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NEWS FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Wisconsin DOJ Recognizes Domestic Violence Awareness Month

MADISON, Wis. – In recognition of October being Domestic Violence Awareness month, Wisconsin Department of Justice (DOJ) today reminds Wisconsinites that domestic violence is an issue that affects communities across Wisconsin and of the resources available to victims of domestic violence. Wisconsin DOJ assists victims of domestic violence through a variety of programs and grants, including Safe At Home - Wisconsin's address confidentiality program, the Violence Against Women Act (VAWA) STOP Program, and the Missing & Murdered Indigenous Women (MMIW) Taskforce.

"Domestic violence impacts people throughout our state," said Attorney General Kaul. "It's vital that we support survivors and hold perpetrators accountable."

When one intimate partner strives to maintain power and control over the other partner, domestic violence occurs. This control-seeking behavior might manifest as verbal or emotional abuse, intimidation, isolation, economic abuse, physical abuse, sexual abuse, or other abuses. The trauma caused by these abusive behaviors can have a significant impact on survivors and even be fatal.

End Domestic Abuse Wisconsin's [2021 Wisconsin Domestic Violence Homicide Report](#), revealed that 80 people died as a result of domestic violence homicides in Wisconsin last year. The overall number of deaths came from 54 incidents including 65 victims and 11 perpetrators who committed suicide. In 52% of incidents, victims had a current or prior relationship with the perpetrator. The report revealed the following additional details:

- Domestic violence homicides were committed in 21 Wisconsin counties at a rate of 1 death every 4.5 days
- Firearms remain the most common means of perpetrating domestic violence homicides. In 2021, firearms were the weapons used in 67% of domestic violence homicide incidents. At least 13 of the 36 perpetrators who used a firearm to commit a domestic violence homicide in 2021 were legally prohibited from having firearms.
- Many of the 2021 homicide cases reflect the risk factors that research has found to be associated with lethal violence. These include, among other factors: threats to use or actual use of a weapon, threats to kill, stalking, strangulation, obsessive jealousy, and sexual assault.
- The ages of victims in this report range from three months to 77 years old. Perpetrators' ages ranged from 17 to 56 years old. The average age for perpetrators was 35 years old, and the average age for victims was 37 years old.

The Safe At Home address confidentiality program provides a legal substitute address that can be used for public and private purposes. This resource is available to anyone that is concerned about their safety and seeks peace of mind in their everyday life. Visit <https://www.doj.state.wi.us/ocvs/safe-home> to learn more about Safe At Home.

The Wisconsin Department of Justice Office of Crime Victim Services implements the federal Violence Against Woman Act (VAWA) STOP program, which allocates funds to develop comprehensive strategies to combat violence against women that are attentive to the needs of victims and hold perpetrators accountable for their crimes. By encouraging communities to explore non-traditional approaches and resources to address domestic violence and other gender-based crimes, the VAWA STOP program fosters long-term partnerships between the criminal justice system and victim advocacy agencies.

As this year's End Domestic Abuse Wisconsin's 2021 Wisconsin Domestic Violence Homicide Report notes, domestic violence can lead to homicide and other violent crimes. The Missing & Murdered Indigenous Women (MMIW) Taskforce is charged with helping in the fight against Indigenous women abduction, homicide, violence, and trafficking in Wisconsin. This multidisciplinary taskforce examines the causes of MMIW and the responses of social service organizations, as well as the roles of federal, state, and tribal jurisdictions. In addition, the taskforce intends to enhance and implement robust data collection and reporting methods. The final report of the MMIW Taskforce is expected to be released before the end of the year.

To find a domestic violence program in your area, please visit <https://www.endabusewi.org/get-help/>.