

Chart 3: Cause of Death, 2004-2008

CAUSE OF DEATH	Aggregate % for 2004-2008
Gunshot	54%
Stab wounds / Stab wounds and lacerations	25%
Strangulation	12%
Blunt or sharp force trauma	6%
Asphyxiation due to smoke inhalation	2%
Multiple traumatic injuries	2%

Chart 3: Key Point:

- ❖ Firearms continue to be the leading cause of death for victims in reviewed cases - greater than all other methods combined - indicating the urgent need to use all legal means possible to remove firearms from the hands of abusers.



Chart 4: Who Else Was Present, a Witness to, or Killed at the Fatality, 2004-2008

WHO ELSE WAS PRESENT?	Present		Witnessed		Killed	
	% of total 2004-2008 cases	Actual number of people	% of total 2004-2008 cases	Actual number of people	% of total 2004-2008 cases	Actual number of people
TOTAL	72%	105	35%	77	6%	6
Children	45%	55	17%	39	5%	3
Family members	18%	19	5%	11	3%	2
Friends	5%	3	3%	2	0%	0
New intimate partners	3%	2	2%	1	2%	1
Coworkers	2%	1	0%	0	0%	0
Acquaintances or neighbors	6%	6	6%	5	0%	0
Strangers	6%	19	6%	19	0%	0

Chart 4:

For the purpose of this chart, individuals labeled as “present” are those who were in the same area where the homicide occurred but did not hear or see the homicide. Those individuals who did have a sensory experience of the homicide have been determined to have “witnessed” the homicide.

Key Points:

- ❖ Contrary to popular understandings of domestic violence as a “private” issue, it is often the case that people other than the victim and the perpetrator are present at, witness to, or killed during a domestic violence homicide. The violence often spills over to affect family, friends, and bystanders. 2004-2008 data indicate that in 72% of reviewed cases, someone was present at the scene of the fatality. 35% of the time, someone witnessed the homicide. In 6% of reviewed cases, someone other than the primary victim was killed.

- ❖ In 17% of reviewed cases, children witnessed the homicide. This finding suggests that there is a critical need to assist children in dealing with the traumatic effects of witnessing the homicide of a loved one.