

# The VICTIM'S INFORMER

TEXAS CRIME VICTIM CLEARINGHOUSE

VOL. 23, NO. 3 | SEP/OCT 2018

## JUST LISTEN

By Angie McCown, Director  
TDCJ Victim Services Division



*"Listening is a magnetic and strange thing, a creative force. The friends who listen to us are the ones we move toward. When we are listened to, it creates us, makes us unfold and expand."*

*-Karl A. Menninger*

I am reading the book *Leading with Emotional Courage* written by Peter Bregman, and it has inspired me to think about what kind of listener I am.

The ability to listen well is critically important in the victim services profession, however, it is also a skill that impacts all interactions and relationships. The second part of Karl Menninger's quote may be the key to good listening, "when we are listened to it creates us, makes us unfold and expand." Oftentimes people simply want someone to witness or validate their experience by listening. They are not looking for advice or someone to fix something, they are not asking someone to argue a point, they are wanting to unfold and expand by sharing their story. However, we have a tendency to listen from a position of authority, or as I prefer to call it, a position of knowing, which may include giving advice or becoming defensive. When we do this, we cannot listen fully. Remember listening does not have to be agreeing.

*"Humility is not thinking less of yourself, it's thinking of yourself less."*

Peter Bergman talks about the importance of listening in a way that conveys curiosity and trust in a person and their feelings. So what does this involve?

1. Just listen – simply focus on what the other person is saying.
2. Repeat back what you heard – this communicates to the person that you actually heard them.
3. Ask questions without interrupting – explore the other person's thoughts and feelings further.

If in listening, we assume something about someone, we can no longer be curious about them. Therefore, just listening and true understanding come from a position of not knowing, of being curious. When I think about this style of listening, two words come to mind, attunement and humility. C.S. Lewis wrote, "humility is not thinking less of yourself, it's thinking of yourself less."

Peter Bregman says that the first rule of attunement is to reduce your power so that you can focus and be in sync with who and what is in front of you. When you let go of your perspective, you make space for other's perspective; you let go of your agenda and connect by just listening.

*"Don't underestimate the value of doing nothing, of just going along, listening to all of the things you can't hear, and not bothering."*

*-Winnie the Pooh by A. A. Milne*

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# TRAVIS COUNTY SHERIFF'S OFFICE VICTIM SERVICES UNIT

By Wendy Williamson

TDCJ Victim Services Division, Texas Crime Victim Clearinghouse

The U.S. Department of Justice's Office for Victims of Crime recognized the Travis County Sheriff's Office (TCSO) Victim Services Unit (VSU) Volunteer Program with the Volunteer for Victims Award. The unit was recognized at the 2018 National Crime Victims' Services Awards because of their extraordinary service to crime victims without compensation. Attorney General Sessions said, "The women and men of the Victim Services Unit cater to the specific needs of area victims, including through on-scene services, continuing education, and expanded access to legal assistance. Their innovative model – which relies on both professional and volunteer support – is an inspiration, and I applaud them for their critical work on behalf of crime survivors in and around Travis County."<sup>1</sup>

The TCSO VSU is comprised of a director, a social services program coordinator, six victim services specialists, as well as more than 60 trained volunteers who contribute their time and expertise to assist victims of crime. These trained volunteers provide an immediate response and support to victims or various criminal and crisis circumstances. Volunteers help victims establish their personal safety, secure access to community services, and apply

for crime victims' compensation. The goal is to reduce the impact of trauma and enhance the ability for individuals to rebuild their lives. The TCSO VSU serves over 5,000 victims annually.

I had the privilege of meeting with some of the dedicated staff members who work for the TCSO VSU to learn how their volunteer program works and how they became so successful.

## **What do you credit your success to?**

Our agency's administration grew to appreciate the services we provide and the vital role we play. Our law enforcement officers started to realize if they involve the VSU regularly, victims are better able to participate in the investigation process. We also attribute a bunch of our success to our volunteers. We have a large pool of well-trained and committed volunteers.

## **What types of victims do you serve?**

Statutory and non-statutory victims. We serve victims of crime and also victims of crisis circumstance (such as natural death and drowning). We also provide death notification assistance. We are very flexible with our response. If law enforcement is not what they need due to the circumstances, then we will go assist in any way we can. We also help

people who reach out to us to try to prevent crime from happening to them.

## **What are some of the services you offer?**

We offer safety planning and assistance with crime victims' compensation. We provide victims with all of their options to empower them to do what is best for them. We start wherever the victim is at the time, depending on the victim's needs. We have a large array of brochures, one for every crime type.

## **Is there anything unique about your program?**

Some agencies have full-time staff in the office and then a crisis team on-call on rotating shifts, but our VSU members do everything both in the office and in the field. We feel that it's a better practice for victims. On scene, we can provide better service continuity. We are on-call 24/7. We all rotate being on call so we can all have contact with different types of victims and situations so we get that exposure and training to better assist victims of all types. We go out on every call, not just calls for serious matters. We have a very large call volume for such a small group.

## **How many volunteers do you currently have?**

We currently have 63 volunteers.

<sup>1</sup>United States Department of Justice: [www.justice.gov/opa/pr/justice-department-honors-travis-county-texas-sheriff-s-office-volunteer-program](http://www.justice.gov/opa/pr/justice-department-honors-travis-county-texas-sheriff-s-office-volunteer-program)



*TCSO VSU Volunteer Appreciation Event*

### **How is using volunteers effective?**

Some agencies may be nervous about using and depending on such a huge group of volunteers, but it has been a great thing for us. We allow them to respond independently because of the extensive training they go through. Some of our newer staff members were even trained by some of the seasoned volunteers because of their knowledge and experience.

### **How do you recruit and retain volunteers?**

Before every volunteer training we hold, there is a press release and we use social media. We also gain a lot of volunteers by word of mouth from current volunteers. We are able to retain our volunteers because it's very meaningful and impactful to them that they are entrusted with responsibility and independence. Volunteers are trained to go out on their own rather than with a staff member, and they appreciate the trust we give to them.

### **What type of training do your volunteers receive?**

Our training process is very structured. The first step is 40+ hours of classroom instruction. Community partners come in to speak to the volunteers, and we also have live panels. Then they become a "volunteer-in-training," where they begin to take calls and respond with a staff member or trained volunteer. Once the volunteer and staff member/trained volunteer feels the volunteer-in-training is ready to go out on their own, they are added to the rotating list of approved volunteers. All volunteers are made aware that there is always a staff member on-call 24/7 if they ever need someone to go out to a call with them.

Our volunteers participate in ride-outs with our law enforcement officers so they will gain exposure to the process and serving victims. We offer continuing education training that volunteers are made aware of in weekly emails we send out to all volunteers. We also hold in-person meetings every other month.

### **What advice would you give other organizations or agencies that wish to start a program like yours?**

Find a mentor program of similar size and demographics. Don't try to do everything at once. Go check out different programs and find a program that best fits your needs and implement it. Don't do this alone, ask for help and pull in community partners. Try to have stakeholders at the table when you create your program. Become familiar with mandates and victims' rights. Apply for grants if necessary.

### **Is there anything else you would like to add?**

Our volunteers are so well trained and professional, that sometimes deputies can't tell the difference between a VSU staff member and volunteer. VSU staff members and volunteers are a great team. We work together seamlessly to ensure that all victims are taken care of and receive the services they need.

*continued on next page*

From the volunteers ...

### **Good qualities of the TCSO VSU program**

#### **Anonymous TCSO VSU Volunteer:**

1. Team of 100% humble, hardworking, dedicated, and committed staff;
2. Team that are well- and properly-trained in how to respond to victims, how to talk to victims, the tone in which to use when you talk to victims;
3. Team that serves victims for their greatest and highest best purpose in a nonjudgmental manner;
4. They actually care about people.

#### **Chris Martinez, TCSO VSU**

##### **Volunteer:**

1. The staff members are incredibly supportive of their volunteers. In my three years with the program, I don't think a single email or meeting has occurred without a profuse expression of gratitude from the staff for all the work we do;
2. Everyone in the unit has pure devotion to our work. There are no egos and no politics. We're all here

- to help people, to create positive impact in our community;
3. We all believe in our work. We believe that our efforts have a real and lasting impact – not just for the victims, but on the sheriff's department as well. We believe that because the staff does a great job measuring data from our work on how it relieves law enforcement while still positively affecting victims.

#### **Debbie Gamble, TCSO VSU**

##### **Volunteer:**

1. Great training to prepare us;
2. Staff are exceptionally accessible;
3. Flexible schedule of being on call.

#### **Zachary Lewis-Hill, TCSO VSU**

##### **Volunteer:**

1. An extremely thorough training program which is short but highly effective in that they teach volunteers a lot of information but in a way that makes it easy to comprehend. They also do frequent checks to make sure everyone understands;

2. They have a strong leadership under a solid and supportive chain of command, which makes our jobs as volunteers easier because they're willing to back our decisions and support us;
3. The support of the other volunteers. It doesn't matter how long you've been there, it's a community of its own where everyone has something to share and some way to help the group, and the staff really encourages us to lean on that support.

#### **Mark G. Doherty, TCSO VSU**

##### **Volunteer:**

1. Training volunteers;
2. Working with and on behalf of victims;
3. Caring staff

#### **Ellen Greenleaf, TCSO VSU**

##### **Volunteer:**

1. Top training and educational programs;
2. Professionalism on all levels;
3. Ongoing opportunities in the field to learn with the best.

### **Advice for someone seeking a place to volunteer**

#### **Teri Segal, TCSO VSU Volunteer:**

If someone is looking for a meaningful, interesting place to display their empathy skills as well as other skills that are related, being a victim's advocate is a great place to be. I have volunteered with many organizations and they have all been meaningful but to be a part of this wonderful program along with being an employee of the Travis County



Several TCSO VSU staff members



TCSO VSU staff members as of June 5, 2018

Sheriff's Office has been one of the best experiences of my life.

**Chris Martinez:**

Victim services is sometimes terrifying. It will put you in the most emotionally challenging position you've probably ever been in. You'll talk to victims of sexual assault hours after the incident. You'll inform parents, siblings, and spouses that their loved one died. You'll witness firsthand the aftermath of a suicide, of domestic abuse, of child abuse. If that makes you nervous, anxious, maybe even a little queasy – don't worry, that's how we all felt. As our former director told me when I revealed my reservations, "As long as you truly want to help, you can do this."

**Debbie Gamble:**

This is an incredible opportunity every time you are on call. Most of the time I get more out of it by helping a victim than they get from my help.

**What made you choose TCSO VSU?**

**Debbie Gamble:**

I wanted to help the people of this community in times of crisis. I liked the structure and training that they offered.

**Ellen Greenleaf:**

I've worked with sheriff's deputies, police officers, firefighters, and

our military over the years in tourism and major events. The opportunity to be a part of what the TCSO VSU has developed is an honor and community necessity. This unit is at the forefront of training of VSU's nationwide and our program leaders continue important connections to help communities set up their own programs.

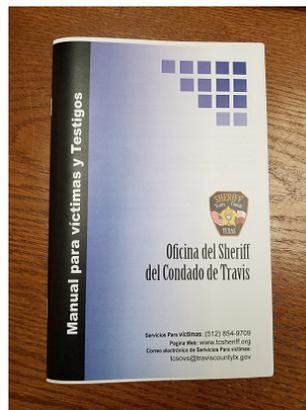
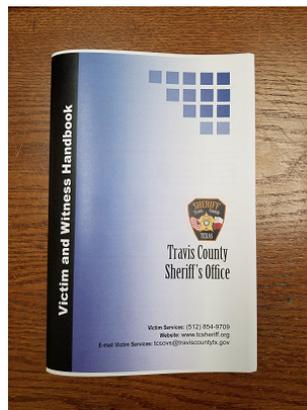
**Zachary Lewis-Hill:**

TCSO VSU has a reputable and established program that appeared to be a good opportunity to give back to my community using skills I had acquired in my professional career while also gaining new skills and insights to a side of the criminal justice system I was not as familiar with.

**Any additional comments?**

**Anonymous TCSO VSU Volunteer**

There is a good chance that victims will remember everything you did, said, and how you said it. Most of all they will remember how you made them feel. In a justice system that sometimes for various reasons minimizes their voice, feelings, and fears, being that one person who can validate them for just a brief while and make them feel like a human being again, is so worth it.



Left and center: TCSO Victim and Witness Handbooks in English and Spanish; right: TCSO VSU brochures in English and Spanish are available in print or on their website.

# REGIONAL VICTIM SERVICES COORDINATORS

By Amanda Gage, Programs Manager  
TDCJ Victim Services Division

The Texas Department of Criminal Justice (TDCJ) Victim Services Division (VSD) Texas Crime Victim Clearinghouse (TxCVC) staff includes Regional Victim Services Coordinators (RVSCs) strategically located throughout Texas in Dallas, Corpus Christi, and Lubbock.

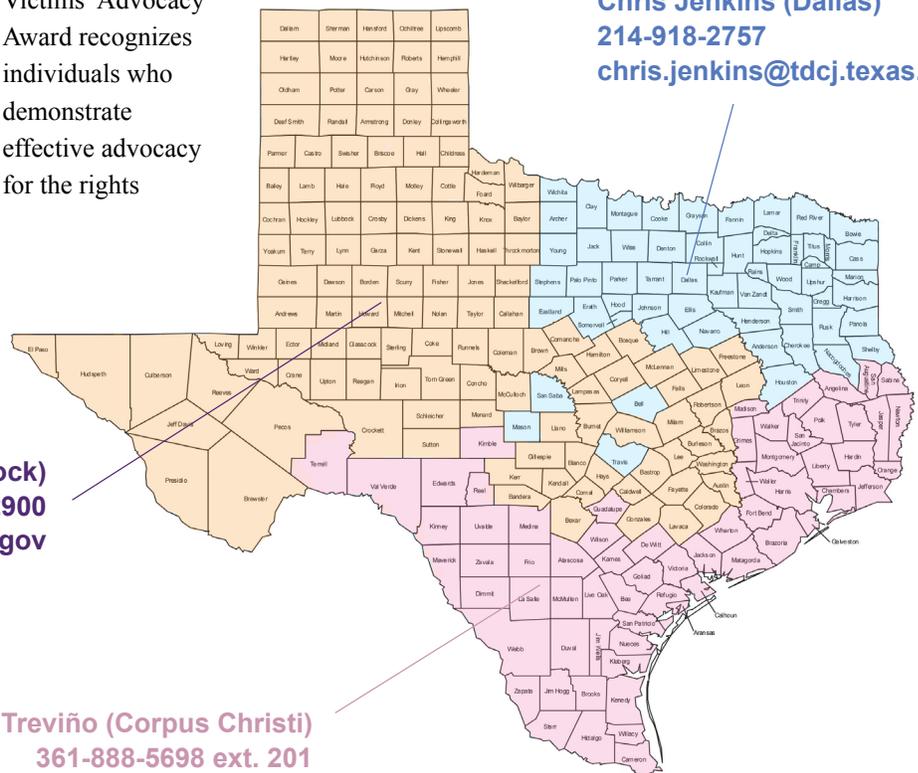
The RVSCs provide direct services to victims, training to criminal justice and victim services professionals, and community outreach and education within their respective region. Direct services provided by the RVSCs include assistance with notification registration, completing the Victim Impact Statement, safety planning, restitution, and Crime Victim Compensation. In addition, RVSCs are able to provide information and referrals, crisis intervention, support

and accompaniment to meetings with the Board of Pardons and Paroles, parole revocation hearings, court proceedings, and during the execution process. Trainings are also offered covering various topics including the Victim Impact Statement, services offered by the TDCJ VSD, and post-conviction crime victims' rights.

One of the RVSCs, Rose Trevino, was awarded the Ellen Halbert Crime Victims' Advocacy Award at the 2018 Texas Corrections Association Conference. The Ellen Halbert Crime Victims' Advocacy Award recognizes individuals who demonstrate effective advocacy for the rights

of crime victims and who exhibit understanding and compassion in their efforts on behalf of crime victims. Rose Trevino exemplifies these efforts on a daily basis and is well-deserving of this commendation.

The VSD also operates a small office in Huntsville. Janice Sager provides training, Board accompaniment, and direct service assistance during the execution process. You may contact Janice at 936-437-4942 or via email at [janice.sager@tdcj.texas.gov](mailto:janice.sager@tdcj.texas.gov).



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# VICTIM OFFENDER MEDIATION DIALOGUE

By Cielito Apolinar, Victim Offender Mediation Dialogue Supervisor  
TDCJ Victim Services Division

## What is Victim Offender Mediation Dialogue and why would someone want to participate in this program?

Victim Offender Mediation Dialogue (VOMD) is a victim-initiated and victim-centered program that provides the opportunity for a crime victim\* to meet in person with the offender who is responsible for his or her victimization. The services provided by the Texas Department of Criminal Justice Division (TDCJ) Victim Services Division (VSD) VOMD program are for cases where an offender has been convicted of a felony and is either serving his or her sentence in prison or is on parole or mandatory supervision.

In 1993, a victim in Texas contacted the TDCJ requesting permission to enter a prison unit to speak face to face with one of the offenders who had raped and murdered her daughter. At the time there was no program in Texas that could arrange such a meeting. Due to advocacy from this mother and the dedication of the VSD staff, the initial VOMD program was developed. Since then, legislation has been passed that provides crime victims the statutory right to request victim-offender mediation.

The reasons victims request to meet with an offender vary but typically include wanting to ask about details of

the crime that only the offender would know. Many victims may want to share with the offender the full impact that the crime has had on them and their loved ones. Others may wish to forgive the offender in person.

The VOMD program is voluntary for both the victim and the offender. The preparation process is crucial and is typically four to six months long. Once a case is initiated by a victim, it is assigned to a mediator who meets with the victim and offender separately in order to help both of them clarify their goals for the meeting, prepare them for what they will encounter, and reduce the likelihood of revictimization.

If an offender agrees to participate, he or she must take responsibility for the offense. Offenders must also understand that participating in the program will not have any bearing on their prison, parole, or appeal status. The VOMD process is confidential, and offenders are made aware that their participation will not be documented for or reported to the Texas Board of Pardons and Paroles in any official capacity.

However, offenders who agree to participate in VOMD have the chance to express remorse, take responsibility for their actions, and be accountable for the pain and suffering their actions have caused.

Victims may also request to conduct a creative alternative mediation, which usually consists of a mediator reading a letter to the offender on behalf of the victim.

Criminal justice professionals who work with victims understand that there is no such thing as *closure* when it comes to victimization. Every victim is unique, but often they chose to participate in VOMD to gain insight and empowerment, to get questions answered, to hold offenders accountable, and possibly to look forward to the next chapter of their lives.

If you are a victim services professional who is working with a victim who might benefit from participating in VOMD, refer him or her to the TDCJ Victim Services Division for more information.

VOMD Program staff can be reached at 512-406-5929, through the Victim Services Division hotline at 800-484-4284, and by email at [vsd.vomd@tdcj.texas.gov](mailto:vsd.vomd@tdcj.texas.gov).

\*A crime victim, as defined by Article 56 of the Texas Code of Criminal Procedure, is a close relative of a deceased victim; a guardian of a victim; and a person who is the victim of sexual assault, kidnapping, aggravated robbery, trafficking of persons,

or injury to a child, elderly individual, or disabled individual or a person who has suffered personal injury or death as a result of the criminal conduct of another.

# REMEMBERING D'AN ANDERS, VICTIM RIGHTS ADVOCATE

*Reprinted with permission from People Against Violent Crime*

For over three decades D'an Anders has been a leader in the fight to provide greater protections for victims of family violence and sexual assault. She strived to ensure victims' needs and rights were met along with individual and community safety. This individual of greatness brought with her the tools that are essential to be an effective victim advocate: compassion, empathy, knowledge, perseverance, understanding, and a commitment to justice for crime victims.

She has trained professionals at the Attorney General's conference, Texas Association Against Sexual Assault Conference and the Texas Sheriff's Association Annual Conference. She began her career as the Rural Outreach Director for the East Texas Crisis Center in Tyler, Texas and as a Legal Advocacy Specialist with the Texas Council on Family Violence in Austin, Texas and went on to the Women's Advocacy Project, Texas Lawyers Care Services and upon her passing with the Texas Association Against Sexual Assault.

D'an fought with great heart and courage on behalf of crime victims. She helped pave the way to turn the tide on how family violence and sexual assault victims were viewed and treated. What

an amazing person and what an accomplished life she has had, yet D'an remained humble and unassuming. As with most victim advocates, D'an witnessed the horrific actions perpetuated against victims of crime, however, she never lost her sense of humor nor her kindness.

When asked, what do you consider your greatest accomplishment as an advocate for crime victims without hesitation D'an will respond, "being able to share the knowledge she has gained over the years and collaborate by networking across the state with colleagues to achieve a common goal for crime victims." What noble accomplishments she contributed to the state of Texas.



D'an Anders will be missed greatly. She was an advocate; she was also a friend to many and a much loved mother. Rest in peace our friend; you did your very best for so many people, and you earned your wings many times over.

# THE FUTURE'S SO BRIGHT, I GOTTA WEAR SHADES

## Thoughts on the next generation of leaders in Victim Services

By Derrelyn Perryman, Texas Board of Criminal Justice



**W**orking in the field of victim services over the 'long haul' has meant that I have seen many things, made many mistakes, learned from some of them, accomplished some of my goals, and seen change happen.

It makes me so happy to see how far we've come, even as I realize there is still much to do to take care of those who experience the trauma of violent crime and make sure that the criminal justice system is doing its part in this important work.

A few weeks ago I had the privilege of doing a workshop for the Texas Victim Services Association's Advanced Academy. It was an amazing experience! I got to be in a room full of victim services providers who are looking forward to the leadership roles they will take in victim services now and in the future.

And I have to tell you, there are some bright, talented, dedicated people carrying on the work that was started decades ago.

Thank you to everyone, whether you are a survivor giving back to other survivors, an advocate brand new to the field, or you've been doing this work for what seems like forever. You make a difference, we move forward together, and great things happen!

Derrelyn Perryman, MSSW, LCSW-S  
Victim Advocate Director

Tarrant County Criminal District Attorney's Office –  
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Tim Curry Criminal Justice Center  
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**MADD Central Texas – Old Settlers Park**  
October 21, 2018 – 11:30 am to 4:00 pm  
3300 E. Palm Valley Blvd., Round Rock, Texas

**WE WALK** for those who no longer can and alongside those who are learning to walk again.

**WE WALK** with supporters who share our vision of no more drunk or drugged driving victims.

**WE WALK** because together we will end drunk and drugged driving.

**23rd Annual Austin Jingle Bell 5K**  
December 9, 2018 – 8:00 am Kids Run  
Starts | 8:30 Adults  
The Domain, Austin.

**Can we get 1000 runners!?**

**THIS YEAR** kick off the Holiday season with Austin's original festival race! Each participant will receive a set of bells, a newly designed event t-shirt, and kids receive finishers' medals! Browse the race vendor booths and mix-and-mingle to a jingling beat. Kids will have the opportunity for a Santa sighting!



Volunteer in the Austin Area  
**512.445.4976**

Volunteers are the lifeblood of MADD – full of passion and compassion for our mission. We encourage you to join MADD's army of *ordinary* citizens who've become *extraordinary* activists in saving lives and preventing injuries.

Whether you're interested in volunteering a couple of times a year or a couple of times a week, there's a place for you at MADD. And we have a wide variety of opportunities to match

your interests and expertise. A couple of ways to volunteer are:

**Roll Up Your Sleeves:** Help set up events, run an information booth or attend community fairs.

**Flex Some Power:** Inspire youth, train parents or mobilize community activities to prevent underage drinking and reduce alcohol access to youth.

Volunteer in the Austin Area  
**512.445.4976**

# TREE OF ANGELS

People Against Violent Crime

December 2-8, 2018

Submitted by Licia Edwards, Caldwell County Sheriff's Office



The Tree of Angels ceremony is a meaningful Christmas program specifically held in honor, memory and support of victims of violent crime. The first program was implemented in December 1991 by Verna Lee Carr, Executive Advisor of People Against Violent Crime (PAVC) in Austin.

The Tree of Angels program provides an opportunity for communities to recognize that the holiday season is a difficult time for families and friends who have suffered the crushing impact of a violent crime. This special event supports surviving victims and victims' families by making it possible for loved ones to bring an angel ornament to place on a Christmas tree.

Over the past 27 years the Tree of Angels has become a memorable tradition observed in many communities and counties throughout Texas. The designated Tree of Angels week is December 2-8, 2018.

If you are interested in hosting a Tree of Angels in your community, a How-To-Guide is available that provides information about establishing a Tree of Angels ceremony. Please note the Tree of Angels is a registered trademark of PAVC. PAVC is committed to ensure that the original meaning and purpose of the Tree of Angels continues. For this reason, PAVC asks that you complete the information form on the website: [pavc.org/contact.html](http://pavc.org/contact.html) to receive the How-To-Guide. After the form is completed and submitted to PAVC, you will receive instructions on how to download the How-To-Guide.

PAVC asks that you do not share the electronic document to avoid unauthorized use or distribution of the material. If you have any questions regarding the How-To-Guide or hosting a Tree of Angels in your community, please contact Licia Edwards at 512-837-PAVC or at [pavc@peopleagainstviolentcrime.org](mailto:pavc@peopleagainstviolentcrime.org).



Medina County Sheriff's Office  
Tree of Angels ceremony



Sutherland Springs ornament for  
the Tree of Angels ceremony

*Photos from previous Tree of Angels ceremonies ...*



*Caldwell County Sheriff's Office  
Tree of Angels ceremony*



*Dallas County Tree of Angels ceremony*



*Bastrop County Sheriff's Office  
Tree of Angels ceremony*

# NATIONAL VICTIM AWARENESS DATES

## SEPTEMBER 2018

### ***National Day of Remembrance for Murder Victims***

In 2007, Congress designated September 25th as the National Day of Remembrance for Murder Victims. Robert and Charlotte Hullinger, of Cincinnati, Ohio formed Parents of Murdered Children following the 1978 murder of their 19-year-old daughter, Lisa, while she was studying in Germany. The annual day of observance is on the date Lisa was murdered. The annual National Day of Remembrance for Murder Victims gives us all the opportunity to remember those lost to homicide, and honor their memories. The purpose of this day of remembrance is to focus on the impact of murder on families and communities, and ways to support and serve survivors. For more information, visit the Parents of Murdered Children website at [pomc.org](http://pomc.org).

### ***National Suicide Prevention Week***

In Texas, twice as many people die by suicide annually than by homicide. On average, one Texan dies by suicide every three hours in our state, and no Texas family is immune to the effects of suicide. National Suicide Prevention Week is the Sunday through Saturday surrounding World Suicide Prevention Day, September 10th. For more information on suicide prevention, visit the American Association of Suicidology at [suicidology.org](http://suicidology.org) or the American Foundation for Suicide Prevention at [afsp.org](http://afsp.org), the Texas Department of State Health Services at [dshs.texas.gov/mhsa/suicide/Suicide-Prevention.aspx](http://dshs.texas.gov/mhsa/suicide/Suicide-Prevention.aspx) or Texas Suicide Prevention at [texasuicideprevention.org/](http://texasuicideprevention.org/).

### ***National Campus Safety Awareness Month***

In 2008, National Campus Safety Awareness Month (NCSAM) was unanimously approved by Congress to encourage a public conversation on important topics in violence prevention at our

nation's colleges and universities. The Clery Center partners with institutions of higher education to develop programs and resources that promote campus safety. For more information, visit the Clery Center website at [clerycenter.org/initiatives/ncsam](http://clerycenter.org/initiatives/ncsam).

### ***National Day of Service and Remembrance***

September 11th, National Day of Service and Remembrance, is the culmination of efforts originally launched in 2002 that promotes community service on 9/11 as an annual and forward-looking tribute to the 9/11 victims, survivors, and those who rose up in service in response to the attacks. For more information, visit the Corporation for National & Community Service website at [nationalservice.gov/special-initiatives/days-service/september-11th-national-day-service-and-remembrance](http://nationalservice.gov/special-initiatives/days-service/september-11th-national-day-service-and-remembrance).

## OCTOBER 2018

### ***National Bullying Prevention Awareness Month***

National Bullying Prevention Month is a nationwide campaign founded in 2006 by PACER's National Bullying Prevention Center. The campaign is held during the month of October and unites communities around the world to educate and raise awareness of bullying prevention. This campaign has grown from an initial week-long event to a worldwide effort with thousands of individuals participating in multiple activities throughout October. Hundreds of schools, major corporations, and many celebrities have joined the movement. Take action and show that you care about kids being safe at school, while online, and in the community. For more information, visit Pacer's website at [pacer.org/bullying](http://pacer.org/bullying).

## INFORMATION ABOUT THE VICTIM'S INFORMER

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The Victim's Informer e-newsletter is published quarterly. Articles and other submissions should be sent to the TDCJ Victim Services Division (VSD), Texas Crime Victim Clearinghouse, 8712 Shoal Creek Blvd, Suite 265, Austin, Texas 78757-6899 or e-mailed to [tdcj.clearinghouse@tdcj.texas.gov](mailto:tdcj.clearinghouse@tdcj.texas.gov). If you would like to submit materials, the deadline dates for articles, meeting notices, and other submissions are below. For questions or comments, please call us at 800-848-4284 or 512-406-5931.

Deadlines for articles and other information:  
October 2, 2018 for December/January issue  
January 2, 2019 for March/April issue

Please Note: You may access the publication at the TDCJ VSD website by going to [tdcj.texas.gov/publications/victim\\_informer\\_newsletter.html](http://tdcj.texas.gov/publications/victim_informer_newsletter.html). If you wish, we will notify you via e-mail each time The Victim's Informer becomes available on the TDCJ VSD website and provide an electronic link to The Victim's Informer.

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**Angie McCown, Director**  
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### **National Domestic Violence Awareness Month**

One in three women will experience domestic violence in her lifetime, and in 2016, 146 Texas women were killed by a male intimate partner. Domestic violence is preventable. For more information on National Domestic Violence Awareness Month, visit the Domestic Violence Awareness Project website at [nrcdv.org](http://nrcdv.org) or the Texas Council on Family Violence website at [tcfv.org](http://tcfv.org).

### **National Crime Prevention Month**

To help celebrate Crime Prevention Month, you can access a kit that contains tips and information for you to use throughout the year. Also included are a few sheets designed to be printed or photocopied for your distribution. It has space for sponsors, local phone numbers, and addresses. You can download the entire kit from [www.safefirearmsstorage.org](http://www.safefirearmsstorage.org). For more information about National Crime Prevention Month, visit the National Crime Prevention Council website at [www.ncpc.org/programs/crime-prevention-month](http://www.ncpc.org/programs/crime-prevention-month).

### **National Cyber Security Awareness Month**

National Cyber Security Awareness Month (NCSAM) – observed every October – was created as a collaborative effort between government and industry to ensure every American has the resources they need to stay safer and more secure online.

Since its inception under leadership from the U.S. Department of Homeland Security and the National Cyber Security Alliance, NCSAM has grown exponentially, reaching consumers, small and medium-sized businesses, corporations, educational institutions and young people across the nation. 2018 marks the 15th year of National Cyber Security Awareness Month.

For more information, visit the Stay Safe Online website at [staysafeonline.org/ncsam/about-ncsam](http://staysafeonline.org/ncsam/about-ncsam).

# IMPOSING SPECIAL CONDITIONS

By Libby Hamilton, Victim Liaison  
Texas Board of Pardons and Paroles



Most Texans are aware that the Board of Pardons and Paroles (Board) decides which eligible offenders to release on parole and mandatory supervision, but another very important part of the job is deciding under what conditions to release an offender. Some parole conditions are statutorily mandated, such as having no contact with the victim and the prohibition from Internet access for certain sex offenders. Others are imposed at the discretion of the Board Members and Parole Commissioners that make up the Board.

According to Board Policy 145.270, voters may impose any reasonable condition that is designed to protect or restore the community, protect or restore the victim, or rehabilitate and reform the defendant. Voters also take into consideration the extent to which imposed conditions might

impact the offender’s work, education, and community service obligations. The Board’s philosophy is to impose reasonable and prudent conditions consistent with the goal of structured reintegration.

Although the Board often receives feedback that offenders should continue to be punished with difficult to follow restrictions, it’s important to point out that this often leads to unsuccessful periods of supervision where they commit violations or new offenses, therefore creating new victims. The Board wants offenders to have the opportunity to successfully reintegrate while enhancing public safety.

A hot topic right now is “criminogenic needs,” referring to an offender’s traits

and problems that may help predict their likelihood to commit new crimes. By acknowledging and addressing an offender’s needs, we may be able to lower recidivism and ultimately reduce victimizations. The Board often imposes conditions requiring participation in substance abuse counseling, for example, that can aid in an offender’s self-improvement and relapse prevention. Other programs include Super Intensive Supervision, sex offender counseling, and the Special Needs Offender Program.

If you have specific questions regarding special conditions the Board can impose, feel free to contact me at 512-406-5833, or [libby.hamilton@tdcj.texas.gov](mailto:libby.hamilton@tdcj.texas.gov).



TEXAS BOARD  
OF  
PARDONS AND PAROLES

**Number:** BPP-POL. 145.270  
**Date:** September 1, 2017  
**Page:** 1 of 2  
**Supersedes:** None

## BOARD POLICY

**SUBJECT:** POLICY STATEMENT ON IMPOSITION OF SPECIAL CONDITIONS

**PURPOSE:** To establish a policy statement of the Texas Board of Pardons and Paroles regarding the imposition of special conditions.

**AUTHORITY:** Texas Government Code Section 508.0441  
Texas Government Code Subchapter F and G  
Texas Code of Criminal Procedure Article 42A

# HONORING TEXAS VICTIMS

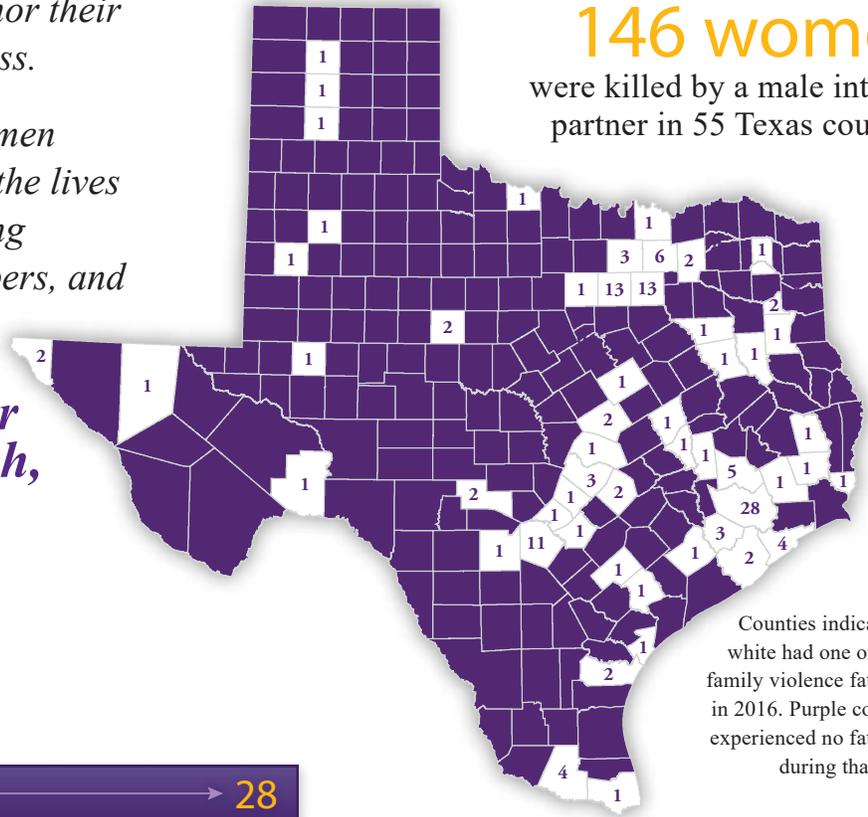
## By the Numbers Summary for 2016

Each year, the Texas Council on Family Violence identifies women killed by male intimate partners to both honor their memories and raise awareness.

These statistics represent women remembered for brightening the lives of those around them as loving mothers, caring family members, and dedicated friends.

### 146 women

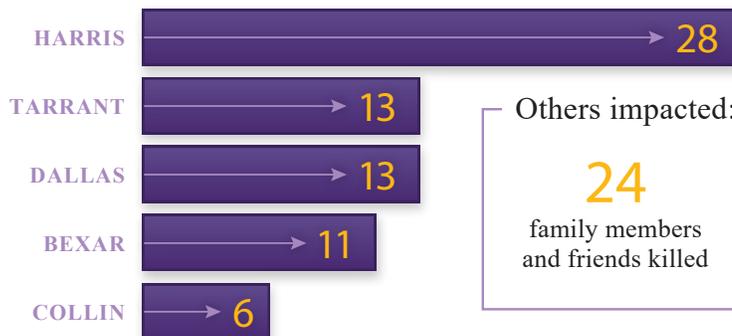
were killed by a male intimate partner in 55 Texas counties.



Counties indicated in white had one or more family violence fatalities in 2016. Purple counties experienced no fatalities during that time.

**“ She loved life, her family, her church, and more than anything, her children. ”**

### Counties with the most fatalities:



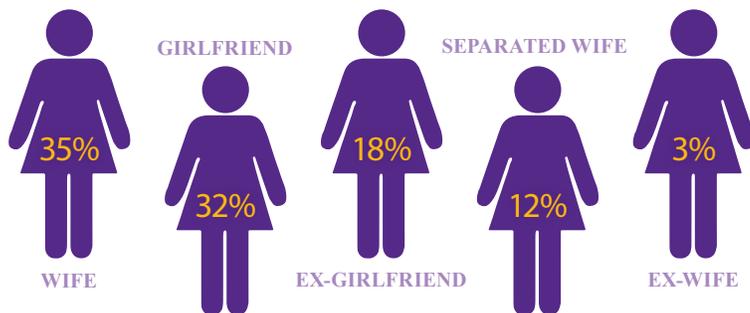
### Others impacted:

**24**  
family members  
and friends killed

**4**  
family members  
and friends injured

**183**  
children lost  
a parent

### Relationship status:

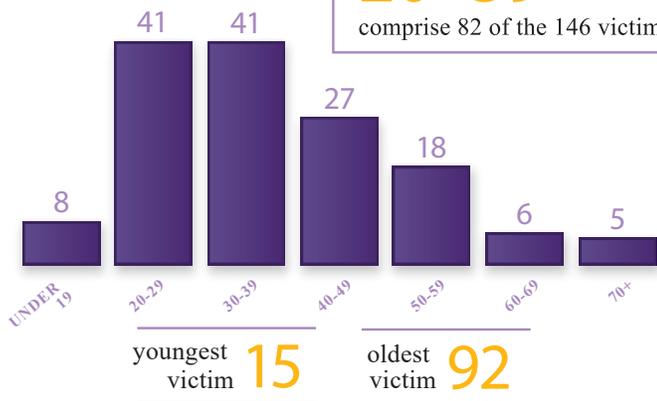


*Leaving does not equal safety.*

**40%** of women killed in 2016 had made attempts to end their relationships or were in the process of leaving when they were murdered.\*

\*This includes women represented in the Wife and Girlfriend categories to the left who had reconciled after prior attempts to end their relationships.

### Risk across lifespan:



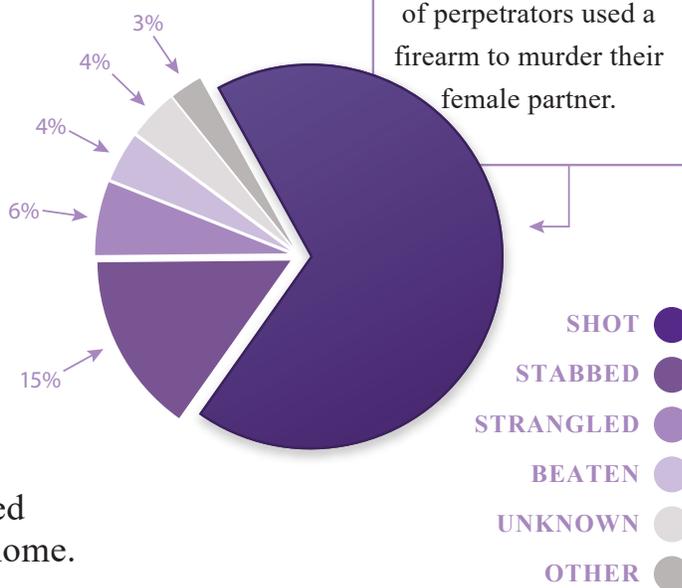
### Location:

*Home and safety are not synonymous.*

**77%**

of perpetrators killed their partners in a home.

### Means of death:



Although the number of women killed in domestic violence related homicides decreased 7.6% in 2016 from a high mark of 158 in 2015, 146 women killed represents the second highest year on record in the last 10 years.<sup>1</sup> Over the last ten years, one in every 10 homicides in Texas is perpetrated by a man killing his former or current female intimate partner.<sup>2</sup>

In 2016, law enforcement responded to almost 200,000 family violence incidents in Texas, averaging over 530 family violence incidents per day.<sup>3</sup> Texas family violence programs responded to these increasing needs by serving 72,782 survivors of family violence and their families in fiscal year 2016, but disappointingly, 39% of victims seeking services were turned away due to lack of space or resources to serve them.<sup>4</sup> According to the National Network to End Domestic Violence's one-day census of domestic violence services, calls to family violence hotlines across the state averaged 62 per hour;<sup>5</sup> in total, victims made 172,573 calls to Texas family violence hotlines.<sup>6</sup> In addition, 17,251 Texas residents contacted the National Domestic Violence Hotline in 2016.<sup>7</sup>

Visit [tcfv.org](http://tcfv.org) to download the 2017 *Honoring Texas Victims* Report published in October 2018.

<sup>1</sup> Analysis of data collected in TCFV's Honoring Texas Victims Report between 2007-2016.

<sup>2</sup> Texas Department of Public Safety, The Texas Uniform Crime Reporting Program (2007- 2016), available at [https://www.dps.texas.gov/administration/crime\\_records/pages/crimestatistics.htm](https://www.dps.texas.gov/administration/crime_records/pages/crimestatistics.htm) (last visited October 24, 2017)

<sup>3</sup> Texas Department of Public Safety, The Texas Uniform Crime Reporting Program (2016), available at [https://www.dps.texas.gov/administration/crime\\_records/pages/crimestatistics.htm](https://www.dps.texas.gov/administration/crime_records/pages/crimestatistics.htm) (last visited October 24, 2017)

<sup>4</sup> Texas Health and Human Service Commission Family Violence Program. Texas Family Violence Program Statewide Report. 2016. Available at <https://hhs.texas.gov/reports/2016/10/texas-family-violence-program-statewide-report-2016> (last accessed October 21, 2017).

<sup>5</sup> National Network to End Domestic Violence, 11th Annual Domestic Violence Counts Census, Texas Summary (2016), available at [https://nnedv.org/mdocs-posts/census\\_2016\\_handout\\_state-summary\\_texas/](https://nnedv.org/mdocs-posts/census_2016_handout_state-summary_texas/) (last visited October 24, 2017)

<sup>6</sup> Texas Health and Human Services Commission Family Violence Program. Family Violence Prevention Services Act Annual Federal Report. 2016. Available upon request.

<sup>7</sup> National Domestic Violence Hotline, Texas State Report (2016), available at <http://tcfv.org/resource-center/learn-the-facts/> (last visited October 24, 2017)