

Bystander Survey 2006

New Poll Reveals Two In Three Americans Say It Is Hard To Recognize Domestic Violence

Despite Its Prevalence, The Patterns Of Domestic Violence Are Not Understood By Many Bystanders

Americans want to help but don't know what to do

A survey, commissioned by Fifth & Pacific Companies, Inc. (formerly Liz Claiborne Inc.) and Redbook magazine on domestic violence, reveals an information gap that may very well prevent Americans from taking action when they witness domestic violence. This survey was conducted to better understand how to motivate bystanders to help stop domestic violence.

Approximately two-thirds of Americans say it is hard to determine whether someone has been a victim of domestic abuse (64%) and want more information about what to do when confronted with domestic violence (65%). Poll results clearly indicate that education about this topic is not only needed but can help save lives since 7 in 10 Americans (69%) will take some action when they are able to recognize domestic violence.

Many Americans do not know the patterns of domestic abuse.

When asked to define what actions comprise domestic violence and abuse, 2 in 5 Americans (40%) did not even mention hitting, slapping and punching. Over 90% of Americans failed to define repeated emotional, verbal, sexual abuse and controlling behaviors as patterns of domestic violence and abuse.

Americans want more information.

A clear majority (65%) say they want more information about what to do when confronted by domestic violence. In fact, more than half of Americans (54%) say they may have been in situations where they believed domestic violence had occurred, but they didn't act because they were not sure what to do.

When they can identify domestic abuse, Americans will act.

Poll results demonstrate how important it is to inform Americans about what constitutes domestic violence and the need to provide them with tools to take action. Of the approximately half of Americans (52%) who did say they suspected that domestic violence was occurring among friends, family and co-workers, 69% say they took some kind of action.

- 46% talked to the abused individual.
- 43% talked to a family member or mutual friends.
- 38% talked to the person responsible.
- 35% contacted the police.
- 19% contacted domestic violence groups.

The survey was conducted in two phases: July 13-17 (2000) and August 3-7, 2006 (500) by Opinion Research Corporation and RF Insights using a computer interviewing system. More than 2000 adults, males and females, 18 years of age or older, in the continental United States were interviewed. The sample error is +/- 2.3%.