

Virginia Department of Health: Office of the Chief Medical Examiner

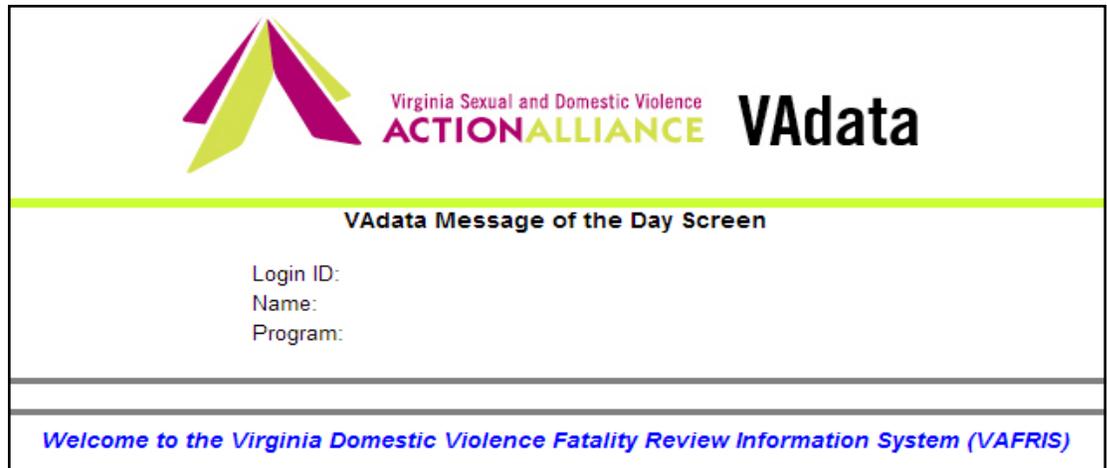
# Virginia Domestic Violence Fatality Review Newsletter

## New Online Resource to Prevent Teen Dating Violence

A new online toolkit provides practical and interactive resources for anyone engaged in teen dating violence prevention. The site is informed by the recently completed Start Strong program, a collaboration between the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation and Blue Shield of California Foundation. The toolkit (available [here](#)) includes downloadable materials and links to other resources, in addition to quotes and video interviews from experts, leaders, and youth and other facts about why middle school matters for preventing teen dating violence.

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## Virginia Launches Online Information System

The Office of the Chief Medical Examiner in partnership with the Virginia Sexual and Domestic Violence Action Alliance, will make available in November a new web-based information system for use by Virginia's local and regional Domestic Violence Fatality Review Teams in collecting and analyzing case review data.

The Virginia Domestic Violence Fatality Review Information System (VAFRIS) will contain more than 100 data elements covering demographics of both victims and perpetrators of fatal domestic violence, as

well as descriptive factors regarding the circumstances of each fatality and the team's assessment of their community response.

The VAFRIS will provide a unique tool to DVFR teams to improve their ability to collect and analyze case review findings in order to more effectively formulate recommendations, and to report this information to their communities. For more information about the Virginia Domestic Violence Fatality Review Information System, please contact Emma Duer, State Coordinator (see page 4 for contact information).

## Study Finds DV Remains Largely Undiscussed Among Peers

In addition to replicating findings from the 2010 Centers for Disease Control and Prevention report on the prevalence of domestic violence, a recent survey funded by the Avon Foundation for Women asked 301 teens and 1,006 adults about how they discuss domestic violence among peers. The [No More Survey](#) found that while 60% said they knew a victim of sexual assault or domestic violence, 57% had never dis-

cussed either issue with their friends. Among men, only 17% had ever discussed the issue with their friends. Among those who had experienced sexual assault or domestic violence, 58% of those who told someone about what happened said no one helped. However, 64% of survey respondents said that "if we talk more about domestic violence and sexual assault, it would make it easier to help someone."

### How States Address Domestic Violence in Selected Areas

The Maryland Department of Legislative Services issued a report in 2012 describing how selected domestic violence issues are handled across 50 states and the District of Columbia. [How States Address Domestic Violence in Selected Areas](#) compares state laws in the following areas:

- the required burden of proof to obtain a final DV order of protection;
- whether states have enacted statutory DV crimes that apply to 1st-time offenders;
- penalties for violation of a protective order;
- the surrender of firearms pursuant to the issuance of a protective order; and,
- the duration of final DV orders of protection.

### Virginia Atlas of Community Health

The Virginia Atlas of Community Health offers interactive mapping, tools, and action guides for improving the health of Virginia communities. At [www.AtlasVa.org](http://www.AtlasVa.org) you can view existing maps, or create a custom map from a variety of health indicators and other population data by locality or Health Planning District. Custom maps give the opportunity to layer more than one variable and analyze for High Priority Target Areas.

## New Report from the Violence Policy Center: Black women murdered at a rate 2.5 times that of white women

The Violence Policy Center's report, [When Men Murder Women: An Analysis of 2011 Homicide Data](#), reveals that in 2011, 492 black females were murdered by males in the U.S. at a rate of 2.61 per 100,000, compared to a rate of .99 for white females. Additional findings from the report include:

- 94% of black females killed knew their killers, nearly 15 times as many than were murdered by a stranger
- 64% of black females killed by someone they

knew were killed by a current or former intimate partner

- 51% of black female victims were killed with a firearm, with 82% of those being handguns
- 87% of black females were killed by males in the course of an argument

The study also ranked each state based on the homicide rate for females murdered by males. In 2011, South Carolina had the highest rate with 2.54 per 100,000.

## New in Research

### DV Increases Risk of Incarceration for Female Victims

In a study published in [Psychology of Women Quarterly](#) reporting on interviews with female inmates, the authors found that IPV increased women's risks for property crimes, drug offending, and commercial sex work. In addition, violence by a caregiver increased risk of running away as a teen.

### 1 in 3 Youth Has Experienced Dating Violence

A new study presented at the annual meeting of the [American Psychological Association](#) this year discussed 2011-2012 national survey results on dating violence among youth aged 14 to 20. The study found that more than one-third had suffered abuse by a dating partner, and one-third say they'd perpetrated abuse. Females were more likely than males to say they were victims of sexual violence and perpetrators of physical

violence.

### Community Program Reduces Repeat IPV

A 5-year study looked at the effectiveness of a court-ordered IPV prevention program called "[Mothers Overcoming Violence through Education and Empowerment](#)" (MOVE). The program for women who are victims of IPV and also have children focuses on effective parenting, improved communication, anger management, and self-advocacy. The study found that up to 3 months after completing the program, women were 96.5% less likely to experience a repeat of physical abuse, and 84% less likely to experience psychological abuse. After 3 months, the number of women who remained with their abusive partner dropped from 42% to 19%.

### Depression Links IPV to Food Insecurity

A new study published in the [Journal of Women's Health](#)

found that not only are women who suffer from IPV more likely to be depressed, but those with depression were twice as likely to experience food insecurity than victims who were not depressed. Researchers believe that depression may impact women's motivation to obtain and prepare food due to decreased appetite, mental and physical fatigue, and feelings of being overwhelmed.

### Stalking Victims at Greater Risk for Poor Mental Health

A study published in the [Social Science Quarterly](#) found that women who are stalked (without also being sexually assaulted) are 203 times more likely to experience poor mental health than women who had been neither stalked nor assaulted. Women in their mid to late 20s are most vulnerable; college-aged stalking victims were 113% more likely to suffer psychological distress than those who were never stalked.

## Drugs, Alcohol and Intimate Partner Violence: Recent research explores possible links

\$1.86 million in grant funds were awarded by the National Institute on Drug Addiction to the [University of Buffalo](#) to study for the next four years the effects of marijuana use in couples and the consequences for their relationships. Researcher Maria Testa said that despite the commonly held belief that marijuana suppresses aggression, many studies have found a positive association between marijuana use and intimate partner

violence.

A study of Russian women from the [Center for Interdisciplinary Research on AIDS](#) at the Yale School of Public Health found 47% of IPV perpetrators reported they had been using alcohol or drugs prior to the violence, and more than half of victims reported being under the influence when the IPV occurred.

A study published in the [Journal](#)

[of the Study of Alcohol and Drugs](#) found that the context of men and women's drinking behaviors were related to IPV. Men who drank at parties at their friends' houses were more likely to perpetrate IPV, but more likely to be victims if they more frequently drank at home. In general, both men and women who drank more often were more likely to be violent toward their partners and to be victims of violence.

## Bedford County to Have New DV Shelter

[Faulconer, J. (2013, September 24). Bedford County to buy site in town for domestic violence shelter. *The Lynchburg News & Advance*.]

A shelter for victims of domestic violence in Bedford now has a permanent place to call home. The Bedford County Board of Supervisors voted unanimously to purchase 7.5-acres in the town of Bedford for \$287,000. The county had leased the site from a private company for five years. Since the Bedford Domestic Violence Services program started in 1997, the shelter has had several leased locations.

County Attorney Carl Boggess

said the vote was the culmination of a lengthy process to secure a permanent home for the shelter. After hugging several volunteers, Leanne Dudley, the program's director, said having assurance of a long-term arrangement is a major milestone.

Debbie Rhodes, a volunteer with the Domestic Violence Gala committee, said several events have raised more than \$100,000 in recent years to help serve as a down payment. The board's resolution acquiring the property said the donations will be applied toward the purchase price.

"We are not just talking about a house," Rhodes said. "We are talking about a safe haven for women and children to escape abusive situations."

She said volunteers support the purchase because the current location in the town is in a secluded area and within minutes of police, already is set up nicely to serve women and children and is properly equipped with alarm systems to monitor trespassers and vehicles entering the property. Owning the property gives the county the say in how adjacent land is used.

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*The Bedford Fatality Review Team recognizes the responsibility for responding to and preventing domestic violence fatalities lies within the Bedford community. By having a permanent location for the shelter it is the hopes of the staff of Bedford Domestic Violence Services that victims of domestic violence and their children will have the resource of a safe place to stay when fleeing a domestic violence situation, to help reduce the potential of a domestic violence death and increase coordination between agencies within the community.* -Leanne Dudley, Bedford DVFR Team Member

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### Upcoming Events

#### November

Forensic Nurses Week  
November 11-15

**Webinar:** [Statute of Limitations and the Connection to Prevention](#)  
November 14

**Webinar:** [Community-based Advocacy in the Criminal Justice System](#)  
November 14

**Webinar:** [Looking Ahead: Innovative Approaches to Domestic Violence Intervention and Prevention](#)  
November 22

#### December

[Sexual Assault Response Teams \(SART\): Enhancing Your Response to Sexual Assault Victims on Campus](#)  
December 3, Stafford, VA

#### January

*Stalking Awareness Month*

**Webinar:** [Stalking in the Workplace](#)  
January 15

#### February

*Teen Dating Violence Awareness Month*

[Innovations in Domestic and Sexual Violence: Research and Practice Conference](#)  
February 6-7, Greensboro, NC

[One Billion Rising Campaign](#)  
February 14

#### April

*Sexual Assault Awareness Month and Child Abuse Prevention Month*

National Crime Victims' Rights Week  
April 6-12

## Virginia Partnership Receives Continuation Funds from GEAP Program

The U.S. Department of Justice Office on Violence Against Women's Grants to Encourage Arrest Policies and Enforcement of Protection Orders (GEAP Program) recently awarded a 3-year continuation grant to the Virginia Department of Criminal Justice Services to fund a collaborative effort by the [Virginia Partnership for Community Defined Solutions to Violence Against Women](#). The Partnership includes five statewide partners:

- The Virginia Sexual and Domestic Violence Action Alliance
- The Virginia Department of Criminal Justice Services
- The Virginia Department of Health's Office of the Chief Medical Examiner
- The Office of the Attorney General
- The Virginia Poverty Law Center

This funding will enable the Partnership to continue its work with local CCR teams while supporting efforts to address identified gaps in system response, particularly gaps related to serving victims from traditionally underserved populations. The first step in addressing these gaps will be to conduct a statewide needs assessment for service providers and criminal justice professionals to formulate an understanding of barriers, challenges, and strengths in Virginia's current sexual and domestic violence service and response system for immigrant, limited English proficient, older adult, and African American victims. The results of this assessment will be utilized to develop training materials to promote the evidence-informed strategies best suited to improve system response to underserved populations, and will guide the direction of future activities for the Partnership.

### For more information on Virginia DVFR:

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*In 1999, the Virginia General Assembly enacted legislation authorizing family and intimate partner fatality review. The [Code of Virginia §32.1-283.3](#) provides for the establishment of local and regional DVFRs. It provides important statutory confidentiality protection, and directs the Office of the Chief Medical Examiner to provide technical assistance and training.*

## Virginia's 2012 Family and Intimate Partner Homicide Report

The Office of the Chief Medical Examiner in the Virginia Department of Health made available in October the [2012 Family and Intimate Partner Homicide Report](#). This report examines characteristics and circumstances of those killed as a result of domestic violence in Virginia in 2012. Some focal points from this report include:

- In 2012, there were 117 Family and Intimate Partner (FIP) homicides in Virginia reflecting a 12.7% decrease from 2011.
- Family and Intimate Partner homicide comprised 34.0% of all homicide in Virginia in 2012.
- Social disparities continued to exist in FIP homicide. Black males had the highest rate of FIP homicide, followed by Black females.
- Intimate Partner Homicide (IPH) decreased for the second year in a row in 2012; and, for the first time since the beginning of surveillance in 1999, both Intimate Partner and Intimate Partner Associated (IPA) Homicides decreased from the previous year. IPH involved a victim who was killed by a current or former intimate partner; IPA Homicide victims included bystanders, interveners, and other intimate partners killed in the crossfire of intimate partner violence.
- Other Family (OFH) and Family Associated Homicides (FAH) increased 50% from 2011 to 2012. OFH involved a victim who was killed by an individual related to them by blood or marriage; FAH victims include those killed as a result of violence stemming from a familial relationship.

Additional information on 2012 deaths and an overview of FIP homicides in Virginia between 2008-2012 are also available in the report.