



Utah Domestic Violence Council
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Judy Kasten Bell, Executive Director

UTAH DOMESTIC VIOLENCE COUNCIL PRESS RELEASE and NOTICE OF PRESS CONFERENCE

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Domestic Violence Deaths in Utah: Respond and Learn How to End the Violence

EMBARGOED UNTIL: Wednesday, January 5, 2011

(Salt Lake City, Utah) – In August, Maria Monserrat Tolentino, 36, was gunned down near her car by her ex-boyfriend in a parking lot after leaving a family party. She died in surgery later that evening. Throughout the year, domestic violence impacts Utah neighborhoods and families. During 2010, at least nineteen people died due to domestic violence. The tragic loss of loved ones due to domestic violence affects not only the victim and perpetrator but children, extended families, neighborhoods, workplaces and communities. This year’s nineteen fatalities from January 1, 2010 through December 31, 2010 include five cohabitant homicides, three perpetrator suicides, one dating relationship homicide, eight domestic violence related homicides and two domestic violence related deaths. Victims ranged in age from 26 years to 79 years old.

In order to respond helpfully, members of communities need to recognize that domestic violence occurs without respect to income, ethnicity, culture, gender, sexual preference, age or disability. Risk factors include physical violence that increases in frequency and severity, threats with weapons or threats against a life, attempted strangulation, controlling behaviors, forced sex, threats of suicide, violence against children or animals, and violence outside the home, among others. If not addressed, these factors add to the dangerous situations victims live with every day.

“In the previous year, over 3,500 women, children and men lived in domestic violence shelters and domestic violence transitional housing to stay safe. Additionally, over 11,000 people were provided with nonresidential services such as safety planning, referrals and support groups,” according to Kathryn Monson, Chair of the Utah Domestic Violence Council. “In order to increase public awareness, information on domestic violence related deaths is collected from public sources and continuously updated by the Utah Domestic Violence Council. This annual report of the Utah Domestic Violence Council is evidence that people can die when domestic violence occurs.” The full 2010 UDVC Domestic Violence Related Death list and other domestic violence-related information are available on the Utah Domestic Violence Council website located at www.udvc.org.

If you or someone you know is experiencing abuse, tell someone. Listening to victims of domestic violence and believing them is a good step for victim safety. Learn about the resources available in your community and contribute to making domestic violence intolerable where you live.

For immediate help call 9-1-1. If you decide to leave a violent relationship, make a plan ahead of time, and do not act alone. Call the Utah Domestic Violence LINKLine at 1-800-897-LINK (5465) for help. Your call is confidential and could save lives. You can be referred to an advocate who will help you create a safety plan and help find shelter for you and your children. If you are an abuser or have questions about what to do in a difficult relationship, there is also help available for you through the LINKLine. End domestic violence by breaking the silence.

Annual UDVC Domestic Violence Related Deaths Press Conference
Wednesday, January 5, 2011
10:00am
Community Legal Center, 205 North 400 West, Salt Lake City, Utah
Conference Rooms, Basement Level

Speakers:

- Kathryn Monson, UDVC Chair and Program Coordinator for CAPSA, Logan
- Annette Macfarlane, UDVC Public Education Chair and Executive Director, New Hope Crisis Center, Brigham City
- Sim Gill, UDVC Board Member and incoming Salt Lake County District Attorney
- Brooke St. John, UDVC Impact on Children experiencing Domestic Violence Workgroup Chair, and South Salt Lake Victim Advocate Coordinator