



# THE FACES OF FATALITY

Volume V • June 2015



**Report of the  
Attorney General's  
Statewide Domestic  
Violence Fatality  
Review Team**

**This report is dedicated to the 205 women, children and men who were killed by an act of domestic violence in Florida last year, to their loved ones, and to those who work every day to prevent these deaths.**

“ The importance of domestic violence fatality review in understanding these tragic homicides and improving the safety of the citizens of Florida should not be overlooked. By reviewing domestic violence homicides the statewide and local fatality review teams identify systemic challenges, make policy recommendations for holding perpetrators of these crimes accountable, and increase the safety for victims of domestic violence and their children. These teams honor the lives that were lost by providing information that may help prevent future deaths. I am pleased to partner with the Florida Coalition Against Domestic Violence in co-chairing the Statewide Domestic Violence Fatality Review Team and commend our great law enforcement agencies, prosecutors, and team members who play such a critical role in the fight against domestic violence. ”

*~ Attorney General Pam Bondi*

“ Last year in Florida 205 women, children and men died as a result of domestic violence. This number represents a shocking 10.2 percent increase from the previous year and 20.9 percent of all murders in our state. Each of these individuals left behind family members and friends that are grieving the loss of their loved ones and wondering what could have been done to prevent these senseless tragedies. We cannot bring back those we have lost, but we can employ every resource at our disposal to prevent future domestic violence homicides - their families and friends deserve no less. The partnership between FCADV and Attorney General Pam Bondi brings together a dedicated and comprehensive team of professionals to find solutions to stop these horrific crimes. Through the work of the Statewide Domestic Violence Fatality Review Team and the local county teams, we are able to identify systemic issues, provide recommendations to enhance policies, and strengthen our understanding of the foundational root causes of domestic violence fatalities and near fatalities. There is no doubt that our work together will help prevent domestic violence homicides in the future. ”

*~ Tiffany Carr, President/CEO  
The Florida Coalition Against Domestic Violence*





## *In Memoriam*

We are deeply saddened to share that Vincent Mazzara passed away in October 2014. Vince was a dedicated member of the Statewide Domestic Violence Fatality Review Team and provided invaluable expertise and leadership. His gentle spirit, tenacity for life, and his drive for helping others will always be cherished by those that had the privilege of knowing him. After decades as a police officer, the Florida Coalition Against Domestic Violence recruited Vince to create, implement, and lead the FCADV's Law Enforcement Training Program. Vince's experience working in law enforcement coupled with his unyielding commitment to helping domestic violence survivors and their children positioned him as one of the most effective advocates in our country. Vince's passion was contagious and he served as a role model to all of us working to end violence against women and children. There are no words that appropriately capture the enormous void each of us feel every day without Vince guiding us with his kind nature. In recognition and honor of the dedication and commitment Vince exhibited throughout his career, FCADV created the Vincent Mazzara Law Enforcement Leadership Award. The award will be presented biennially to a law enforcement officer who embodies Vince's life of service to survivors of domestic violence. The Statewide Domestic Violence Fatality Review Team honors Vince's life and is dedicated to continuing the work he cared so much about; ensuring the safety of those most impacted by domestic violence.

## Executive Summary

The Florida Department of Law Enforcement's 2014 Uniform Crime Report reflected that while Florida's overall crime rate decreased, there was a 14.2% increase in domestic violence homicides compared to 2013. In total, 193 women, children and men were murdered as a direct result of domestic violence.<sup>1</sup> An additional 12 people died as a result of domestic violence manslaughter totaling 205 homicides in Florida last year. This dramatic 10.2% overall increase in domestic violence homicides demands the attention of state and local governmental and non-governmental entities and illustrates the continuing need to develop strategies that increase protections for victims and their children while holding perpetrators accountable for their violence.

Florida's commitment to preventing domestic violence homicides is evidenced by the existence of the Statewide Domestic Violence Fatality Review Team and 24 active local teams. Since 2009, The Attorney General's Statewide Domestic Violence Fatality Review Team has conducted comprehensive reviews of domestic violence fatalities with the ultimate goal of preventing domestic violence homicides. The team identifies gaps in the service delivery system and renders recommendations to strengthen safety factors and reduce risk factors that contribute to these deaths. The statewide team is co-chaired by Attorney General Pam Bondi and the Florida Coalition Against Domestic Violence (FCADV). The team is comprised of representatives from a variety of state and local entities that interact with survivors, their children, and perpetrators of domestic violence. Members represent the court system, probation, parole, law enforcement, faith-based organizations, certified domestic violence centers, legal providers, health care providers, and the defense bar. Both the statewide and local teams employ a "no shame, no blame" methodology, and operate in accordance with statutory mandates to maintain the confidentiality and public records exemptions when reviewing fatality-related information.<sup>2</sup> Recognizing the critical role of the fatality review process in the prevention of domestic violence homicides, the United States Department of Justice Office on Violence Against Women recently awarded a grant to the Florida Department of Children and Families to enable FCADV to provide comprehensive training and technical assistance to the local fatality review teams and other stakeholders to increase their knowledge base and improve community collaborations.

This 2015 report of the Statewide Domestic Violence Fatality Review Team includes a review of a 2013 domestic violence murder/suicide and an analysis of data collected by Florida's local fatality review teams related to domestic violence fatalities that occurred primarily between 2011 and 2013. The local team data provides a demographic profile of decedents and perpetrators involved in these tragic deaths. The gender profile of

<sup>1</sup>The 2014 Uniform Crime Report is available at [www.fdle.state.us/fl](http://www.fdle.state.us/fl)

<sup>2</sup>See s. 741.316



perpetrators and decedents are largely similar between the 2014 and 2015 reports. Perpetrators were predominately male (93%) and decedents were predominately female (89%). The data from local teams reflects substantial disparities existed between perpetrators and decedents in average age, occupational status, and years of formal education. On average, decedents were five years younger than perpetrators, decedents were far more likely to have graduated from college, and decedents were far more likely than perpetrators to be employed in professional occupations. The data also reflects a substantially larger percentage of foreign born victims and perpetrators, as 50% of perpetrators and 46% of decedents were identified as documented immigrants. The victim and perpetrator in the murder/suicide reviewed by the statewide team also were documented immigrants.

In more than 50% of the fatalities, there was a history of prior domestic violence, stalking, death threats, and obsessiveness exhibited by the perpetrator. More than 60% of perpetrators were known to carry or possess a gun or other weapon. There was marital or physical separation reported between 64% of decedents and perpetrators prior to the incident, versus 33% in 2014, clearly highlighting the increased risk of fatality when the victim attempts to leave the abusive relationship. The most commonly identified high risk factors for this year's fatalities were extreme jealousy, obsessiveness, death threats, perceived betrayal, and the use of weapons. This is substantially different from the 2014 report, which identified substance abuse history, prior criminal record, and a history of domestic violence as the most common risk factors. The data reflected a significant increase in stalking behavior (50% in 2015 compared to 28% in 2014). This year's report identified a higher percentage of perpetrators (27%) having at some time been enrolled in a batterer intervention program than in prior years reports. While 43% of perpetrators had a history of substance abuse, known substance use by the perpetrator at the time of the fatality decreased from 48% in 2014 to 30% in the reviews analyzed.

The statewide team's 2015 findings and recommendations underscore the continued need to develop policies and interventions to increase the probability of preventing domestic violence fatalities in the future. This report provides information for legislators, state agencies, social service organizations and the general public to increase understanding of the difficult and multifaceted circumstances surrounding domestic violence, and to assist in creating policies to prevent domestic violence related deaths in Florida.

## Findings

The 2015 *Faces of Fatality* report includes descriptive statistics of domestic violence homicides based on data collected by local fatality review teams from reviews completed between April 2014 and March 2015. The deaths reviewed occurred between 2002 and 2013. However, the majority of these fatalities occurred more recently, between 2011 and 2013. In total, teams across the state submitted 29 completed reviews of fatal or near-fatal domestic violence incidents in Florida. In one of the 29 reviews the “perpetrator” was identified by reviewers as a domestic violence survivor acting in self-defense.

The report also includes a case study and findings based on a fatality review conducted by the statewide team of a murder/suicide that occurred in 2013. The perpetrator murdered his spouse and then killed himself two weeks after they separated and filed for divorce. Their story is included in this report, and along with the local team data, provides the framework for the 2015 recommendations to reduce and prevent domestic violence homicides in Florida.

**Findings from the 2014-2015 local team fatality reviews that highlight several themes regarding victim and perpetrator profiles, as well as factors that suggest a heightened risk of lethality:**

- 36% of perpetrators were unemployed at the time of the homicide.
- 43% of perpetrators were reported to have substance abuse histories.
- 21% of perpetrators were reported to have a medically diagnosed mental health disorder.
- In 50% of deaths there was evidence of prior stalking behavior on the part of the perpetrator.
- In 61% of deaths the perpetrator was known by family or friends to carry or possess a weapon.
- 64% of the decedents and perpetrators were separated at the time of death.
- In 50% of the fatalities there was a history of prior domestic violence, stalking, death threats, and obsessiveness exhibited by the perpetrator.
- 36% of fatalities had known allegations by the decedent of death threats made by the perpetrator towards the decedent.
- 44% of perpetrators possessed a known criminal history of domestic violence and in 39% of fatalities there were known prior reports to the police by the decedent alleging domestic violence by the perpetrator.
- In 50% of the fatalities, family members reported knowing about prior incidents or prior threats of domestic violence on the part of the perpetrator.
- In 33% of the deaths there was a known no contact order issued against the perpetrator.
- In 7% of the fatalities there was a known permanent Injunction for Protection filed against the perpetrator by the decedent and in 29% there was a known permanent Injunction for Protection filed against the perpetrator by someone other than the decedent.
- 32% of perpetrators completed suicide and an additional 7% attempted suicide that did not end in their own death.

**Findings based on the 2015 fatality review conducted by the statewide team:**

There were several indicators of increased risk factors for lethality including:

- The perpetrator owned weapons and possessed access to them.
- The perpetrator showed up unannounced at the victim's workplace and told her supervisor that he did not know what he would do if his wife left him.
- The victim had a child from a previous relationship.
- The victim reported to family members that the perpetrator was tracking her every move (stalking her).
- The family members reported that they were aware that the perpetrator had a bad temper.
- The couple separated and filed for divorce at the time of the incident.
- The perpetrator lost temporary access to their shared home in the divorce proceeding.
- The victim's friends said she expressed fear of the perpetrator's violent behaviors.

## 2015 Recommendations

- **FCADV should build upon its Florida Domestic Violence Enhancements and Leadership Through Alliances (DELTA) Project to include training for school personnel on adult intimate partner violence. The training should include information on community resources, safety planning and red flag indicators of increased danger.**

The FCADV Florida DELTA project is currently working with school resource officers (SROs) in two communities to increase their involvement in the prevention of teen dating violence. Statewide partners in the project include the Florida Department of Education Office of Safe Schools, the Florida Department of Law Enforcement, the Florida Sheriffs Association, and the Florida Police Chiefs Association. School resource officers statewide were surveyed seeking information regarding their role in preventing teen dating violence. In general, results indicated that SROs believe that adult intimate partner and teen dating violence are preventable in their community and that the school they work for has a zero-tolerance policy against abuse. In most cases, the survey respondents successfully identified many of the risk factors for the perpetration of such violence. Since the survivor in the 2013 murder/suicide reviewed by the Statewide Domestic Violence Fatality Review Team was a school employee, and the perpetrator interacted with school employees and the SRO, it would be beneficial to expand training for these groups on appropriate responses and referrals for adult intimate partner violence in addition to teen dating violence.

- **FCADV should explore additional funding opportunities to expand and enhance FCADV's Violence Against Women Act STOP (Services-Training-Officers-Prosecutors) funded Legal Clearinghouse Project to provide assistance to *pro se* survivors with completing and filing Injunction for Protection petitions.**

The data from the local fatality review teams reflected that only 7% of victims had a known final civil Injunction for Protection against the perpetrator. Studies demonstrate that civil Injunctions for Protection are an effective tool in protecting survivors and stopping the violence.<sup>3</sup> A 2014 FCADV-funded study conducted by Northern Arizona University's Family Violence Institute (FVI) in six Florida counties, identified assistance with completion of petitions for domestic violence Injunctions for Protection as an unmet legal need. The FVI convened focus groups consisting of survivors, certified domestic violence center advocates, local fatality review team members, law enforcement, judges, court staff, and other community stakeholders. These stakeholder focus groups reported that *ex parte* Injunctions for Protection are granted more often when an attorney or advocate assisted the petitioner with completing and filing the petition to help the petitioner include all the relevant facts and required documents. The focus groups noted that this critical assistance was not available consistently in their jurisdictions. FCADV's Legal Clearinghouse Project currently uses STOP funds to contract with attorneys statewide to represent survivors of domestic and dating violence, sexual assault, and stalking at the hearings on the final Injunction for Protection, which occurs after the *ex parte* petition is granted. However, for many survivors, if their initial petition is denied, they will not have the opportunity to present their case to a judge at a hearing. The FCADV should explore funding opportunities that will provide for the expansion of the Legal Clearinghouse Project. Further, the organization should consider expanding civil legal services beyond Injunctions for Protection to create a comprehensive approach to achieving the legal needs of domestic violence survivors.

<sup>3</sup>See The Kentucky Civil Protective Order Study at <https://www.ncjrs.gov/pdffiles1/nij/grants/228350.pdf>



- **FCADV should convene a workgroup with the Florida Sheriffs Association, the Florida Police Chiefs Association, the Office of the State Courts Administrator, agencies that work with immigrant communities, faith-based representatives, and other stakeholders to develop a plan for increasing outreach to immigrant communities and; increasing access to certified interpreters for survivors seeking assistance from law enforcement and seeking Injunctions for Protection.**

The local teams' data reflecting a 43% increase in documented immigrant domestic violence fatalities demonstrates the critical need for increased outreach to immigrant communities regarding the services and legal remedies available to victims of domestic and dating violence, sexual assault and stalking. The workgroup should build upon FCADV's past and current projects with certified domestic violence centers and agencies that provide services to immigrant communities to develop a plan to increase outreach including, but not limited to, reprinting or developing new materials in Spanish, Creole, and other languages.

Additionally, the 2014 FVI focus groups reported that law enforcement and the Clerks of Court have limited access to translation services for immigrant and Limited English Proficiency (LEP) survivors. The workgroup should develop a plan to identify gaps and increase access to interpreter services for survivors seeking law enforcement assistance and survivors seeking Injunctions for Protection.

- **Florida's child welfare agencies should improve collaboration with community partners when there are surviving children.**

This year's data indicates 79% of the decedents had children, and there were known child witnesses in 28% of the deaths, including in the murder/suicide reviewed by the statewide team. It is critical for Florida's child welfare agencies to collaborate with community partners to ensure that surviving children are referred to and offered appropriate services to address trauma. The Statewide Domestic Violence Fatality Review Team is convening a workgroup comprised of victim advocates from entities including, but not limited to, law enforcement, state attorneys and certified domestic violence centers to develop a protocol for providing referrals for counseling services for surviving children. The workgroup will develop an information sheet with referral services and coordinate with child welfare agencies to provide the information to family members or foster families with whom the children are placed.

- **FCADV's Batterer Intervention Program Workgroup should make formal recommendations to establish a system to monitor batterer intervention programs (BIPs) to ensure that courts refer perpetrators to BIPs that comply with Florida statutes<sup>4</sup> governing length of program, methodology, and other requirements.**

Local team data identified that 27% of perpetrators were currently or were previously enrolled in a BIP, in contrast to 6% in the 2014 *Faces of Fatality* report. Since 2012, the Department of Children and Families is no longer designated in statute as the agency that monitors BIPs in Florida, and unless local jurisdictions have imposed a monitoring system, there is no method for ensuring that BIPs comply with the requirements in Florida statutes. FCADV's Batterer Intervention Workgroup should make formal recommendations to establish a consistent statewide monitoring system for BIPs.

<sup>4</sup>See s. 741.325

## Fatality Review

The statewide team convened for two, two-day meetings during the 2014-2015 fiscal year. In addition to reviewing data from the local teams and discussing recommendations, the team conducted a review of a 2013 murder/suicide. The review is based on information from law enforcement and media reports, and the statewide team's in-person interviews with the detectives who investigated the case.

In late December 2013, G.T., age 32, was murdered by her husband of nine years, C.L. age 33, who then took his own life.<sup>5</sup> They were living separately at the time of their deaths. C.L. filed for divorce approximately one month prior to the homicide. G.T. filed a counter petition and was granted temporary, exclusive use of their marital home. The judge in the divorce case also prohibited C.L. from entering the school property where G.T. was employed. C.L. had moved in with a friend a few weeks prior to the divorce being filed. The couple's two daughters, ages seven and eight, as well as, G.T.'s son, age 11, from a previous relationship, were living with G.T. but were visiting C. L. at the friend's home the morning of the murder/suicide.

## Background on the victim and the perpetrator

G.T. and C. L. married in 2002. They owned a home together and both were employed full-time. G.T. had a college degree and worked as a teacher. C.L. was employed in the maintenance department of a large company. Both were born outside of the United States and moved to Florida during their childhoods. There were no prior police reports for domestic violence. C.L.'s criminal record included one violence charge which may have involved a vehicle; the charge was reduced from a felony to a misdemeanor.

## Events leading up to the homicide and suicide

In November 2013, C.L. trespassed on school property and confronted G.T., accusing her of having a relationship with a co-worker. G.T. walked him out of the building, but C.L. returned to the school principal's office before leaving the school grounds. The principal reported to the School Resource Officer that C.L. appeared upset and that he had stated that his wife was romantically involved with a co-worker. C.L. also reported to the principal that he had given his gun collection to a friend for safekeeping because he was afraid he would snap if he lost G.T. The SRO report stated that the school did not file trespassing charges because G.T. expressed to the SRO that filing charges would create more problems for her at home. The SRO report stated that charges would be filed if another incident occurred.

G.T. was in an intimate relationship with a male co-worker who visited her at her residence the day of the homicide. A week earlier, the co-worker helped G.T. change the locks on her doors after she was granted temporary exclusive use of the home. After the homicide, the co-worker reported to law enforcement that C.L. had verbally confronted him on school grounds and asked him to explain text messages left on G.T.'s phone during the November 2013 incident at the school.

C.L. picked up the children for visitation the morning of the homicide and spent the day with them. He took them to his friend's home with whom he had been staying since leaving the residence he shared with G.T. At approximately 10 p.m., the children went to bed at the friend's house. Later that night, C.L. went to G.T.'s residence, parked the car in the road a distance from the house, entered the home, and shot her, and then himself. The law enforcement report stated that it appeared the door to the residence had been kicked in.

<sup>5</sup> Out of respect for the victim, the perpetrator, and their families, the initials of the victim and perpetrator have been changed.

The children woke up the next morning and realized their father was gone and had left them at his friend's home. The friend made numerous unsuccessful attempts to reach C.L., and then drove the children to G.T.'s residence to see if their father was there. The children entered the home and found their parents deceased. They ran out and told C.L.'s friend who then called 911.

After the murder, friends of G.T. reported that they had been aware of the violence and had tried to help. Her family stated that although they knew C.L. had a temper, they had no indication that he was physically violent toward G.T. The victim's family also reported that G.T. had told them she thought that C.L. was stalking her by tracking her movements. The children were placed with relatives shortly after their parent's deaths. Counseling services were offered to the children and adult family members at that time. According to friends, G.T. was a loving mother, a great teacher, and valued friend who will be missed tremendously.



## Local Fatality Review Team Data Analysis

The 2015 report includes descriptive statistics from 29 reviews conducted by local teams of domestic violence fatalities or near fatalities in Florida. Incidents included in the analyses occurred between 2002 and 2013.

<b>Year of incident</b>	<b># of reviews</b>
2002.....	1
2007.....	1
2009.....	1
2010.....	2
2011.....	2
2012.....	5
2013.....	12
Not specified by reviewers.....	5
<b>Total .....</b>	<b>29</b>

For each fatality or near fatality, local teams reviewed and described characteristics of the perpetrator, the decedent, the relationship, criminal records, domestic violence histories and services provided, details about the fatality, and a range of risk factors. The data points are based on 29 reviews submitted by local teams. Statistics are provided for each of these categories, followed by a brief comparison between this year's data and the information that was collected in 2014 for last year's report.

In some instances, statistics are based on different totals from the 29 fatalities or near fatalities reviewed. This is either due to non-applicability or missing information for any given review. The data includes a total number of cases used to calculate a given statistic in parenthesis. This year's review includes one out of the 29 for which reviewers identified the "perpetrator" as a domestic violence survivor acting in self-defense. The team excluded this case in the descriptive statistics that inquire about specific details of perpetrators or decedents because of the unique circumstances surrounding this case. The numbers in some categories do not equal 100 due to rounding caused by the sample size of less than 100.



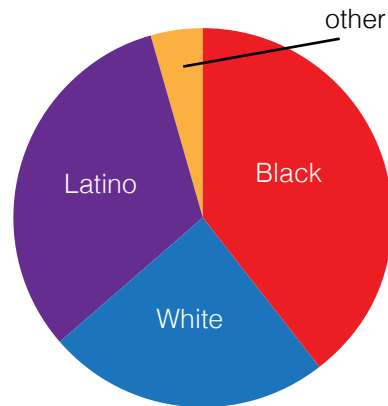
## Perpetrator Characteristics

**Gender:** 93% (26 of 28) male, 7% (2 of 28) female

**Average age:** 44 (min: 18 max: 67)

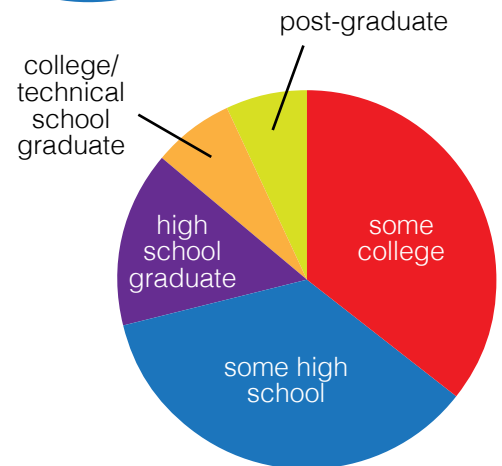
### Race/ethnicity:

- 36% Black, non-Latino (10 of 28)
- 32% Latino (9 of 28)
- 29% White, non-Latino (8 of 28)
- 4% other (1 of 28)



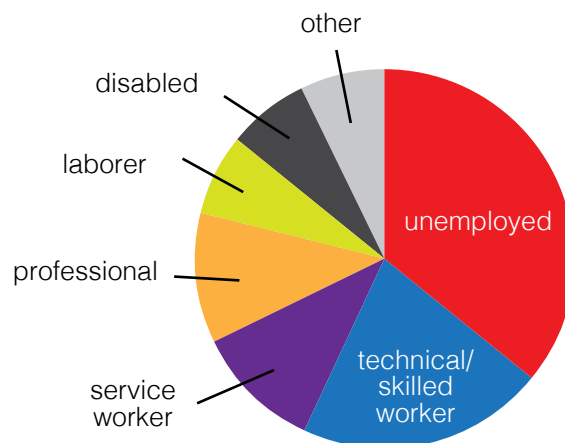
### Education level:

- 36% some high school (5 of 14)
- 36% some college/technical school (5 of 14)
- 15% high school graduate (2 of 14)
- 7% post-graduate (1 of 14)
- 7% college/technical school graduate (1 of 14)



### Employment type:

- 36% unemployed (10 of 28)
- 21% technical/skilled worker (6 of 28)
- 11% service worker (3 of 28)
- 11% other (3 of 28)
- 7% professional (2 of 28)
- 7% laborer (2 of 28)
- 7% disabled (2 of 28)



### Other known perpetrator characteristics:

- Reviewers identified evidence of substance abuse of some kind in 43% (12 of 28) of perpetrators based on various sources (e.g., driving under the influence records, police reports, substance abuse services, personal narratives from self, family, friends or coworkers).
- Reviewers found evidence of medically diagnosed mental health disorders in 21% (6 of 28) of perpetrators.
- Reviewers found evidence that 50% (14 of 28) of perpetrators exhibited stalking behavior.
- Reviewers learned that 61% (17 of 28) of perpetrators were known, by family or friends, to carry or possess a weapon.

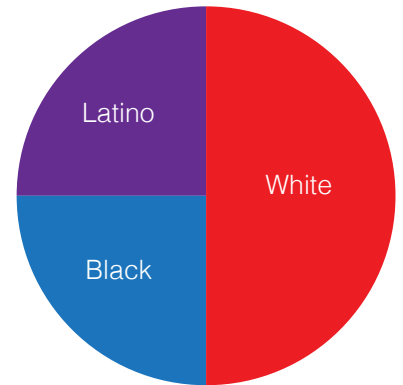
## Decedent Characteristics

**Gender:** 11% (3 of 28) male, 89% (25 of 28) female

**Average age:** 39 (min: 15 max: 66)

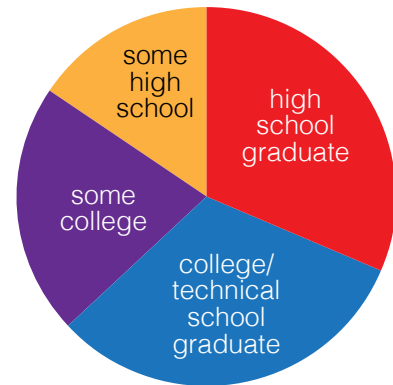
### Race/ethnicity:

- 50% White, non-Latino (14 of 28)
- 25% Black, non-Latino (7 of 28)
- 25% Latino (7 of 28)



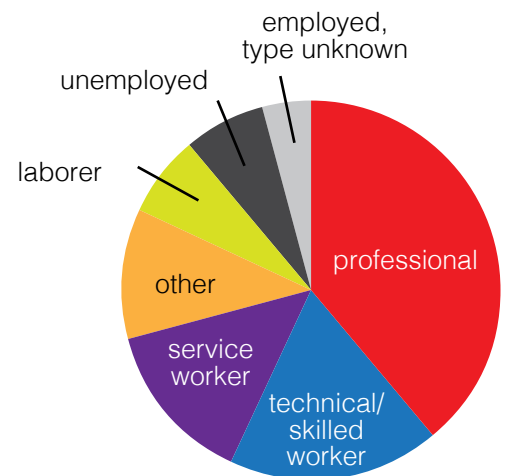
### Education level:

- 31% high school graduate (4 of 13)
- 31% college/technical school graduate (4 of 13)
- 23% some college/technical school (3 of 13)
- 15% some high school (2 of 13)



### Employment type:

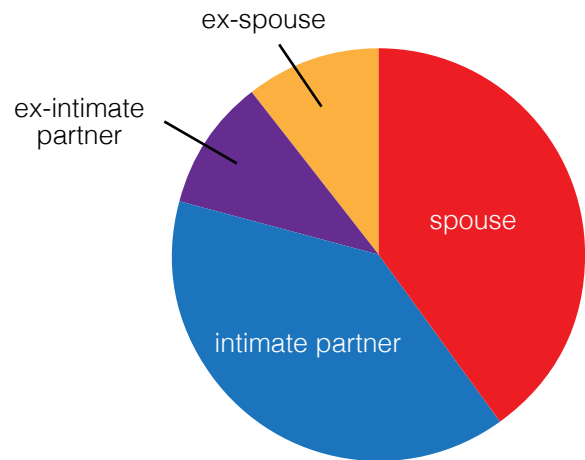
- 39% professional (11 of 28)
- 18% technical skilled worker (5 of 28)
- 14% service worker (4 of 28)
- 11% other (3 of 28)
- 7% laborer (2 of 28)
- 7% unemployed (2 of 28)
- 4% employed, type unknown (1 of 28)



## Relationship Characteristics

### Relationship of perpetrator to decedent:

- 41% spouse (12 of 29)
- 38% intimate partner (11 of 29)
- 10% ex-spouse (3 of 29)
- 10% ex-intimate partner (3 of 29)



**Mean length of relationship:** 9.9 years

### 79% of decedents (22 of 28) had children

- 27% 1 child (6 of 22)
- 41% 2 children (9 of 22)
- 23% 3 children (5 of 22)
- 5% 4 children (1 of 22)
- 5% 8 children (1 of 22)
- Of decedents with children, 46% (10 of 22) were known to have children outside of their relationship with the perpetrator.

### Prior living arrangements and separation

- 59% (17 of 29) of couples were known to have previously lived together full time and 21% (6 of 29) of couples were known to have been living together “off and on.”
- 45% (10 of 22) of couples were known to have lived together at the time of the incident and 55% (12 of 22) of couples were known not to have lived together at the time of the incident.
- Reviewers found evidence of separation at the time of death (marital, separate households, or both) in 64% (14 of 22) of couples.
- The average length of separation, when known, was approximately 1.2 years (min = 0, max = 6).
- In 36% (10 of 28) there had been known allegations by the decedent of death threats made by the perpetrator towards the decedent, prior to the incident.
- In 12% (3 of 26) there had been known harassment of the decedent, by the perpetrator, at the decedent’s workplace.

## Immigration Status

- 50% (14 of 28) of perpetrators were identified as immigrants to the U.S.
- 46% (13 of 28) of decedents were identified as immigrants to the U.S.

## Criminal Records

### Perpetrator

- 36% (10 of 28) of perpetrators had a known, non-domestic violence-related criminal history.
- 44% (12 of 27) of perpetrators had a known criminal history of domestic violence.
- 50% (14 of 28) of perpetrators had a known criminal history of any kind, domestic violence-related or otherwise, based on criminal records and narrative reports.
- 39% (11 of 28) of perpetrators had known prior reports to the police made by the decedent, alleging domestic violence.
- 50% (14 of 28) of family members reported knowing about prior incidents or prior threats of domestic violence on the part of the perpetrator.
- 33% (9 of 27) of perpetrators had a known no contact order issued against them.
- 7% (2 of 28) of perpetrators had a known permanent Injunction for Protection filed against them by the decedent.
- 29% (8 of 28) of perpetrators had a known permanent Injunction for Protection filed against them by someone other than the decedent.
- In 4% (1 of 28) there was a known Injunction for Protection violation arrest of the perpetrator identified by reviewers.

### Decedent

- 11% (3 of 28) of decedents had a known history of domestic violence, based on criminal records and narrative reports.
- 4% (1 of 28) of decedents had a known no contact order issued against them.
- 11% (3 of 28) of decedents had a known permanent Injunction for Protection filed against the decedent by the perpetrator.

## Domestic Violence and Social Services

- 41% (12 of 29) of decedents or her/his family had known contact with the Department of Children and Families.
- 28% (8 of 29) of the deaths/near deaths had known child witnesses.
- 25% (7 of 28) of decedents had known contact with victim support services.
- 7% (2 of 28) of decedents had known contact with a domestic violence center.
- 27% (4 of 15) of perpetrators with a prior history of domestic violence were currently or had been previously enrolled in a batterer intervention program.

## Fatality Characteristics

- 32% (9 of 28) of perpetrators completed suicide.
- 7% (2 of 28) of perpetrators attempted suicide where the decedent was the only fatality.
- At the time of the fatality or near fatality, there was known substance use by 30% of perpetrators. This information is based on self-reports by the perpetrator and medical toxicology reports. The breakdown is as follows:
  - 10% alcohol (2 of 20)
  - 10% drugs (2 of 20)
  - 10% drugs and alcohol (2 of 20)
  - 70% no evidence of substance abuse (14 of 20)
- 18% (5 of 28) of incidents had a collateral victim (i.e., a victim other than the decedent; does not include perpetrator suicides).



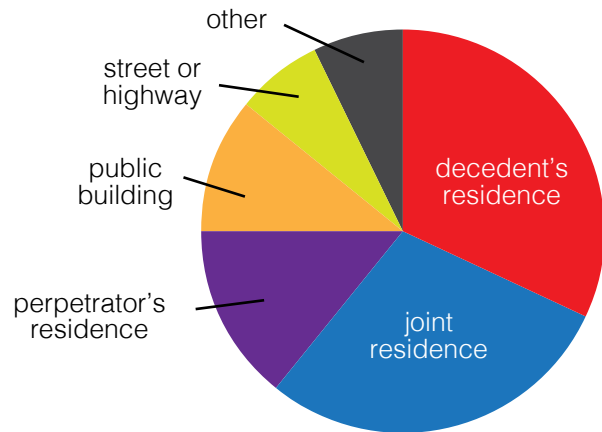
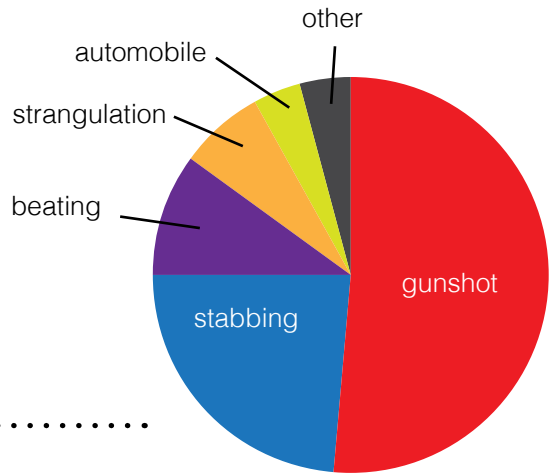
**Manner of death (includes attempted):**

- 52% gunshot (15 of 29)
- 24% stabbing (7 of 29)
- 10% beating (3 of 29)
- 7% strangulation (2 of 29)
- 4% automobile (1 of 29)
- 4% other (1 of 29)



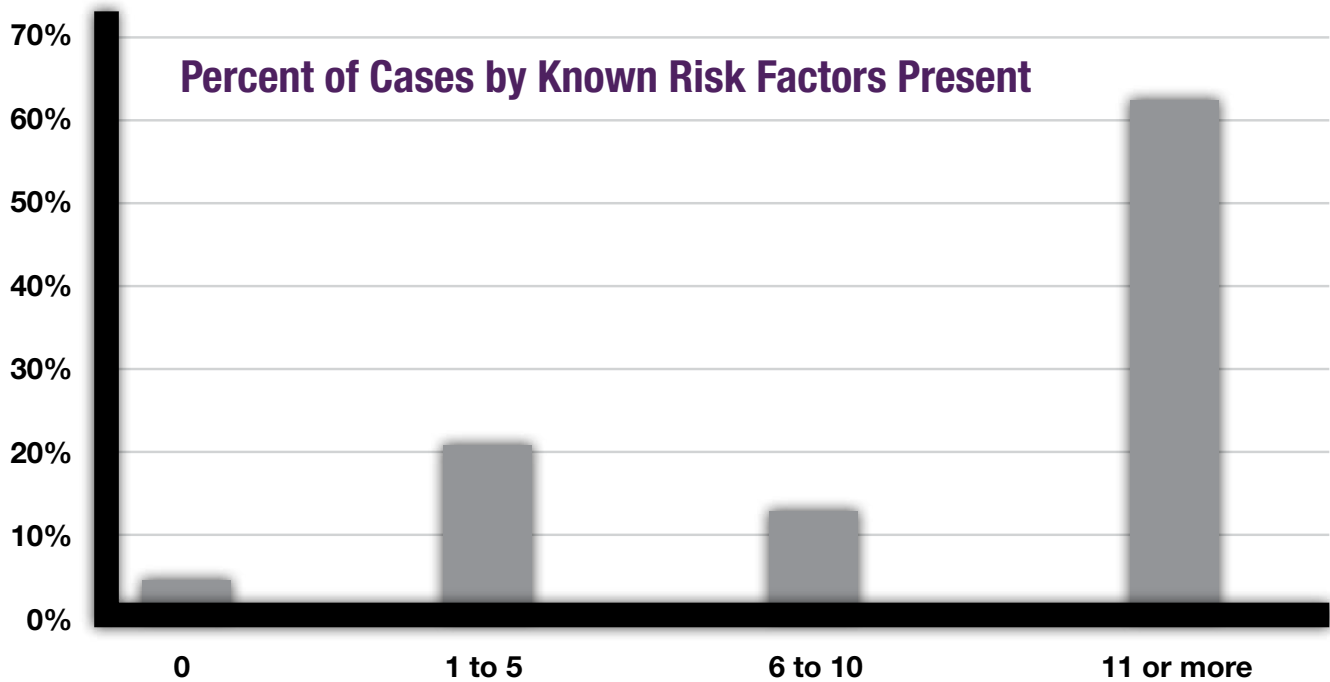
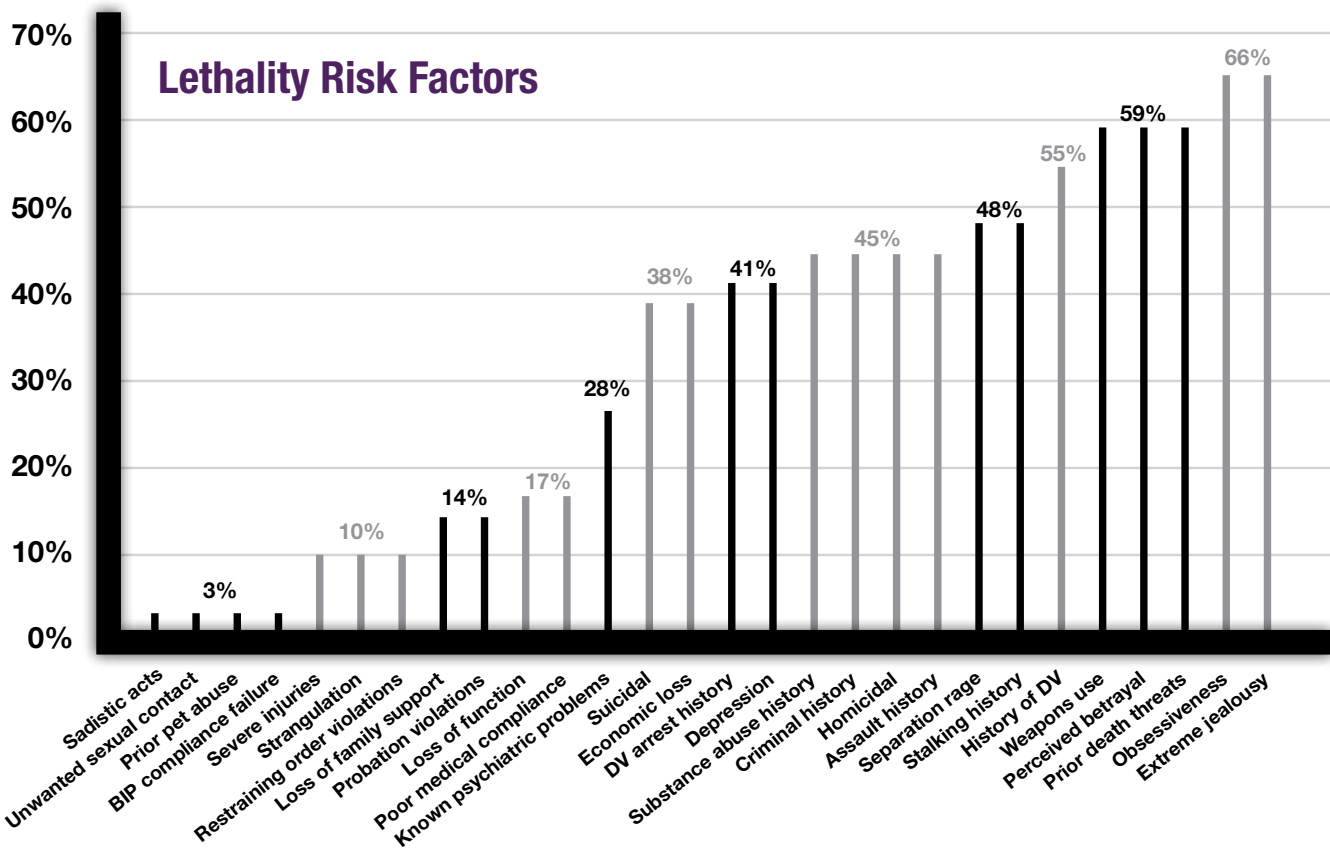
**Location of homicide or near homicide:**

- 32% decedent's residence (9 of 28)
- 29% joint residence (8 of 28)
- 14% perpetrator's residence (4 of 28)
- 11% public building (3 of 28)
- 7% street or highway (2 of 28)
- 7% other (2 of 28)



## Notable Comparisons

- Reviews in this year's report include a substantially larger percentage of citizens born outside the United States. This year, 50% of perpetrators and 46% of decedents were identified as documented immigrants, compared to 28% and 35%, respectively, in cases reviewed in 2014.
- The demographic profile of perpetrators and decedents are largely similar between 2014 and 2015 across age and gender breakdowns. However, one key difference emerged in this year's report; the percentage of Hispanic/Latino perpetrators and decedents is substantially higher. In 2014, 10% of perpetrators were Hispanic/Latino, compared to 32% in this year's report. Similarly in 2014, 3% of decedents were Hispanic/Latino, compared to 46% in this year's report. Overall, the percentage of immigrant decedents increased a total of 43% from the previous year.
- This year's reviews indicate a higher percentage of separation between perpetrators and decedents (64% in 2015 compared to 33% in 2014).
- The most commonly identified risk factors in 2015 were extreme jealousy, obsessiveness, death threats, perceived betrayal, and use of weapons. The rate of identified stalking behavior in the most recently reviewed fatalities or near fatalities is much higher than last year (50% in 2015 compared to 28% in 2014).
- 79% of decedents in the 2015 report had children compared to 53% of decedents in the 2014 report.



Many known risk factors were found this year including significantly higher rates of perpetrator extreme jealousy (66%) versus (51%) in 2014.

## Status of Prior Recommendations:

### Status of the Statewide Team's 2014 Recommendations:

**FCADV should secure funding to continue to provide its *Advanced Domestic Violence for Law Enforcement Training*, endorsed by the Florida Police Chiefs Association and Florida Sheriffs Association, to ensure that all Florida law enforcement agencies receive quality training. Further, it is recommended that FCADV expand the scope of this training to include 911 dispatchers, law enforcement victim advocates, emergency medical technicians, fire departments, and other first responders. In addition, FCADV should explore opportunities to provide comprehensive training to law enforcement academies.**

**Status:** Sponsored by FCADV, The National Domestic Violence Fatality Review Initiative (NDVFRI) provided half day trainings on *Risk Factors for Intimate Partner Homicide* to law enforcement first responders and criminal court personnel in four communities throughout the state. FCADV also sponsored eight full day *Advanced Domestic Violence Trainings* for law enforcement, prosecutors, and victim advocates. Approximately 30 law enforcement agencies participated in the trainings. The training topics included: *Effective Incident Response Strategies, Conducting Investigations for Increased Prosecution, Collaborating with Domestic Violence Victim Advocates, Enhancing Victim Safety, and Holding Perpetrators Accountable.*

**The Florida Legislature should continue to require health care providers to receive initial and continuing education on domestic violence and should require that students attending medical and nursing schools, as well as those seeking degrees in a health care related field, receive comprehensive training on domestic and dating violence.**

**Status:** FCADV convened a Medical Advocacy Workgroup to review the training currently provided to health care professionals. This workgroup will make recommendations for state level training and statutory changes as appropriate.

**The Florida Legislature should amend s.903.047, Florida Statute, Conditions of Pretrial Release, to make the order of no contact with the victim effective immediately, and to permit the court to impose special conditions for persons charged with domestic or dating violence.**

**Status:** FCADV and other stakeholders worked with Senator David Simmons to file SB 342 and Representative Holly Raschein on filing the House companion measure that amended F.S. 903.047 to implement this recommendation. With the assistance of the sponsors, Representative Dana Young, and co-sponsors of the legislation, Representative Dennis Baxley, Representative Gayle Harrell, Representative Mike Miller, and Representative Victor Torres, the 2015 Florida Legislature passed SB 342 and Governor Scott signed the bill into law on May 14, 2015. Effective October 1, 2015, the amended statute provides that an order of no contact is effective immediately, and authorizes the court to prohibit the following acts: communicating orally or in written form, either in person, telephonically, electronically, or in any other manner, either directly or indirectly through a third person, with the victim or any other person named in the order, unless the order specifically allows indirect contact through a third party; having physical or violent contact with the victim or other named person on his or her property; being within 500 feet of the victim's or other named person's residence, even if the defendant and the victim or other named person share the residence; being within 500 feet of the victim's or other named person's vehicle, place of employment, or a specified place frequented regularly by such person.



## Status of Prior Recommendations:

**The Statewide Domestic Violence Fatality Review Team should form a subcommittee to develop a comprehensive plan for educating the general public, with a specific focus on individuals working within systems that interface with domestic violence victims, their children, and perpetrators regarding the adverse impact of victim-blaming on systemic efforts to protect victims and children, hold perpetrators accountable, and prevent domestic violence.**

**Status:** The Statewide Domestic Violence Fatality Review Team convened a victim-blaming subcommittee. The subcommittee recommended that FCADV provide training to law enforcement and other first responders, prosecutors, child welfare professionals, and batterer intervention program facilitators to assist them in reframing and redirecting the focus to batterer accountability instead of blaming survivors of domestic violence. Professionals who interact with survivors would benefit from an understanding of how blaming survivors marginalizes them, making it harder for them to disclose or report abuse to authorities, friends, and families. Training can also serve to change the way first responders think about survivors and challenge subtle forms of victim-blaming that exist in society.

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Brandy Carlson, Cynthia Rubenstein and Leisa Wiseman

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- Alachua
- Bay
- Brevard
- Broward
- Collier
- Duval
- Escambia
- Hernando
- Highlands
- Hillsborough
- Indian River
- Martin
- St. Lucie
- Okeechobee
- Lee
- Leon
- Manatee
- Miami-Dade
- Orange
- Palm Beach
- Pasco
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- Santa Rosa
- Sarasota
- Seminole
- St. Johns

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