



Femicide: The Facts

Cristal N. Hernandez, M.A.

What is Femicide?

Femicide (or feminicide) refers to the intentional gender-related killing of women and girls.[1,2] Gender-related killings are the most brutal and extreme manifestation of violence against women and are different from other types of homicide, where the motivation may not be related to gender.[1,2] Femicide is often thought of as an issue that only affects low-income countries, but this could not be further from the truth; a study on female homicide victimization among 25 populous high-income countries found that 70% of all cases occurred in the United States.[3] Despite the high prevalence of female murder victimization in the U.S., the U.S. lags behind other nations in defining and documenting gender-related female homicides.[2] Furthermore, existing research suggests the majority of femicides involve longstanding incidence of domestic violence and abuse, including psychological, sexual and physical violence, especially where women have less control or fewer resources than their partners.[1]

Have You Heard?

- On average, 140 women or girls are killed every day globally by someone in their own family.[1]
- Every 10 minutes, partners and family members killed a woman intentionally worldwide in 2023.[1]
- Prior abuse by the perpetrator is considered a key risk factor for femicide.[4]
- Structural factors of low income and high inequality are significantly negatively associated with femicide rates, meaning that more socioeconomic disadvantage in an area was correlated with more femicide events.[4]

What Are the Consequences?

Femicide tragically robs a girl or woman of life. Additionally, many girls and women experience multiple acts of violence, degradation, psychological and/or physical isolation, fear, and terror before they are killed. Femicide has an impact on all women and girls, not just those personally impacted by a death. Femicide also harms communities and society as a whole. Overall, femicide is a human rights violation and a crime against humanity. Yet, this global health and humanitarian concern often goes unpunished.[5]

How to Spread Awareness

To spread awareness, society must work towards making the invisible visible by increasing efforts to name, define, criminalize, and document femicides in the U.S.[2] The identification of risk factors to predict and prevent femicide is of utmost importance. This can be achieved by a multidisciplinary approach involving law enforcement, legal professionals, hospitals, governmental and nongovernmental organizations, and medico-legal departments aimed at promoting standardized methodologies.[6] Structural factors must also be addressed alongside policy and legal initiatives if significant gains are to be made toward eradicating violence against women and girls.[4,7]

Resources

Texas

- **Texas Advocacy Project --**
<https://www.texasadvocacyproject.org/>
- **Texas Council on Family Violence --** <https://tcfv.org/>

National

- **UN Women --**
<https://www.unwomen.org/en/articles/explainer/five-essential-facts-to-know-about-femicide>
- **Women Count USA --**
<https://womenscountusa.org/resources>
- **Womankind Worldwide --**
<https://www.womankind.org.uk/resource/a-femicide-factsheet-global-stats-calls-to-action/>

References

- [1]UN Women. (2024). Five essential facts to know about femicide. <https://www.unwomen.org/en/articles/explainer/five-essential-facts-to-know-about-femicide>
- [2]Lewis, P. C., Kaslow, N. J., Cheong, Y. F., Evans, D. P., & Yount, K. M. (2024). Femicide in the United States: a call for legal codification and national surveillance. *Frontiers in public health*, 12, 1338548.
- [3]Sanctuary for Families. (2023). The Silent Epidemic of Femicide in the United States. <https://sanctuaryforfamilies.org/femicide-epidemic/#:~:text=In%20the%20United%20States%2C%20femicide,cases%20occurred%20in%20the%20U.S.>
- [4]Whittington, R., Haines-Delmont, A., & Bjørngaard, J. H. (2023). Femicide trends at the start of the 21st century: Prevalence, risk factors and national public health actions. *Global public health*, 18(1), 2225576.
- [5]Centre for Research & Education on Violence Against Women & Children. (2015) Issue 14: Femicide. https://www.gbvllearningnetwork.ca/our-work/issuebased_newsletters/issue-14/index.html
- [6]Stassi, C., La Mantia, M., Lo Re, G. F., Martinez, V., Zerbo, S., Albano, G. D., ... & Argo, A. (2024). Femicide circumstances and harmfulness: case report and focusing review. *Diagnostics*, 14(13), 1360.
- [7]Nicastro, A. (2025). Addressing femicide through international criminal law: The need for a binding legal framework. *Yale Journal of International Law*. <https://yjl.yale.edu/posts/2025-01-26-addressing-femicide-through-international-criminal-law-the-need-for-a-binding>

Texas State University System Board of Regents

Alan L. Tinsley
Chairman
Madisonville

Stephen Lee
Vice Chairman
Bastrop

Charlie Amato
Regent
San Antonio

Duke Austin
Regent
Houston

Sheila Faske
Regent
Rose City

Don Flores
Regent
El Paso

Russell Gordy
Regent
Houston

Tom Long
Regent
Frisco

William F. Scott
Regent
Nederland

Olivia Discon
Student Regent
Huntsville

Resources

- Aging and Disability Resource Center 855-937-2372
- Cyber Civil Rights Initiative 844-878-2274
- Mothers Against Drunk Driving 877-623-3435
- National Child Abuse Hotline 800-422-4453
- National Domestic Violence Hotline 800-799-7233
- National Human Trafficking Hotline 888-373-7888
- National Sexual Assault Hotline 800-656-4673
- National Suicide Prevention Lifeline 988
- Texas Abuse Hotline 800-252-5400
- Texas Council on Family Violence <https://tcfv.org/survivor-resources/>
- Texas Association Against Sexual Assault <https://taasa.org/get-help/>
- Victim Connect Resource Center 855-484-2846