



PRESS RELEASE

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Domestic Violence Related to Eight Recent Deaths

In the Las Vegas Valley, at least eight people have been killed as a result of domestic violence in the past four months. In January, Crystal Figueroa was found beaten to death in a trash bin; in February Sgt. Henry Prendes was shot in the line of duty; and just last week, one spouse killed another in the early hours of the morning. These tragic cases have one thing in common: each death was related to domestic violence.

As the murders of Sgt. Prendes and Crystal Figueroa indicate, intimate partners are not the only victims of domestic violence; the entire community suffers as well. The man who killed Sgt. Prendes was beating his girlfriend when police were called to his home and the man who is charged in the beating death of Crystal Figueroa also abused her mother.

Domestic violence is pervasive and deadly. Those who have recently died as a result of domestic violence include a 42 year-old mother of three who was strangled by her abusive ex-boyfriend last December and a 21 year-old woman who was shot in January by her ex-boyfriend while trying to serve a temporary protective order—the man then turned the gun on himself. Another man, who was abusing his girlfriend, was killed in an officer-involved shooting this month.

“These recent murders highlight the tragic and deadly nature of domestic violence and the importance of targeted prevention and intervention programs,” said Safe Nest Associate Director, Kathleen Brooks. Through its counseling and crisis intervention services for victims and perpetrators, she noted that Safe Nest works every day to stop domestic violence and protect victims, but stated that “it is critical that law enforcement, the judicial system, and federal and state legislatures continue to work together in a coordinated community response to domestic violence.”

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Brooks stated, "No victim should suffer in silence." She continued, "anyone who needs help may reach out to Safe Nest for shelter, counseling and legal advocacy--preventing violence requires that our community come together to end this deadly problem." Nevada ranks second in the nation in the rate of women killed by their intimate partners.

Safe Nest recently launched a ground-breaking campaign called Coaching Boys Into Men that seeks to prevent domestic violence before it begins. The campaign invites men throughout the valley to take a leadership role in preventing violence against women and children. The campaign includes television and radio public service announcements and educational resources for parents, coaches, teachers and community leaders. The message of the campaign is simple: men can teach boys what not to hit.

Established in 1977, Safe Nest is Clark County's largest and most comprehensive agency devoted solely to domestic violence issues. Services include shelters in confidential locations, a 24-hour crisis hotline, counseling, victim advocacy, prevention and community education. For help and information, call the crisis hotline at 646-4981.

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