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About This Series; [FINAL Edition]

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The Toll: Researchers are just beginning to discover what has been a hidden risk of pregnancy: Pregnant women and new mothers are more likely to be victims of homicide than to die of any single natural cause, several statewide studies have shown.

The Victims: As public health experts focus new attention on homicide during pregnancy, the Washington region has become a focal point. Research rarely casts light on the lives of those who were slain or how violence entered their lives at such a pivotal time.

The Legacy: The tragedy of maternal homicide lingers in the lives of children left behind, some of them born as their mothers were dying. Older siblings sometimes witness the violence. The children often must be raised by their grandparents.

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