

Recommendations for Friends and Family

Friends and family members are uniquely positioned to impact safety for victims and accountability for perpetrators of domestic violence.

The Georgia Domestic Violence Fatality Review Project has developed recommendations geared to reduce incidents of domestic violence and domestic violence-related homicide. To affect change, local communities must work diligently to implement these recommendations, which were developed by fatality review teams across the state. Acting on established best practices and calls to action from the Project's 15-year history is how Georgia will see real change in the future.

Obtain Support and Education

- + Contact a domestic violence program for support and guidance as you provide assistance to a friend or family member who is experiencing abuse.
- + Remind the victim you are there for her, even if you do not understand what she is experiencing.
- + Do not attempt to limit the victim's contact with her abuser, even if you do not approve of the relationship. Hard-line rules about contact may add to feelings of isolation for the victim and may reduce the likelihood she will share information about future abusive incidents.
- + Encourage the victim to contact a domestic violence program for safety planning and supportive services.
- + Make the victim aware that they may be eligible for compensation to pay medical expenses, counseling, and other important items. The victim can contact an advocate in their community for assistance or visit crimevictimscomp.ga.gov.
- + If you are providing care or support for a child who has lost a loved one to homicide, make certain children are referred to counseling with therapists who specialize in grief and trauma, and connect to kinship care resources and the crime victims compensation program. Contact the Georgia Commission on Family Violence for supportive resources for surviving family members or visit gcfv.georgia.gov/support-survivors-murder-suicide.
- + Receive training on how to help friends or family members at risk of suicide and their families reduce access to lethal means, particularly firearms. Consider the free, two-hour course through the Suicide Prevention Resource Center on Counseling on Access to Lethal Means (CALM) by registering at training.sprc.org.
- + Prioritize your self-care. You cannot provide support and assistance to someone else, if you have not prioritized your own time, boundaries, and emotional needs.



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- + Join your local domestic violence task force or coordinated community response group. You can locate information about domestic violence task forces at gcfv.georgia.gov/family-violence-task-forces.
 - + Advocate with your local agencies to increase their capacity to respond to domestic violence.
 - Ask your faith community, grocery store, doctor, or other locations where you regularly go, to provide information and referrals to domestic violence resources such as the Georgia Domestic Violence Hotline 1-800-33-HAVEN (1-800-334-2836) or the Breaking Silence Teen Textline any time at 706-765-8019.
 - Posters and other awareness resources are also available for download at GeorgiaFatalityReview.com.
 - + Ask your employer to develop a plan for addressing domestic violence which makes sense for their company. This plan may include the development of a model domestic violence in the workplace policy such as those found at WorkplacesRespond.org. Request the Domestic Violence in the Workplace Train the Trainer Toolkit at GeorgiaFatalityReview.com.
 - + Advocate with your Senator and Representative in the Georgia General Assembly about the issue of domestic violence. Ask for their commitment to prioritize victim safety and offender accountability in public policy.
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Use the Georgia Domestic Violence Fatality Review Project Annual Report

- + Read and Remember
 - Read the fatality review reports and remember the stories of those who have lost their lives to domestic violence.
 - Share victims' names and stories and attend events that honor domestic violence victims and survivors.
- + Share with Others
 - Copies of this report and prior reports are available at GeorgiaFatalityReview.com. Email the link to coworkers, advocates, judges, police officers, mental health professionals, substance abuse counselors, attorneys, health care workers, religious leaders, teachers, family, and friends.
 - Print the sections you think are relevant to others' work and share these sections with them.
- + Increase Community Awareness
 - Create discussion groups in your community to talk about the fatality review reports and recommendations for change. These groups can be interdisciplinary groups of professionals or groups of community members interested in making their communities safer and healthier.
 - As a group, identify action steps toward implementing the recommendations in the report.





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- Contact the Georgia Commission on Family Violence or the Georgia Coalition Against Domestic Violence for further conversations and presentations.

+ Alert the Media

- Alert the local media about fatality review findings, recommendations, and local work being done to help victims of domestic violence.
- For additional suggestions about working with the media download our Domestic Violence and The Media tip sheet here GeorgiaFatalityReview.com/resources/.



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