

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

REVIEW OF DEATHS FROM INTIMATE PARTNER VIOLENCE FINDS STATEWIDE CRISIS

Crimes Often Involve Murder/Suicide and Workplace Violence and Include Youth and Older Adult Victims

ALBUQUERQUE, NM (July 27, 2010) -

The members of the New Mexico Intimate Partner Violence Death Review Team wish to convey their condolences to the families and friends of the victims of the recent domestic violence homicides in New Mexico in recent months. Our team reviews all cases of intimate partner homicide that occur in New Mexico. Our wish is that our reviews and subsequent recommendations improve responses to victims of domestic and sexual violence and ultimately prevent future injury and death associated with this violence.

Review of intimate partner violence deaths in New Mexico has resulted in key findings and recommendations for improvement in recognition and response at all levels of the community, in all parts of the state. These findings and recommendations stem from the process of in-depth review of the risk factors and circumstances of each death conducted by the New Mexico Intimate Partner Violence Death Review Team.

Key findings in our 2009 report include victims whose ages ranged from 13 to 82 years old; domestic violence homicides occurring when women and teens are pregnant; and an increase in domestic violence around the time of a divorce or breakup. Fatal domestic violence often occurs in the workplace and includes victims who have previously sought help from law enforcement, judicial, healthcare, or social services agencies.

Many systems work to keep families safe from domestic violence. Recommendations for improvement in the recognition of domestic violence include uniform reporting of domestic violence across all law enforcement agencies; more opportunities for training for all professionals who assist victims; recognizing the connections between power and control over another person, stalking, and domestic violence homicide; and more education and resources for youth regarding relationship violence.

The community plays a significant role in preventing and responding to domestic violence. Coworkers, neighbors, family and friends can learn more about risk factors for domestic violence and how to respond quickly when they see these risks. Research also shows that prosecuting domestic violence as a felony when possible, removing firearms from offenders of domestic violence, and holding offenders accountable for their actions during parole and probation can reduce lethal domestic violence.

Help for anyone experiencing domestic violence is available 24 hours a day/7 days a week through the National Domestic Violence Hotline at 1-800-799-7233. Resources and education are available from the New Mexico Coalition Against Domestic Violence (www.nmcadv.org) or the New Mexico Coalition of Sexual Assault Programs (www.nmcsap.org) or the Coalition to Stop Violence Against Native Women (www.csvanw.org). For a copy of the 2009 Annual Report of the New Mexico Intimate Partner Violence Death Review Team please contact Laura Banks at LBanks@salud.unm.edu or 505-272-6240.

The Intimate Partner Violence Death Review Team is a statutory body enabled by the New Mexico Legislature under NMSA 1978 §31-22-4.1. The Team is funded through the Crime Victims Reparation Commission.

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