

BATTERED WOMEN WHO KILL AND BATTERED WOMEN'S SYNDROME (BWS): OVERVIEW AND RESOURCES

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What is Battered Women's Syndrome (BWS)?

BWS is an affirmative defense which defendants may use in court cases as mitigation in homicide cases where a battered woman (the defendant) kills her abuser.

In Wisconsin, Battered Women's Syndrome is admissible as an affirmative defense to a crime. To read more about BWS as a defense in Wisconsin courts, view [State v. Richardson](#) and [State v. Head](#).

Federal courts also admit BWS as an affirmative defense in cases where a battered woman kills her abuser. Cornell University has published an [article](#) with a summary of what BWS is and summaries of two federal cases—*Ibn-Tamas v. United States* and *Dyas v. United States*—and a Connecticut case, *State v. Yusuf*.

Wisconsin Law on Homicide and BWS

Battered Women's Syndrome can be used as an affirmative defense when a domestic violence victim has been charged with homicide of her abuser. To view the different types of homicide in Wisconsin, click [here](#).

The National Clearinghouse for the Defense of Battered Women

The National Clearinghouse for the Defense of Battered Women (NCDBW) was founded in 1987 to work for justice for victims of battering charged with crimes where a history of abuse is relevant to their legal claim or defense. To visit the NCDBW's website, click [here](#).