

## 28 Minnesotans murdered due to domestic violence

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Gruesome statistics, on the number of women and children murdered in 2010 as a result of domestic violence and child abuse have been revealed in the 2010 Minnesota Femicide Report released last week by The Minnesota Coalition for Battered Women (MCBW).

28 Minnesotans were murdered as a result of domestic violence in 2010, according to Thao Mee Xiong, MCBW Public Policy Specialist. This included 15 women who were murdered by their intimate partner; 2 men murdered by their intimate partners; 7, under 18 children, were murdered by a family member; and 4 friends, family members, or interveners were killed in a domestic violence related-situation.

MCBW analyzed cases of the 15 women murdered by intimate partners and identified some red flags for batterer lethality. The first and the most common—67%—occurred after the victim had left the relationship or while the victim was attempting to separate from the batterer.

Threats by the abuser to kill the victim are very reliable indicators of lethality; the study finds this in 20% of the cases. While 40% of the perpetrators were known to have abused the victim prior to the murder, 67% intimate partner femicide were committed with firearms.

The Minnesota Coalition for Battered Women has challenged policy makers to prioritize domestic safety. It anticipates that this session the controversial and emotional debates around family court reform will return. They ask that policy makers prioritize safety and uphold the “best interest of the child standard”.

Xiong said, “It is during these tough economic times that our communities are most vulnerable and our government leaders need to stay vigilant on making sure public safety—a core government responsibility—remains a top priority. Minnesota’s economic and social prosperity hinges on the state’s ability to keep our families and communities safe.”