

DOMESTIC VIOLENCE FATALITY REVIEW

New Jersey Domestic Violence Fatality
and Near Fatality Review Board

Safer Garden State Conference
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Purpose of this presentation is:

- Understand the purpose and function of the NJ Domestic Violence Fatality and Near Fatality Review Board.
- Describe the Board's key recommendations for system-wide change in NJ.
- Identify potential ways to collaborate with the Board to implement the recommendations.

Intimate Partner Fatalities

- Definition
- Nationally
- New Jersey

Intimate partner homicide

- The largest sub-category of domestic violence deaths is intimate partner homicide.
- ***Intimate partner homicide*** can be defined as a form of domestic homicide that involves the killing of a person by her/his intimate or former intimate partner.

¹. New Jersey State Police. “2012 Uniform Crime Report, Domestic Violence”

Epidemic

**A total of 1,615
women were killed
by intimate partners
in 2013**

Violence Policy Center, 2015

Scope of intimate partner homicides- national

- Intimate partner homicides comprise approximately 10% of all U.S. murders (Hamby, 2005)
- For homicides where the victim-offender relationship could be determined, 94% of females were murdered by a male they knew (Violence Policy Center, 2015)
- Women are more likely to be killed by an intimate partner than by anyone else (Catalano, 2013).
- Female murder victims are almost 6 times more likely than male murder victims to be killed by an intimate partner (Cooper & Smith, 2011).

National scope, continued

- About 4.9% of male murder victims were killed by an intimate partner (Cooper & Smith, 2011).
- Firearms, especially handguns, were the weapon most commonly used by males to murder females in 2013 (53%)
- Black females are especially at risk; murdered at a rate 2.5 times higher than white females (Violence Policy Center, 2015), except for victims over age 65, who were more likely White

Scope of intimate partner homicides- New Jersey

- In 2013, New Jersey had 49 females murdered by males in single victim / single offender homicides
- Homicide rate per 100,000 females = 1.08 (U.S. Average = 1.09)
- NJ ranked 21st (tie) in the number of intimate partner homicide victims

New Jersey headlines this year

Ewing woman found dead in bedroom following domestic dispute, prosecutor says

By Dan Alexander August 17, 2016 11:48 AM

Tuesday, August 23, 2016 06:55PM

COLLINGSWOOD, N.J. (WPVI) -- A man hospitalized in critical condition has been charged in the stabbing death of his estranged wife in a Collingswood, Camden County high rise.



Email the author

on February 02, 2016 at 4:45 PM, updated

NEWARK — Domestic violence was likely at the center of a string of city homicides that saw [one man and two women killed over the weekend](#), authorities confirmed Tuesday.

Authorities: Burlington Township man kills wife, 10-year-old son in murder-suicide

By Rose Krebs and Joe Green, staff writers Aug 9, 2016 0

New Jersey boy, 11, finds his mom, dad dead in Bergenfield home from apparent murder-suicide



BY

BEN KOCHMAN

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NEW YORK DAILY NEWS

Saturday, March 19, 2016

10:24 PM



You can help the 3 Carlstadt kids whose dad 'snapped,' killed mom and himself

By Dan Alexander July 7, 2016 1:41 PM



By Anthony G. Attrino | NJ Advance Media for NJ.com

Email the author | [Follow on Twitter](#)

on January 29, 2016 at 7:37 PM, updated January 30, 2016 at 10:33 AM

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[UPDATE: Wife seemed disconnected weeks before she was killed, neighbors say](#)

NORTH ARLINGTON — Police arrested a borough man Friday after [finding him in his apartment with the body of his wife](#), who had been dead for at least a day.

Domestic Violence Fatality Review

- Definition
- Purpose
- Process

What is domestic violence fatality review?

Domestic violence fatality review refers to the:

- deliberative process for identification of deaths, both homicide and suicide, caused by domestic violence
- examination of the systemic interventions into known incidents of domestic violence occurring in the family of the deceased prior to the death
- consideration of altered systemic response to avert future domestic violence deaths
- development of recommendations for coordinated community prevention and intervention initiatives to eradicate domestic violence.

Basis for domestic violence fatality review

The emergence of domestic violence fatality review is traceable to morbidity and mortality reviews in the medical profession.

- Domestic violence fatality review focuses less on individual accountability and more on system-wide service coordination.
- Errors and/or inadequate procedures are identified, discussed and changes recommended within an open climate.

Brief history of domestic violence fatality review

1991:

The first domestic violence fatality review takes place. The Charan Investigation was conducted by the San Francisco Commission on the Status of Women.

1994:

Domestic violence fatality review teams are formed in Nevada and California, as well as other communities,

1998:

In New Jersey, several interested individuals began to explore the value of reviewing cases of deaths that were related to intimate partner violence.

Why conduct fatality review?

Domestic violence fatality review provides a systematic way of reviewing domestic homicides through a lens of prevention and accountability.

Underlying objectives of fatality review:

- Prevent future domestic violence & domestic violence homicides
- Provide safer provisions for battered women
- Hold accountable both the perpetrators of domestic violence and the multiple agencies and organizations that come into contact with the victims and perpetrators.

Different fatality review board approaches

- Case Selection
 - in-depth review of one case
 - multiple cases with a commonality
 - review all cases during a particular period of time
- Jurisdiction
 - a particular city or county
 - statewide review
- Review Process
 - review case once with materials available at that time
 - interview family, friends and professionals that have come in contact with the victim and/or perpetrator
 - review cases individually or in teams
 - bring the review to the community

Keys to successful fatality review

- Bringing together professionals and community members committed to a victim-centered mission of fatality review.
- Ensuring confidentiality of the information brought to the meetings and the Board's deliberations.
- Focusing on victim safety and recognizing that the person ultimately responsible for the fatal incident is the actor.

NJ Domestic Violence Fatality Review

- History
- Goals
- Projects

Brief history of the NJDVFNFRB

1998: Several individuals began to explore the value of reviewing New Jersey deaths related to intimate partner violence.

2000: Governor signs Executive Order No. 110, which established the New Jersey Domestic Violence Fatality Review Board.

2004: Board's scope, purpose and membership are expanded and it is permanently established as the New Jersey Domestic Violence Fatality & Near Fatality Review Board.

Goals of the NJDVFNFRB

- Describe domestic violence fatalities in New Jersey.
- Identify trends in domestic violence deaths and integrate understanding of possible risk factors into the various services systems functioning.
- Develop policy and systems change recommendations from review of facts and circumstances of domestic violence deaths.

Types of cases reviewed by the NJDVFNFRB

The Board reviews:

- closed cases, meaning the perpetrator has been convicted, most or all appeals have been expired.
- cases of intimate partner violence homicide, where the victim was killed.
- predominantly where the victim is 18 years of age or older.

NJDVFNFRB case selection

- The Board identifies cases for review through its partnerships.
 - New Jersey State Police's Uniform Crime Reports (NJSP UCR)
 - New Jersey Violent Death Reporting System (NJVDRS)
- Committee reviews data provided by NJSP and the NJVDRS and other sources to determine what cases will be selected for in-depth review.
- The Board amasses as comprehensive a case file as possible.

NJDVFNFRB case review process

- Pre conference
- Board meeting & case review
- Recommendations

“Let me see tomorrow”

A report based on interviews with women
who were nearly killed by their intimate partners

October 2010

Near Fatality Report:

Fear of being killed: women hide from abusers

- Support (from family, friends, and communities including law enforcement and courts) is lacking
- Insufficient accountability of abusers

“I’m running for my life...and he went off scot-free.”

Among recommendations:

- Hold domestic violence offenders accountable for each act of offending
- A coordinated response is needed for complex and high risk domestic violence cases

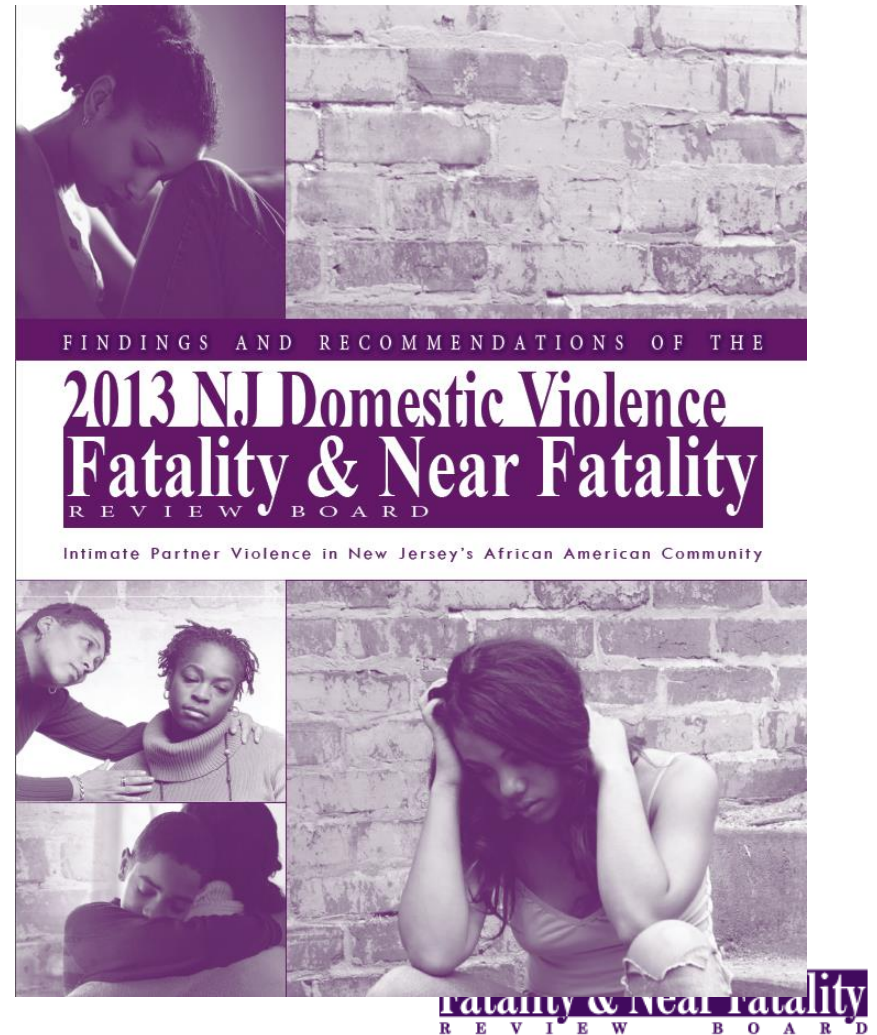
Orquidea project



- Trend that Latino/as had almost twice the rate of domestic violence homicide-suicide related killings
- Worked in partnership with The NJ Division on Women, Puerto Rican Action Board, and Women Aware
- Developed and evaluated the Orquidea project
- Outreach to Latina/o community in New Brunswick
- New model of culturally specific services

NJ African American Community Report (2013)

- African American women between the ages of 25-44, were 3.5 times more likely to be victims of IP homicides than White women.
- Unique factors include oppression, inaccessible and irrelevancy of existing services, racial loyalty, the impact of economic factors.



NJ African American Community Report (2013)

- MORE training and services are recommended that are often similar for all victims but that also address the unique experiences and needs of African Americans
- Complexity of “Cultural competency”
- Need to build upon protective factors and community-specific strengths
- Develop alliances with community leaders and engage community members in prevention and intervention strategies

Teen Dating Violence Fact Sheets (2015)

- Creation of fact sheets on Teen Dating Violence for educators
- Created in collaboration with Coalitions
- Distributed to Department of Education & posted online

What is Teen Dating Violence?

A pattern or series of abusive behaviors over a course of time that reflects the perpetrator's desire to control, dominate, and exert power over a dating partner.

Physical

- Hitting, slapping, punching, kicking, shoving
- Scratching, pinching, biting, choking, hair pulling
- Grabbing a dating partner's body parts or clothing to prevent partner from leaving or forcing him/her to go somewhere
- Grabbing a partner's face to make him/her look at them
- Throwing a foreign object at a dating partner
- Using a gun, knife, bat, mace, or other weapon

Psychological

Verbal and Emotional

- Yelling and screaming
- Name-calling, ridiculing, criticizing, humiliating
- Starting rumors about a dating partner
- Making a dating partner feel guilty or insecure
- Making a dating partner think s/he is irrational
- Emotional blackmailing
- Playing mind games

Threatening to...

- Harm a dating partner or his/her pet or loved ones
- Report a dating partner to police
- Have children taken away
- Expose a dating partner's secrets such as sexual orientation or immigration status
- Leave the dating partner
- Commit suicide

Controlling Behaviors

- Isolation
- Preventing a dating partner from interacting with friends/family
- Controlling what a dating partner does and who s/he sees and talks to

Intimidation

Includes telling the dating partner who he/she can and can't be friends with on social media and constantly checking and sending texts, emails, etc.

Unwanted kissing, touching, and sexual activity

Priority recommendations (2016)

1. Create a Task Force to investigate the utility of high risk assessment teams to review domestic violence cases.
2. Mandate education and ongoing evidence-based training to develop increased competencies related to domestic violence for key stakeholders that currently do NOT receive education on these issues, but have the potential to help prevent and respond to domestic violence.

Recommendations, continued

3. In congruence with the 2016 Supreme Court Ad Hoc Committee on Domestic Violence recommendation, we recommend that the Attorney General review policies for Domestic Violence Response Teams (DVRTs), consider mandated call out, and ensure consistency in procedures across jurisdictions.
4. The Board recommends that the Department of Education review the NJ Dating violence model policy and update to include requirements for evidence-based prevention curricula for grades 7-12 and ensure consistent implementation across the state through accountability measures.

Recommendations, continued

5. The Board recommends that all law enforcement utilize the New Jersey Domestic Violence Fatality Review Board Data Collection form to provide documentation of the homicide case in order to facilitate more comprehensive reviews by the Board.

Future Directions

- **Moving forward with Fatality Review**
 - **Engaging stakeholders**
 - **Ideas for involving others**

Moving forward

- Forthcoming report on Teen Dating Violence
- Current review of cases involving immigrant victims

Dissemination efforts

- Reports posted on the website
- Reports sent to key stakeholders with letters
- Specific recommendations sent to agencies most appropriate for evaluation, comment and/or implementation
- Fact sheets posted and distributed

Debated approaches

- **Using lethality assessments**
- **Using GPS monitoring**
- **Implementing Coordinated Community Responses**
- **Developing culturally tailored approaches**

-What are the pros/cons of these highly debated approaches?

-What might be the perspective from different fields?

- DV/SV county programs
- Law enforcement
- Judicial professionals
- Medical/health professionals

Ideas to help us develop our
partnerships and share our
findings?

For more information

National Domestic Violence Fatality Review Initiative

<http://ndvfri.org/>

NJ Domestic Violence Fatality and Near Fatality Review Board

<http://www.nj.gov/dcf/providers/boards/dvfnfrb/>

Rutgers Center on Violence Against Women and Children

<https://socialwork.rutgers.edu/centers/center-violence-against-women-and-children>