

2014 Legislative Guide: Domestic Violence Homicides



Domestic Violence Homicides in Louisiana

Louisiana consistently leads the nation in domestic homicides and has done so since 1997.

- For the year 2011, using multiple sources, LCADV identified 60 incidents, resulting in 71 domestic violence fatalities.
- LCADV observed an approximate 16% increase in domestic violence fatalities in 2011 (71 deaths) from 2010 (61 deaths). What is clear is that our rate of domestic homicides did not improve from 2010 to 2011, in fact it worsened.
- Louisiana has a higher than average rate of multiple death domestic violence incidents. The average is about 30%, ours is 39% and often includes extended family and 10% of the time bystanders.

Homicide Data 2010-2012

Total number of domestic violence homicides: 178

- Committed with guns: 74%
- 37% had prior charges, protective orders, or other violent history
- 94% of multiple victim incidents were committed with firearms

ABOUT US

Our Mission

To eliminate domestic violence through public education, systems change, social change, and public policy. To promote and strengthen quality comprehensive services for member programs and all individual affected by domestic violence.

Our Work

The Louisiana Coalition Against Domestic Violence is the federally designated statewide coalition of programs and individuals working to end domestic violence in Louisiana. Our programs serve people from everywhere in Louisiana and who come from all backgrounds. We oppose violence as a means of control over others and support equality in relationships.

What Can We Do?

Louisiana is famous for its family values.

No one believes that families should be destroyed due to domestic homicides. Many jurisdictions around the nation have successfully implemented strategies to reduce their domestic homicides .

3 KEY RECOMMENDATIONS

Improved Safety
Net for Victims

Increased
Accountability
for Abusers

Restricting
Abusers Access
to Firearms

SAFETY NET FOR VICTIMS

- 1 in 4 women will experience domestic violence in their lifetime.¹ This means there will be about 450,000 women who experience domestic abuse in Louisiana over the course of their lifetime, more than 5,000 adult women per year.
- To house the portion of these women and their children seeking shelter services we would need 700 shelter beds throughout the state. We currently have 400.
- Louisiana has 17 shelters compared to South Carolina with a similar population which has 23. We have fewer shelters than both Oregon and Oklahoma which have 1 million fewer residents than Louisiana.
- More than 90,000 shelter nights and 33,000 crisis calls were handled within the last year by domestic violence programs in Louisiana.
- Programs were unable to meet 2,397 service requests due to lack of resources.
- Currently there are only 35 parishes with permanent physical points of access to domestic violence services, which means either outreach offices or shelters.

45% of our parishes have very limited access to services for victims.

A 43% increase in the number of beds would be required to meet the current demand for shelter.

ACCOUNTABILITY FOR ABUSERS

Reduce Dual Arrest

- Dual arrests discourage victims from seeking help and send the message to abusers that they are not solely responsible for their actions. They create cases that are unlikely to be prosecuted.

Increase Use and Enforcement of Protection Orders

- Protection Orders are very effective. According to a 2009 study funded by the United States Department of Justice, threats and physical abuse dropped dramatically during the months after a survivor got a protective order.²
 - * Threats to kill or harm decreased nearly 50 %.²
 - * Moderate physical abuse decreased 61 %.²
 - * Severe physical abuse decreased nearly 50%.²

RESTRICT ABUSER'S ACCESS TO FIREARMS

- 85 % of Louisiana residents want every gun buyer to pass a criminal background check.³
- In the 14 states that already require background checks for all gun sales:
 - * The rate of women murdered by an intimate partner with a gun was 38 percent lower than in other states – **and 54 % lower than in Louisiana** – while the number murdered by other means was nearly identical.⁴
 - * The firearm suicide rate was 49 percent lower than in other states – **and 52 % lower than in Louisiana** – people who committed suicide in other ways at almost precisely the same rate.⁵
 - * Gun trafficking is 48 percent lower in states that require background checks for all handgun sales.⁶
- An analysis of 56 mass shootings since 2009 showed that more than half – 57% – involved domestic violence.²
- Although federal law prohibits domestic violence offenders from possessing weapons, Louisiana law does not. In many jurisdictions of Louisiana abusers access to firearms is not restricted.
- Access to firearms increases the risk of intimate partner homicide more than five times, compared to instances where there are no weapons. In addition, abusers who possess guns tend to inflict the most severe abuse on their partners. ⁷

References

¹Tjaden & Thoennes. National Institute of Justice and the Centers of Disease Control and Prevention Survey, (2000).

²Logan, T.K., R. Walker, W. Hoyt, T. Faragher, The Kentucky Civil Protective Order Stud, 2009.

³Mayors Against Illegal Guns, “New Poll Finds 85 Percent in Louisiana Favor Mandatory Background Checks for All Gun Buyers,” Press release, March 5, 2013,

⁴U.S. Department of Justice, Federal Bureau of Investigation, Supplementary Homicide Reports, 2011.

⁵Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, National Center for Injury Prevention and Control. (WISQARS) [online]. (2005)

⁶Webster, Vernick, & Bulzacchelli, “Effects of State-Level Firearm Seller Accountability Policies on Firearm Trafficking,” Journal of Urban Health, July 2009.

⁷J. C. Campbell, D; Webster, J; Koziol-McLain, C. R; et al. 2003. Risk Factors For Femicide in Abusive Relationships: Results From A Multi-Site Case Control Study. American Journal of Public Health. 93(7).

Coalition Member Programs

Program Name	Parishes Served	Office Number
Crescent House	Orleans	504.866.7481
Chez Hope	Assumption, St. Mary	337.828.4200
Jeff Davis CADA (Communities Against Domestic Abuse)	Jefferson Davis	337.616.8418
DART (Domestic Abuse Resistance Team)	Bienville, Claiborne, Jackson, Lincoln, Union, Winn, Grant	318.513.9373
Faith House	Acadia, Evangeline, Lafayette, St. Landry, Vermilion, Avoyelles, Rapides	337.267.9422
The Haven	LaFourche, Terrebonne	985.872.0757
Iris Domestic Violence Center	Ascension, Iberville, East Baton Rouge, West Baton Rouge, Pointe Coupee, East Feliciana, West Feliciana	225.389.3002
June N. Jenkins Women's Shelter	Beauregard, Vernon	337.462.1452
Metropolitan Center for Women and Children	Jefferson, St. Charles, St. James, St. John	504.837.5455

Program Name	Parishes Served	Office Number
Oasis A Safe Haven	Allen, Calcasieu, Cameron	337.436.4552
Providence House	Bossier, Caddo, Red River, Webster	318.226.5015
Safe Harbor	St. Tammany, Washington	985.626.5740
SNAP (Safety Net for Abused Persons)	Iberia, St. Martin	337.367.7627
St. Bernard Women's Program	Plaquemines, St. Bernard	504.277.3177
SAFE (Southeast Advocates for Family Empowerment)	Livingston, St. Helena, Tangipahoa, Washington	985.542.8384
Taylor House	DeSoto, Sabine, Natchitoches	318.256.3408
The Wellspring Alliance for Families	Caldwell, East Carroll, Franklin, Morehouse, Ouachita, Madison, Richland, Tensas, West Carroll, LaSalle, Concordia, Catahoula	318.651.9314

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