

# Connecticut's Lethality Assessment Program

# June 10, 1986



Associated Press  
**Present when Gov. William A. O'Neill signed bill on family violence was Tracey Thurman, whose case raised the issue.**

391

October 1, 1986 to June 9, 2016

Incidents: 604

# victims: 630

# IP Victims: 391

% of IP Victims: 62

## ■ **Lethality Assessment Program**

Identifying victims of IPV

who are at the greatest risk of being killed,

for the purpose of getting them out of harm's way,

if necessary,

and encouraging them to go into domestic violence services.

# Research by Dr. Campbell

- For 28-33% of victims nationwide, the homicide or attempted homicide was the first act of violence.
- More than 44% of perpetrators were arrested in the year prior to the homicide (**any** offense)
- Only 4% of abused victims had used a DV hotline or shelter within the year prior to being killed by an intimate partner.

MNADV developed lethality assessment instrument and protocol between 2003-2005.

Lethality Screen:

11 questions,

user-friendly,

based on extensive research

by Dr. Jackie Campbell.

- BASED ON MARYLAND MODEL

2010: Ansonia Police & one CCADV member organization – The Umbrella

2012: 14 local police departments & 8 CCADV member organizations.

2016: 84 law enforcement agencies & 18 CCADV member organizations (**ALL**)

# When to Initiate a Lethality Screen

1. When police believe there's been an **assault** or other act of domestic violence,
2. When police believe the **victim faces danger once the officer leaves,**
3. When the home or parties are **repeats,** or
4. When officer's **gut** says the situation is dangerous.

\*\*\*\*Screens to be Used for IPV Only\*\*\*\*



## DOMESTIC VIOLENCE LETHALITY SCREEN FOR FIRST RESPONDERS

Generate Call Report for Domestic Violence

**When to Initiate a Lethality Assessment?** When an intimate relationship is involved; AND You believe an assault has occurred, You sense the potential for danger is high, Names of parties or location are repeat names or locations, OR You simply believe one should be done.

|  |   |                              |   |
|--|---|------------------------------|---|
| Officer:   |   | Department/Town:             | Hotline # :   |
| Victim:  |   | Offender:                    | Date:   |
|  |   |                              | Case #:   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Victim has been informed that any responses to the following questions could be used in the criminal or civil court process.  |   |                              |   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Check here if victim did not answer any of the questions.   |   |                              |   |
| <b>▶ A "Yes" response to any of Questions #1-3 automatically triggers the protocol referral.</b>   |   |                              |   |
| 1.   | Has he/she ever used a weapon against you or threatened you with a weapon?                      | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes | <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> Not Ans. |
| 2.   | Has he/she threatened to kill you or your children?   | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes | <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> Not Ans. |
| 3.   | Do you think he/she might try to kill you?  | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes | <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> Not Ans. |
| <b>▶ Negative responses to Questions #1-3, but positive responses to at least four of Questions #4-11, trigger the protocol referral.</b>  |   |                              |   |
| 4.   | Does he/she have a gun or can he/she get one easily?  | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes | <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> Not Ans. |
| 5.   | Has he/she ever tried to choke you?   | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes | <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> Not Ans. |
| 6.   | Is he/she violently or constantly jealous or does he/she control most of your daily activities? | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes | <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> Not Ans. |
| 7.   | Have you left him/her or separated after living together or being married?                      | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes | <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> Not Ans. |
| 8.   | Is he/she unemployed?   | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes | <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> Not Ans. |
| 9.   | Has he/she ever tried to kill himself/herself?  | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes | <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> Not Ans. |
| 10.  | Do you have a child that he/she knows is not his/hers?  | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes | <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> Not Ans. |
| 11.  | Does he/she follow or spy on you or leave threatening messages?                                 | <input type="checkbox"/> Yes | <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> Not Ans. |
| <b>▶ An officer may trigger the protocol referral, if not already triggered above, as a result of the victim's response to the below question, or whenever the officer believes the victim is in a potentially lethal situation.</b> |   |                              |   |
| Is there anything else that worries you about your safety? (If "yes") What worries you?  |   |                              |   |
| Check one: <input type="checkbox"/> Victim screened in according to the protocol<br><input type="checkbox"/> Victim screened in based on the belief of officer<br><input type="checkbox"/> Victim did not screen in                  |   |                              |   |
| If victim screened in: After advising her/him of a high danger assessment, did the victim speak with the hotline counselor?<br><input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No Advocate First Name: _____                   |   |                              |   |

Officer's Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Supervisor's Signature: \_\_\_\_\_  
*Note: The questions above and the criteria for determining the level of risk a person faces is based on the best available research on factors associated with lethal violence by a current or former intimate partner. However, each situation may present unique factors that influence risk for lethal violence that are not captured by this screen. Although most victims who screen "positive" or "high danger" would not be expected to be killed, these victims face much higher risk than that of other victims of intimate partner violence.*

**Admin Only**  Sent to DV Agency  Sent to State's Atty  Other (Authorized Agency) \_\_\_\_\_  
 Name

# Protocol for First Responders

1. Making **phone call**. Not the norm for officer or hotline worker, but police and advocates are a TEAM. Respect each other's task at hand and job.
2. **Encouraging** the victim. Be supportive in words and actions.
3. **Cooperating** with hotline worker. Convincing the victim to get on the phone and then for the hotline worker to convince her to go into services in a brief period of time takes a teamwork mind-set. The victim will know if police and the advocate are working together.

# Review of the Data

## Statewide Data:

- 52% of screens: victim in high danger of being killed
- Only 6% of victims in high danger of being killed did not participate in screen when officer requested they do so
- 79% of victims in high danger of being killed spoke to an advocate about safety planning
- 91% of high danger cases: officer called advocate
- 82% of victims in high danger who spoke to an advocate followed up with services

# CT LAP from Sept 2012 to May 2016

| <b>Police Agencies</b> | <b>Total Screens</b> | <b>High Danger</b>    | <b>Spoke to Advocate</b> | <b>Followed up w/Services</b> |
|------------------------|----------------------|-----------------------|--------------------------|-------------------------------|
| <b>80</b>              | <b>11,708</b>        | <b>6,068</b><br>(52%) | <b>4,779</b><br>(79%)    | <b>3,898</b><br>(82%)         |

A victim stated weeks after an arrest with a HIGH Lethality Screen being completed that;

*“I had no idea that the officer would be so caring and concerned. I really took the officer and the advocate seriously when I saw them work together to help me to a safe place. They showed me that there are people out there to help me and my son, I did not have to do this alone.”*

# Questions

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# Contact Information

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