

## **UTAH DOMESTIC VIOLENCE COUNCIL – PRESS RELEASE**

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### **Domestic violence continues to devastate lives**

#### FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

(Salt Lake City, Utah) – Every year domestic violence takes a terrible toll in Utah, and the first half of 2009 was no exception. To date there have been ten domestic violence related deaths, beginning with the fatal multiple stabbing murder of a young Ogden mother by her former boyfriend, possibly in the presence of her three-year old daughter.

The tragic loss of loved ones due to domestic violence affects not only the victim and perpetrator but children, extended families, neighborhoods, and communities. This year’s ten fatalities from January 1st through June 30<sup>th</sup> include two cohabitant homicides, three perpetrator suicides, two dating relationship suicides, one dating relationship homicide, one domestic violence related homicide, and one domestic violence related death. Victims have ranged in age from a teenager to 54 years old.

It is crucial to recognize that domestic violence occurs in all communities, without respect to income, ethnicity, culture, gender, sexual preference, age or disability. Domestic violence adversely affects all of society and must be met with zero tolerance. Recognize risk factors—physical violence that increases in frequency and severity, threats with weapons or threats against your life, attempted strangulation, controlling behaviors, forced sex, threats of suicide, violence against children or animals, and violence outside the home, among others.

“Domestic violence is no respecter of age or background,” according to Caron Withers, Chair of the Utah Domestic Violence Council, “so to increase public awareness information on domestic violence related

deaths is collected from public sources and continuously updated by the Utah Domestic Violence Council.” In an additional effort to raise awareness, 2009 is the first year in which the Utah Domestic Violence Council is releasing a mid-year report on domestic violence related deaths in Utah. The full 2009 Year-to-Date Domestic Violence Related Death list and other domestic violence-related information is available on the Utah Domestic Violence Council website located at [www.udvc.org](http://www.udvc.org).

If you or someone you know is experiencing abuse, tell a friend, a neighbor, a family member or co-worker. **For immediate help call 9-1-1.** If you decide to leave a violent relationship, do not act alone. Threatening to leave may increase the danger. Call the Utah Domestic Violence Link-Line at 1-800-897-LINK (5465) which is available 24 hours daily for resource information. 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 necessary. If you are an abuser, there is also help available for you through the Link-Line. Remember, there’s no excuse for abuse. End domestic violence by breaking the silence.