



“At the Core of this Horrendous Act is Domestic Violence...”

“...The suspect, who was in a relationship with one of the victims [Sandra Ibarra-Perez, 28] displayed power and control issues in this relationship. When he wasn’t invited to a family gathering, the suspect responded by opening fire and killing six victims before taking his own life.”¹

Those were the words of Colorado Springs Chief of Police Vince Niski during a press conference following the mass shooting that claimed the lives of six and the suspected shooter. This was only one mass shooting out of twelve reported to take place in the United States over Mother’s Day weekend. Twelve mass shootings in just two days, and this one was so close to home...

Despite there being no reported instances of domestic violence or protection orders between the two to law enforcement, we cannot know what really goes on behind closed doors. Investigators have learned that the shooter tried to control Ibarra-Perez, and isolate her from her family, her friends. While no physical harm may have been done to Ibarra-Perez prior to taking her life, the shooter’s actions were still abusive and indicative of domestic violence. Tamika Matthews, with Violence Free Colorado, explained that “it’s not uncommon for someone who is using abusive behaviors to expand those activities toward other people in that survivor’s circles.”²

It can be difficult to know when an abuser will escalate their behavior to life-threatening action, but we want everyone to know it is always possible, and in some cases: probable. Abusive behavior tends to be deliberately unpredictable; it is just one of their methods of control that hindsight sees repeating over and over again. Additionally, in more than 50% of shooting incidents in which four or more people were shot and killed (not including the shooter) between 2009 and 2017, the perpetrator also shot current or former intimate partners or family members.³

We have provided not only a list of our resources⁴ but those from Violence Free Colorado below.⁵ By including local and state-wide services, it is our hope to reach those who are in the most need. If you or someone you know is living through an abusive relationship, please reach out or encourage them to reach out for help. No one should live their lives in fear. No one should be made to feel worthless. You are not alone. You matter. Our crisis hotline is available 24/7: (719) 486-3530.

¹ [Victims Identified In Colorado Springs Mass Shooting At Birthday Party – CBS Denver \(cbslocal.com\)](#)

² [Domestic Violence Blamed For Mass Shooting At Colorado Springs Birthday Party – News, Weather & Sports For All Of Colorado \(cbslocal.com\)](#)

³ [Domestic Violence | Everytown Research & Policy | Everytown Research & Policy](#)

⁴ [Resources - Advocates of Lake County](#)

⁵ [Resources after Colorado Springs shooting - Violence Free Colorado](#)