remains open as of September 6, 2008. Prosecution was suspended after Bongxay was deemed unfit to stand trial and ordered to undergo treatment. It will resume if he is found competent to stand trial.

30. The cases against Pheng Yang and Kao Yang remain open as of September 6, 2008.

aspects of cultural identity can be used as a tactic of battering and can present a woman with significant barriers in trying to end or escape the violence. When Hmong women face domestic violence, much of it looks and sounds very much like that in the dominant community: name-calling (“slut”, “whore,” “ugly bitch”), checking on her whereabouts, physical, sexual and emotional abuse, threats to take the children or kill the children, and the overall pattern of coercive control.

At the same time, Hmong women must navigate the danger and attempt to build safety within their cultural identity, traditions, and language. For example, Hmong women who participated in a series of statewide focus groups emphasized the need to take into account the distinctiveness of the clan structure and the role of elders. The role of the mother-in-law and in-laws in general is significant. Shame and gossip in the community can be powerful controls over a woman’s willingness to report domestic violence and seek help. Help seeking can have a strong spiritual component: “She would have a soul calling; bring chicken and eggs to bring her spirit back to her.”³¹

Leaving can present the wrenching decision of choosing safety over losing an entire community. It can mean cutting off her connections and place in her culture. It can mean losing a language, food, traditions, holidays, and a shared understanding of what it is like to be in the world. She can be violence free, but at a tremendous cost. As one advocate observed, leaving means that “she gets up in the morning and goes to bed at night without another voice that she can communicate with.”³²

The reality of domestic violence homicide and its devastation is becoming a catalyst for change. Hmong leaders, women’s advocates, and survivors in Wisconsin and elsewhere are working to strengthen the understanding and prevention of domestic violence, build safety for victims, and craft responses that are anchored in and not imposed on their communities. In Marathon County, for example, the most recent homicides spurred the production of a DVD that addresses domestic violence in the Hmong community. Organizers mailed a copy to all of the known families in the county and made it available through the Wausau Area Hmong Association and the Women’s Community, the local domestic abuse program.³³

31. *Violence Against Women: Focus Groups with Culturally Distinct and Underserved Communities*, Jane Sadusky and Jennifer Obinna, Rainbow Research, Inc., 2002.

32. “Tsim Txom: Domestic Violence in Hmong Society,” a Wisconsin radio documentary available at the Public Radio Exchange, <http://www.prx.org>.

33. The DVD was a production of Wausau-Marathon County Diversity Affairs Office [(715) 261-1192] in cooperation with local community agencies. A list of translated materials and media resources addressing domestic violence in Hmong and Lao communities is available through the Asian & Pacific Islander Institute on Domestic Violence at www.apiahf.org.

Gun violence

A gun is the most commonly used weapon in domestic violence homicide in the United States.³⁴ The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention has reported that family and intimate assaults with a firearm were three times more likely to result in death than those involving knives or other sharp instruments and twenty-three times more likely to result in death than assaults involving other weapons or bodily force.³⁵

In 2006, 12 victims of domestic violence homicide in Wisconsin were killed by guns; in 2007, there were 21 victims killed. The guns used ranged from a variety of small to large caliber handguns to a shotgun and an assault rifle. Guns were used in 2 of the 4 (50%) multiple homicides in 2006 and in 3 of the 4 (75%) of the 2007 incidents.

Guns continue to be the most likely weapon used in a domestic violence homicide in Wisconsin. Between 2000 and 2007, 151 people were murdered with a gun in domestic violence related homicides. This is more than those killed by knives, other weapons, beating, strangulation, and other methods of killing combined (132).

In response to the heightened risk that guns pose to domestic violence victims, federal law restricts an offender convicted of a domestic violence related misdemeanor crime from possessing a firearm. Similarly, both federal and Wisconsin law prohibits possession of firearms while a person is subject to an active domestic violence restraining order. In 2006-2007, at least 4 perpetrators should not have had access to guns under either felony or domestic abuse related convictions. In reviewing court records, we noticed that when perpetrators had a record of arrest on domestic abuse-related charges, such as battery, restraining or harassment order violations, and stalking, such charges were often dismissed or reduced to a disorderly conduct charge, thereby avoiding the firearms prohibition.

According to various research studies, when firearms are in homes, an abused woman was six times more likely than other abused women to be killed.³⁶ Guns are kept in homes where there is domestic violence more often than in homes that are not violent. In addition, if a gun is present, its use in domestic violence situations is relatively common.³⁷ In 2006-2007, 12 of the 22 firearm-involved incidents occurred in the victims' homes. All of the incidents involved an intimate partner relationship, either between the perpetrator and the victim, or between the perpetrator and someone related to or otherwise involved with the victim.

34. Bureau of Justice Statistics, *Homicide Trends in the United States: Trends in Intimate Homicide*.

35. Leonard J. Paulozzi et al., "Surveillance for Homicide Among Intimate Partners – United States, 1981 – 1998," *Morbidity and Mortality Weekly Report Surveillance Summaries*, October 12, 2001, 50:1 – 16.30.

36. Jacquelyn C. Campbell et al., "Assessing Risk Factors for Intimate Partner Homicide," *NIJ Journal*, National Institute of Justice, Issue 250, November 2003.

37. S.B. Sorenson and D.J. Wiebe, "Weapons in the Lives of Battered Women," *American Journal of Public Health*, August 2005, 94:1412-1417.

Guns and murder-suicide are closely linked. A study by the Violence Policy Center found that 73.7% of murder-suicide incidents involved intimate partners and nearly all (94.5%) of the murder-suicides involved firearms.³⁸ In 2006, all of the perpetrators who used guns to kill and then committed suicide also shot themselves. In 2007, firearms were involved in 6 of the perpetrator suicides. Five were at the hands of the perpetrator and 1 was a “suicide by police” situation.

Help-seeking

Most victims of domestic violence seek help from a variety of sources, both informal (e.g., talking with family and friends, finding information online or through a library) to formal (e.g., local domestic abuse services, police, courts, counseling). While the 2006-2007 homicide report did not specifically examine help-seeking strategies used by victims prior to their deaths, it provides numerous examples of their efforts. Help-seeking efforts reflected the approaches reported in research studies, as well as findings that abused women who were killed were more likely to have sought help and that “by seeking help, an abused woman indicates that her situation could be serious.”³⁹ This picture of help-seeking raises questions about what kinds of new strategies might support those efforts to be safer and more protective. It also reinforces the challenge of recognizing opportunities for intervention.

Women used informal approaches such as letting friends, family members, and coworkers know what they were experiencing. They arranged to call frequently and check in with family members. One woman moved in with her sister; another went to stay temporarily with an adult son. Several women told coworkers that they feared for their lives. One woman told a coworker that she was afraid of her husband and that if anything ever happened to her police should look at her husband first. A number of women confided in their sisters, mothers, or friends.

The formal help-seeking evident in the homicide reviews is split between contacts with domestic violence advocacy organizations, calls to police, and turning to the civil legal system for divorce actions or restraining orders. In two cases from Hmong communities the couples had met with a mediator or clan leader. There was history of police response in several cases, although there were few domestic abuse-related convictions on record. In reviewing criminal history information we noticed a widespread pattern of initial charges for battery, restraining or harassment order violations, and stalking frequently dismissed or reduced to a disorderly conduct charge. Few victims apparently sought restraining orders. We identified 4 cases where at the time of the homicide a restraining order was in effect, recently expired, or waiting to be served. Such examples, in particular, reinforce Block’s finding that seeking help can be a signal of escalating and severe violence.⁴⁰

38. Violence Policy Center, *American Roulette: The Untold Story of Murder-Suicide in the United States*, 2002.

39. Block, *How Can Practitioners Help?*. See also, Adams, *Why Do They Kill?* Adams reports a range of help-seeking by women who survived homicide attempts. The top five include: sought help from her family, obtained protective order, sought medical treatment for domestic violence injury, called police, and sought help from friends.

40. Block, *How Can Practitioners Help?*

VI. Methodology

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

- The victims and perpetrators were spouses or partners, former spouses or former partners, adults with children in common, and adults or teens that had been in a dating relationship. We also include cases that involved adults related by blood if dynamics of power and control were demonstrated.
- It was a homicide of a person other than the intimate partner and it occurred within the context of domestic violence. This includes cases where the circumstances of the murder included obsessive control of the perpetrator's current or former partner that extended to her or his new partner; or, of a person who attempted to protect a domestic violence victim from future harm. It also includes the killing of perpetrators who were a threat to law enforcement or the killing of law enforcement in the line of duty.
- The homicide occurred as an extension of or in response to ongoing abuse between intimate partners. For example, when a partner or estranged partner killed their children in order to exact revenge on his partner.

To determine the domestic violence homicides that occurred in Wisconsin in 2006 and 2007, we examined the Uniform Crime Reports (UCR) submitted to the Wisconsin Office of Justice Assistance (OJA) by local law enforcement agencies. UCR fields include: reporting agency; county; homicide date, type, and location; victim and offender demographics; weapon used; relationship between the perpetrator and victim; and, circumstance of the homicide. The UCR does not provide the name of the victim or the offender. We reviewed the UCR reports and identified domestic violence-related homicides.

The next step was a search for news accounts of the selected homicides and those that might not have appeared in the UCR. WCADV tracks daily media coverage of domestic violence homicides in four Wisconsin newspapers, which is supplemented with Internet searches. Finally, in some cases we contacted one or more of the following sources for clarification of information: local domestic violence programs, district attorney's offices, adult protective services, law enforcement agencies, and coordinated community response coordinators in the counties where the homicides took place. We also used the Wisconsin Circuit Court Access Program to research the criminal history of the homicide perpetrator and victims.

We sought to uniformly report the facts of the case for each incident. However, if additional information was not available to us, we reported only the simple demographic information available in the UCR. Reporting on domestic violence related homicides is complicated since we cannot know the exact characteristics of the relationship. Our knowledge is ultimately limited by the information reported to community systems and friends and family by the involved parties prior to the homicide, and how much of that knowledge finds its way into the official record.⁴¹

41. Neil Websdale, *Lethality Assessment Tools: A Critical Analysis*, National Resource Center on Domestic Violence, 1999.

The scope of our report is limited to those homicides identifiable through public access. Due to confidentiality laws, WCADV could only obtain records of public access and such data as death certificates were not available to us. We know this methodology is imperfect and can result in undercounts in at least two areas:

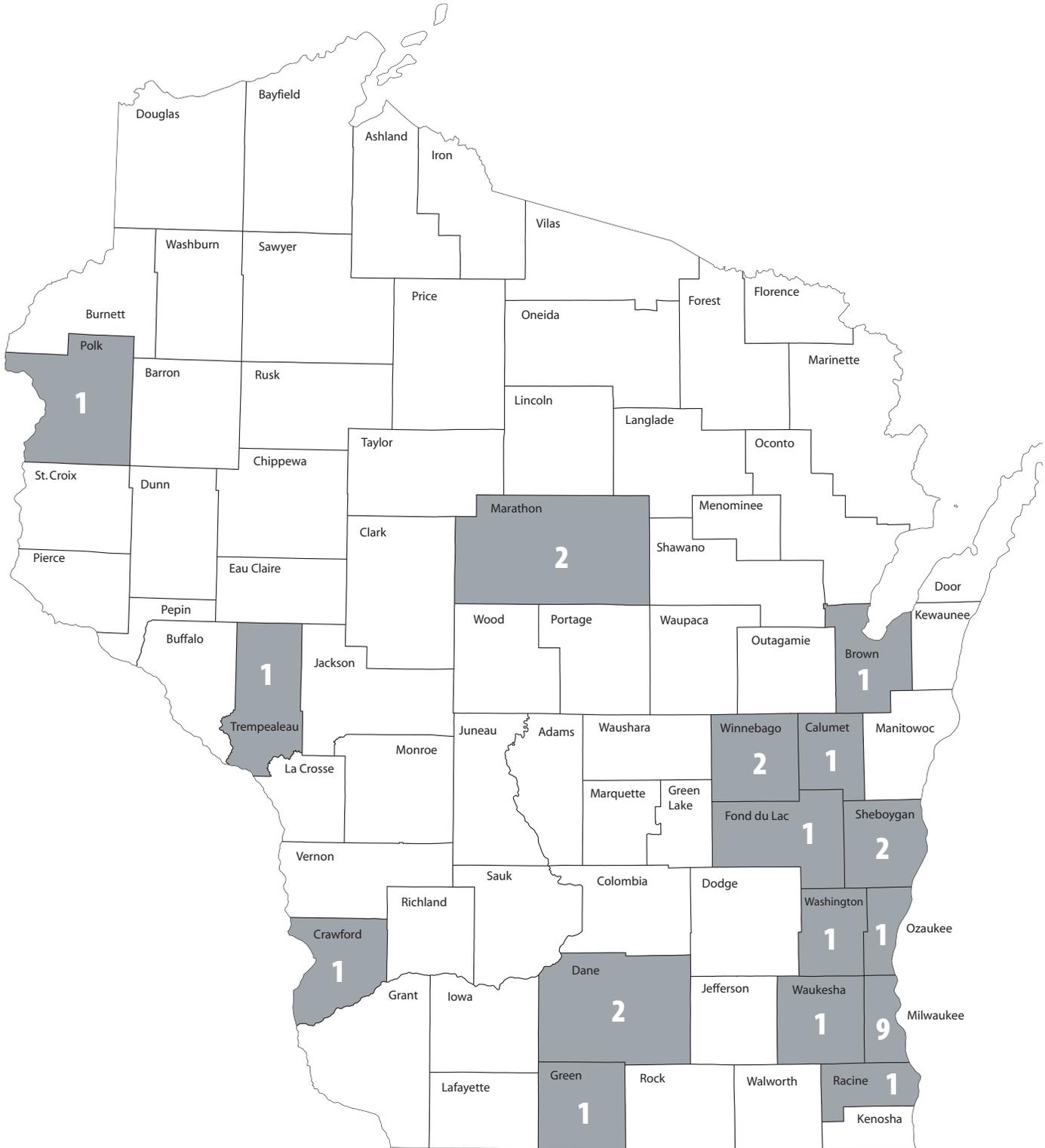
- Children killed by domestic violence abusers: We include children who were killed as a direct result of a domestic violence incident. We believe this count is low since a homicide of a child is often viewed as an isolated incident of child abuse. An investigation of a child homicide can often overlook past domestic violence or the domestic violence might not be included in the public record. While we believe that a larger number of child deaths are directly related to an ongoing pattern of domestic abuse, our current methods of tracking homicides do not allow us to consistently identify children killed by perpetrators of domestic violence.
- Same-sex relationships: It is likely that we undercount domestic violence homicides that occur in lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender (LGBT) relationships. Due to the stigma that is placed on LGBT communities, relationships can be hidden and the nature of a relationship might not be accurately identified in the public record of a homicide. An LGBT relationship might be coded as “friend,” “roommate” or “other known to victim.”

In compiling our summary data we sought to include the total number of homicides committed in Wisconsin in 2006 and 2007. This figure is available from several sources, including the Bureau of Health Information (BHI) and the Office of Justice Assistance (OJA), although the figures from each source differ, as noted in Section I, Executive Summary. Each agency compiles its data from various reporting methods including death certificates, police reports, coroner, medical examiner and hospital records. For example, BHI counts homicides of Wisconsin residents that occur in other states, as well as traffic fatalities from intoxicated driving; OJA counts homicides in the Wisconsin county in which they occur and conforms to UCR standards that omit intoxicated driving deaths. The BHI figure is therefore usually higher than the UCR-based count.

In each case of homicide-suicide, we chose to list the murdered person in our heading as we recognized this person as the homicide victim. When we knew the information, we included the number and ages at the time of the homicide of children that survived their parent(s).

We seek to be as consistent and as accurate as possible year to year in the homicides included in the report. The methodology leaves out certain kinds of violence between individuals who know one another or are related to one another. It does not take in the full scope of “family violence,” for example. With few exceptions, it does not include deaths from child abuse and neglect, deaths of parents or grandparents at the hands of adult children or grandchildren, or one sibling’s murder of another. In applying this framework, most of the cases included in the report are related to intimate partner violence.

Domestic Violence Homicides 2006



Postscript: Reading domestic violence homicide cases

You come to recognize their names. You learn too much about the details of their deaths. You learn too little about their full lives and their hopes, desires, and loves. You learn too little about their work and homes and favorite times. You learn too much about their fears. You wonder whether you even have a right to put their stories on the page, however well-intentioned the cause. They have no say in how the story is told, after all, whether by police or prosecutors or reporters or you.

You are always surprised by the brutality, and especially the brutality of men's violence towards women. You wonder at the deaths that seem more inadvertent or accidental, because of where the knife or the shot landed.

Above all, you hope that by linking one person to the next and telling their stories in this small way that you will somehow, eventually, make a difference.

About WCADV

The Wisconsin Coalition Against Domestic Violence (WCADV) is a statewide membership organization of domestic abuse programs, formerly battered women, and other individuals who have joined together to speak with one voice against domestic abuse. As a statewide resource center on domestic violence, we offer such services as:

- Training and technical assistance to domestic abuse programs;
- A quarterly educational journal;
- Forums for the involvement of battered women;
- Networking and support for programs for battered women and their children and for professionals in related fields;
- Training for professionals in legal, health care, social services, child welfare, elder abuse, housing, education, and mental health fields and for employers throughout Wisconsin; and
- Technical assistance for attorneys, legal advocates, prosecutors and public defenders and limited funds for victims to acquire direct legal assistance.

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