

End Domestic Abuse WI: Ahead of homicide report release, End Abuse mourns Milwaukee homicides, highlights needed change

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Madison – In the wake of six domestic violence homicides over the span of just two weeks this summer in Milwaukee, many are left in mourning and questioning how to address this crisis. End Domestic Abuse Wisconsin: The Wisconsin Coalition Against Domestic Violence (End Abuse) points out patterns highlighted by these homicides and offers insight for homicide prevention ahead of the September release of their Annual Domestic Violence Homicide Report.

“We hear about homicides in the media,” said End Abuse Executive Director Monique Minkens, “but there are many survivors experiencing extreme levels of violence that can lead up to homicide, whose lives and safety can be preserved today. Our action or inaction can mean the difference between life and death for our neighbors, family, and community members. We need to involve the entire community, as we all have a part to play.”

The six murdered women were all women of color, killed by firearm, and ranged in age from 19-66, demonstrating that abuse takes place across the lifespan. The homicide method aligns with known data. According to past years’ coalition reports on domestic homicides in Wisconsin, firearms are used in over half of all homicide cases. Since 2005, firearms have killed more people in than all other methods combined. In the last 20 years, an average of 41 lives were lost each year.

“They were mothers, daughters, sisters, aunts, and grandmothers,” said Antonia Drew Norton, Director of The Asha Project in Milwaukee. “They were Black, Brown,

Hmong, and immigrant women. While this is not a new pattern, we are seeing an unprecedented spike in deaths and near fatal shootings of Black and Brown women attributable to systemic, racialized oppression combined with the effects of COVID-19 in marginalized communities.”

Women of color are particularly impacted by homicide. According to Every Town for Gun Safety’s January 2022 [report](#), Black, American Indian/Alaska Native, and Hispanic women fall victim to homicide at the highest rates, and over 55% of homicides are committed by an intimate partner. Firearms are involved in over half of these deaths.

“We are in crisis,” said Norton, “and we cannot blindly continue the status quo, which is at best minimally working for some, while others are maimed or dying at record numbers. We must be intentional in our support of culturally responsive intervention efforts, alongside prevention activities. Culturally specific programs that are developed and led by People of Color must have equitable access to resources and tools to serve survivors and their families within their communities before violence claims more lives. Enough is enough!”

End Abuse’s annual Domestic Violence Homicide Report will be released at the end of September, ahead of Domestic Violence Awareness Month in October. The report will contain 2021 data, and highlight topics including the relationship between domestic violence and mass shootings, abuser intervention shifts, and GRACE – the coalition’s monthly support group for WI adults impacted by domestic violence homicide.

“We remain hopeful about the role increased awareness can play in the public’s understanding of domestic violence,” said Minkens, “but what our state truly needs goes beyond awareness. We need comprehensive, equitable community safety that includes safe and affordable housing, prevention education, universal healthcare, and economic equity. We need more than band aid solutions, and we need to listen to the experts at culturally specific programs, like those that comprise the We Are Here MKE collective. These women’s lives matter, and they deserve more than what our state is offering their communities to prevent future violence.”

Learn more about the GRACE support group at bit.ly/dvhsupport22info. Learn about the We Are Here MKE collective at www.weareheremke.org.