

DOMESTIC VIOLENCE AWARENESS MONTH | 2023

# GUN VIOLENCE REPORT

9.8%

Domestic violence incidents account for 9.8% of ALL reported crimes in Houston.

10%

Between 2015 and 2019, the FBI reports that nearly 10% of law enforcement officers killed in the line of duty were responding to domestic disturbances or domestic violence.

18%

Domestic violence related homicides account for approx. 18% of total homicides in Houston.

68%

In 68% of deadly mass shootings between 2014-2019, the perpetrator killed at least one partner or family member or had a history of domestic violence.

73%

In the Houston area, 73% of domestic violence deaths from 2019-2022 involved guns.

500%

When firearms are present in abusive households, the risk of homicide increases by 500%.

The Houston Area Women's Center (HAWC) is at the forefront of the mission to end gun violence. As an organization deeply rooted in the history of the domestic and sexual violence movement, HAWC is uniquely positioned to lead efforts advocating for common sense gun safety and systems-level changes that prevent violence. Firearms are undeniably the leading cause of domestic violence homicides for women and children in our country. At HAWC, we witness firsthand the devastating impact that domestic violence has on families and the community.

“The right to carry without a permit went into effect in Texas in September 2021. It is not a coincidence that we've seen the number of Houston's domestic violence related homicides committed with a gun increase by more than 60% in the years after. We cannot pretend there is not a correlation between gun laws and domestic violence deaths.”

- Emilee Whitehurst, HAWC President & CEO

HAWC works at a systems-level to improve what happens to survivors the moment they call for help. HAWC collaborates with the Houston Police Department on the Domestic Abuse Response Team (DART). DART teams are comprised of officers, medical professionals, and advocates, like HAWC, who provide trauma-informed care and offer immediate access to safety resources.

DART is one of the only programs like this in the nation. To give an idea of its success, in the last twelve months, DART has responded to 1,084 on-scene requests and placed 404 adult survivors in emergency shelter. This does not include the number of children who often accompany their parent. These partnerships work and DART is creating positive change in Houston.

3x

Three times as many children were shot in domestic violence incidents from 2017-2022 than in school shootings and eight times as many died. Most of those children were shot by a parent or guardian - the very people expected to protect them.

866

866 kids ages 17 and younger were shot in domestic violence incidents in the U.S. from 2017-2022. 621 of them died.

SUPPORT COMMON SENSE GUN SAFETY

# STOP DOMESTIC VIOLENCE HOMICIDES

## 3 WAYS YOU CAN HELP

### SIGN THE PETITION



Dangerous domestic abusers do not have a constitutional right to possess firearms.

[hawc.org/supportdvam](http://hawc.org/supportdvam)

### EDUCATE & SHARE



HAWC's services save lives. Learn how domestic violence impacts Houston and help raise awareness.

### DONATE



Your donations go directly to supporting survivors.



Did you know, Houston's domestic violence services are staggeringly underfunded? Harris County has 475 shelter beds, while New York City, with twice the population, has more than ten times as many shelter beds!

HAWC supports survivors in imminent danger by helping them secure protective orders. For decades, these orders have included provisions for the removal of firearms when necessary. However, the upcoming United States v. Rahimi Supreme Court case will decide if current federal law, which prohibits the possession of firearms by persons under certain domestic violence protective orders, violates the Second Amendment.

“My biggest fear at night was him coming to my house and shooting me and my loved ones. After obtaining a protective order, although it was just a piece of paper, it allowed me to feel more at peace. Having the protective order restricts his power to have a gun. This allowed me to feel safe. It allowed me to sleep better. I recently was subpoenaed for a criminal case he has pending and if it wasn't for the protective order and knowing he doesn't have access to guns, I would not participate.”

-HAWC Legal and Counseling Client

In Texas, the protection requiring guns to be removed from abusers subject to a protective order has already been revoked. Since the Fifth Circuit's decision was issued, clients with existing protective orders have begun to receive photos and videos from their abusers waving guns. Abusers are still able to send a message of intimidation without even firing their weapons, and victims who escape death or injury by firearm still live in fear. The US Supreme Court's decision will supersede the Fifth Circuit's so it is imperative we make our voices heard.



TAKE ACTION

If you or someone you know is experiencing domestic or sexual abuse, call our free, 24/7 hotline: (713) 528-2121.