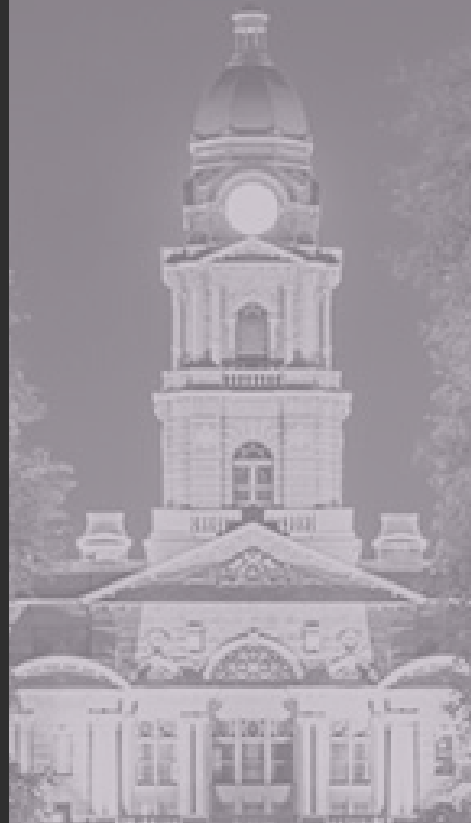


INTIMATE PARTNER VIOLENCE

2019 FATALITY REVIEW

TARRANT COUNTY, TEXAS



WHAT IS FATALITY REVIEW?

The Tarrant County Intimate Partner Violence (IPV) Adult Fatality Review Team was re-affirmed by the Tarrant County Commissioner's Court in 2016. It is led by the Tarrant County Criminal District Attorney's Office in partnership with SafeHaven of Tarrant County, Tarrant County's state-designated Family Violence Center.

The Fatality Review Team consists of designated partners that conduct in-depth case analysis with each partner providing relevant information. The contributing partners are listed below:

- Arlington Police Department
- Fort Worth Police Department
- John Peter Smith Hospital
- MedStar
- Office of the Criminal District Attorney
- SafeHaven of Tarrant County
- Texas Health Resources

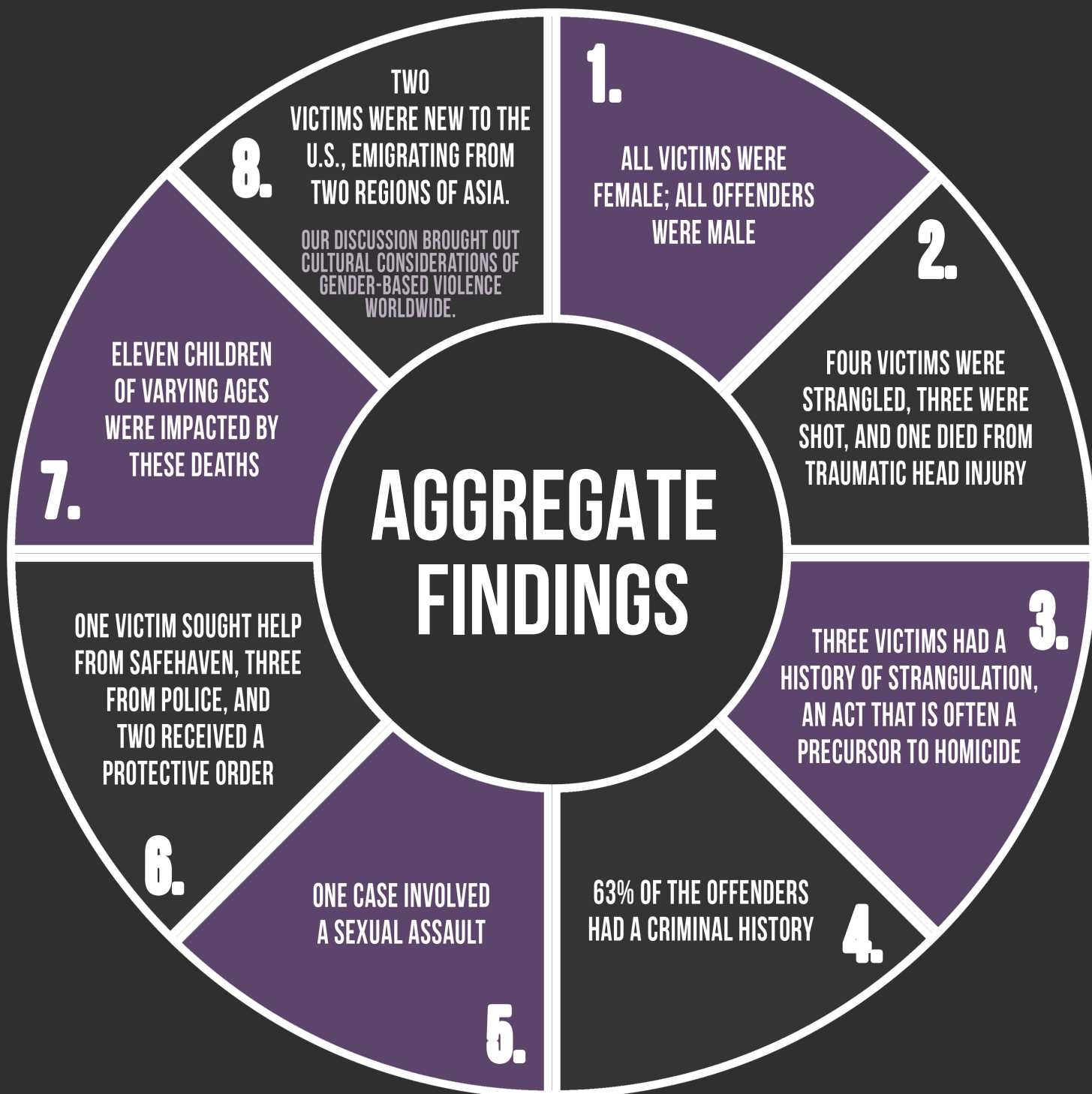
Using a multi-disciplinary approach, the Team serves to collaborate in order to best determine possible systemic, policy, and practice flaws in our County. The goal is to prevent IPV homicides by identifying gaps in services and resources to victims, survivors and offenders, and to initiate change based on those findings.

Solely for purposes of reviewing homicides in the Fatality Review Team, the agreed upon definition of an IPV Homicide is "an ongoing pattern of abusive behavior that includes physical violence, sexual violence, stalking, or psychological aggression (including coercive tactics) by a former or current intimate partner that is motivated by the offender's desire for power and control over the victim and the relationship ends in homicide."*

The Fatality Review Team reviewed eight (8) deaths that occurred in 2019. The data below represents these eight cases. Because case information comes from several different sources, names and identifying details have been withheld from this report. The data presented here is *in aggregate*.

**This is not the legal definition nor does this serve as a definition in a healthcare, education, or other settings or industries. The definition is solely for purposes of this specific review and was agreed upon when the team was formed in its current iteration in 2016. It stems from a combination of the definitions offered by the Centers for Disease Control and Hofstra University's Law School. This definition is specifically more broad than the legal definition of Family or Dating Violence in the State of Texas.*

FATALITY REVIEW FINDINGS



WHAT WE LEARNED AND CONFIRMED

1. Intimate partner violence impacts every age group.

- The age of victims ranged from 23 – 71

2. Intimate partner violence knows no geographical or socio-economical boundaries.

- These homicides happened in Arlington, Fort Worth, North Richland Hills, and Watauga

3. Intimate partner violence impacts every race.

- Victim and offenders identified as white, Black, Asian, and Native American

4. Leaving often doesn't mean safety.

- Relationship lengths ranged from two weeks to many years, and all but one relationship had ended. **Only one couple remained together at the time of the homicide.**

WHY DOESN'T SHE JUST LEAVE?

This is a common question in the world of Intimate Partner Violence. The layman's assumption is that leaving equals safety. If your relationship is violent, logic would indicate the best next step is to end the relationship. Often times, it is not that simple - and leaving is no guarantee of safety. Research indicates the most dangerous time in an abusive relationship is when the survivor ends the relationship and the three months following the termination. This is because offenders hold power and control over the survivor; her ending the relationship claims that power and control back. This can be a significant trigger for an offender losing his grip on power. When the Tarrant County Fatality Review Team assessed these eight homicides, seven of them happened after a relationship had been terminated. The victims "left", and they died anyway. Our review confirmed the research and what we already knew: leaving does not guarantee safety.

