Domestic Violence Fatality Review Committee Releases Latest Report

In September CCADV released *Upon Further Examination, 2015-2016 Findings & Recommendations of the CT Domestic Violence Fatality Review Committee*. Report recommendations focus on the key areas of offender accountability, victim resources, healthcare and training.

Since 2000, 222 victims have been killed in Connecticut as a result of intimate partner violence, including 190 women (86%) and 32 men (14%). The average annual number of intimate partner homicides in Connecticut remains steady at 14, although 2015 saw only 8 confirmed intimate partner homicides to date, the lowest annual total since 2000.

Intimate partner homicides make up 13% of Connecticut’s overall homicide rate, with the parties most often being married (35%) and firearms remaining the single most commonly used weapon in intimate partner homicides (41%). Thirty percent (30%) of Connecticut’s intimate partner homicides result in murder/suicides, of which 79% of those murder/suicides are committed with a firearm. Victims and offenders of intimate partner homicide in Connecticut are most often between the ages of 25 and 34.

Offender accountability remains a significant aspect of the Committee’s recommendations. Holding offenders accountable for their behavior is the most effective way to provide them with the opportunity to learn and choose new behaviors that will lead to safe and stable families. A trend across case reviews for the last several years has been violations of court orders, specifically restraining and protective orders, by the offender in the days, weeks and months preceding the homicide. An offender’s willingness to violate a court order demonstrates a complete disregard for the court’s authority and is a risk indicator for potentially escalating violence. CCADV has already entered into discussions with the National Council of Juvenile & Family Court Judges (NCJFCJ) and other stakeholders to hold a symposium in the spring aimed at addressing this issue.

*Continued on page 4...*
CCADV CEO Honored by CT Women’s Hall of Fame

In November, CCADV CEO, Karen Jarmoc, was honored by the CT Women’s Hall of Fame at its 23rd Annual Induction Ceremony & Celebration. This year’s ceremony was themed - Women’s Wellness: Awareness, Advocacy & Action. Karen was recognized for her influential policymaking and statewide advocacy for victims of domestic violence. Since assuming the role of CEO in 2011, she has led efforts to pass critical legislation that helps keep victims safe at the most dangerous time, she has secured increased funding for domestic violence prevention and court advocacy, and has developed policies that strengthen offender accountability.

The staff and Board at CCADV congratulate Karen for this well-deserved recognition. Her leadership at CCADV has strengthened the coalition and positioned the organization as the primary resource for media and policymakers on matters related to domestic violence, ensuring that the voice and needs of victims and those organizations that serve them are always heard.

CONGRATULATIONS, KAREN!
AND THANK YOU!

CCADV Provides Training to Naval Commanders

In October, CCADV’s Director of Training & Prevention, Linda Blozie, and Director of Law Enforcement Services, Butch Hyatt, provided domestic violence awareness training to 250 command staff at the Naval Submarine Base in New London. They were joined by Kathie Verano, Director of Client Services at Safe Futures, and Chief L J Fasaro of the Groton Town Police. Prior to the start of the presentation, the base Captain addressed command staff reminding them of the Navy’s zero tolerance policy on domestic violence and its incompatibility with the Navy’s Relationship Core Values. Those core values include “honor to act with distinction and pledge to treat others with dignity and having admiration for your intimate partner” and “commitment to a healthy relationship and prevention of domestic violence.”

The presentation included methods of control, warning signs of domestic violence, lethality assessment principles, the arrest process and how to start a conversation with someone you suspect might be a victim. The particular challenges that sailors and other military personnel often face were also addressed. Naval officers are deployed at sea for months facing extended separation from their families with limited contact. Family of military personnel have to adjust to the new “normal” of their partner/parent being gone for the duration of the deployment and subsequent reintegration can be stressful for all involved. Maintaining trust, respect, honesty and open communication about each other’s struggles are key components of preventing abusive behaviors during or following deployment.

The sub base’s Fleet and Family Support Center indicated that the presentation was well received, particularly while addressing the struggles faced by some families when reuniting. This presentation continues CCADV’s partnership with the sub base – in 2015 CCADV staff addressed over 1,200 sailors attending Naval Submarine School on the base.
CCADV Honors First 100 Plus Class of 2016

On November 4, 2016 we recognized a strong group of more than seventy male and female leaders from across the state at our 6th Annual First 100 Plus Breakfast & Awards Ceremony. These men and women were recognized for their work at local and state levels to improve outcomes for domestic violence victims and their children. Each honoree is known for “going above and beyond” in their work with victims and have demonstrated a commitment to strengthening policy and practice that ensures the complex needs of victims and their children are met.

Multiple professions were represented among this year’s honorees, including law enforcement, education, healthcare, public policy, law, probation, journalism and social services. Each honoree, whether in ways large or small, played a critical role in improving the lives of domestic violence victims and their children. We are grateful for their dedication because we know that we cannot make progress without them.

In addition to the honorees inducted into the 2016 Class of First 100 Plus, State Representative Robyn Porter and the Hartford-based firm, McDowell Jewett Communications, were also recognized. State Representative Robyn Porter was the recipient of the Coalition Crusader Award for her bravery to tell her story of surviving an abusive relationship and the instrumental leadership she provided in passing legislation to help protect victims at the most dangerous time. McDowell Jewett Communications was the recipient of the Lawrence and Shirley Bostrom Pillars of Change Award for its ongoing leadership in developing and implementing strong awareness campaigns to increase victim and community knowledge of the help available at CCADV’s 18 member organizations.

Funds raised through the annual breakfast are utilized to support CCADV’s public awareness efforts across the state. We know that our members, the state’s 18 domestic violence organizations, can help keep victims safe. We are grateful for the support of our event sponsors, including presenting sponsor Verizon, for helping us raise awareness about the existence of our members’ services. (click here for a complete list of event sponsors)

Check out more photos from the event on our Facebook page and this great video, all courtesy of Perceptions Photography!

Thank you to the wonderful Sandy Aldieri, owner of Perceptions Photography, for donating her time and expertise again this year to capture these moments!
Fatality Review cont’d

The Committee also continues to see trends in the cases reviewed related to civil/family court involvement of victims prior to a homicide. As you know, services related to legal needs are one of the most frequent requests from victims of domestic violence who seek assistance from the member organizations. Attorney Nuala Droney, a partner at Robinson+Cole and one of the lead attorneys in the Domestic Violence Restraining Order Project (a pro bono project assisting victims seeking restraining orders) spoke at the press conference and committed to working to expand and strengthen the project.

Finally, the report focuses on the unique role that health professionals can play in Connecticut’s response to intimate partner violence, an issue currently being addressed through CCADV’s Health Professional Outreach Project. The Committee continues to see trends related to potential points of intervention within the healthcare system for victims prior to their deaths. This is particularly true of pregnant victims and mothers of young children. Intimate partner homicide continues to be a leading cause of death for pregnant women, while experiencing any abuse during pregnancy is associated with a number of poor health outcomes for both the mother and the child. CCADV has also already gotten started on addressing the Committee’s recommendations in this area through the development of trainings for practitioners within the networks of Women’s Health CT and Planned Parenthood of Southern New England.

Now in its sixteenth year, the Committee has conducted over 70 in-depth case reviews of intimate partner fatalities and near-fatalities. The Committee, which is comprised of experts in the areas of victim advocacy, social services, healthcare, child advocacy, offender education, law enforcement, corrections, and the judicial system, uses a multidisciplinary, systemic approach to case examinations that allows it to assess events from numerous angles, exploring each opportunity for prevention and intervention.

Please contact Committee chair and CCADV Director of Legal Advocacy, Dan Cargill, at dcargill@ctcadv.org with questions.

222
INTIMATE PARTNER HOMICIDES
2000 - 2015

86% FEMALE
190 FEMALE
32 MALE

88% MALE
26 FEMALE
196 MALE

Weapons Used

41% GUN
34% KNIFE
10% STRANGULATION/ASPHYXIATION
7% PHYSICAL FORCE
3% OTHER
5%

Relationship between Victim & Offender

SPOUSE
78
FORMER SPOUSE
6
FORMERLY DATED
30
LIVING TOGETHER
51
CHILD IN COMMON
17

Source: Connecticut Department of Emergency Services & Public Protection, CT State Police, Crimes Analysis Unit; State of Connecticut Family Violence Homicide Reports 2000 - 2015
The Children’s Center on Family Violence
Featured on NBC Connecticut

The Children’s Center on Family Violence, a partnership between CCADV and Connecticut Children’s Medical Center, was featured on NBC Connecticut in October as part of Domestic Violence Awareness Month. Center co-directors, Karen Jarmoc and Dr. Nina Livingston, discussed the impact of family violence on children and the Center’s mission to improve outcomes for children and families. Common responses of children who witness family violence were outlined for each level of development, including infant, grade school and adolescent. Resources, including the state’s 18 domestic violence organizations and the statewide domestic violence hotline, were also discussed. The co-chairs also touched on the work of the Center to offer evidence-based interventions for families experiencing abuse with the primary goal being the support of the non-offending parent. Two-generation solutions are critical to ensuring a secure, stable, nurturing caregiver for the child. Evidence has demonstrated that supporting the well-being of the non-offending parent will result in stronger, healthier outcomes for children impacted by family violence.

Longtime Leader Takes on New Opportunity

Cathy Zeiner, who led CCADV’s member organization, Safe Futures, and sat on CCADV’s Board of Directors, announced in October that she would be stepping down to pursue a new professional opportunity after serving as the organization’s executive director for 13 years. Cathy is a committed leader and advocate for victims of domestic violence who always demonstrates unrelenting passion for improving systemic responses and ensuring that all victims receive the help they deserve. She is a strategic thinker, examining policies from multiple angles with an eye towards feasibility, efficiency and effectiveness. Known to “hit the ground running” with any problem thrown her way, Cathy would work at all hours of the night to make certain that every victim had a safe place to go. No one was ever turned away from Safe Futures.

Cathy now serves as the Chief Operating Officer at YWCA Hartford Region where she has the opportunity to make an impact in other areas of women’s empowerment and social justice, particularly basic human needs. Cathy, we thank you for your passion, commitment and tireless work to improve outcomes for victims of domestic violence. We wish you the best in this new pursuit and look forward to continuing our work together.
Exhale to Inhale is a New York City-based non-profit that brings the healing practice of yoga to survivors of domestic violence and sexual assault. In 2015 Exhale to Inhale began expansion into Connecticut, and is currently represented at YWCA Greenwich Domestic Abuse Services, Stamford and Norwalk Domestic Violence Crisis Centers, and The Center for Family Justice in Bridgeport, with more to come by the end of 2016. The program works to empower clients to take charge of their bodies and therefore take charge of their lives.

When people experience trauma the memory is stored not just in their minds, but in their bodies as well. The practice of yoga, which includes simple stretches and breathing exercises, is an effective method of discharging the physically stored trauma and residual symptoms of Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD). Bessel Van der Kolk, M.D., the world’s leading trauma expert noted for his research in the area of PTSD, has discovered that 12 weeks of yoga has been shown to be more effective in relieving the symptoms of trauma than medication traditionally prescribed for PTSD. He adds, “The real therapy is to take charge of your body. In yoga you can actually train your brain to calm down, and to take care of yourself again.”

In addition to being certified yoga teachers, all Exhale to Inhale instructors are trained to teach in a trauma-informed style. The instructors teach using invitational, versus directional, language. For instance, “if you would like...”, “when you are ready...”, and “you can choose to...” are common verbal cues. Students are invited into the yoga forms, then encouraged to notice any sensations they are feeling in their bodies. They can choose what to do with their bodies from there. In addition to this shift in language, classes are taught at a slower pace; participants are encouraged to set up their mats facing the door so they can see the entrance and exit at all times; and instructors do not leave their mats or offer physical adjustments to respect trauma survivors’ need for personal space.

Lexy Stauffer, Exhale to Inhale’s Connecticut Program Manager who has brought this program to the YWCA Greenwich Domestic Abuse Services and other agencies across the state, is a certified yoga instructor and also trained in Exhale to Inhale’s trauma-sensitive protocol. And the reviews from clients who have participated in the classes have been very positive. One client shared, “I come to yoga classes because they make me feel better. We keep it in, and yoga is a way to release and feel free.” Another noted, “After the trauma I had experienced, my body closed down. The practice of yoga physically helped me but also using the breath to spread the stability has been night and day.”

For the YWCA Greenwich Domestic Abuse Services, beginning an Exhale to Inhale Yoga class as part of their program has been a natural fit. For many years, DAS’ counseling services have included non-traditional approaches, incorporating the mind, body and spirit into the counseling practices. Having learned that too much ‘talk therapy’ can actually re-traumatize people with PTSD, the staff at DAS has learned to rely on a variety of tools to help clients heal. An individual or group counseling session at DAS might also include guided imagery, deep breathing techniques, mindfulness practices, yoga poses to reduce anxiety, and dance. Therefore, the clients have been excited to try these new trauma informed yoga classes.

For more information, or if your agency or organization is interested in beginning an Exhale to Inhale program, please contact Lexy Stauffer: lexystauffer@exhaletoinhale.org.
CCADV Kicks Off New Women’s Leadership Initiative

In October, CCADV kicked off its new Women’s Leadership Initiative, which seeks to establish and support a statewide community of women actively leading efforts to prevent domestic violence and improve outcomes for victims through increased philanthropic giving and volunteerism. The kickoff Fund & Friend Raiser was sponsored by CCADV Board members Marcia Keegan, Shannon Klenk and Diana Sousa, and held at Diana and Attorney General George Jepsen’s residence. The event included featured speaker, New York Times bestselling author, Beatriz Williams.

Anyone interested in learning more about the Women’s Leadership Initiative can contact CCADV CEO, Karen Jarmoc at kjarmoc@ctcadv.org.

Check out more event photos on our Facebook page!

All photos courtesy of Sandy Aldieri, Perceptions Photography.
Thank you, Sandy!

Beatriz Williams, author and featured speaker (center), with event hosts and CCADV Board members (from left to right) Diana Sousa, Shannon Klenk, and Marcia Keegan, and CCADV CEO, Karen Jarmoc.

WOMEN GIVING MATTERS!
Women have the leadership ability to make large-scale societal change. Preventing domestic violence leads to safe, healthy communities and greater equality for women who, according to the CDC, experience abuse at rates exceeding 30%.

TOGETHER WE CREATE CHANGE
Historically, when women come together to create change, they can accomplish anything. A shift in our society is necessary to end domestic violence. Collectively, women are well-positioned to lead this change.

CCADV Training Institute

Don’t miss out on these exciting opportunities through CCADV’s Training Institute! Click on the titles below for a description and registration information. Be sure to check our website for the Winter 2016 catalog - coming soon!

Members Only
New Staff & Volunteer Orientation
Nov. 28 - Dec. 1 | 9:30am - 4:00pm | CCADV

Creating Partnerships with Healthcare Professionals to Respond to IPV
December 6 | 10:00am - 1:00pm | CCADV

Law Enforcement
Domestic Violence for Police Telecommunications Personnel
December 7 | 9:00am - 11:00am | CCADV
Law Enforcement, Police Telecommunications Only
CCADV Hosts Roundtable Discussion on Health Cares About Domestic Violence Day

CCADV Director of Health Professional Outreach, Jillian Gilchrest, led a roundtable discussion on healthcare and domestic violence at the Legislative Office Building on National Health Cares About Domestic Violence Day, October 12, 2016. The discussion, Every Patient Every Time, focused on the importance of healthcare providers screening, assessing and making referrals for intimate partner violence (IPV). Participants in the roundtable included:

- State Senator Terry Gerratana, Chair, Public Health Committee
- State Representative Robyn Porter
- Karen Jarmoc CCADV
- Dr. Kimberly Citron, New Horizons, Community Health Center, Inc.
- Garry Lapidus, CT Injury Prevention Center, CT Children’s Medical Center
- Shelly Nolan, Dept. of Mental Health & Addiction Services
- Lakesha Rivera & Leslie Stedman, Women’s Health Connecticut
- Dr. Robert Zavoski, Dept. of Social Services
- Jillian Gilchrest, CCADV

With the ultimate goal of screening “every patient, every time”, participants discussed policies and practices that can strengthen efforts within the healthcare system to support victims. Shelly Nolan, Behavioral Health Clinical Manager at the Department of Mental Health & Addiction Services (DMHAS) discussed the importance of creating “no wrong door” policies when it comes to meeting the needs of domestic violence victims. DMHAS clients are now being screened for IPV more than once - when they first begin receiving services and later in their treatment as they build rapport with their counselor.

The importance of screening more than once and over a period of time was also discussed by Dr. Kimberly Citron, Director of New Horizons Domestic Violence Services, a program of Community Health Center, Inc. (CHC). Dr. Citron is working to formalize the screening process utilized by CHC, which will now be screening for lifetime exposure to IPV. At rollout, all female patients ages 14 and up will be screened initially using HITS and at each subsequent annual visit using HARK. Pregnant women will be screened once per trimester and again when post-partum, allowing the doctor to build a trusting relationship with the client which may facilitate increased openness by the patient. Overtime the project will also include men in all screening efforts.

Dr. Robert Zavoski, Medical Director, Division of Health Services at the Department of Social Services (DSS) shared his concerns about the low number of DSS clients (1.25%) who screen positive for IPV or who refuse to be screened at all (7%). He encouraged the development of better screens and creating environments where potential victims aren’t afraid to answer honestly.

Lakesha Rivera, Director, Clinical Operations at Women’s Health Connecticut discussed the importance of sharing available resources and referral steps with health providers who often don’t know what to do when a patient screens positive. She believes that developing online training and webinars will be a critical to effectively educate health providers on this topic as many are pressed for time and unable to attend outside trainings.

In the coming weeks CCADV will be outlining next steps to strengthen health screening efforts and to incorporate feedback from the roundtable. You can view the full roundtable discussion on CT Network. Please contact CCADV Director of Health Professional Outreach, Jillian Gilchrest, at jgilchrest@ctcadv.org with questions.

Click image to view roundtable discussion on CT Network

**EVERY PATIENT, EVERY TIME**

Screening matters. Are you a healthcare provider in need of tools and guidance that will help you strengthen your work with patients potentially experiencing domestic violence? Check out our Health Professional Toolkit, which includes validated screening tools, national best practices and outreach materials.
Raising Awareness One Purple Tie at a Time

Attorney Matt Reale, Board Member, The Center for Family Justice

Staff at CohnReznick

Staff at Safe Haven of Greater Waterbury

Staff at Webster Bank

Congressman Joe Courtney

Fairfield First Selectman Michael Tetreau

Staff in Senator Blumenthal’s Office

US Senator Richard Blumenthal

Attorney General George Jepsen

CCADV Staff

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TONYA JOHNSON
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Director of Member Organization Services

LINDA BLOZIE
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DANIEL CARGILL
Director of Legal Advocacy

JILLIAN GILCHREST
Director of Health Professional Outreach

BUTCH HYATT
Director of Law Enforcement Services

WENDY MOTA KASONGO
Director of Diversity & Accessibility

GERALYN O’NEIL-WILD
Director of Legal Advocacy

Connecticut Coalition Against Domestic Violence

912 Silas Deane Highway, Lower Level
Wethersfield, CT 06109
860.282.7899
Statewide Hotline: 888.774.2900
www.ctcadv.org
MEMBER ORGANIZATIONS

The Umbrella Center for Domestic Violence Services
Ansonia  New Haven
(203) 736-9944  (203) 789-8104
www.bhcare.org

Women's Center of Greater Danbury
Danbury
(203) 731-5206
www.wcogd.org

The Network
Enfield
(860) 763-4542
www.thenetworkct.org

Interval House
Hartford
(860) 527-0550
www.intervalhousect.org

New Horizons
Middletown
(860) 347-3044
www.newhorizonsdv.com

Safe Futures
New London
(860) 701-6000
www.safefuturesct.org

Women's Support Services
Sharon
(860) 364-1900
www.wssdv.org

Safe Haven
Waterbury
(203) 575-0036
www.safehavengw.org

The Center for Family Justice
Bridgeport
(203) 384-9559
www.centerforfamilyjustice.org

Domestic Violence Program/
United Services, Inc.
Dayville  Willimantic
(860) 774-8648  (860) 456-9476
www.unitedservicesct.org

Domestic Abuse Service/
Greenwich YWCA
Greenwich
(203) 622-0003
www.ywca.greenwich.org

Chrysalis Domestic Violence Services
Meriden
(203) 238-1501
www.mwchrysalis.org

Prudence Crandall Center
New Britain
(860) 225-6357
www.prudencecrandall.org

Domestic Violence Crisis Center
Norwalk  Stamford
(203) 852-1980  (203) 588-9096
www.dvccct.org

Susan B. Anthony Project
Torrington
(860) 482-7133
www.sbabproject.org

CCADV is the state’s leading voice for victims of domestic violence and those agencies that serve them.