



# Women and Gun Violence

Women are much less likely than men to be victims of homicide as a result of gun violence. In Colorado from 1990-2010, 23% of firearms homicide victims were female.<sup>1</sup>

For women, the danger of gun violence is rarely "stranger danger," but rather the intimate partner:

- ▶ Of those women murdered by guns in 2008, 90% of them were killed by someone they knew.<sup>2</sup>
- ▶ When firearms are used in a family or intimate assault, death is 12 times more likely than if another weapon is used.<sup>3</sup>
- ▶ An abuser's access to a gun is associated with an 8-fold increase in the risk of homicide.<sup>4</sup>
- ▶ Firearms appear to be far more common in homes where battering has occurred (36.7%) than in the general population (16.7%).<sup>5</sup>

Can women protect themselves from victimization by owning a gun? In actuality, statistics show that guns are more of a danger than a means of security.

- ▶ A firearm in the home raises a woman's risk of suicide by a factor of five, while her risk of homicide is increased by more than three times.<sup>6</sup>
- ▶ In 1992, for every time a woman used a handgun to justifiably kill a stranger, 239 women were murdered by a handgun.<sup>6</sup>

The gun industry has made attempts to increase sales by scaring women into owning guns, when instead, owning a gun endangers the lives women and their children.

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<sup>1</sup> Colorado Death Statistics, Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment, <http://www.chd.dphe.state.co.us>

<sup>2</sup> Violence Policy Center, "When Men Murder Women: An Analysis of 2008 Homicide Data," Violence Policy Center, Washington, D.C.

<sup>3</sup> Salzman, L.E., et al, "Weapon Involvement and Injury Outcomes in Family and Intimate Assaults," *Journal of the American Medical Association* 267(22) (June 1992):3043-0937.

<sup>4</sup> Campbell, Jacquelyn C., et al, "Risk Factors for Femicide in Abusive Relations: Results from a Multisite Case Control Study," *American Journal of Public Health*, 98(7) (July 2003): 1089-1097.

<sup>5</sup> Sorenson, Susan B. and D.J. Wiebe, "Weapons in the Lives of Battered Women," *American Journal of Public Health* 97 (2004):1412-1417.

<sup>6</sup> Kellermann, Arthur L. and James A Mercy, "Men Women, and Murder: Gender-specific Differences in Rates of Fatal Violence and Victimization," *The Journal of Trauma*, Vol. 33, no. 1, July 1992.