Firearms and Domestic Violence

**Homicide Risk and Domestic Violence:** Guns increase the probability of death in incidents of domestic violence.¹

- Firearms were used to kill more than two-thirds of spouse and ex-spouse homicide victims between 1990 and 2005.²
- An analysis of female domestic homicides (a woman murdered by a spouse, intimate acquaintance, or close relative) showed that having one or more guns in the home made a woman 7.2 times more likely to be the victim of such a homicide.³
- Domestic violence assaults involving a firearm are 12 times more likely to result in death than those involving other weapons or bodily force.⁴
  - Abused women are 5 times more likely to be killed by their abuser if the abuser owns a firearm.⁵

**More Guns = More Risk:** A study of risk factors for violent death of women in the home found that women living in homes with 1 or more guns were more than 3 times more likely to be killed in their homes.⁶

- The same study concluded that women killed by a spouse, intimate acquaintance, or close relative were 7 times more likely to live in homes with 1 or more guns and 14 times more likely to have been victims of prior domestic violence compared to women killed by non-intimate acquaintances.⁷

**Domestic Violence Homicides, Firearms, and State Gun Laws:** Murders associated with domestic violence, suicide, and illegal guns are all less prevalent in the states that already require background checks for all handgun sales.

- The number of women killed with a firearm by an intimate partner is 38 percent lower in states that require background checks on all handgun sales.⁸

**Preventing Access to Firearms by Domestic Abusers:** Family and intimate assaults with firearms are 12 times more likely to result in death than non-firearm assaults. This research suggests that limiting access to guns by domestic abusers will result in less lethal family and intimate assaults.⁹


Linda E. Saltzman, et al., Weapon Involvement and Injury Outcomes in Family and Intimate Assaults, 267 JAMA, 3043-3047 (1992)


See footnote 3

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See footnote 4