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112 people died from domestic violence in Ohio, including 22 young victims, according to 8th annual fatality count

Survivor who survived near fatal strangulation describes long-term effects

COLUMBUS, Ohio (Oct. 11, 2023) – Ohio suffered 112 domestic violence fatalities in the year ending June 30, 2023, including 22 youth, according to the Ohio Domestic Violence Network's (ODVN's) eighth annual [count](#) of domestic violence fatalities. The number of deaths of adults and young people is the same as in last year's count, and like last year, included the highest number of youth fatalities since the coalition began the count.

The [count](#) shows a pattern of continuous, unceasing violence – with guns the weapon of choice in most cases. The number of family annihilation cases doubled over 2021. There were 13 murder suicides, six multiple murder suicides and at least three attempted murder suicides.

More than a fifth of the deceased victims (17) died from strangulation or traumatic brain injuries or a combination of both, nearly double the number in last year's report. Teen-dating violence figured prominently: Two teenagers – girls, aged 15 and 18, were shot and killed by the 18-year-old men they were dating.

ODVN released the fatality [count](#) at its annual Domestic Violence Awareness Month event on Oct. 11 in the Atrium of the Capitol. More than 290 people were registered to attend the event online and in person. The count of DV fatalities occurring between July 1, 2022 and June 30, 2023 was compiled from media reports and information provided by ODVN's 76 member programs

In nearly two thirds of the cases, victims had been involved with the criminal or civil justice systems. More than half of the victims had contacted law enforcement or the courts to report violence or threats of violence, or the court system had been involved in some way, such as with custody cases involving domestic violence that were pending or cases where the perpetrators were out on bond. In other words, in most cases there were warning signs and the primary victim had tried to get help.

That nearly two-thirds of the victims died after they tried to get help is troubling, said ODVN's Legal Counsel Lisa DeGeeter, who oversees the count each year. "These victims were leaving, they were reporting, filing charges, requesting protection orders, but it wasn't enough to stop the violence."

The cases also show how the effects of domestic violence ripple through families and communities. A Butler County woman whose daughter was shot by her boyfriend, lost her sister to domestic violence 20 years ago when her sister was shot by her boyfriend. In some cases, the primary victims of intimate partner abuse survived, but their children were killed – including the horrific case of a Clermont County father, Chad

Christopher Doerman, who is facing trial for allegedly shooting his three sons, ages 7, 4 and 3, in front of their mother at the family home on June 15. A fourth child, a girl, ran away and escaped; the mother also survived.

In six cases, law enforcement responded and killed the perpetrator. For the third year in a row, no law enforcement officers were killed in responding, although two officers were shot but survived. In five other cases, a third party intervened and the perpetrator died – including a case where a father shot his daughter’s abusive ex-boyfriend when the man tried to break into their house.

The event’s guest speaker, [Paula D Walters](#), survived a near fatal strangulation at the hands of her abuser in 2006, but her traumatic brain injury was not diagnosed for more than a decade. Walters, a paramedic in Henry County, has worked to educate others on the connections between intimate partner violence and brain injury.

ODVN honored Ohio Gov. Mike DeWine and Attorney General Dave Yost with its annual Croucher Family Award for Outstanding Leadership, for their commitment to getting \$20 million in state line-item funding for domestic violence services in the state’s 2024-25 budget.

Also honored were Ohio state Sen. Nathan Manning, a Republican who chairs the Senate Judiciary Committee, and House Minority Leader Allison Russo, a Democrat from Upper Arlington, for their support of the increased funding and their long-standing work on legislative efforts to keep families safe.

About the Ohio Domestic Violence Network (ODVN): ODVN provides a strong statewide voice for Ohio’s domestic violence programs that serve all 88 counties, and advocates on domestic violence-related issues at the state and federal level. The network’s 76 member programs served close to 81,000 survivors and their children in 2022.

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