

PRESS STATEMENT
August 9, 2004

RE: Lori Hacking Case

Issued by Stewart Ralphs, Chair of the Utah Domestic Violence Council (UDVC)

Our deepest condolences go out to the family and friends of Lori Hacking. Lori Hacking's tragic disappearance July 19, 2004 and the subsequent arrest of her husband Mark Hacking are grim reminders that domestic violence is a problem that still needs to be addressed in our homes and communities in Utah.

Although the circumstances in this particular case may differ from physical abuse and threats of violence that are usually associated with domestic violence, the murder of a spouse *is* a domestic violence crime. The Utah Domestic Violence Council¹ is saddened that yet another Utah woman has allegedly lost her life to violence by her intimate partner in the sanctity of her home.

Domestic violence is not limited to physical violence—it takes on many forms, including physical, sexual, emotional, verbal, spiritual and psychological abuse by an intimate partner. The main factor in domestic violence relationships is one partner using power and control over the other. Control of information, lies and betrayal of trust can contribute to domestic violence. From the information available in the Hacking case, controlling information and an elaborate pattern of deception and lies may have led to alleged physical violence in the form of murder.

The allegations in the Hacking case illustrate that domestic violence can take different forms with the same tragic results and affects all sectors and demographics of the state. Many may be surprised to learn that Lori Hacking's situation could be statistically similar to many victims of domestic violence in Utah—female, married and living with her spouse, employed with a high school diploma and under age 40. In 1994–1999, according to the Department of Health's intimate partner violence death review team report:

- Nearly 50% of the 131 female homicides in Utah were perpetrated by an intimate partner (e.g., husband, ex-husband, boyfriend, or ex-boyfriend)
- 76.6% were killed in their own residence
- 93.8% of the victims were white or Hispanic
- 50% of the victims were living with their partner
- 73% were under age 40
- 70.4% had at least a high school diploma²

Each year approximately one-third of all homicides are domestic-violence related.³ Domestic violence is a grossly underreported crime. A study conducted by the Utah

¹ <http://www.udvc.org>

² *Intimate Partner Homicide in Utah 1994–1999*, Utah Department of Health, <http://www.health.utah.gov/vipp>

Commission of Criminal and Juvenile Justice in January 2002 found that only 13 percent of domestic violence victims reported attacks by their intimate partners.

Domestic violence warrants a community-wide response. The Utah Domestic Violence Council knows that only with education about domestic violence and working together as members of a community can we prevent these tragedies from continuing to happen in Utah. We as a community need to be aware the following:

- To the victims — You are *not* alone.
- To the family and friends — You *can* help.
- To the abusers — You *will* be held accountable.
- To the community — We *must* work together to protect our families from harm.

If you or someone you know needs more information about domestic violence, call the Utah domestic violence resource line at 1 (800) 897-LINK (5465). For more information about the Utah Domestic Violence Council call Judy Kasten Bell, Executive Director, at (801) 521-5544 or Stewart Ralphs, Chair, at (801) 578-1213.

³ *Vital Statistics*, Utah Health Department, 2002.