
Domestic Violence Fatality Review Team

Multnomah County Local Public Safety Coordinating Council
December 4, 2012

Commissioner Deborah Kafoury, Co-Chair
Honorable Nan Waller, Co-Chair
Annie Neal, Staff

DV Fatality Review Mission

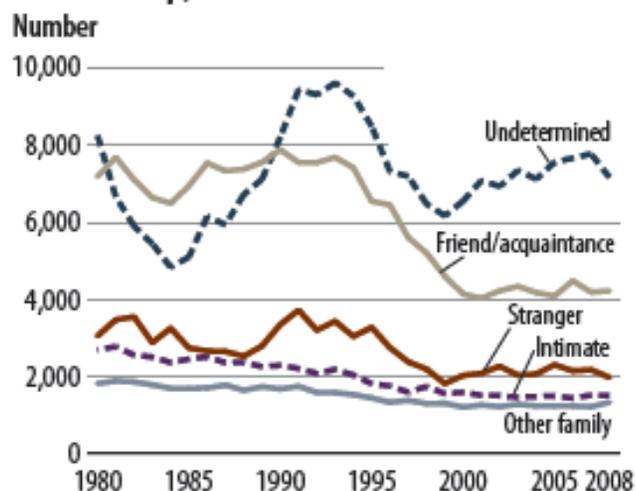
- Review domestic violence-related deaths and make recommendations to prevent fatalities by:
 - Improving communication between public and private organizations
 - Determining the number of DV-related fatalities and associated factors
 - Providing accurate information about domestic violence and DV-related deaths to community
 - Generating recommendations to improve response and prevention efforts

Why it matters?

- DV is a significant factor in all violent deaths
 - 1 in 4 homicides in Oregon (2003-2010)
 - 45% of female homicide victims in Oregon
 - 13% of legal intervention deaths
 - 80% of murder-suicide incidents
 - 5% of male suicide victims
- They are preventable (we can ID high risk indicators & periods)
- Deaths = proxy for other serious violence – what we learn will help reduce other violence

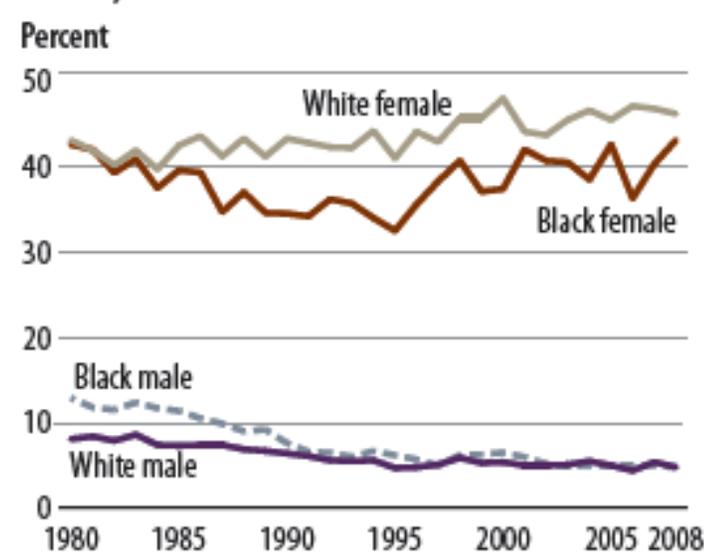
National Trends

FIGURE 24
Number of homicides, by victim/offender relationship, 1980–2008



Note: Intimate includes spouses, ex-spouses, boyfriends, girlfriends, and same-sex relationships. Friend/acquaintance includes neighbors, employees, employers, and other known persons. These data are grouped from the original categories. For detailed categories, see appendix table 24a and appendix table 24b for weighted and unweighted data.

FIGURE 27
Homicides of intimates, by sex and race of victim, 1980–2008



Note: Percentages are based on the 63.1% of homicides from 1980 through 2008 for which victim/offender relationships were known.

It's a pattern

- Prior DV is the most significant predictor of recidivism and lethality
- DV has highest rate of repeat violent victimization
- Threats frequently lead to violence: women threatened by partners are 40X more likely to experience a subsequent assault
- Providing accurate information about risk and helping DV victims reduce exposure to offenders reduces repeat victimization

We know what to look for

Risk Indicators in Repeat DV

- Prior domestic violence
- Prior arrests (any offense)
- Prior violent crime
- Early criminal justice involvement
- Stalking
- Violations of restraining/protection orders

We can distinguish repeat from lethal

Risk Indicators for Severe/Lethal DV

- Estrangement (OR=5.5)
- Access to guns (OR=5.4)
- Offender unemployed (OR=4.4)
- Threats with weapons (OR=3.8)
- Threats to kill (OR=3.2)
- Stepchild in the home (OR=2.4)
- Controlling daily activities (OR=2.4)
 - *Estrangement + Control (OR=5.5)*
- Forced Sex (OR=1.9)

Fatality Review Team Membership

- Co-Chairs:
 - Presiding Judge Nan Waller
 - County Commissioner Deborah Kafoury
- 3 victim services representatives
- Medical personnel with DV expertise
- Local Health Department
- District Attorney Office representatives
- Police agency representatives
- Oregon Dept. of Human Services representative
- Presiding Judge, Trial Court Administrator, or designee
- Corrections representative
- Civil legal services representative
- Batterer intervention program
- County Human Services representative
- FVCC representative
- LPSCC representative
- DV survivor
- City/County Commissioners
- Defense bar representative
- County attorney
- Children's services program
- Faith community representative
- Forensic expert or medical examiner

How we review fatalities

- Case selection & background work
 - Official records
 - Media coverage
 - Post-event responses
 - Previous events, interventions, opportunities
 - Key informant interviews: family, friends, co-workers of victims and offenders
- Case review meeting
- Key findings & recommendations

Recent Findings

- Victims don't identify their experience as "DV" or understand the level of risk they face
- Friends/family don't know how to help
- Offender suicidality is a big red-flag, high-risk indicator
- Overlap with other high-risk circumstances (gang involvement, sexual exploitation)

Recommendations

- Increase public awareness of DV especially awareness of high-risk indicators
- Provide victims with accurate information about risk
- Increase identification and early intervention efforts, especially outside of “DV systems”
- Screen suicidal men for DV & estrangement
- Address DV offender access to guns especially during high risk periods