

A NATIONAL EPIDEMIC:

FATAL ANTI-TRANSGENDER VIOLENCE IN AMERICA IN 2018



HUMAN
RIGHTS
CAMPAIGN
FOUNDATION™

AN INTRODUCTION FROM CHAD GRIFFIN, PRESIDENT OF THE HUMAN RIGHTS CAMPAIGN



Over the past several years, the transgender community has pressed forward with courage and resilience in the face of physical and political attacks.

Since 2013, at least 128 transgender and gender-expansive individuals have been killed in the U.S. At the end of 2017, we mourned the loss of 29 people — the highest number ever recorded. At the time of publication, at least 22 transgender people have been killed in 2018.

In the face of a national crisis, the Human Rights Campaign Foundation has joined activists, journalists and advocacy organizations to report and raise awareness about fatal anti-transgender violence in the United States. Unfortunately, the levels of violence are just as disturbing and deeply saddening as they were when HRC redoubled our reporting efforts nearly six years ago.

Just this summer, we saw a disturbing outbreak of attacks, claiming the lives of nine Black trans women in eight cities across the country in a span of only 10 weeks. As we have in the past, HRC continued to join and support advocates in calling out instances where law enforcement and media misgendered and disrespected victims, who are disproportionately young women of color. We also know that hate crimes reporting and inclusive policing must be enhanced, and we continue to advocate for these reforms to ensure all victims are delivered justice.

At the same time, our work cannot stop there. Even as we pursue these immediate and largely

reactive solutions, **we must simultaneously address the root causes of violence to make our communities safer for everyone. It is unacceptable that transgender and gender-expansive people are killed simply because of who they are.**

In this report, HRC's team of researchers, policy experts and programmatic specialists have laid out steps that each and every one of us can take to make our society safer for transgender people. Whether you're a teacher promoting LGBTQ-inclusivity at your school, a concerned citizen fighting for expanded shelter access in your city, or simply an individual who wants to make your community safe and welcoming for all, there are ways you can dig in and help.

For far too long in our society, transgender people — and especially transgender women of color — have faced blatant discrimination and severe violence simply for being who they are. In order for this to change, we must all take action to dismantle the barriers that dehumanize, delegitimize and endanger transgender lives.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Chad Griffin". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal line extending from the end.

Chad Griffin
President
Human Rights Campaign

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INTRODUCTION

At least 22 transgender people have been killed in the United States since the beginning of 2018.

82

**percent of them
were women
of color.**

64

**percent were
under the
age of 35.**

55

**percent
lived in the
South.**

We say “at least” because the stories detailed in this report very likely undercount the number of transgender people who were killed in the United States this year. Although advocates, bloggers and media groups have elevated this crisis in the past several years, **data collection is often incomplete or unreliable when it comes to violent and fatal crimes against transgender people.** Some victims’ deaths may go unreported, while others may not be identified as transgender in the media, often because authorities, journalists and/or family members refuse to acknowledge their gender identity.

As we remember the lives lost this year, this context of identity erasure and denial could not be any more significant. Across the United States, anti-transgender stigma and systemic discrimination heighten the vulnerability of transgender people from an early age. For transgender women of color, who comprise the vast majority of victims, these challenges are further exacerbated by and intertwined with racism and sexism.

Even in the face of physical danger, hatred and discrimination — sometimes ruthlessly endorsed and enforced by those at the highest level of our government — transgender Americans live courageously and overcome unjust barriers in all corners of our country. But until we as a country address and dismantle these barriers, transgender people will continue to face higher rates of discrimination, poverty, homelessness and violence.

In life, each of the individuals memorialized in this report went to extraordinary lengths to live authentically as who they were. **In death, we must honor their truth and bravery with action.**

WHO IS TRANSGENDER?

AN IMPORTANT NOTE ON TERMINOLOGY

For the purpose of this report, we use the word **transgender** to describe a collective community of individuals whose gender identities, expression and/or lived experiences differs from — and may in fact transcend — what is typically associated with the sex they were assigned at birth.

This includes transgender men and women, as well as:

NON-BINARY

Non-binary people who do not identify exclusively as men or women — or, in fact, who do not identify with either. A non-binary person may also use the terms genderqueer, gender fluid or others to describe their gender identity.

GENDER NON-CONFORMING

People who are gender non-conforming in expression, which includes their outward presentation and behavior. Any person, regardless of their gender identity, can be gender non-conforming.

GENDER-EXPANSIVE

People who are gender-expansive, a term that conveys a wider, more flexible range of identity and/or expression, including, but not limited to, the terms listed above.

As with any language that attempts to succinctly capture the human experience, the usage of these terms and sense of identity among the transgender community vary widely. Meanwhile, virtually every culture has its own terminology and differing concepts of gender and whom we may consider to be transgender.

In this report, we have taken every effort to ensure our memorials reflect the most accurate depiction of individual's identity, based on their own words, the accounts of loved ones and/or the ways in which they presented themselves and interacted with the world. Tragically, in several of the stories in this report, government officials, media and even loved ones have denied, ignored or intentionally erased victims' gender identities.

Using correct identifiers and pronouns isn't just about accuracy — **it's about affording all individuals the respect and dignity that everyone deserves.** Moreover, in order to end anti-transgender violence, we must acknowledge the true identities of its victims and address the ways in which societal attitudes regarding these identities may have played a role in their deaths.

IN MEMORIAM



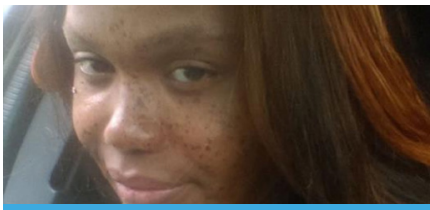
Christa Leigh Steele-Knudsen
North Adams, MA
Age 42 | January 5, 2018



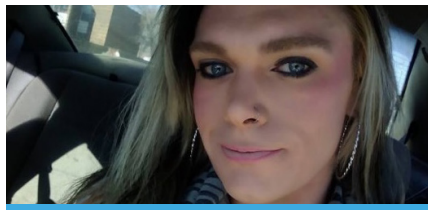
Vicky Gutierrez
Los Angeles, CA
Age 33 | January 10, 2018



Celine Walker
Jacksonville, FL
Age 36 | February 4, 2018



Tonya "Kita" Harvey
Buffalo, NY
Age 35 | February 6, 2018



Zakaria Fry
Albuquerque, NM
Age 28 | February 19, 2018



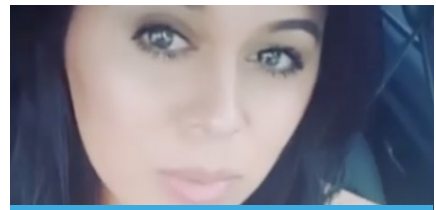
Phylicia Mitchell
Cleveland, OH
Age 45 | February 23, 2018



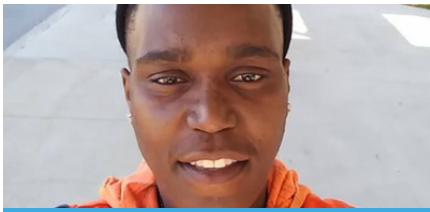
Amia Tyrae Berryman
Baton Rouge, LA
Age 28 | March 26, 2018



Sasha Wall
Chesterfield County, SC
Age 29 | April 1, 2018



Karla Patricia Flores-Pavón
Dallas, TX
Age 26 | May 9, 2018



Nino Fortson
Atlanta, GA
Age 36 | May 13, 2018



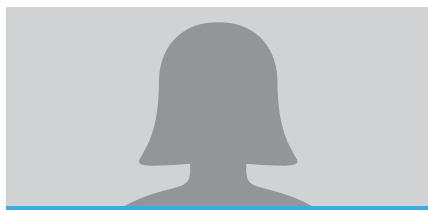
Gigi Pierce
Portland, OR
Age 28 | May 21, 2018



Antash'a English
Jacksonville, FL
Age 38 | June 1, 2018



Diamond Stephens
Meridian, MS
Age 39 | June 18, 2018



Keisha Wells
Cleveland, OH
Age 54 | June 24, 2018



Cathalina Christina James
Jacksonville, FL
Age 24 | June 24, 2018

In commemoration of Transgender Day of Remembrance, HRC remembers the lives and mourns the loss of the following individuals:



Sasha Garden
Orlando, FL
Age 27 | July 19, 2018



Dejanay Stanton
Chicago, IL
Age 24 | August 30, 2018



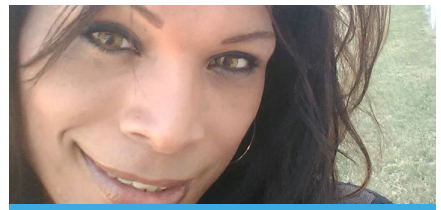
Vontashia Bell
Shreveport, LA
Age 18 | August 30, 2018



Shantee Tucker
Philadelphia, PA
Age 30 | September 5, 2018



Londonn Moore
North Port, FL
Age 20 | September 8, 2018



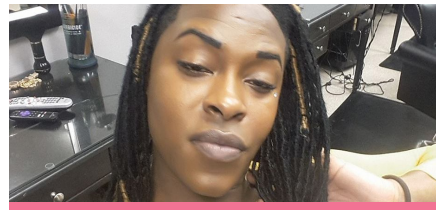
Nikki Enriquez
Laredo, TX
Age 28 | September 15, 2018



Ciara Minaj Carter Frazier
Chicago, IL
Age 31 | October 3, 2018



Roxana Hernández
Albuquerque, NM
Age 33 | May 25, 2018



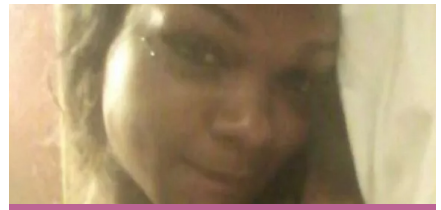
Jessie Sumlar
Jacksonville, FL
Age 30 | July 19, 2018



Jaylow Mcglory
Alexandria, LA
Age 29 | August 4, 2017



Brooklyn BreYanna Stevenson
Oklahoma City, OK
Age 31 | November 27, 2017



Brandi Seals
Houston, TX
Age 26 | December 13, 2017



Rhiannon Layendecker
Englewood, FL
Age 51 | December 16, 2017

- 2018 DEATHS**
- OTHER DEATHS IN 2018**
- LATE 2017 DEATHS**

PAGEANT QUEEN “A HEART OF GOLD” HARD WORKER COMMUNITY ORGANIZER

Christa Leigh Steele-Knudslie

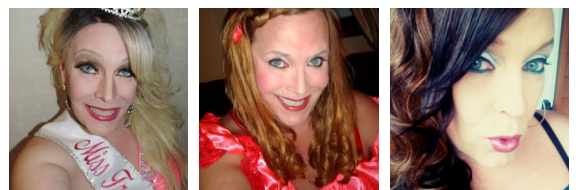
North Adams, Massachusetts

Christa Leigh Steele-Knudslie, 42, was killed in her home in North Adams, Massachusetts, on January 5. Her husband Mark Steele-Knudslie was charged with her murder after turning himself in to police.

A beloved leader in the local transgender community, Christa was integral to the creation of both New England Trans Pride and the Miss Trans New England Pageant. Her friend, Justin Atkins, notes that Christa firmly believed that “transgender women are beautiful and need a venue to be seen as beautiful.”

Lorelei Eris, who won the first Miss Trans New England Pageant title in 2009, says that Christa “made it a mission to have a party around being trans.”

“She [gave] me the boost I needed to do almost everything I do today,” recounts Lorelei. ***“She almost single-handedly created the community that all of us benefited from.”***



Vicky Gutierrez

Los Angeles, California

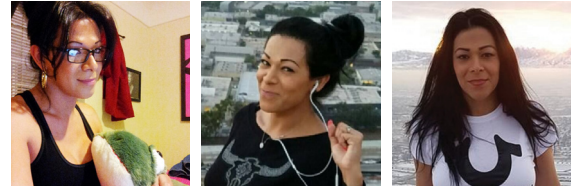
On January 10, Vicky Gutierrez, a transgender Latina woman, was fatally stabbed and brutally set ablaze inside her Los Angeles home. She was 33 years old. The Los Angeles Police Department officially charged Kevyn Ramirez with murder, attempted robbery and arson. According to local reports, it took 60 firefighters working for nearly an hour to extinguish the flames.

Those who knew Vicky remember her as someone **“whose warm smile would give anyone comfort”** and who served as an inspiration to those around her. Friend Felisha Starr says that Vicky loved the color green and frogs, believing both to bring “good vibes” and luck.

Vicky was an active organizer within LA’s Latinx, transgender and LGBTQ communities. TransLatin@ Coalition founder Bamby Salcedo describes Vicky as **“such a sweet girl”** and like a sister to her.

Vicky previously collaborated with the Los Angeles LGBT Center for a Transgender Day of Remembrance event in 2015 to honor victims of anti-transgender violence. The Center mourned her death, writing, “Our deep sorrow is accompanied by a sense of moral outrage that Vicky is yet another transgender woman of color whose life has been taken.. Rest in Power, Vicky.”

Following her passing, friends held an online fundraiser to ensure that she could be laid to rest in her native Honduras. According to friends, Vicky had come to LA because she believed she could live there free from persecution. A vigil was held in her honor on January 12.



TRANS LATINA ACTIVIST
AN INSPIRATION
COMPASSIONATE LEADER
**“NICEST GIRL
IN THE WORLD”**

BRAVE INSPIRATIONAL ENCOURAGING TALENTED

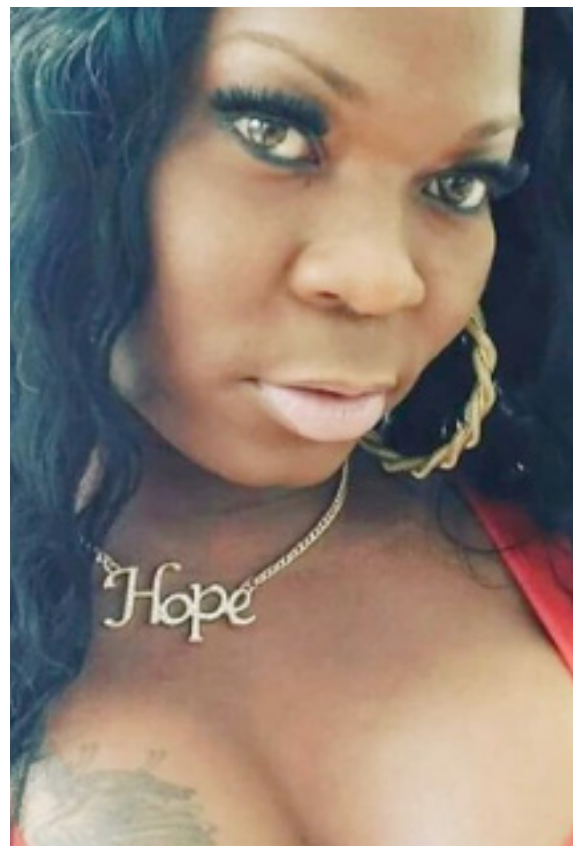
Celine Walker

Jacksonville, Florida

On February 4, Celine Walker, a 36-year-old Black transgender woman, was found fatally shot in a hotel room in Jacksonville's Southpoint area. Police have yet to charge a suspect in connection with her death, although a sketch of a wanted person of interest was released to the public in August.

According to those who knew her, Celine had an understated personality and lived a "low key life." Today, she is remembered for her courage to live as her authentic self, which friends describe as both **"inspirational" and "encouraging."** Celine was repeatedly misgendered by police and in initial media reports, even after loved ones reached out numerous times to request corrections.

Activists worry that the Jacksonville Sheriff's Office's refusal to recognize Celine's identity as a transgender woman may have delayed investigative efforts in the days immediately following the shooting. In the aftermath of her death, many advocates and organizations, including Equality Florida, TransAction Florida and the ACLU of Florida, held solidarity vigils calling for justice for Celine.



Tonya “Kita” Harvey

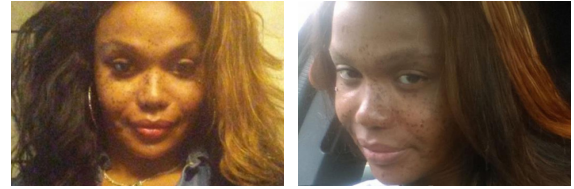
Buffalo, New York

Tonya “Kita” Harvey, a Black transgender woman, was fatally shot in Buffalo, New York, on February 6. She was 35 years old. Officers are investigating the case as a potential hate crime but, at the time of publication, there are no leads.

Tonya was known for her sweet and kind demeanor and as someone who did everything with strength and conviction. She was a seasoned performer and a “big staple” to the local LGBTQ community.

Vaughn Mciver, a mentor to Tonya, paints the picture of a natural entertainer: ***“She was very good. We used to call her the rig queen because she could rig anything. She could take a T-shirt and turn it into a doll. She was very, very creative, very articulate.”***

A “show-stopper” with a “loving heart,” Tonya was honored by friends and family who held a rally in her memory in front of Buffalo’s City Hall on February 26.



**NATURAL
ENTERTAINER
A SHOW-STOPPER
LOVING HEART
CREATIVE**

FUN “SHINING BRIGHT” DANCER SINGER

Zakaria Fry

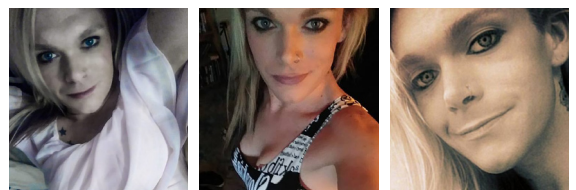
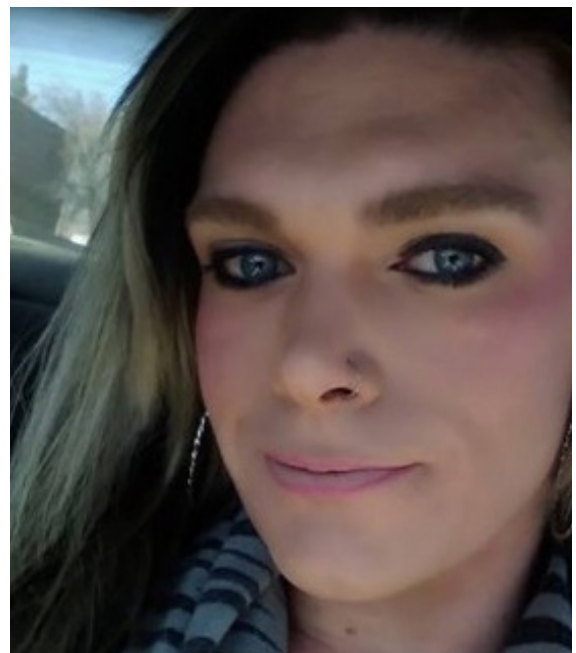
Albuquerque, New Mexico

On February 19, Zakaria Fry, a 28-year-old transgender woman, was found dead in a garbage bin along the side of a road near Albuquerque, New Mexico. She was reported missing several weeks prior. Police arrested and charged Charles Spiess with her murder.

“Brave, strong and inspirational,” Zakaria remains in the hearts of many who knew her. Her friend, Tara Yvonne, remembers Zakaria as a **“fun and positive person despite all the challenges she faced in life.”**

Several loved ones, including two of her sisters, continuously post fond memories and positive messages on Zakaria’s Facebook page. Even in death, Zakaria continues to give strength to others, including some who have recounted how Zakaria helped them come out with their own LGBTQ identities.

On what would have been Zakaria’s 29th birthday, friend Majorie Nez wrote online that she knew Zakaria was “dancing and singing in the sky with that big smile of yours.” Another said she was sure Zakaria was “shining bright” as an angel.



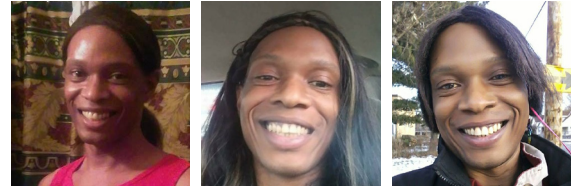
Phylcia Mitchell

Cleveland, Ohio

On February 23, Phylcia Mitchell, a Black transgender woman, was fatally shot outside of her home in Cleveland. She was 45 years old. After being pursued by authorities for several months, Gary Sanders was arrested and charged with Phylcia's death.

Shane Mitchell, Phylcia's partner of thirty years, thinks back fondly on her sense of life, the love and attention she brought to her career as a hairdresser and the connection she had with his family. Phylcia had left her family in Pittsburgh, in part because they were unaccepting of her transgender identity, and met Shane shortly after arriving in Cleveland. **"My nieces and nephews opened up to her so much,"** he says, adding that **"she was just so funny and kind."** After the couple held an informal wedding celebration at a local church in 2017, Phylcia legally changed her name to take Shane's surname.

Other friends remember Phylcia as beautiful and sweet, and a kind person who easily connected with others.



TALENTED
HAIRDRESSER
FUNNY
CARING
GOOD WITH KIDS

AWESOME FRIEND RESILIENT STOOD UP FOR OTHERS HAD A BIG HEART

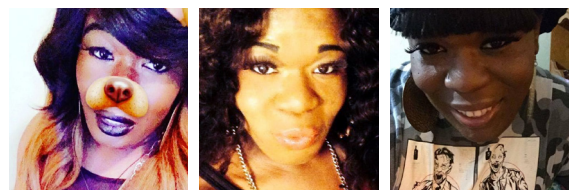
Amia Tyrae Berryman

Baton Rouge, Louisiana

Amia Tyrae Berryman, a 28-year-old Black transgender woman, was fatally shot in a Baton Rouge, Louisiana, motel on March 26. Police have arrested Dedrick Butler in connection with the shooting. Amia was misgendered in initial media reports.

Loved ones say Amia made a family out of her community in Baton Rouge. She was known for standing up for others despite being the target of bullying herself.

NeVaa White remembers Amia as an **“awesome” friend** who “didn’t have a easy life” and was unfortunately “taken away in the very manner she feared.” Others think back on Amia’s **“big heart” and “sweet” personality**. Numerous friends and family members have taken to social media to write messages in her memory.



Sasha Wall

Chesterfield County, South Carolina

Sasha Wall, a 29-year-old Black transgender woman, was found dead in a rural area of Chesterfield County, South Carolina, on the morning of April 1. Sasha was found in the driver's seat of a still-running car, shot multiple times at close range. The FBI and Chesterfield County Sheriff's investigators have been collaborating to identify a suspect, but no names have been publicly released. Sasha was misgendered in initial media reports.

Sasha's friends have taken to social media to express their grief and celebrate her life. Many have shared stories about Sasha's vivacious and lively personality, while others remember her as a sweet, caring and outspoken woman.

Donovan Dunlap expressed his condolences on Facebook, writing to Sasha, ***"You had me always taking [photos] of you, you stayed ready for the camera. I will miss you my beautiful sister. I cannot sleep, I hope they find who did this."***

Close friends and members of the local LGBTQ and Black Lives Matter communities held a vigil at the South Carolina State House on April 29 to honor her memory and speak out against anti-transgender violence.



VIVACIOUS
LOVED TO
TAKE PHOTOS
PLAYFUL
"SPOKE HER MIND"

GOOD-HEARTED BEAUTIFUL SOUL LOVED MAKEUP REMEMBERED FOR HER LAUGHTER

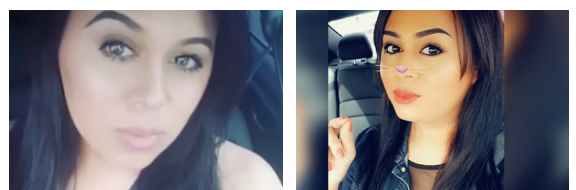
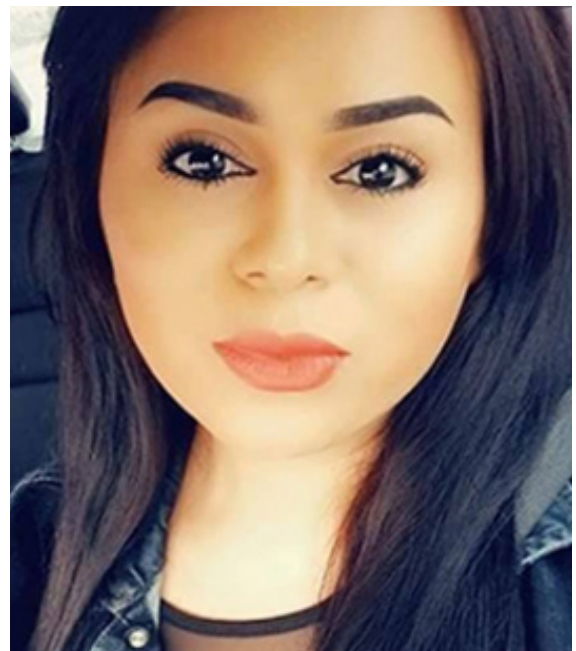
Karla Patricia Flores-Pavón

Dallas, Texas

On May 9, Karla Patricia Flores-Pavón, a transgender Latina woman, was found strangled in her apartment in Dallas. She was later pronounced dead at a nearby hospital. Karla was 26 years old. Police have arrested Jimmy Eugene Johnson III in connection to Karla's death, and investigators believe that the motive was robbery.

Friends and allies took to social media to mourn her death, many of them posting in Spanish. "It hurts a lot, you were a good-hearted person," writes Gia York Herrera, in a translated Facebook post. **"Sister, fly high. We will remember you with love. Your beautiful smile will stay with us."** A vigil was held in Karla's memory on May 16 at Dallas's Cathedral of Hope.

José Guzmán, who performed at Karla's funeral, says that Karla had a "beautiful soul." According to cousin Luz Pavón, Karla had moved to the United States from Honduras to escape discrimination based on her identity as a transgender woman. She describes Karla as an "angel" in their family.



Nino Fortson

Atlanta, Georgia

On May 13, Nino Fortson, was fatally shot in Atlanta during an argument with a group of people. Nino, 36, also went by names Nino Starr and Nino Blahnik, and was a gender-expansive individual.* Authorities have yet to file charges in connection to the killing.

Sonteria Tera Williams, Nino's girlfriend, spoke out after Nino's death, saying she feels "like someone stole something from me that I will never be able to get back."

An active participant in Atlanta's ballroom scene, Nino was a member of the House of Blahnik, a national organization serving LGBTQ performers of color. Nino was known for walking in the "Butch Realness" category.

A Facebook video posted by Sonteria announcing Nino's death received more than 100 comments from community members expressing their grief. Several have taken to social media with the hashtag #JusticeForNino to hold local news accountable for misgendering Nino in their reporting. A **"great person" with a "sincere, beautiful heart,"** Nino continues to be loved and remembered by many.

*Note: Reports vary regarding Nino Fortson's gender identity and pronouns. Accounts from close loved ones and Nino's own social media suggest that Nino may have identified with both he/him and she/her pronouns.



SINCERE
"BUTCH REALNESS"
KIND
BALLROOM PERFORMER

SELFLESS ENTHUSIASTIC STAGESTOPPER “GLITTER AND COCKTAILS”

Gigi Pierce

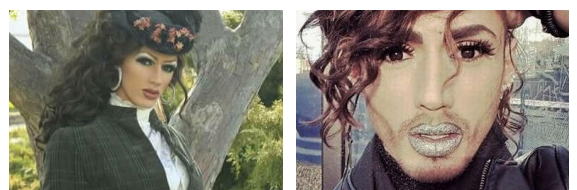
Portland, Oregon

On May 21, Gigi Pierce, a 28-year-old transgender woman, was fatally shot after an altercation in downtown Portland, Oregon. Although Sophia Adler was initially arrested in connection with the shooting, murder charges were dismissed after a grand jury ruled she was acting in self-defense. In August, Sophia Adler pled guilty to unlawful possession of a firearm during the incident and was sentenced to 100 days in jail. It was reported that the two women were friends and had known each other for several years.

The Q Center, Portland's LGBTQ community center, held a vigil in Gigi's memory. During the event, Patricia Hart told local reporters that Gigi was homeless at the time of her death but always tried to help others in the area. "She'd give you the shirt off her back and feed you if she could. She spent \$90 and fed all the women in the shelter."

Others remember Gigi as someone who was ***“full of life” and “always trying to help somebody.”*** Dallas Jackson Falls says Gigi was a ***“performer through and through,” where “life was her stage, and those fortunate enough to know her were her audience.”***

Close friend and former boyfriend Jason Johnson recalls their decade-long friendship fondly, calling it “a beautiful run filled with glitter and cocktails.”



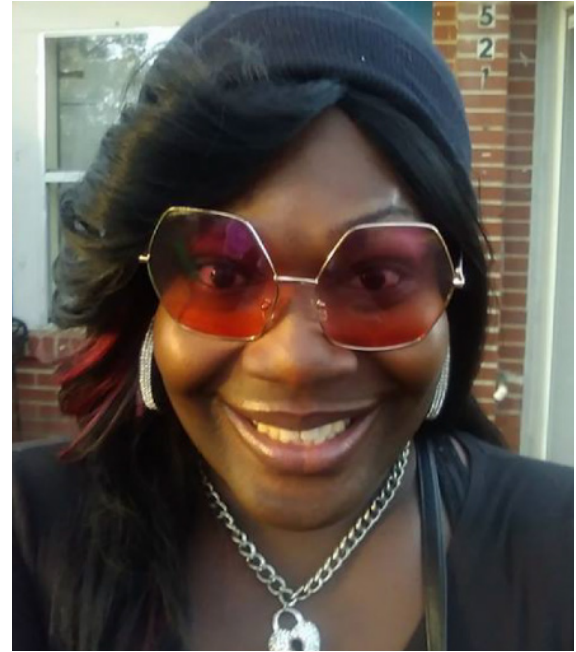
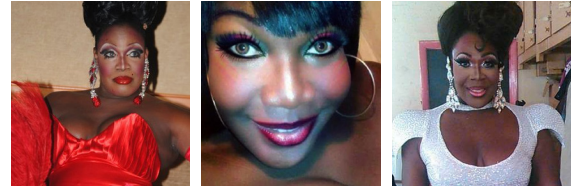
Antash'a English

Jacksonville, Florida

On June 1, Antash'a English, a 38-year-old Black transgender woman, was shot to death in Jacksonville, Florida. The Sheriff's Office declared it an active murder investigation, but has yet to file any formal charges. Antash'a was misgendered in initial police reports.

Originally from Albany, Georgia, Antash'a took pride in being an independent woman, writing on her Facebook page that **she “thrives on being the best person” she can be.** Friend Taliyah Smith says she treasured her for being “unapologetic, bold and loyal.”

Antash'a had won many titles in the transgender pageantry circuit and recently celebrated her first day at a new job. She was a popular performer for ten years at InCahoots Nightclub. The nightclub hosted a benefit night to help her family cover funeral costs, and friends and family held a balloon release vigil in Antash'a's honor on June 7.



UNAPOLOGETIC
BOLD
PAGEANT QUEEN
LOYAL

INDEPENDENT INCREDIBLE PERSONALITY GORGEOUS LOVED TO DRESS UP

Diamond Stephens

Meridian, Mississippi

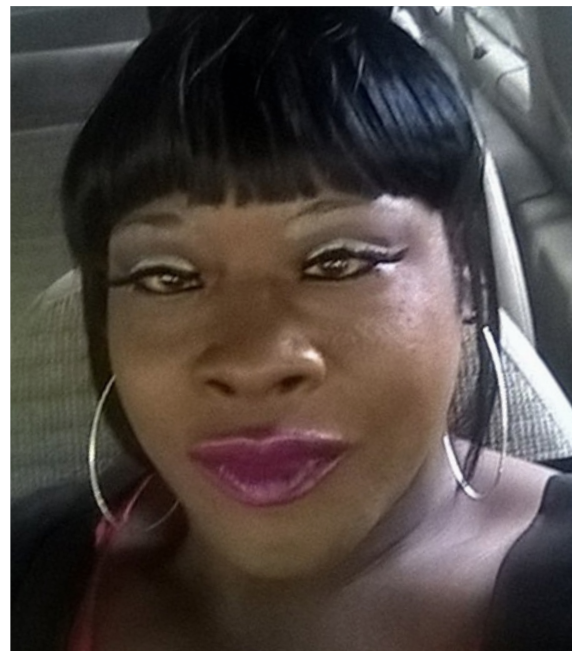
On June 18, Diamond Stephens, a 39-year-old Black transgender woman, was killed in Meridian, Mississippi, after suffering a gunshot wound to the head. Family members said Diamond was driving home to get ready for work when she was killed. Meridian police report that she was found dead in the driver's seat of her van, and investigators suspect that one or two other individuals may have been present in the vehicle when she was shot. Authorities have yet to identify any suspects.

In interviews with media, family members have spoken of Diamond's **"incredible personality."**

"We are hurting really bad," says Diamond's cousin, Georgia Brown. "I don't really know what words to say other than we need God to help us and give us strength to make it through this situation and pray to God that whoever did this is found."

Diamond was misgendered in initial media reports, delaying advocates' awareness of the incident until late July. Following her death, friends and family held a candlelight vigil and released balloons at the site where her body was found.

In light of the tragedy, cousin Kimberly Stevens expresses her desire for justice and solidarity, telling reporters, **"I think the community needs to get together and stand because we're all united as one...** Without us being together, it'll always continue."



Keisha Wells

Cleveland, Ohio

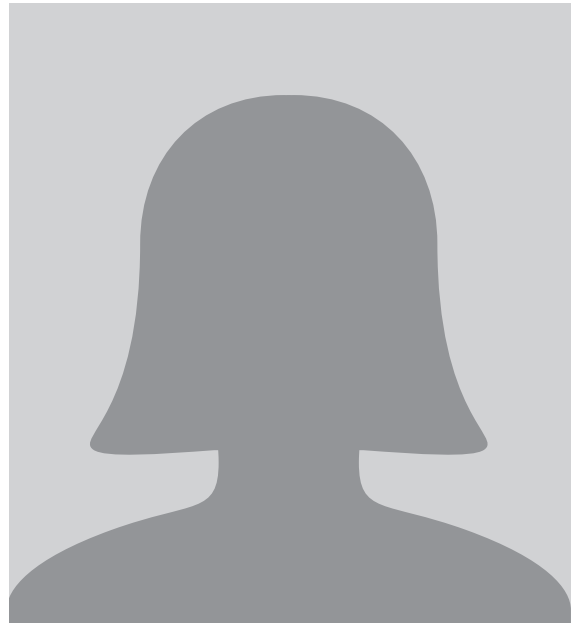
Keisha Wells, a 54-year-old transgender woman of color, was fatally shot after leaving a Cleveland bar on June 24. Although police are still searching for a primary suspect, they charged James Butler with complicity to aggravated murder in connection with the case.

Keisha was affectionately known as “Pokey” by friends and family, like her aunt Regina Spicer who recalls her sense of humor, saying, **“Pokey was funny. Pokey liked laughing and telling funny stories about people.”**

Devinity, a Transgender Wellness Specialist, remembers Keisha as a **“very sweet, kind, lovely person.”**

Longtime friend Sheila Jones calls Keisha “the nicest person ever.” Recalling her friend’s love of fashion, Sheila says that Keisha “always loved the most expensive high heels and stilettos, the hats and [her] expensive sunglasses.”

“But she was a tough cookie,” Sheila says. “She wouldn’t back down from anyone.”



**“THE NICEST
PERSON EVER”
A TOUGH COOKIE
FASHIONABLE
HILARIOUS**

LOVED TO TRAVEL SCENESTEALER DANCER “LIFE OF THE PARTY”

Cathalina Christina James

Jacksonville, Florida

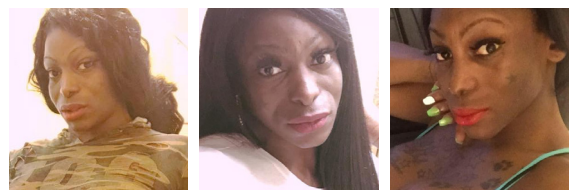
On June 24, Cathalina Christina James, a Black transgender woman, was fatally shot in Jacksonville, Florida. Cathalina was just 24 years old. Police have yet to file any charges in connection to the case, but released a sketch of a possible suspect on August 9. Cathalina was misgendered in initial police reports, continuing a disturbing trend by the Jacksonville Sheriff's Office regarding reporting on transgender victims.

According to her mother, Cathalina had a “big and bold personality.” Always the life of the party, she loved to dance and travel.

“She always found a way to steal the show,” says her sister Deandra. “All eyes was always on Cathalina basically.”

Cathalina's father knows that she touched the lives of many, as she **“would do anything for anybody to help anybody out.”**

Originally from Sumter, South Carolina, Cathalina was in the process of moving to New York when she was killed.



Sasha Garden

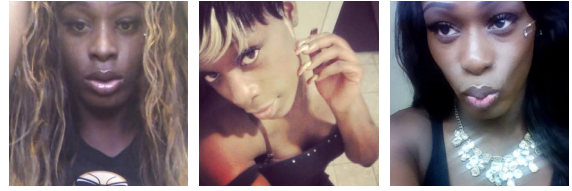
Orlando, Florida

Early on July 19, Sasha Garden, a Black transgender woman, was found dead with signs of trauma in Orlando, Florida. Sasha was 27 years old.

Several aspects of the investigation and reporting on Sasha's death have raised concern among advocates. According to news reports, police officers used discriminatory slurs when asking friend Mulan Montrese Williams, who is also transgender, to identify Sasha's body. Meanwhile, local media used inappropriate and offensive terminology when describing the tragedy. Two outlets refused to issue corrections regarding Sasha's gender identity until six hours after they were first contacted by loved ones.

Originally from Wisconsin, Sasha is remembered by loved ones as a "firecracker" who "didn't hold anything back." Mulan, herself a local trans activist, recalls that Sasha was a talented and aspiring hair stylist and had been saving money to fund her transition.

The weekend after Sasha's death, friends and loved ones gathered to hold a vigil in her honor. Attendee Richard Sizemore told reporters, ***"There's a little bit of Sasha in all of us here today... Her adventure in this realm may be over... but I have faith that on the next plane, she is somewhere where she's perfect — and everybody knows it."***



FIRECRACKER
STYLISH
GIFTED
AUTHENTIC

AN INSPIRATION BELOVED SWEETHEART FASHION FORWARD “LIKE A BREATH OF FRESH AIR”

Dejanay Stanton

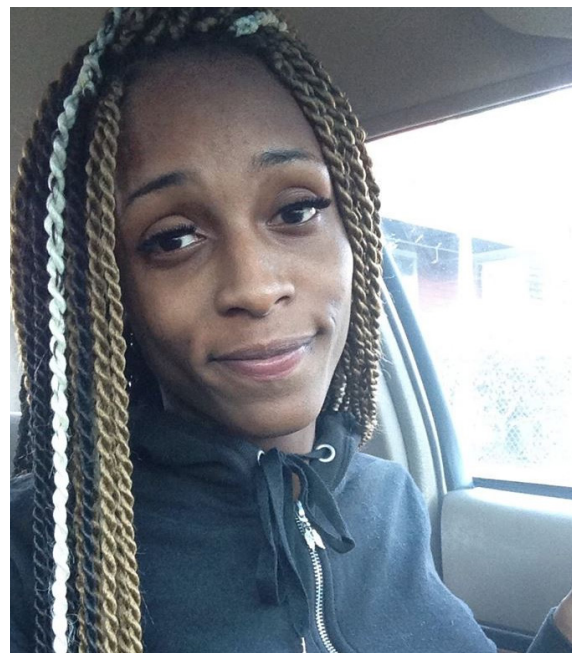
Chicago, Illinois

Early in the morning of August 30, Dejanay Stanton (also known as De'janay Lanorra), a Black transgender woman, was found with severe injuries in an alley in Chicago. Dejanay, just 24 years old, was suffering from a gunshot wound to her head and was transported to a nearby hospital where she was later pronounced dead. Her death was officially ruled a homicide, and local detectives are still investigating the crime.

LaSaia Wade, executive director of Brave Space Alliance, holds cherished memories of Dejanay's warm personality. ***“She was so sweet. Every time you saw her she had a smile on her face,”*** she writes, noting that Dejanay's spirit was ***“like a breath of fresh air.”***

Dozens of friends and family members have taken to Dejanay's Facebook page to express their grief and pay tribute to a young woman who they say was “loved by everyone.” Nyelle Brown recalls how Dejanay gifted “so many people with encouraging and inspiring words.” Cousin Nella Bella remembers how Dejanay “always smiled, laughed and loved.”

A vigil was held for Dejanay on August 31, during which more than 100 friends, family and community members released balloons in her honor. At the vigil, Dejanay's mother acknowledged the large turnout, saying, “You all see how much she was loved.” Several friends continue to raise awareness online surrounding Dejanay's death, including organizing a march on October 12 calling for her killer to be brought to justice.



Vontashia Bell

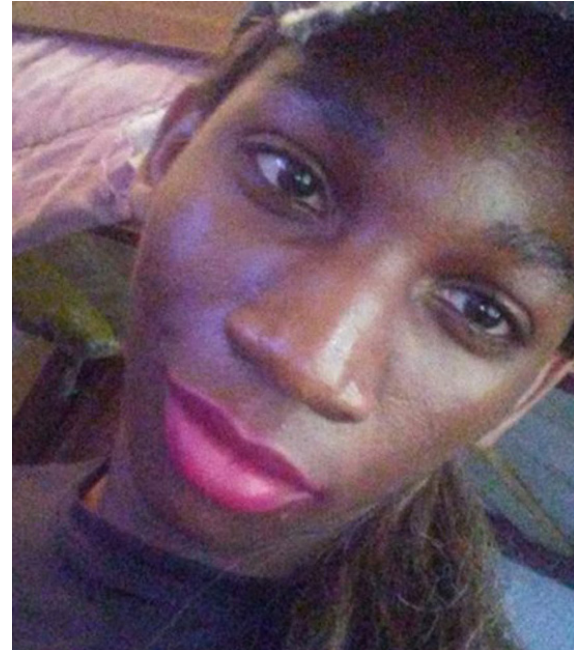
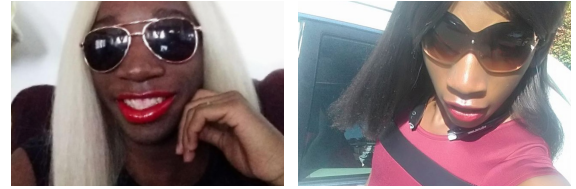
Shreveport, Louisiana

Vontashia Bell, a Black transgender woman, was fatally shot in Shreveport, Louisiana, in the early hours of August 30. Police found Vontashia on the street in the Cedar Grove neighborhood and rushed her to a local hospital where she was later pronounced dead. Investigators have yet to identify any suspects. Just 18 years old, Vontashia is the youngest known victim of fatal anti-transgender violence in 2018.

Vontashia was misgendered and in their initial reports, media did not refer to her by her chosen name. Shortly after her death, local group Louisiana Trans Advocates released a statement identifying Vontashia as a transgender woman, writing that “Vontashia Bell must not die in vain.”

Vontashia’s public social media presence paints the picture of a video gamer and self-described “geek” who also loved to dress up and take selfies. Days before her tragic death, she playfully wrote, “just wait until next month” when “Vontashia [will be] back in business and in style.”

On her memorial page, Vontashia is remembered by friends and family as **“loving, kind and fun to be around.”**



LOVING
KIND
PLAYFUL
STYLISH

DOWN TO EARTH SPIRITED GENUINE A WONDERFUL SOUL

Shantee Tucker

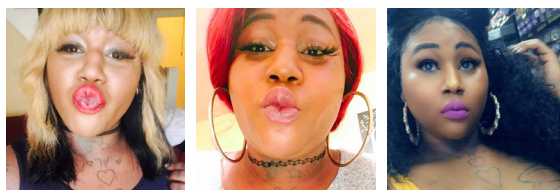
Philadelphia, Pennsylvania

Shantee Williams, a Black transgender woman, was found shot in the back on a highway in Philadelphia on September 5. She was taken to Temple University Hospital where she was later pronounced dead. Police believe Shantee knew her assailant, but have not yet identified any suspects.

Shantee celebrated her 30th birthday just three days prior to her killing. Friends and family members were shocked to hear of her tragic death, and many took to social media to mourn and celebrate her life.

While reminiscing on her *“beautiful spirit and fun aura,”* friend Tameer Harris notes how Shantee was like “another big sister” to him. Juan Ortega, another friend of Shantee, says, *“Anyone that [knew] her knows that she had a wonderful soul.”* One cousin believes that Shantee is now just “waiting in line to get her halo.”

On September 8, friends and family members gathered to hold a balloon release vigil in Shantee's honor. Days later, community members organized a candlelight march to demand justice for Shantee and other transgender victims of violence.

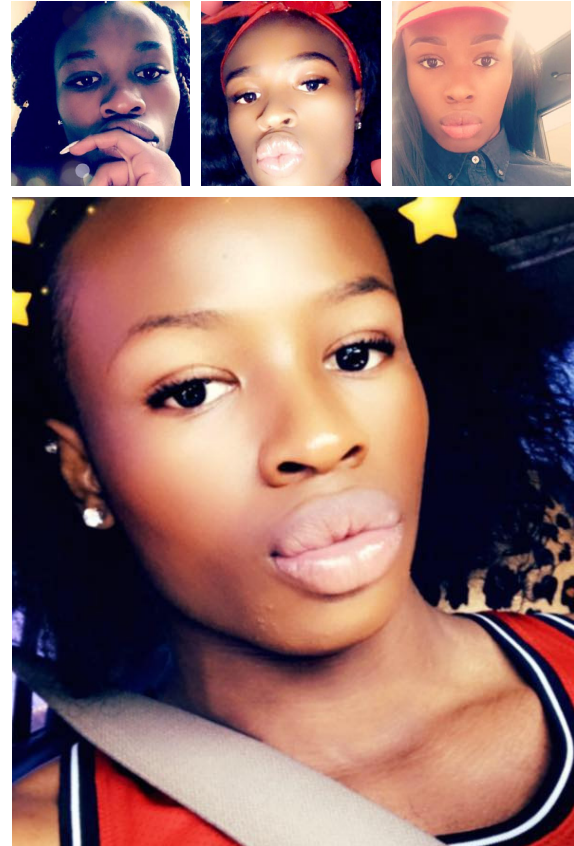


Londonn Moore

North Port, Florida

On the morning of September 8, Londonn Moore was found shot to death in a remote area of North Port, Florida. Police investigators tracked down Moore's missing vehicle in nearby Port Charlotte and believe that the suspect may have driven the car there from the crime scene. Londonn was misgendered in initial reports, delaying awareness of her death until it was reported to transgender advocate Monica Roberts several days later. Just 20 years old, Londonn is the fifth and youngest Black transgender woman known to be killed in the state of Florida in 2018.

Londonn is remembered by her family and other loved ones as **"hilarious" and "such a sweetheart."** Known for her uncanny **ability to make "everyone laugh all the time,"** Londonn's public social media presence reflects a playful young woman who followed several R&B, hip-hop and rap artists.



HILARIOUS
MUSICAL
PROTECTIVE OF
HER FAMILY
WONDERFUL

HIGH-SPIRITED ENCOURAGING TO OTHERS SOCIAL BUTTERFLY LOVED TO PARTY

Nikki Enriquez

Laredo, Texas

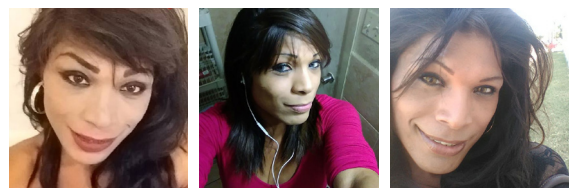
On September 15, Nikki Enriquez, a 28-year-old Latina transgender woman, was shot and killed in Laredo, Texas. Nikki, who also went by the name Janelle, was one of four women killed between September 3 and 15 in what local officials describe as a “serial killing spree” allegedly carried out by an intel supervisor for the U.S. Border Patrol. According to authorities, the alleged killer may have targeted his victims based on their vulnerability, profession and “the dislike that he had for this community of people.” Investigators also reported that the suspect utilized “information he had access to through his job” to monitor and evade police efforts to track him down.

Nikki’s numerous loved ones, including her parents, four siblings, extended family and friends, have spoken out publicly to express their grief.

Nikki’s mother, Elva, recalls that her daughter was very sociable, “had a lot of friends” and was a **“high-spirited person who would never get mad.”** Nikki’s cousin, Veronica Castillo, describes her as a **“nice” and “very outgoing”** person who loved to go to parties and was beloved by the local LGBTQ community.

At a funeral visitation on September 20, Nikki’s aunt, Patricia Ortiz, told reporters that their family had been fully supportive of Nikki’s transgender identity. She also explained how Nikki was dressed in her casket wearing a red dress to match the one Aretha Franklin wore at her funeral in late August.

According to Patricia, Nikki had told family members she wanted to wear something similar should something ever happen to her. “Now we got [her] a red dress,” she said. “It’s very glittery... they say that it’s beautiful with one sleeve only.”



Ciara Minaj Carter Frazier

Chicago, Illinois

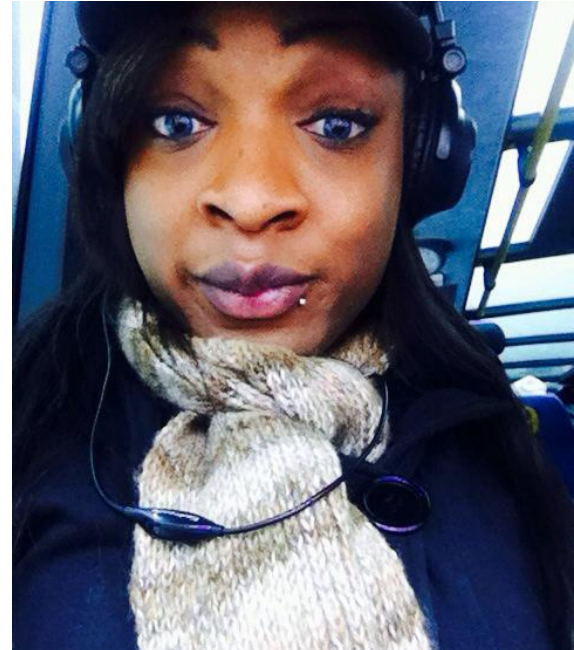
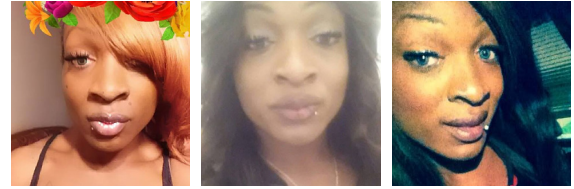
Ciara Minaj Carter Frazier, a 31-year-old Black transgender woman, was found fatally stabbed on the West Side of Chicago on October 3. According to officials, Ciara was killed and her body left behind an abandoned building by a man she was arguing with. While the criminal investigation is still ongoing, transgender advocate Monica Roberts has raised the alarm on undisclosed and disturbing details surrounding Ciara's death, including that her body may have been mutilated before she was discovered by authorities.

According to LaSaia Wade, executive director of Brave Space Alliances, a local transgender advocacy organization, Ciara was a regular participant in Chicago's Black LGBTQ ballroom scene.

Friends and family have taken to social media with messages indicating that she is "missed" and "definitely will NOT be forgotten."

"My heart is broken so many memories so many good times," writes Destiny Wells, a friend of Ciara's. According to her friend Nita Nene, Ciara was **"one of the sweetest people [she] had ever met."**

Two weeks after her death, Ciara's father, Darrin Frazier, wrote, "My child, Dad's up thinking about you, missing you, **your presence, your smile, your [laughter and] fun sense of humor,**" while her sister Lunetta started using the hashtag #CiaraForever to memorialize her online. In late October, family members held a memorial service in Ciara's honor.



**DIVA
HUMOROUS
STYLISH**
**"SHE WAS
FABULOUS"**



OTHER DEATHS IN 2018

HRC is deeply concerned about two other fatal incidents in 2018 that we are following closely. For both of these individuals, HRC calls for further investigation into the causes of their deaths, including whether discriminatory bias toward transgender and/or gender non-conforming people played a motivating factor.

Roxana Hernández

Albuquerque, New Mexico

On May 25, Roxana Hernández, a 33-year-old transgender Latina, died while in the custody of U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) in Albuquerque, New Mexico. Roxana was seeking asylum after fleeing anti-LGBTQ violence and discrimination in Honduras.

According to various media reports, Roxana reached the U.S. border on May 9 and was held for five days by U.S. Customs and Border Protection (CBP) before being processed into the U.S. and into ICE custody in San Diego. She was transferred again to another facility three days later on May 16 before being admitted to a nearby hospital on May 17 for dehydration, pneumonia and other HIV-related complications. She was reported dead eight days later. It is unclear what medical care was made available to Roxana when she entered the U.S. and what role the conditions of her initial detention while in CBP custody played in the worsening of her illness.

Outraged LGBTQ advocates held protests in both New Mexico and New York following the news of her death. Many advocates used the hashtag #JusticeforRoxana to share their collective pain and anger.

Irving Mondragón, cofounder of Diversidad sin Fronteras, a collective of LGBTQ migrant advocates, remembers Roxana as a ***“respectful person, [who was] always giving the other girls advice and sharing her food.”***

Friends and family have memorialized Roxana on social media while expressing their sadness and anguish. Her sister, Sonia Rodríguez, has shared many loving posts and photos with Roxana, who she calls “my Roxi.” In addition, a LGBTQ community member in Los Angeles organized a GoFundMe on behalf of Familia: Trans Queer Liberation Movement and the Transgender Law Center to send Roxana’s body back to her family in Honduras and fund her funeral costs.



*Note: Reports vary regarding the spelling of Roxana’s name. We have included the spelling used most commonly by those who knew her personally.

CARING
COURAGEOUS
GENEROUS
SOFT SPOKEN

HRC joins numerous LGBTQ and immigrant rights advocates who are carefully monitoring and raising the alarm on this tragic story. Disturbing reports from local aid workers and former detainees allege that

ICE and CBP have and may currently still be incarcerating dozens of transgender asylum seekers under inhumane and dangerous conditions. On July 26, HRC sent Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) requests

to both agencies for the release of all records relating to Roxana’s detention and death. For more information about this crisis, please refer to Barriers for Immigrants, Refugees and Asylum Seekers.

A SWEET SOUL LAID BACK THOUGHTFUL KIND

Jessie Sumlar

Jacksonville, Florida

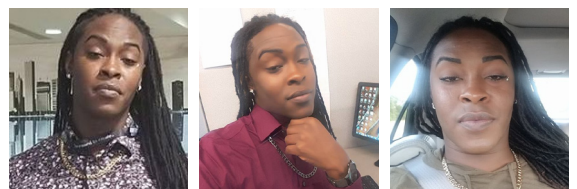
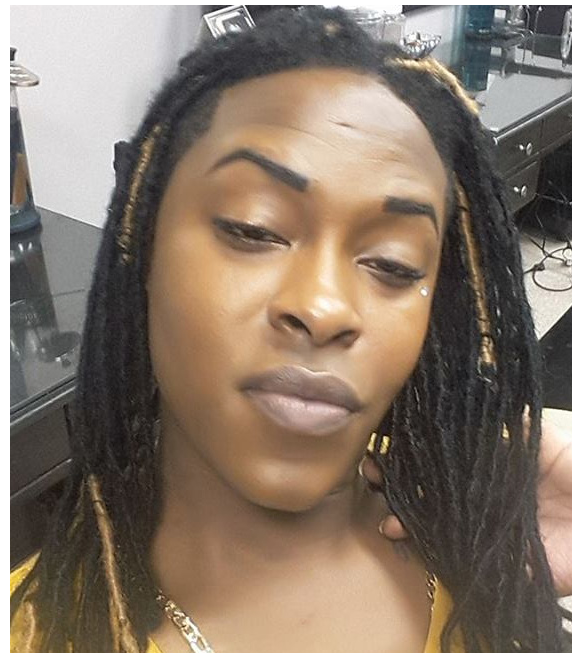
On July 19, 30-year-old Jessie Sumlar was found stabbed to death in his apartment in Jacksonville, Florida. Both Jessie's car and his wallet were missing. Omar Lewis was charged with Jessie's murder and arrested on August 2; he was also charged with auto theft and credit card theft.

Although the suspect has thus far refused to cooperate with detectives, Jacksonville officials are still investigating a motive in the case. "They obviously did know each other somehow, but we're trying to determine how," said Lt. Craig Waldrup.

A trained hair stylist, coworkers at Jessie's beauty salon remember "a beautiful man with a wonderful sense of humor, beautiful personality and positive outlook on life."

Another colleague, Avianca Manning, wrote to Jessie on his obituary page, saying "You've impacted more lives with smiles and good purpose than you know. I'll never forget your warm touches on my shoulder and soft voice and how you ALWAYS spoke to everyone when you earned the room."

Tina Yetman recalls Jessie having "such a sweet soul" and smiling every time she saw him. Jessie was affectionately known by the nickname "Sleepy" by close friends.



In the story above, news reports and interviews with loved ones indicate that the victim was not transgender and instead identified as a "gay man" or "queer." At the same time, those who knew Jessie say that

he regularly dressed in drag and his social media photos reflect a proud individual who may have been gender-expansive, whether in personal identity and/or expression. Because of the ways anti-

transgender bias — based on both perceived and real gender identities, as well as bias against those who are gender non-conforming — can put someone at risk for violence, we have included his story here.



LATE 2017 DEATHS

This is the fourth year HRC has published a report tracking fatal violence against transgender people in the U.S. In the following pages, we share the stories of four transgender women not previously reported – in some cases, crimes were committed following the publishing of the report and in others the deaths were not widely known by advocates.

“SMILES AND LAUGHS” SWEET LOVING FRIEND BELOVED COUSIN

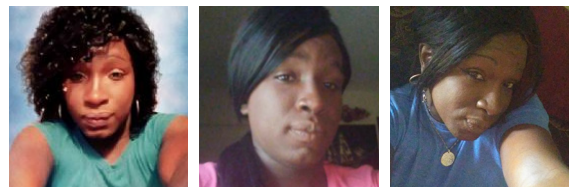
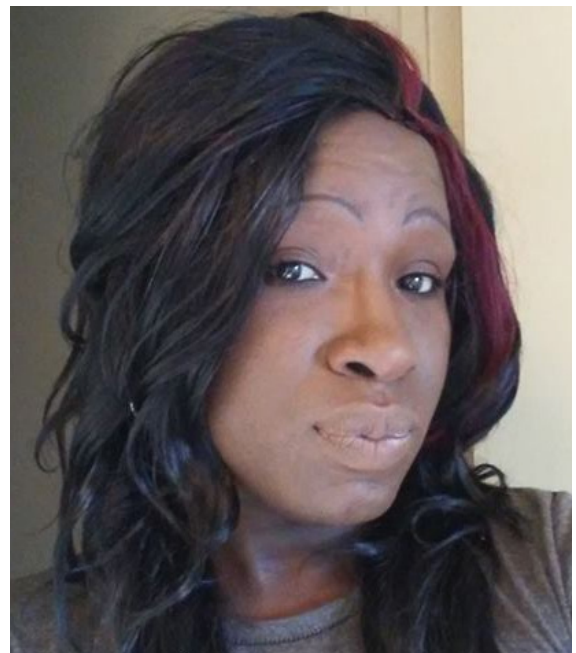
Jaylow Mcglory

Alexandria, Louisiana

Jaylow Mcglory, a 29-year-old Black transgender woman, was fatally shot in Alexandria, Louisiana, on August 4, 2017. Police have charged Desmond Harris with her murder. Multiple social media posts indicate that the two may have been in a relationship leading up to her death.

Jaylow was misgendered in initial media and police reports. Her identity as a transgender woman was not publicly confirmed until several months after her passing when BreakOUT!, a local LGBTQ community group in New Orleans, contacted the National Coalition of Anti-Violence Programs. Without the work of these advocates, Jaylow’s death may have continued to go unrecognized.

Friends miss Jaylow’s **“smiles and laughs,”** while several of her family members recall fond memories shared over late night phone calls and text messages. On her obituary page, Jaylow’s sister Amy writes that she will be missed and that Jaylow “[continues] to watch over us.” Another family member remembers Jaylow as the **“sweetest cousin ever.”**



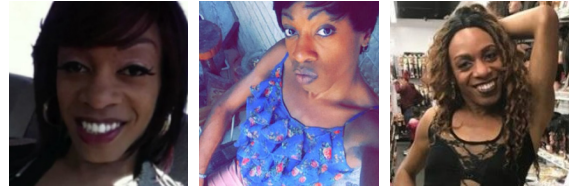
Brooklyn BreYanna Stevenson

Oklahoma City, Oklahoma

On November 27, 2017, Brooklyn BreYanna Stevenson, a Black transgender woman, was found fatally shot in a motel room in Oklahoma City. She was 31 years old. Police have arrested Brandon Tyson in connection to her death, charging him with one count of first-degree murder.

Brooklyn's mother writes that she was "loved by many and would be truly missed," while other family members remember her as **"an amazing daughter, sister and friend with a giving and loving heart."** Paula Sophia Schonauer, a local trans advocate, praises Brooklyn's drive and desire to "establish a place in the world for herself." The Stevenson family released a public statement on December 21 after Tyson's arrest, expressing that they were "incredibly thankful to detectives for their hard work in this case."

In memorial, the Diversity Center of Oklahoma dedicated their multipurpose room to Brooklyn, installing a plaque that reads: "Her memory will live on through this dedication to the community." On September 11, 2018, Brooklyn's family held a balloon release vigil to celebrate what would have been her 32nd birthday.



FREE SPIRIT
DRIVEN
"A BLESSING TO
HAVE KNOWN"
GIVING

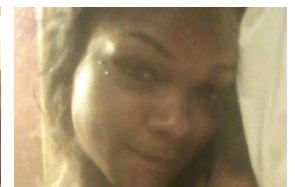
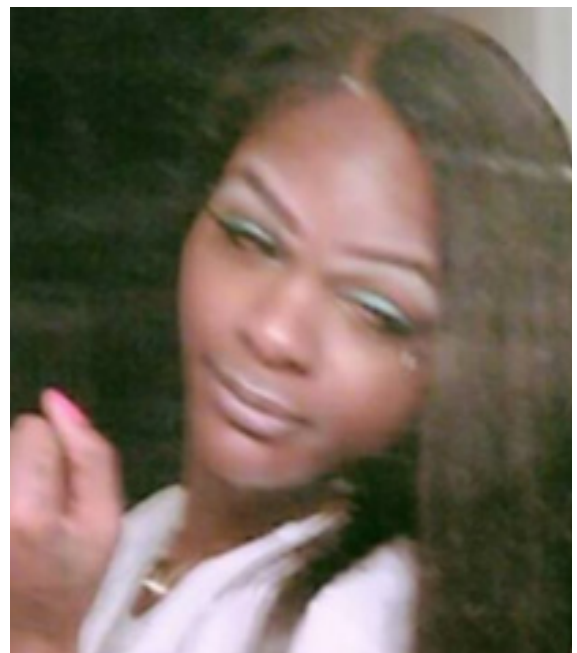
BEAUTIFUL LOVING VIBRANT CARING

Brandi Seals

Houston, Texas

In the early hours of December 13, 2017, Brandi Seals, a Black transgender woman, was found dead in front of a home under construction in southeast Houston. She was 26 years old. Reports indicate that those nearby heard several gunshots before Brandi's body was found, but police have yet to identify a suspect. She was misgendered in initial media and police reports, leading to a delay in the accurate reporting of her death.

Family members describe Brandi as a ***"loving" and "beautiful" person.*** Two vigils were held in Brandi's honor in the days after her death. At a memorial event on December 15 outside of Houston's City Hall, Chief of Police Art Acevedo apologized for his detective's "lack of sensitivity" in a report about Brandi's murder. Loved ones remember Brandi as a ***"caring, amazing person who was so full of life and laughter."***



Rhiannon Layendecker

Englewood, Florida

On December 16, 2017, Rhiannon Layendecker, a 51-year-old transgender woman, was fatally shot in her home in Englewood, Florida by her wife, Jessica Winkler, after a domestic dispute. Jessica, who is also transgender, later called 911 to report the killing and faces charges of second-degree murder and tampering with evidence.

Rhiannon's neighbors say she was a loving person who **"would do anything for you."** Friends describe Rhiannon as a **"kind, sweet and gentle person"** and **someone who "would help out anyone in need."** She was an animal lover, posting countless photos of rescue dogs and cats on her Facebook page in the months leading up to her death.

Rhiannon's niece writes that their large family was in "shock and disbelief" after learning of her death, and many took to social media to memorialize Rhiannon. Her family later held a memorial in June 2018 to celebrate her life and share fond memories.



ANIMAL LOVER
SELFLESS
COMPASSIONATE
LOVING

DISMANTLING A CULTURE OF VIOLENCE

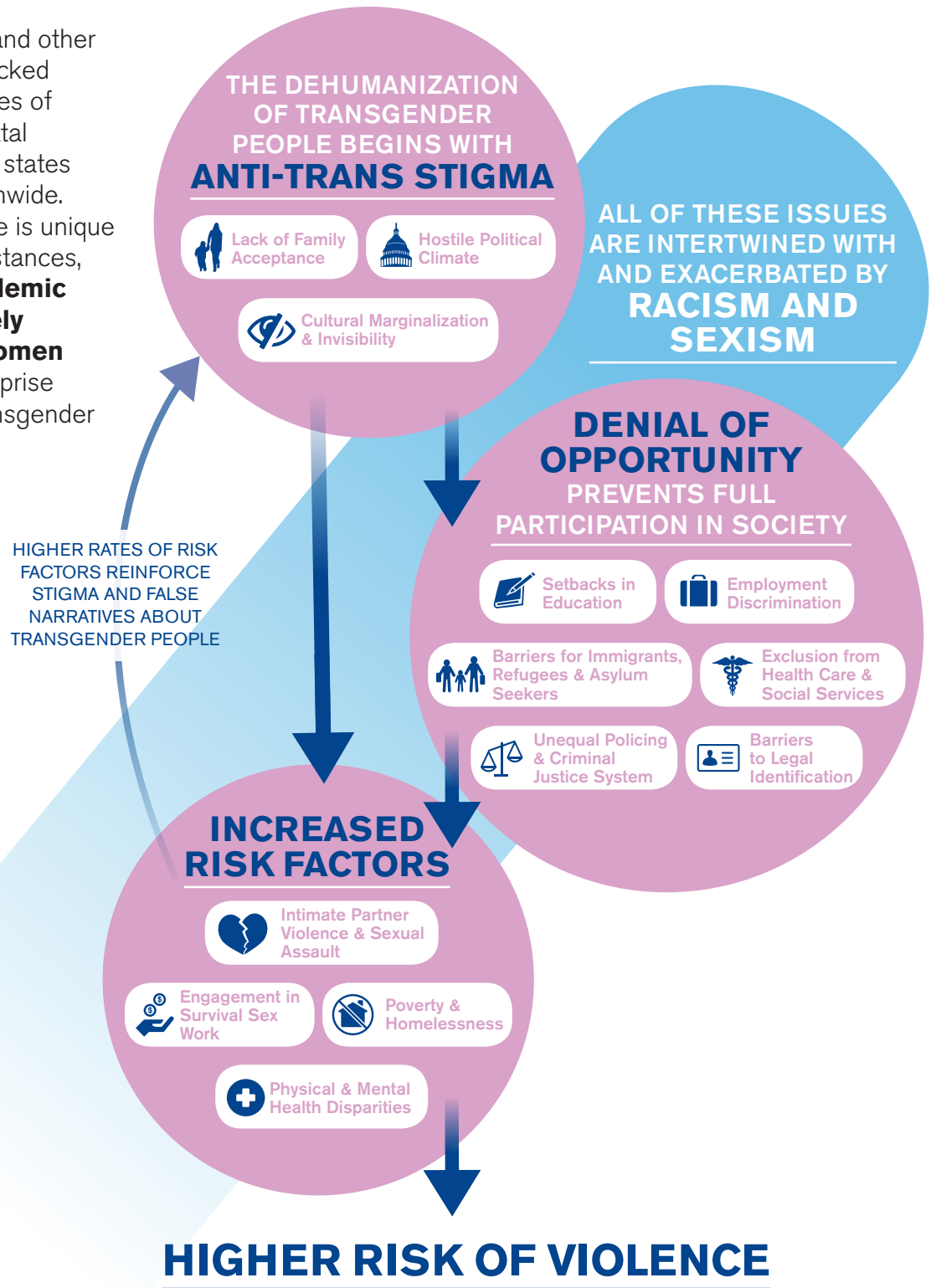
It's not enough to grieve the loss of victims of anti-transgender violence. We must honor their memories with action.

In the following sections, we hope to demonstrate how anti-transgender stigma, denial of opportunity and increased risk factors compound to create a culture of violence. But most importantly, **we provide clear ways that each of us, no matter who we are, can directly make an impact to make our society a safer place for transgender people.**

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- 40 Anti-Transgender Stigma**
- 45 Denial of Opportunity**
- 54 Increased Risk Factors**

What Leads to Anti-Transgender Violence?

Since 2013, HRC and other advocates have tracked more than 128 cases of anti-transgender fatal violence across 32 states and 87 cities nationwide. Although each case is unique in its tragic circumstances, we know **this epidemic disproportionately impacts trans women of color**, who comprise 80% of all anti-transgender homicides.



Ending this epidemic requires addressing and eliminating anti-transgender stigma and discrimination across all facets of society — **and embracing people of all genders for who they are.** Read the following sections to learn how you can take action to help end the violence.

ANTI-TRANSGENDER STIGMA

For many transgender people, living openly can be its own act of defiance in a society that continues to set rigid cultural norms for gender identity and expression.

Transgender and gender-expansive people face stigma surrounding who they are from an early age. Often rooted in inaccurate beliefs and politically-motivated attacks on transgender identities, this stigma erects barriers in virtually every facet of life, denying transgender people the equal opportunity to succeed and be accepted for who they are. Moreover, anti-transgender stigma can have long-term impacts on mental health and economic and housing stability, especially if individuals experience familial rejection and isolation from social support systems.

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LACK OF FAMILY ACCEPTANCE



[Transgender and gender-expansive youth](#) face heartbreaking levels of familial rejection, often from a early age. This rejection can take a devastating toll on individuals and isolate them from physical and emotional resources that are essential to their well-being.

In contrast, [research](#) shows that familial acceptance is a protective factor for transgender young people and can contribute to lower rates of depression, anxiety, substance use, HIV acquisition and suicide attempts.

As adults, many transgender people continue to face familial rejection and isolation, including being [kicked out](#)

[of their homes](#) or physically harmed by family members. In one of its most heartbreaking forms, grieving family members will misgender or erase the identities of victims of anti-transgender violence after their deaths.

When family members reject, deny or disown transgender individuals, it can have a devastating effect on their well-being and self-worth. It can also impact educational, economic and housing stability and have long-term effects on mental health.

Nearly
3 IN 4
transgender and gender-expansive youth hear their family make negative remarks about LGBTQ people

Over
HALF
of transgender or gender-expansive youth say they have been mocked by their family for their identity

40%
of homeless youth are LGBTQ

We must take action to ensure transgender and gender-expansive people of all ages are accepted by their families and safe in their own homes.

1 Educate family members and other loved ones about transgender inclusion

For many parents, their transgender child may be the first transgender person they have ever met. Sadly, fear of the unknown and anti-transgender stigma lead many to initially reject or deny their children for who they are. You can help reshape the narrative by elevating the brave stories of transgender people and leaders. By being a visible friend and ally of transgender people, you also show others that you support transgender people and their right to live openly and safely – with the full support of family and loved ones.

2 Provide culturally-relevant resources for transgender people and their families

Familial rejection of transgender people can be even more challenging for those who hold racial, ethnic, linguistic, religious, immigrant and other cultural identities that appear to conflict with LGBTQ identities. Resolving a family member's anti-transgender bias requires addressing the sources of their biases and why it causes them to reject or deny transgender people. We must provide relevant information, counseling and support for all transgender people and their families, especially within [faith communities](#) and [communities of color](#) where such resources may be less readily available.

3 Offer additional support for youth who face rejection and homelessness

Sadly, LGBTQ youth comprise a disproportionate percentage of homeless youth, often as a result of familial rejection regarding their identities. These young people desperately need our support, whether in the form of housing, clothes, financial assistance, educational resources or LGBTQ-affirming mental health providers. Support the work of local organizations performing this important work and advocate for additional government funding for these crucial resources. If you know someone who may be facing familial rejection, affirm your support for them and offer assistance in whatever way you can.

ENDING THE DANGEROUS PRACTICE OF “CONVERSION THERAPY”

Parents who are struggling to accept their child's gender identity may be urged or misled to subject them to so-called “conversion therapy,” a dangerous and ineffective practice that has been [discredited by virtually every mainstream medical and mental health organization](#).

Efforts that falsely claim to change a person's sexual orientation, gender identity or gender expression can lead to lasting trauma and other adverse mental health conditions. We must combat misinformation about these practices as we look to support LGBTQ people and their families.

13%

of transgender people [report](#) that one or more professionals, such as a psychologist, counselor or religious advisor, tried to stop them from being transgender.

There are many [resources](#) available for parents to learn about the harmful effects of this practice that include recommendations on best practices to promote their child's health and well-being.

Transgender people who have had a professional try to stop them from being transgender were far [more likely](#) to experience psychological distress, attempt suicide, run away from home and experience homelessness.

To learn more, visit [HRC's resource on The Lies and Dangers of Efforts to Change Sexual Orientation or Gender Identity](#).

HOSTILE POLITICAL CLIMATE



There are currently very few explicit legal protections for transgender or gender-expansive people. Despite marginal gains in state and local policies that support and affirm transgender people, recent years have been marked by anti-LGBTQ attacks at all levels of government.

Hateful efforts have included a number of so-called “[bathroom bills](#)” designed to restrict transgender people from accessing public spaces, attempts to remove gender identity from non-discrimination policies, and religious exemptions from non-discrimination policies for health care providers and federal contractors.

In 2018, we have also seen a [slew of attacks](#) on the transgender community from our highest elected officials,

including the Trump-Pence administration’s intention to [redefine “sex”](#) to exclude transgender people from existing civil rights protections. In [August](#), officials from 16 states filed an amicus brief asking the Supreme Court to declare that transgender people have no employment protections under the law.

These discriminatory efforts send a harmful message to our overall society and culture that transgender people are not worthy of equal protection under the law or recognition as full members of our society.



Calls to the [Trans Lifeline’s](#) trans suicide hotline **quadrupled** in the week following the Trump-Pence administration’s attempt to erase transgender people

21 anti-transgender bills have been introduced by 10 states in 2018

We must demand better from our elected officials and reject harmful anti-transgender legislation appearing at the local, state and federal levels.

1 Elevate transgender voices and support pro-equality elected officials

We must ensure that transgender voices have a seat at the table at all levels of government and civic engagement. Raise the profile of transgender leaders and elevate their concerns about policies that affect your community. Support transgender and other pro-equality elected officials who are committed to addressing the needs of all of their constituents – including combating the epidemic of anti-transgender violence.

2 Fight for critical non-discrimination protections

LGBTQ people still lack discrimination protections in employment, housing, health care, education and public accommodations in many parts of the country. The protections that do currently exist are increasingly under attack by anti-equality forces, and discrimination against transgender people is often at the epicenter of such dangerous efforts. We must fight to preserve existing protections and continue to pursue policies like [the Equality Act](#) that make our country more inclusive and fair for all.

3 Actively voice your support for the transgender community

When discriminatory, anti-transgender legislation is being considered in your state and at the federal level, amplify your voice to educate others about multifaceted forms of discrimination and violence that transgender people face in America. Dispute harmful rhetoric that seeks to dehumanize transgender people, and educate those who are not informed of the many barriers transgender people experience. Advocate for the recognition of transgender people as equal members of our society deserving of the same level of dignity, respect, representation and opportunity as every other member of our society.

CULTURAL MARGINALIZATION & INVISIBILITY

Transgender people continue to be ignored, ostracized and excluded from full participation in communities across the country, including faith communities, cultural communities, educational spaces or geographically bound communities and neighborhoods.

This marginalization is often rooted in lack of awareness of transgender identities and long-held beliefs dictating gender norms and behavior. It can further be perpetuated by a history of stereotypes and invisibility of transgender individuals in media and politics. Meanwhile,

rigid cultural or religious beliefs, a lack of exposure to transgender people and discriminatory political attacks from our highest elected officials contribute to a culture of anti-transgender stigma, discrimination and violence.

Without full acceptance in their communities, transgender people will continue to lack support systems, social networks and an overall safety net that many other people take for granted, especially in the role these systems play in their future success and well-being.



We must increase the cultural visibility of transgender people and ensure their full inclusion within all communities.

1 Make your communities more transgender inclusive

Take the personal initiative to speak to family members, friends and other individuals in all communities you are a part of to ensure these spaces are fully welcoming to transgender people. Make time to have personal, heart-to-heart conversations about transgender-centered allyship with people in your workplace, place of worship, neighborhood and other spaces. We all have a personal responsibility to make sure transgender people are safe and supported in every community – and to work to transform the spaces where they have yet to be fully included.

2 Support and elevate transgender voices in media

Support artists, athletes, activists, political leaders and other transgender public figures who are sharing their stories and lived experiences. Uplift these individuals by elevating their projects and sharing their work among your personal network and communities. Support the accurate portrayal and appropriate casting of transgender people in prominent media works to reduce harmful, inaccurate images of transgender people that contribute to anti-trans stigma.

3 Raise awareness of the issues transgender people face

Educate people in your community about the different forms of discrimination that transgender people face on a daily basis, including anti-transgender stigma, systemic denial of opportunities and increased risk factors. Help your community members understand the differences between and sources of these forms of mistreatment, and how together they create an overall culture where transgender people are at a higher risk of violence simply for being who they are.

DENIAL OF OPPORTUNITY

Across virtually every facet of society, discriminatory and unjust barriers deprive transgender people the right to full and equal participation in society. Whether formalized through law or policy or upheld due to cultural misconceptions about gender, these systemic barriers must be abolished in order to end the marginalization and consequent risk of violence transgender people face in their daily lives.

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SETBACKS IN EDUCATION

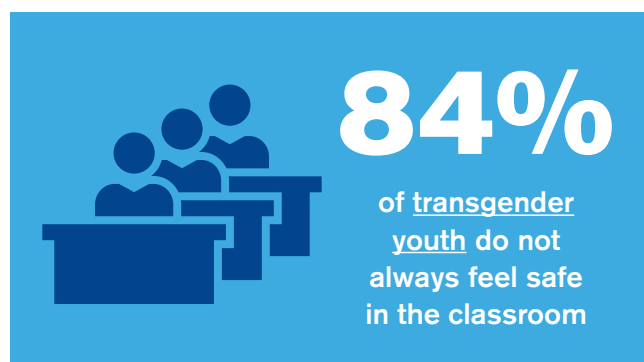


Across the country, educational environments are often hostile or unwelcoming to transgender and gender-expansive youth. Many transgender students still have too few policies that protect them and experience rampant mistreatment and discrimination in schools from peers and/or staff. As a result, they may [miss large amounts of class](#) due to feeling unsafe at school.

In 2017, the Trump-Pence administration withdrew [guidance](#) issued by the Obama administration clarifying schools' obligations to protect transgender students under

federal law, including policies regarding sex-segregated facilities in public schools.

When transgender students are left unprotected from the discrimination they face at all levels of education, it can negatively impact their overall well-being, future economic stability and employment opportunities.



We all must take steps to ensure transgender and gender-expansive students have access to inclusive learning environments where they are able to thrive.

1 Create safe spaces for transgender youth

Less than 5 percent of LGBTQ youth believe that all of their teachers are accepting of LGBTQ people. We need to work in our communities to establish [transgender-inclusive training](#), data collection, accommodations, registration protocols and curricula. Transgender youth must be [supported](#) and affirmed in [educational settings](#) to fully thrive as students and as future leaders.

2 Advocate for transgender-inclusive policies and anti-bullying laws

In the absence of federal legislation, establishing school district policies, state department of education requirements and state laws is imperative to protect transgender students. Work with your local school board or state officials to enact change that will make educational spaces more welcoming for all.

3 Combat misinformation about transgender people in schools

Over the past two years, there's been a surge in legislation seeking to ban transgender people from public spaces – including school facilities such as restrooms and locker rooms. These bills are predicated on misinformation and misconceptions about transgender people, and when passed, they not only put transgender youth in harm's way, but create a toxic environment where they may be unable to fully achieve their highest potential in the classroom.

Supporting transgender students, in their own words:

Too many transgender students face harassment and denial of full participation in learning environments:

“ I wait until I get home to use the bathroom, even when I’m at school for 10+ hours... I wear my gym clothes over my normal clothes to avoid changing in locker rooms.”

“ I transitioned in 7th grade and was bullied profusely by my peers. I asked my health teacher to educate the class. She said that it was too complicated for the students.”

However, when transgender students are fully supported in schools, they thrive:

“ My counselor has always been very supportive of me and has cared a lot about my mental health issues, and always made me feel like a priority. I felt comfortable talking to her because she was very open and understanding and never ever judged me.”

“ I wish school staff were more open about their opinions on LGBTQ issues. I visited a school last week and some teachers had signs on their door that welcomed LGBTQ students.”

“ My school counselor is the sole reason I am here today. She is the most wonderful, most accepting being I could ever think of.”

Take action in your community to support transgender youth. Support LGBTQ-inclusive policies and work to make your local schools places where all students are able to reach their fullest potential.

Quotes from the [2018 LGBTQ Youth Report](#), a study of more than 12,000 young people nationwide conducted by the HRC Foundation and the University of Connecticut. [To learn more about transgender youth, read the full breakout report.](#)

EMPLOYMENT DISCRIMINATION



Transgender people face devastating levels of discrimination and harassment in the workplace.

These barriers are even higher for Black transgender people, who have **double the unemployment rate of all transgender people, and four times that of the U.S. general population.** With limited access to

workplaces that are affirming and inclusive, transgender and gender-expansive people are put at greater risk for poverty, homelessness and involvement with criminalized work. Together, these factors put transgender people at an increased risk of violence and danger.

30%

of transgender employees report having been fired, denied a promotion, or experiencing another form of mistreatment in the workplace due to their gender identity or expression

The unemployment rate among transgender people is

3x

higher than that of the general population.

We must act to ensure transgender working people have fair and equal access to well-paying jobs.

1 Expand non-discrimination policies at the federal, state and local level

Currently, only [21 states and the District of Columbia](#) prohibit employment discrimination based on gender identity and sexual orientation. Voice your support for legislation at all levels, including the [Equality Act](#), and encourage elected officials in your community to enact these protections.

2 Encourage all employers to engage in eliminating workplace discrimination

Encourage your employer to establish internal non-discrimination policies that fully include transgender colleagues, including providing transgender inclusive health benefits, cultural competency training and expanded recruiting and hiring practices. For more information on how some of America's largest companies are building LGBTQ-inclusive workplaces, refer to HRC's [Corporate Equality Index](#).

3 Ensure transgender working people have a pathway to success

Beyond policies and dismantling anti-trans stigma, we must provide avenues for transgender people to obtain the education, training and skills that far too many have been denied due to racist and/or anti-LGBTQ systemic barriers. We must provide transgender inclusive career fairs, mentorship, networking opportunities and career coaching for transgender workers and raise awareness about their [rights as employees](#).

BARRIERS FOR IMMIGRANTS, REFUGEES & ASYLUM SEEKERS



LGBTQ people face extremely high levels of discrimination and violence in several parts of the world. Many come to the U.S. to claim asylum and escape persecution based on their sexual orientation and/or gender identity. **Yet, rather than addressing this crisis, the Trump-Pence administration has put more obstacles in place for those seeking asylum and proposed lowering refugee admissions for 2019 to an all-time low.**

Once in the U.S., LGBTQ immigrants and asylum seekers face a higher risk of violence as a result of the U.S. immigration system. Undocumented immigrants may actively avoid going to police to report being a victim of

a crime out of fear of arrest or deportation. Transgender detainees held by U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) may be placed in facilities that do not match their gender identity and are often unable to access gender affirming and life saving medical care and treatment.

In recent months, transgender detainees and aid workers have given disturbing reports of individuals being held under inhumane conditions that threaten their physical safety. To learn more about this crisis, read the story of Roxana Hernández, who passed away from medical complications while in ICE custody.

40%

of transgender people held in state and federal detention report being sexually abused.

LGBTQ people are

97x

more likely to report being sexually abused in immigration detention.

We must demand the humane treatment of all immigrants, refugees and asylum seekers.

1 Tell ICE they must ensure the safety and well-being of transgender detainees

The dangerous levels of reported sexual abuse and violence that transgender people face in immigration detention indicate that ICE is failing to ensure their safety and well-being. We must hold ICE accountable for addressing these deficiencies immediately and demand that all detainees be treated with respect and dignity. ICE should utilize alternatives to detention for those in custody who are not flight risks, pose no threat to community safety and are not subject to mandatory detention.

2 Call for the U.S. Government to resettle at least 75,000 refugees in 2019

LGBTQ people face extremely high levels of discrimination and violence in many parts of the world. [Roxana Hernández](#), for example, traveled to the U.S. as part of a group – including a number of transgender women – who were fleeing violence in Central America. As the Trump-Pence administration turns away people fleeing persecution and horrific levels of violence, we must stand united in sending a powerful message that their cruel policies do not represent American values.

3 Hold the U.S. government accountable to speaking up for international LGBTQ human rights

The Trump-Pence administration has been unconscionably silent in the face of violence targeting LGBTQ people around the world. We must sound the alarm about atrocities against LGBTQ people worldwide and hold our government accountable to their commitments to protecting and advancing human rights.

Anti-transgender violence around the world

Violence against transgender people is pervasive and often deadly in every part of the world, not just in the U.S. In many countries, the violence is often underreported due to misgendering and transphobia. Latin American countries, which generally have strong transgender movements and monitoring mechanisms, report the highest number of hate crimes against transgender people, both in total numbers and per capita.

Over
2,300 transgender people

are known to have been killed in the last decade in dozens of countries, according to figures released by Transrespect versus Transphobia Worldwide, a global project combining the efforts of advocates in more than 100 countries.

Tragically, transgender people are often killed viciously. The most common means by which they are killed are being shot, stabbed, beaten, strangled and stoned, in that order.

Over
60 transgender people

have reportedly been killed this year in Pakistan.

Central American countries are especially inhospitable and dangerous for transgender people. Honduras has the highest per capita rate of reported murders and El Salvador has the third highest reported rate.

Despite tremendous challenges, progress towards greater inclusion for transgender people is occurring around the world. This year, governments in New Zealand, Pakistan and Uruguay passed critical legal protections for transgender people. Courts in Botswana, Ecuador, Europe and Nepal issued rulings recognizing the rights of transgender people.

Even as we look to address the epidemic of violence within our own country, we must continue to support LGBTQ rights and freedom of expression around the world.




EXCLUSION FROM HEALTH CARE & SOCIAL SERVICES

Transgender people are especially vulnerable when it comes to accessing social services and [health care](#), including finding doctors who respect and affirm their identities. Many experience [discrimination](#) from medical providers, while others may simply struggle to access medical and mental health professionals who are knowledgeable in transgender-specific care. Others may be denied health insurance coverage to pursue transition-related care or lack insurance altogether, especially those living in or near poverty and living in states where they do not have access to health care through Medicaid.

Concurrently, denial from social services prevents transgender people from receiving the resources they need, especially during times of vulnerability. In nationwide studies of transgender people who have pursued such services, [many](#) report being expelled or denied access to homeless or domestic violence shelters, while others said they avoided shelters altogether because they feared mistreatment or harassment.

Exclusion from these vital safety nets doesn't just worsen physical and mental health outcomes, it directly contributes to higher risk of homelessness, sexual assault and violence.



1 IN 4
transgender people [report](#) having avoided medical care in the past year out of fear of being disrespected or mistreated.

52%
of transgender people who stayed at a shelter were verbally harassed, physically attacked, and/or sexually assaulted because of being transgender.

There are many actionable steps we must take to ensure transgender people have equitable access to health care and social services.

1 Expand and protect health care coverage for transgender people

Support the prohibition of discrimination against transgender patients in private insurance and Medicaid and the elimination of health plans that include exclusions on necessary transition-related care. **Fifty-five percent** of transgender people [report](#) that their insurance denies them from medically necessary transition-related surgery, while **1 in 4** report that they were denied coverage for hormone therapy. At least 147 cities [now offer](#) transgender inclusive health care benefits for municipal employees, but this trend needs to be followed throughout the United States for all working people.

2 Increase provider expertise and cultural competency

Health care and social work professionals must increase their skills to offer welcoming, inclusive and up-to-date services, which includes abiding by the National Association of Social Workers [Code of Ethics](#) and LGBTQ-inclusive [policy recommendations](#) already published by the American Medical Association. Work within your community to ensure your local providers are providing competent care and make sure to [know your rights](#) should you or a loved one face discrimination from a provider.

3 Provide transgender-specific social services

Across the nation, state and local governments are increasingly recognizing the need to provide transgender-specific services to a community that is disproportionately at risk. An alarming **70 percent** of transgender people who have stayed in a homeless shelter report [experiencing](#) some form of mistreatment because of their transgender identity. Start by connecting with local shelters and services to ensure they are able to fully support the needs of transgender clients. Check whether your local or state government has LGBTQ and trans-specific initiatives for its public welfare programs.

UNEQUAL POLICING & CRIMINAL JUSTICE SYSTEM



Inequities in the existing justice system continue to lead transgender people to mistrust and avoid the very systems supposedly designated to protect them. Many transgender people, and especially transgender people of color, avoid interaction with law enforcement because they fear harassment, intimidation, incarceration or violence — leaving transgender victims of crime without the legal recourse and protections they vitally need.

Only [18 states](#) and the District of Columbia currently have laws that address [hate or bias crimes](#) based on gender identity. As a result, bias-motivated crimes against transgender people often go uninvestigated, unreported and thereby unaddressed.

Meanwhile, transgender and gender-expansive inmates face disproportionate levels of mistreatment during confinement that leave them vulnerable to violence. They are often housed in facilities that do not match their gender identity and inappropriately placed in solitary confinement. While incarcerated, they also face [extremely high](#) rates of sexual assault.

In the absence of a criminal justice system that serves and protects them equally, transgender people face a heightened risk of discrimination and violence.

Among transgender people who interacted with police in the past year and say officers were aware they were transgender:

58%

report facing some form of mistreatment from law enforcement.

49%

of transgender people report being repeatedly misgendered.

37%

of transgender people who had been taking hormones prior to incarceration report being prevented from taking hormones while incarcerated.

We must address inequities in the criminal justice system, including holding law enforcement to a higher standard in serving transgender people and communities of color.

1 Enhance law enforcement response and training

Encourage local law enforcement agencies to designate an LGBTQ police liaison and enact policies that ensure respectful, culturally competent and non-discriminatory interactions with transgender and gender-expansive people. In addition, law enforcement agencies should hold regular mandatory trainings on these policies as well as on ways officers can better serve LGBTQ populations and understand the unique challenges that transgender people may face in their communities.

2 Ensure that law enforcement agencies accurately identify, investigate and report hate crimes based on sexual orientation and gender identity to both state and federal agencies

These actions are imperative to the larger law enforcement community's ability to accurately gauge the scope of bias-motivated crimes and effectively address them. Because reporting hate crimes is [currently not mandatory](#) under federal law, municipal police departments must take every step possible to ensure that their hate crimes data is transmitted to the FBI accurately and on time. Moreover, local legislators should ensure that city ordinances include provisions that require local police departments to identify and report hate crimes to state law enforcement agencies as well as the FBI.

3 Ensure that detention policies include protections for transgender detainees

While incarcerated, nearly [one quarter](#) of transgender people report being physically assaulted by staff or other inmates. Ensure that your local and state detention facilities have non-discrimination policies that expressly cover gender identity and ensure that transgender detainees are addressed, transported and housed consistent with their gender identity. Advocate for the right for inmates to have access to medically-necessary, transgender-competent care while being detained.

BARRIERS TO LEGAL IDENTIFICATION



Transgender Americans face significant barriers to obtaining identity documents that accurately reflect their gender. Some reside in states that forbid gender marker changes on IDs. Others may live in places with onerous requirements for such changes, including unnecessary medical procedures, medical documentation, court orders and processing fees.

Transitioning is a personal choice and the degree to which transgender people decide to undergo transition-related care varies considerably, depending on personal preference, safety, financial circumstances and access to specialized care. However, several states still require proof of “surgical procedure” or other treatments before allowing

ID changes. The hurdles are greater still for non-binary people, as only a handful of states currently allow the use of a third gender (e.g., “X” or “NB”) on IDs.

ID discrepancies are not just an inconvenience. They impact access to virtually every aspect of life, including daily transportation, travel, housing, health care, education, employment, public accommodations, and even exercising the right to [vote](#). They can also threaten physical safety and overall well-being, starting with discriminatory and potentially dangerous [interactions](#) with medical professionals, law enforcement and community members.

Nearly 1/3

of individuals who have presented IDs with a name or gender that did not match their presentation reported negative experiences, such as being harassed, denied services and/or attacked

68%

of transgender people say that none of their IDs or records reflect both their correct name and gender

We must act to ensure all transgender people have the right to accurate legal identification that allows them to fully participate as members of society.

1 Increase pressure on all states to facilitate gender marker changes

Only **15** states currently facilitate gender marker change on both birth certificates and driver’s licenses. Raise awareness about the importance of legal identification as an LGBTQ issue, and voice your support for policies that will allow all Americans to obtain accurate identity documents.

2 Eliminate exclusionary barriers to ID changes

All individuals should have the right to obtain identification that reflects who they truly are, without the need to furnish documentation on medical procedures they do not want or may not be able to afford. Simultaneously, we must address the cost of legal name changes, which typically range from \$150 to \$500, and prevents access to many who cannot afford it. Speak out about these exclusionary hurdles, and consider donating to or creating a name change fund in your community that provides financial assistance to low-income people seeking name changes.

3 Educate and train “gatekeepers” to public accommodations

Regardless of legal status, transgender people can still face stigma and adverse treatment from those who act as gatekeepers to public accommodations, including travel security agents, employees at restaurants and bars, school officials, law enforcement and others. To ensure that competent care is given to all individuals, establishments and public agencies should take steps to train staff on LGBTQ issues and how to approach what one might perceive as a potential discrepancy on identification.

INCREASED RISK FACTORS

Although every tragic case is unique, we know from research and advocacy with the transgender community that the victims of violence share common experiences that put them at a higher risk. Moreover, women of color, who must also contend with racism and sexism prevalent in our society, are even further impacted by these issues.

Anti-equality forces often use these statistics and research surrounding these fraught topics to erroneously (or maliciously) blame victims for their plight. Instead, we know that stigma and denial of opportunity from an early age leads many transgender people to face these challenges.

Although there are many ways we can support those who are impacted by these risk factors, there are no easy solutions to addressing these issues. Instead, we must ensure that everybody in our society has the equal opportunity to succeed – no matter who they are.

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INTIMATE PARTNER VIOLENCE & SEXUAL ASSAULT



Intimate partner violence (IPV) and sexual assault can have a devastating impact on any person, but transgender people face elevated risks and challenges to care and justice. In the face of discriminatory treatment from law enforcement, medical providers, shelters and other services, many transgender survivors of IPV and sexual assault may be hesitant to seek help or fear losing their privacy within care settings.

Higher rates of IPV are also correlated with other risk factors that are disproportionately observed in transgender

populations. For instance, **77 percent** of transgender people who have engaged in sex work and **72 percent** of transgender people who have been homeless [report](#) having experienced intimate partner violence.

Several deaths featured in this report have been linked to sexual violence and/or were committed at the hands of intimate partners. We must address these issues simultaneously in order to curb anti-transgender violence — and it starts with dismantling stigma and the dehumanization of transgender lives that put individuals at a higher risk of violence.

54%

of transgender people [report](#) having experienced some form of intimate partner violence

47%

of transgender people have been sexually assaulted

At least 21 of the 128 known cases of anti-transgender fatal violence from 2013-2018 are suspected to have been committed by an intimate partner

We must ensure all transgender and gender-expansive people have the support they need when they experience intimate partner violence and sexual assault.

1 Explicitly include transgender issues in conversations surrounding IPV and sexual assault

LGBTQ people are often left out of conversations surrounding intimate partner violence and sexual assault, and this is especially true for transgender people. [Learn](#) the signs of the common types of abuse transgender people experience. Advocate for the inclusion of gender identity and sexual orientation markers in research studies to ensure we have the data available to better understand and combat these issues in LGBTQ relationships and populations.

2 Ensure medical and mental health services are available for transgender survivors

Support specialized service providers who offer transgender-specific care, services and support to survivors of sexual assault and IPV. We must also urge all care providers and organizations to offer professional development opportunities for their staff so they can provide culturally competent services to transgender survivors who seek care in hospitals, primary care settings and mental health settings.

3 Train law enforcement to respond appropriately

To avoid further victimization, law enforcement officials must be prepared and expected to treat transgender survivors with respect and dignity. We also need to ensure reported cases of intimate partner violence and sexual assault are appropriately documented and investigated. Encourage your local police department to hold a [webinar](#) or training on this specific issue, and hold them accountable to accurate and comprehensive data reporting of anti-transgender violence.

If you or someone you know has been affected by intimate partner violence or sexual assault, you can seek help by calling a helpline or seeking counseling and information from one of the LGBTQ-friendly resources listed below.

FORGE: serves transgender and gender nonconforming survivors of domestic and sexual violence; provides referrals to local counselors, 1-414-559-2123

Let's Talk About It: A Transgender Survivor's Guide to Accessing Therapy

The Anti-Violence Project: serves people who are LGBTQ; Hotline 1-212-714-1141, Bilingual 24/7

The Network La Red: serves people who are LGBTQ, poly and kink/BDSM; Bilingual. Hotline - Voice: 1-617-742-4911; Toll-Free: 1-800-832-1901; TTY: 1-617-227-4911

National Sexual Assault Hotline: 1-800-656-HOPE (4673) 24/7 or Online Counseling

Love is Respect Hotline (for youth): online chat; 1-866-331-9474 (24/7); TTY: 1-866-331-8453; or Text "loveis" to 22522

LGBT National Help Center: Youth Hotline 1-800-246-PRIDE (7743); LGBT National Hotline 1-888-843-4564; Sage LGBT Elder Hotline 1-888-234-7243; or Online Chat at <http://www.volunteerlogin.org/chat/>

Northwest Network: serves LGBT survivors of abuse; can provide local referrals: 1-206-568-7777

ENGAGEMENT IN SURVIVAL SEX WORK



In the face of discrimination and economic barriers, many transgender people engage in sex work (i.e., the exchange of sex for money or goods) out of survival.

The HRC Foundation estimates that at least **one in three** victims of fatal violence in the past six years had engaged in sex work at some point their lives. According to media reports, several victims engaged in such work out of financial necessity in the face of employment discrimination and poverty. Others told loved ones that they were doing so to save money for expensive but medically-necessary transition-related care.

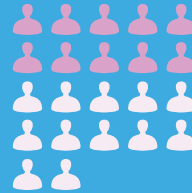
Engagement in sex work and the current criminal status of sex work are intricately tied to

the epidemic of violence that impacts transgender people. Transgender people who engage in sex work face [higher rates](#) of intimate partner violence and sexual assault. Unfortunately, the criminal status of sex work leads many to avoid interactions with law enforcement or to decline to seek assistance, even when they themselves are victims of a crime or traumatic event. It can also prevent those with criminal charges from securing housing or other employment opportunities.

Advocates and researchers around the world are increasingly elevating this issue and how it directly impacts public health, especially among transgender and gender-expansive communities.

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VICTIMS

At least 41 victims of anti-transgender fatal violence since 2013 reportedly engaged in sex work



This figure includes at least 10 out of the 22 known victims in 2018, several who are believed to have died while performing such work

We must consider the stigma and legal status surrounding sex work and address its impact on anti-transgender violence.

1 Address the impact criminalization has on public safety

The criminalization of sex work directly impacts already strained interactions with and trust of law enforcement. [Eighty-six percent](#) of transgender people who had engaged in sex work report being mistreated by police officers. Meanwhile, [one-third](#) of Black transgender women who had interacted with law enforcement in the past year report that officers assumed they were sex workers. The reality is that many transgender people – and especially transgender people of color – distrust and avoid law enforcement altogether, leaving many victims of violent crime unprotected and unsupported. We must educate policy makers on how criminalization of sex work contributes to a higher risk of violence and hold law enforcement agencies accountable to equally serving transgender individuals regardless of their engagement in sex work.

2 Provide additional resources and support for survival sex workers

Denial of opportunities across the board leads many transgender people to resort to the underground economy for survival. In order to decrease the percentage of individuals who engage in such work out of financial necessity, we must provide greater employment opportunities and affordable access to gender-affirming care for transgender people. We must also create spaces where sex workers can receive judgment-free care, support and resources, especially as we look to resolve the higher rates of health disparities and violence they face.

3 Reframe the narrative surrounding sex work and its relation to the transgender community

Harmful stereotypes regarding the transgender community and sex work dehumanize and delegitimize the violence that impacts transgender people. "Despite popular portrayal, the decision to engage in sex work is complex and influenced by the various barriers individuals face to obtain other gainful employment and sufficient sources of income. Just like with poverty, homelessness and health disparities, we must educate others on the root causes of this issue in order to provide greater support to those who engage in this work.

POVERTY AND HOMELESSNESS



Transgender people face disproportionate rates of poverty and homelessness in the United States. These issues are more severe for transgender women of color, who face even higher rates of homelessness, including:*

- American Indian women (59 percent),
- Black women (51 percent),
- Multiracial women (51 percent),
- Middle Eastern women (49 percent), and
- Latina women (35 percent).

Many of those living in poverty rely on the underground economy to survive, which includes sex work, drug sales and other currently criminalized work. Involvement in these systems increases the risk of violence, including intimate

partner violence, sexual assault, health disparities, police harassment and fatal violence.

The poverty and homelessness experienced by transgender people does not exist in a vacuum. We must eliminate societal barriers in education, employment and other areas to ensure transgender people have access to well-paying jobs and are able to fully participate as working people within our communities. We must also continue to support those currently living in poverty and homelessness with transgender-inclusive services.

**Percentage who reported experiencing homelessness during one's lifetime to the [2015 USTS](#).*



We must ensure transgender people have access to inclusive resources and support when they are experiencing homelessness and poverty.

1 Educate others on disparities transgender and gender-expansive people face related to homelessness and poverty.

Increase community awareness of the disproportionate rates of homelessness within this community. Support policies that address this issue in ways that include targeted resources for transgender people of color.

2 Ensure homeless shelters are welcoming spaces for transgender people

More than one-quarter of transgender people who have experienced homelessness say they avoided shelters out of fear of mistreatment. This can include harassment or assault from others staying at the shelter, but also being denied access or having to stay in a sex-segregated facility that does not match their gender identity – an issue even more challenging for non-binary individuals. There are many resources available to shelter workers to ensure their space is affirming of transgender people who are experiencing homelessness. Connect with your community homeless resources to ensure they are providing competent care and protection for all.

3 Demand transgender-inclusive resources for low-income individuals in your community

Nearly one in five transgender people report receiving negative treatment when they went to a public assistance or government benefits office. These resources, designed to assist individuals in escaping poverty, need to be accommodating and knowledgeable of the unique challenges transgender people face while experiencing poverty and homelessness.

PHYSICAL & MENTAL HEALTH DISPARITIES



Confronted with barriers in virtually every facet of life, transgender people can be more [more susceptible](#) to elevated mental health risks including depression, anxiety and suicide. Although higher rates of these issues have been erroneously (and maliciously) used to portray transgender people as “broken” or inherently flawed, it is actually the anti-trans stigma and rejection prevalent in our society that leads to higher rates of mental health challenges among transgender youth and adults.

Transgender people are also more likely to face physical health conditions, often related to the risk factors

discussed in this report. For instance, the rate of HIV among transgender people working solely in the underground economy, including survival sex work, was more than [ten times higher](#) than other transgender people living with HIV. Transgender people who have experienced homelessness are [twice as likely](#) to be living with HIV.

Unfortunately, limited access to transgender-inclusive care too often prevents health conditions from being fully addressed. In lieu of affordable and affirming care, countless transgender people will continue to lack the resources they need to improve their well-being and overall safety.

83%

of transgender youth surveyed said they felt hopeless or worthless in the past week

39%

of transgender adults surveyed say they are currently experiencing serious psychological distress, nearly 8 times the rate in the U.S. general population

19%

of Black transgender women are living with HIV, compared to a national rate of approximately 0.3 percent.

We must address the factors that lead to disparities in transgender physical and mental health and ensure transgender people have access to the care they need.

1 Expand access to transgender-inclusive health services for youth

All transgender people face difficulties in finding competent care, but the barriers are even greater for transgender and gender-expansive youth during an age where well-being can have long-term impacts on success. We must ensure all young people have access to gender-affirming medical care, which has been [shown](#) to improve the mental health of transgender people. We must also provide greater training for youth-serving professionals in schools and our communities who can help monitor and mitigate mental health conditions. By providing support at an early age, we give transgender people a greater opportunity to develop, grow and thrive in our communities.

2 Enhance services for low-income and homeless populations

Although transgender-affirming care is slowly becoming more available in many communities, transgender people who are low-income or homeless may be completely locked out from these services – especially if they lack health insurance coverage, the ability to pay for care, and/or the time off to pursue care. We must directly support social services and low-income care providers and ensure that they are prepared to support transgender community members, including LGBTQ health centers. When doing so, we must acknowledge that many transgender people have had negative and discriminatory experiences pursuing medical and mental health care – and create environments where they feel comfortable pursuing care.

3 Change the narrative surrounding transgender identities and mental health

For too long, the mental health disparities that transgender people experience have been used to dehumanize transgender people and delegitimize the struggles they experience. Transgender identities and experiences are still heavily pathologized, and viewed as a mental health struggle in and of itself by many in the medical community, which prevents transgender people from receiving life-saving care. Transgender people do not inherently struggle with mental health; instead, any disparities are created due to the systematic violence and discrimination transgender people experience throughout their lives. Dispute this myth by educating others on the various forms of discrimination that transgender people face, and how stigma and cultural marginalization can negatively impact mental health.

Addressing and Ending Suicide in the Transgender Community

The most devastating toll of anti-transgender stigma and discrimination can be seen in the high rate of attempted suicide by transgender people, and especially [transgender youth](#), where current statistics constitute a national crisis at nearly nine times the national average.

Those who actively oppose the transgender community occasionally use these deeply saddening statistics to portray transgender people as “broken” or “mentally unstable.” But in reality, it’s our anti-transgender culture and society that constructs barriers against transgender people in ways that threaten the mental well-being of transgender people. **We must all take responsibility in reshaping our culture and our communities in ways that allow transgender people to fully thrive.**

Dismantling the barriers transgender people face, starting with increased familial and community acceptance, political support and representation, cultural affirmation of transgender identities, and increased access to gender-affirming medical care will have an overwhelmingly positive impact on the mental health of transgender people.

FOUR OUT OF TEN

**transgender adults
report having
attempted suicide,
the majority
having done so
before age 25.**

If you or someone you know may be at risk of suicide, call the [National Suicide Prevention Lifeline](#) at 1-800-273-8255. If you’re a young LGBTQ person and need to talk to someone, call [The Trevor Project](#)’s 24-hour crisis hotline for youth at 1-866-488-7386. If you are a transgender person of any age, call [the Trans Lifeline](#) at 877-565-8860.

THE STATISTICS BEHIND THE FACES

Anti-Transgender Fatal Violence in the United States, 2013-2018

Since January 2013, the HRC Foundation and other advocates have recorded the deaths of at least 128 transgender people who were victims of fatal violence.

Fatal violence disproportionately impacts transgender people of color.

In the past six years of reporting, at least **110** victims were people of color, including:

- **95** Black or African American individuals
- **14** Latinx individuals

Nearly 9 in every 10 victims were transgender women.

At least **115** transgender women were victims of fatal violence, as well as:

- **7** transgender men
- **6** others with another identity (including non-binary, questioning or unknown identities)

At least **103 victims** (80%) were transgender women of color. **Black trans women are critically impacted, representing 69% of all known victims**

Approximately

3 IN 4

victims were under the age of 35.

The includes four minors under the age of 18 and 31 individuals between the ages of 18 and 25.

58

lived in the South, comprising 45% of deaths nationwide.

Louisiana, a state which represents only 1.4% percent of the total U.S. population, has alone seen 10% percent of known cases since 2013.

At least

SIX

transgender women have been killed in Greater Cleveland, the second highest number of deaths among all metropolitan areas in the country.

This number is only exceeded by the Greater Los Angeles area, a region which is nine times more populous.

Data as of November 7, 2018.

As we remember their lives and mourn their deaths, we must also address the common risk factors shared among many of the victims that put transgender people at higher risk of violence.

Out of the 128 known victims of anti-transgender violence from 2013-2018,

80

were victims of gun violence, including four cases involving altercations with police where the use of deadly force has been questioned.

At least
21

victims are suspected to have been killed by intimate partners.

At least
41

victims reportedly engaged in sex work, including many who are believed to have died while performing such work.

According to media interviews with family members and friends, several victims engaged in sex work out of financial necessity and/or to save up for expensive but medically-necessary transition-related care they would otherwise be unable to afford.

At least
10

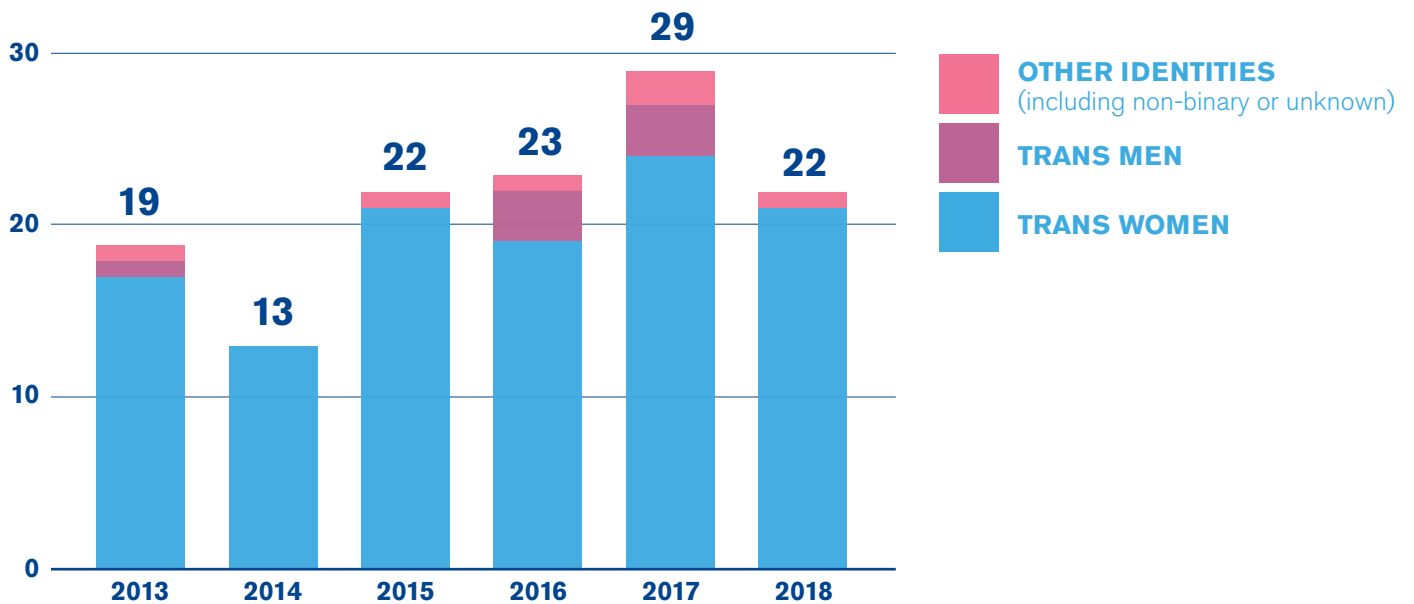
victims experienced homelessness or housing insecurity, either in the past or at the time of their deaths.

This figure does not capture or include other victims who may have been experiencing poverty or economic instability, issues that disproportionately impact transgender people and people of color.

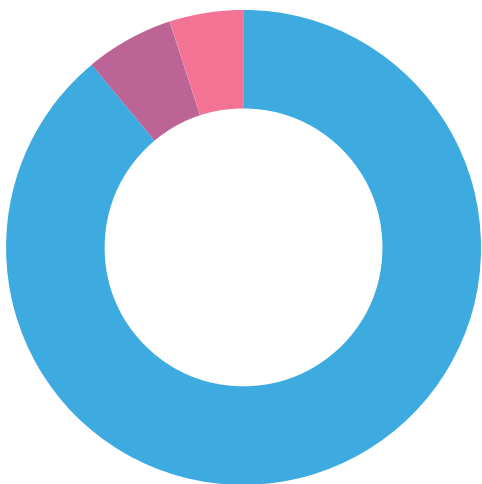
Data as of November 7, 2018. Note: we say "at least" for the above figures, recognizing that they likely undercount and fail to capture the lived experiences of several victims for whom we have very little information. Unfortunately, tracking and researching these risk factors among victims is limited by information reported in media reports or available elsewhere online (e.g., on social media or other accounts by loved ones).

GENDER IDENTITY

Annual Known Cases of Fatal Anti-Transgender Violence by Gender Identity (2013 – 2018*)



Gender Identity of Victims, 2013 – 2018*



	TRANS WOMEN	TRANS MEN	OTHER IDENTITIES	TOTAL
2013	17	1	1	19
2014	13	0	0	13
2015	21	0	1	22
2016	19	3	1	23
2017	24	3	2	29
2018*	21	0	1	22
TOTAL	115	7	6	128

*Data as of November 7, 2018. Compiled based on information provided by police and news reports, which may not always be complete or fully accurate.

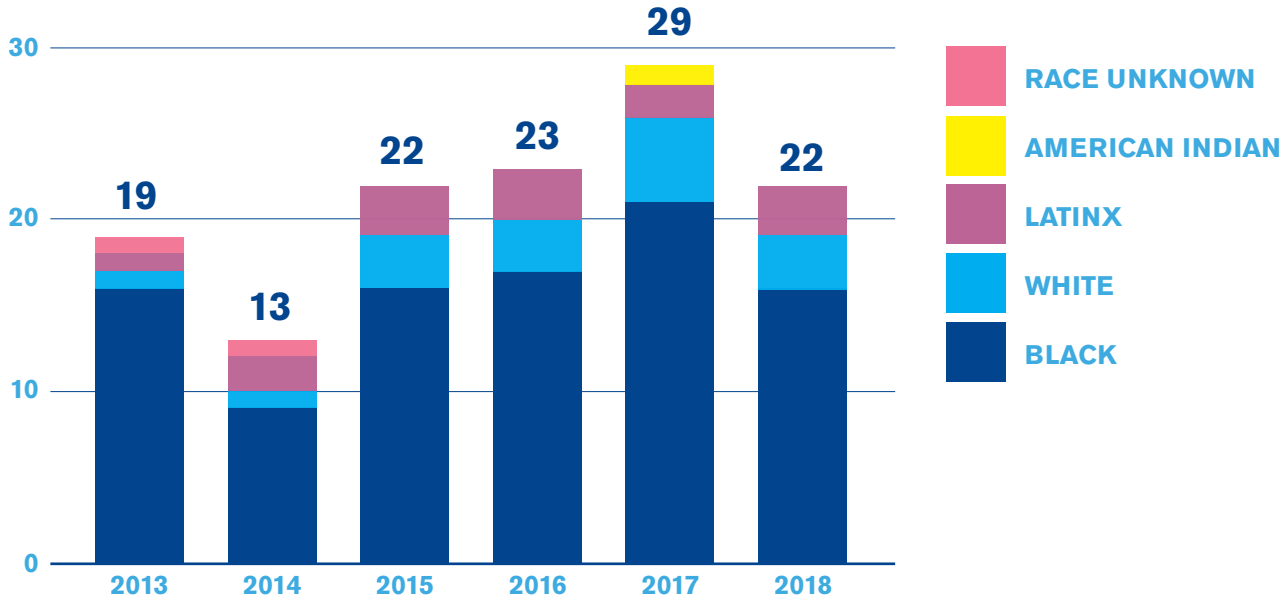
TRANS WOMEN: 115

TRANS MEN: 7

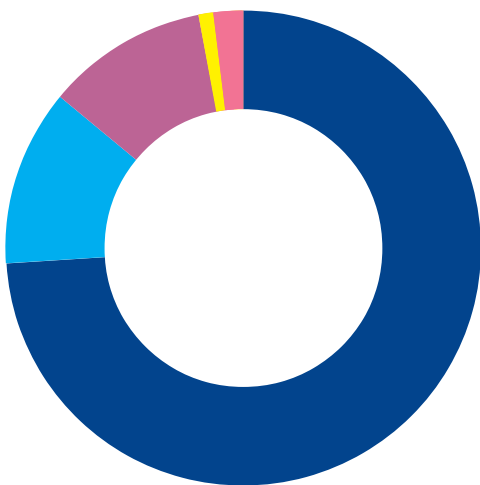
OTHER IDENTITIES: 6

RACE

Annual Known Cases of Fatal Anti-Transgender Violence by Race (2013 – 2018*)



Race/Ethnicity of Victims, 2013 – 2018*



	BLACK	WHITE	LATINX	AMERICAN INDIAN	RACE UNKNOWN	TOTAL
2013	16	1	1	0	1	19
2014	9	1	2	0	1	13
2015	16	3	3	0	0	22
2016	17	3	3	0	0	23
2017	21	5	2	1	0	29
2018	16	3	3	0	0	22
TOTAL 2013-18	95	16	14	1	2	128



Note: Count for Latinx includes one individual who identified as Latina and mixed race.
 *Data as of November 7, 2018. Compiled based on information provided by police and news reports, which may not always be complete or fully accurate.

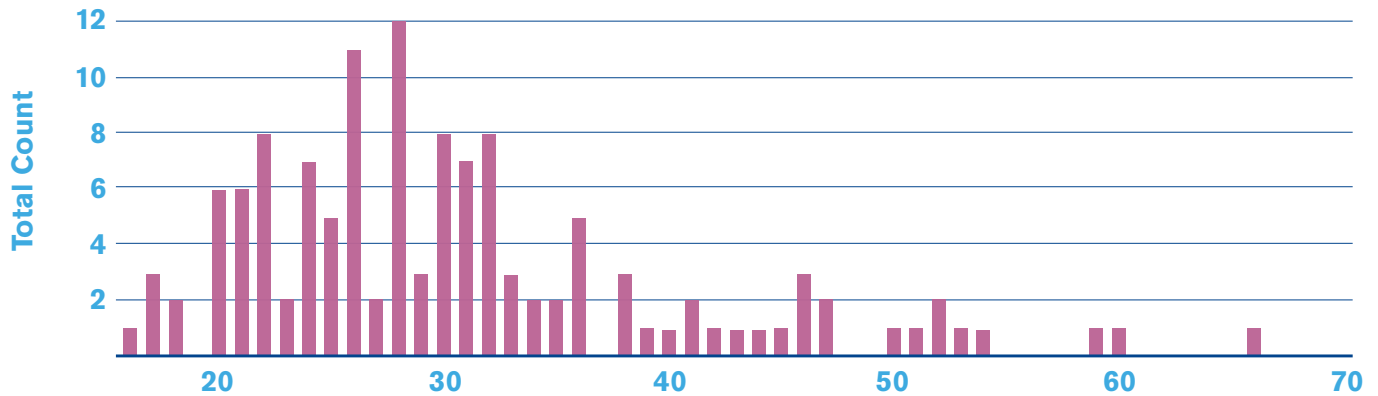
AGE

Age of Victims, 2013 – 2018*

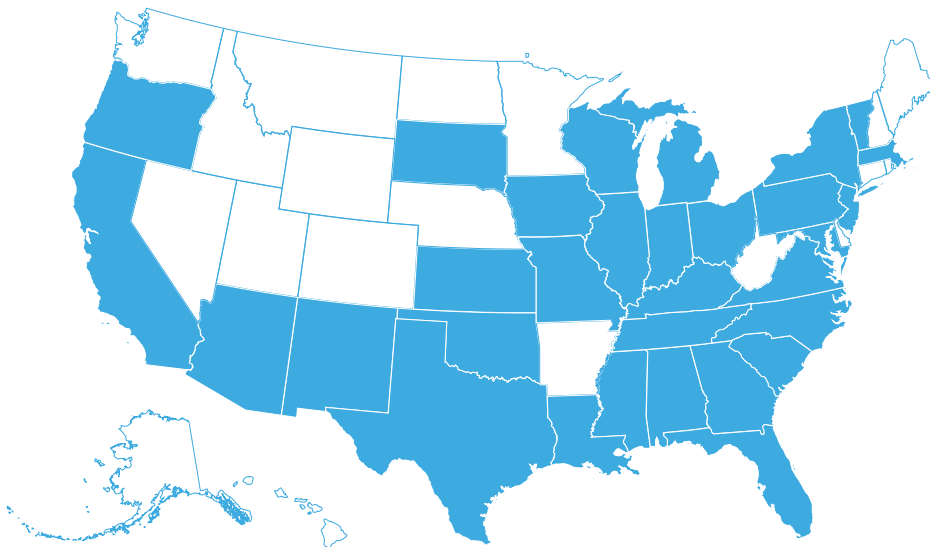
MIN: 16

MAX: 66

MEDIAN: 28



LOCATION



ALABAMA	2
ARIZONA	2
CALIFORNIA	11
DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA	1
FLORIDA	12
GEORGIA	8
IOWA	1
ILLINOIS	5
INDIANA	1
KANSAS	1
KENTUCKY	1
LOUISIANA	13
MASSACHUSETTS	1
MARYLAND	7
MICHIGAN	4
MISSOURI	4
MISSISSIPPI	3
NORTH CAROLINA	3
NEW JERSEY	1
NEW MEXICO	1
NEW YORK	5
OHIO	10
OKLAHOMA	1
OREGON	1
PENNSYLVANIA	6
SOUTH CAROLINA	1
SOUTH DAKOTA	1
TENNESSEE	2
TEXAS	12
VIRGINIA	5
VERMONT	1
WISCONSIN	1
TOTAL U.S.	128

TAKE ACTION

Anti-transgender violence is not a new phenomenon. We know that it disproportionately impacts young transgender women of color, and we can identify common risk factors shared among many of its victims. But in order for us to end this deeply complex crisis, we must constantly identify new approaches and engage wider audiences to address the root causes that lead transgender people to face a higher risk of violence.

Learn. Understand. Educate others. Support equality and show up for the transgender community.

Below, we summarize the major ways that we can address each issue within this larger crisis, as explained in detail earlier in this report. As you review them, think about what steps you may be most qualified or able to take on personally. Consider others you know — especially those either other areas of influence or expertise — whom you might be able to educate and raise awareness with about this crisis.

There are many steps all of us can take to address anti-transgender stigma, discrimination and risk factors that lead to a higher rate of violence.

Eliminating Anti-Trans Stigma

Lack of Family Acceptance

1. Educate family members and other loved ones about transgender inclusion
2. Provide culturally-relevant resources for transgender people and their families
3. Offer additional support for youth who face rejection and homelessness

Hostile Political Climate

1. Elevate transgender voices and support pro-equality elected officials
2. Fight for critical non-discrimination protections
3. Actively voice your support for the transgender community

Cultural Marginalization & Invisibility

1. Make your communities more transgender inclusive
2. Support and elevate transgender voices in media
3. Raise awareness of the issues transgender people face

Opening Opportunities Across Society

Setbacks in Education

1. Create safe spaces for transgender youth
2. Advocate for transgender-inclusive policies and anti-bullying laws
3. Combat misinformation about transgender people in schools

Employment Discrimination

1. Expand non-discrimination policies at the federal, state and local level
2. Encourage all employers to engage in eliminating workplace discrimination
3. Ensure transgender working people have a pathway to success

Barriers for Immigrants, Refugees & Asylum Seekers

1. Tell ICE they must ensure the safety and well-being of transgender detainees
2. Call for the U.S. Government to resettle at least 75,000 refugees in 2019
3. Hold the U.S. government accountable to speaking up for international LGBTQ human rights

Exclusion from Health Care & Social Services

1. Expand and protect health care coverage for transgender people
2. Increase provider expertise and cultural competency
3. Provide transgender-specific social services

Unequal Policing & Criminal Justice System

1. Enhance law enforcement response and training
2. Ensure that law enforcement agencies accurately identify, investigate and report hate crimes based on sexual orientation and gender identity to both state and federal agencies
3. Ensure that detention policies include protections for transgender detainees

Barriers to Legal Identification

1. Increase pressure on all states to facilitate gender marker changes
2. Eliminate exclusionary barriers to ID changes
3. Educate and train “gatekeepers” to public accommodations

Reducing Risk Factors to Violence

Intimate Partner Violence & Sexual Assault

1. Explicitly include transgender issues in conversations surrounding IPV and sexual assault
2. Ensure medical and mental health services are available for transgender survivors
3. Train law enforcement to respond appropriately

Engagement in Survival Sex Work

1. Explore and address the impact criminalization has on public safety
2. Provide additional resources and support for survival sex workers
3. Reframe the narrative surrounding sex work and its relation to the transgender community

Poverty & Homelessness

1. Educate others on disparities transgender and gender-expansive people face related to homelessness and poverty.
2. Ensure homeless shelters are welcoming spaces for transgender people
3. Demand transgender-inclusive resources for low-income individuals in your community

Physical & Mental Health Disparities

1. Expand access to transgender-inclusive health services for youth
2. Enhance services for low-income and homeless populations
3. Change the narrative surrounding transgender identities and mental health

We see you off with messages of solidarity and resilience from transgender activists:

“ Walking in one’s truth does not mean you don’t recognize the truth of others, it means you have placed a value on your truth... it means you are resilient.. ”

-Marissa Miller, *nationally recognized advocate for human rights, social justice, health equity and LGBTQ equality*

“ Our transness embodies our resiliency, and in that resiliency we see our power. We see the individual agency we have demonstrated in living our truth despite all of the barriers in the world, and the bullies see that power and they are jealous of it. No matter the challenges we face, we must never forget the simple fact that resiliency is strength, authenticity and hope – and we carry that with us from the scariest of spaces to the safest of places. ”

-Sarah McBride, *National Press Secretary at HRC, trans activist and author*

“ Resiliency comes in knowing that our blackness and trans identity are intertwined so beautifully they cannot be pulled apart. It is in the intersection of my identities that pride, like a phoenix, rises from the ashes of oppression. Resiliency is knowing the fire in my black trans heart burns brighter and with a purpose so strong, nothing can diminish it. ”

-Zeam Porter, *writer and activist*

“ Resiliency is that small ember, kept warm by love, encouraged by hope, lifted in faith that reminds us that we, too, have a right to be here. There are so many who look at us and say that because we are who we are, we are not enough. But I have the prayers of my parents, the courage of my child, the substance of my ancestors reminding me that yes, we are enough and we can and must keep going. ”

-Ea Porter, *member of the HRC Foundation’s Parents for Transgender Equality Council*

“ As a trans Latinx woman who’s survived many acts of violence, my survival was dependent on the help of allies and those who work in solidarity to fight for my rights, housing and dignity. Trans people are brave, strong, resilient and courageous, but even so we still need your solidarity to fight for equality, safety and the right to exist. ”

-Laya Monarez, *Operations Coordinator at the Human Rights Campaign, DC artist, LGBTQ and sex worker rights advocate*

“ It’s a volatile time across the country for everyone, especially trans and non-binary people. It is urgent for trans and non-binary people to be themselves but to come together at this very crucial juncture in the country. This means that we continue to fight for our rights, especially as trans and non-binary people of color, but the most powerful way to do this is together. We must remember that the fight should not be within the community, but with those outside the community. Hate crimes under the Trump Administration have skyrocketed by 17% and continue to grow rapidly. To succeed, we must bond together to do the work. ”

-Kylar W. Broadus, Esq., *Executive Director, Trans People of Color Coalition (TPOCC)*

“ At least 128 transgender people – the vast majority transgender women of color – have been killed in the last five years. But most people can’t even name one victim – one human being who left behind family, friends and a future. We must do better. Solidarity means showing up, speaking out, saying their names and steadfastly working to change the realities that conspire to put transgender people at risk of violence. We can do better. ”

-Jay Brown, *trans activist and Acting Senior Vice President, HRC Foundation*

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

Human Rights Campaign Foundation, Public Education & Research Program

The HRC Foundation's Public Education & Research Program spearheads a wide variety of LGBTQ advocacy and outreach campaigns, working to ensure that the HRC Foundation's resources and programs are timely, impactful and inclusive. In addition to publishing resource guides, informational materials and reports, the team conducts original quantitative and qualitative research exploring the lived experiences of LGBTQ people. The program also collaborates with academic researchers and provides guidance to other HRC initiatives in support of efforts to advance LGBTQ equality and well-being.

Special thanks to report author **Mark Lee**, HRC Foundation Senior Content Manager, for his leadership and research efforts on this project. Thanks to Senior Research Manager **Liam Miranda**, Outreach & Research Coordinator **Katalina Hadfield**, and Public Education & Research Interns **Jake Mazeitis** and **Gabrielle Winger** for their invaluable contributions.

Tracking the epidemic of fatal violence facing transgender people requires the combined efforts of many people who have worked over several years to diligently research, document and share the stories of those lost too soon. First and foremost, the HRC Foundation's Acting Senior Vice President, **Jay Brown**, and HRC National Press Secretary, **Sarah McBride**, have provided leadership, guidance and support throughout this difficult task.

Special thanks to the **HRC Trans Justice Working Group** and HRC staff members Liz Halloran, Rokia Hassanein, Sula Malina, Brian McBride, Hayley Miller, Helen Parshall and Allison Turner for their collective efforts in tracking and reporting the deaths of transgender individuals, as well as elevating the stories of those who have passed.

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Research on LGBTQ populations, and especially transgender and gender-expansive people, is often limited and difficult to conduct. In the creation of this project, HRC is grateful for the efforts of other researchers whose data and findings we have elevated throughout this report. We are so thankful for the work of [TransGriot](#) and Monica Roberts in their steadfast efforts to bring visibility to the transgender lives lost due to violence. We also applaud the groundbreaking research and advocacy of the [National Center for Transgender Equality](#) and their [2015 U.S. Transgender Survey](#). Additional thanks to other leading researchers, reporters and advocates, including the Center for American Progress, Everytown for Gun Safety, the Family Acceptance Project, FORGE, GLAAD, GLSEN, the Movement Advancement Project, the National Coalition of Anti-Violence Programs, the National LGBTQ Task Force, Pew Research, Pittsburgh Lesbian Correspondents, Transgender Europe, the Transgender Law Center, the Trans People of Color Coalition, Transrespect versus Transphobia Worldwide, the University of Connecticut, the Williams Institute, and countless others.

About the Human Rights Campaign Foundation

The Human Rights Campaign Foundation improves the lives of lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and queer (LGBTQ) people by working to increase understanding and encourage the adoption of LGBTQ-inclusive policies and practices. We build support for LGBTQ people among families and friends, co-workers and employers, pastors and parishioners, doctors and teachers, neighbors, and the general public. Through our programs and projects, we are enhancing the lived experiences of LGBTQ people and their families, as we change hearts and minds across America and around the globe. The HRC Foundation is a nonprofit, tax-exempt 501(c)(3) organization.

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