



## **First Annual Allstate Foundation National Poll on Domestic Violence Executive Summary**

The Allstate Foundation's National Poll on Domestic Violence was conducted by Murphy Marketing Research for The Allstate Foundation Domestic Violence Program and the National Network to End Domestic Violence Fund (NNEDV Fund). The goal of the survey was to gauge public awareness of the issue and reveal how Americans view domestic violence. The findings will be used to help the Foundation provide programming for its Domestic Violence Program, which focuses on the financial concerns of domestic violence survivors. The survey specifically asked questions about the financial concerns affecting domestic violence survivors.

As part of its Domestic Violence Program, The Allstate Foundation, in partnership with the NNEDV Fund, has made a long-term commitment to providing comprehensive programming and resources to provide comprehensive programming and resources to help survivors of domestic violence connect to resources that will help them live more safe and secure lives.

Domestic violence victims frequently cite lack of income, employment and financial stability as the strongest, most immediate deterrents to leaving an abusive situation. The devastation of leaving a home, income, benefits and economic security behind are struggles that all victims of domestic violence must overcome – regardless of their education, job skills and personal earning-potential – if they are to care for their families and live a life free from violence.

The national poll is a significant piece of research that will guide future domestic violence programming and public awareness efforts. The Allstate Foundation plans to regularly conduct a national poll on domestic violence to assess the needs of the domestic violence community.

The following are key findings of The Allstate Foundation's National Poll on Domestic Violence:

- **83% of respondents strongly agreed that domestic violence affects people in all racial, ethnic, educational, social and economic backgrounds.**
- **Approximately six out of ten respondents strongly agree that lack of money and a steady income is often a challenge faced by a survivor of domestic violence when leaving her/his abuser.**
- **More than a quarter (28%) of respondents thought that finding access to money or income to support the victim and/or children was the *most* difficult problem faced by those leaving an abusive situation, ranking second only to the fear that their abuser would find the victim.**
- **The majority of respondents reported that programs to help with financial challenges would be very valuable to domestic violence victims.**
  - Three quarters (75%) thought emergency funds would be very valuable.
  - Two thirds (67%) thought education and job training would be very valuable.
  - Over half (54%) thought training to help with financial challenges would be very valuable.

- **66% of respondents strongly agreed that domestic violence is a serious, widespread social problem in America.**
- **Eight out of ten respondents strongly agreed that domestic violence has a deep and lasting impact on individuals, families, communities and society as a whole.**
- **Nearly three-quarters (74%) of respondents personally know someone who is or has been a victim of domestic violence.**

The following are survey questions and responses that provide an understanding of attitudes and perceptions of domestic violence in the United States:

**Question:**

**“In your own words, how would you define domestic violence?”**

Respondents’ definitions of domestic violence tended to fall into three categories: abuse among family members, abuse in general and abuse/violence between two people (not necessarily family).

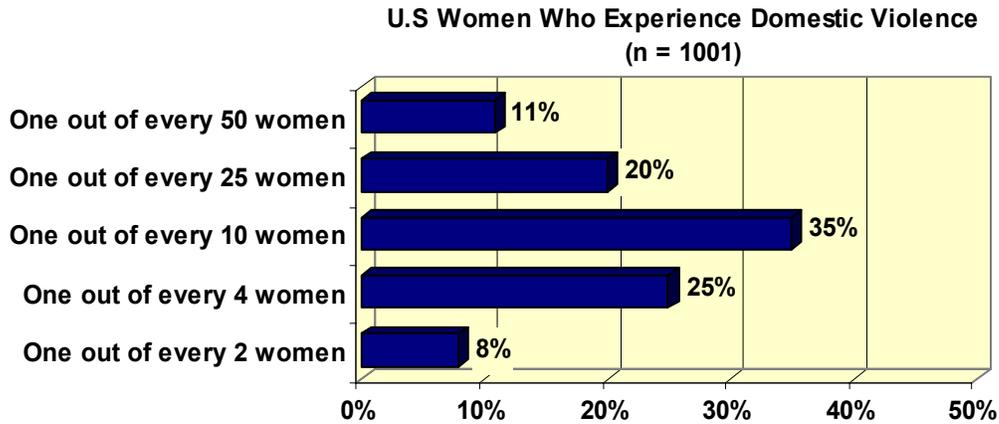
The following are a selection of verbatim responses from respondents:

- “I guess it’s when spouses disagree and hit each other.”
- “It’s the use of physical or emotional abuse within somebody in your household.”
- “Violence at home against any family member. It is one of the worst things that have happened to women and men in America and we don’t realize how far it reaches.”
- “What is domestic violence? I’ve lived it.”
- “Uncontrolled anger.”
- “Any act of aggression used against someone else that resides in the same household.”
- “It’s a power grab by one over the other. They use pain and strength over a weaker person to make themselves feel stronger or better than them.”
- “Violence in the household.”
- “I’ve been through it, I’ve seen it and it’s horrible.”
- “Just somebody hitting on somebody.”
- “Loss of self control and acts of ill will toward people who live within the same dwelling.”
- “I’m a victim of domestic violence and it’s the worst thing. You never know what will happen and when you ask for help it’s treated like nothing. Sometimes the people don’t believe you and that’s why a lot of women are scared to go to the police. You go back and continue to be a victim because it’s better than trying to get people to help you and believe you. Even the police don’t believe you. If you call you have to be black and blue. They don’t do anything.”

**Question:**

**“In your opinion, which of the following statistics do you feel most accurately describes the number of adult women living in the United States who will experience domestic violence at least once in her lifetime?”**

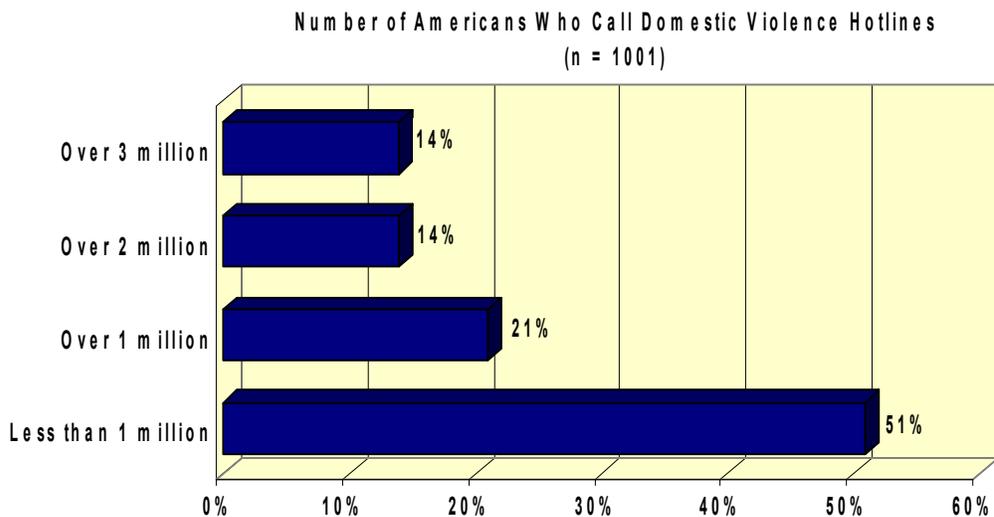
25% of the survey respondents accurately estimated the incidence of domestic violence in the United States. According to the Centers for Disease Control, one out of four women will experience domestic violence in her lifetime.



**Question:**

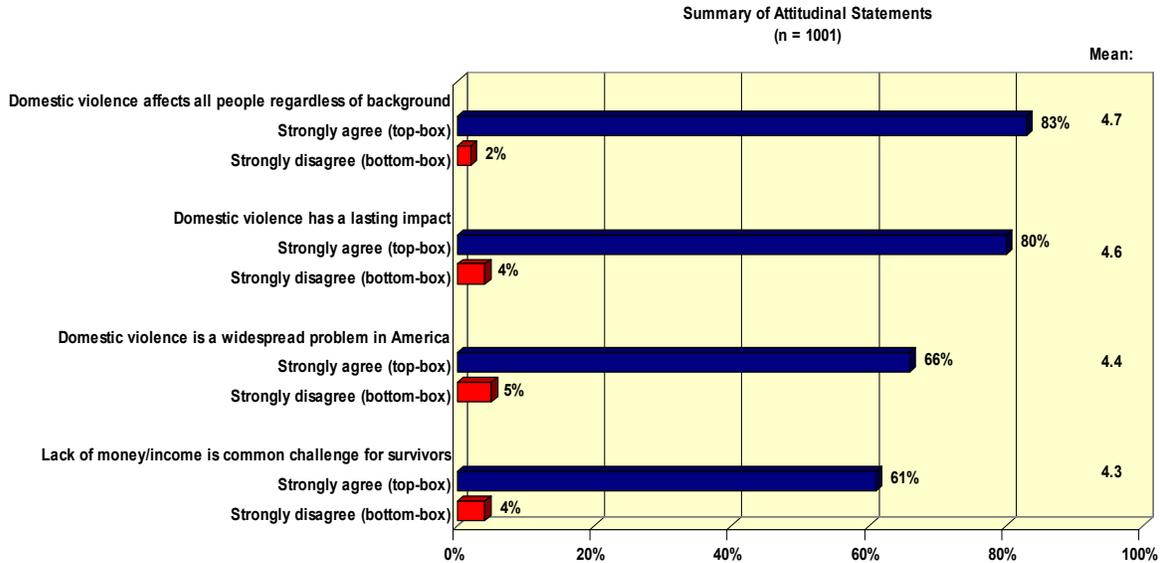
**“In your opinion, which of the following statistics do you feel most accurately describes the number of people in the United States who call local and national domestic violence hotlines for advice on escaping crisis situations or assisting friends or family in domestic violence situations?”**

Only 14% of respondents accurately estimated that over two million Americans call domestic violence hotlines each year. According to the National Network to End Domestic Violence, nearly 2.2 million people called local and national domestic violence hotlines in 2004 to escape crisis situations, seek advice about leaving batterers and assist friends and family who might be victims.



**Question:**

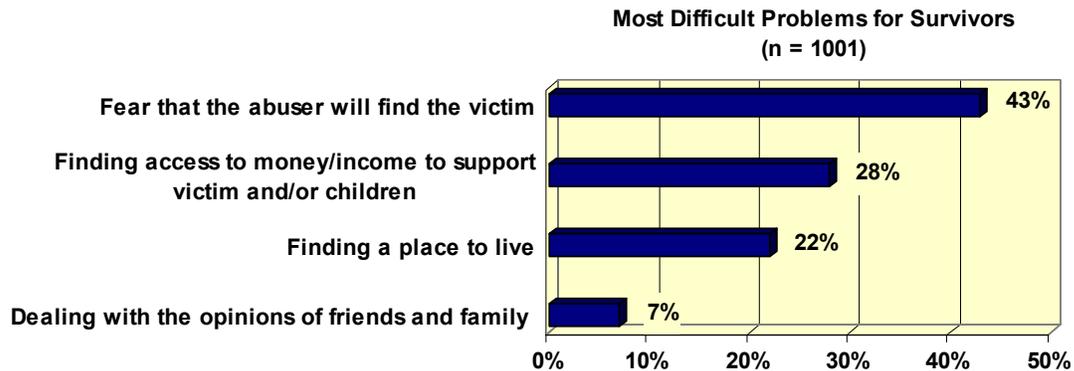
**“Please rate each of statement on a 5-point scale based on your level of agreement with the statement. A rating of 5 would mean you “strongly agree” and 1 means you ‘strongly disagree.’ You may choose any number from 1 to 5.”**



**Question:**

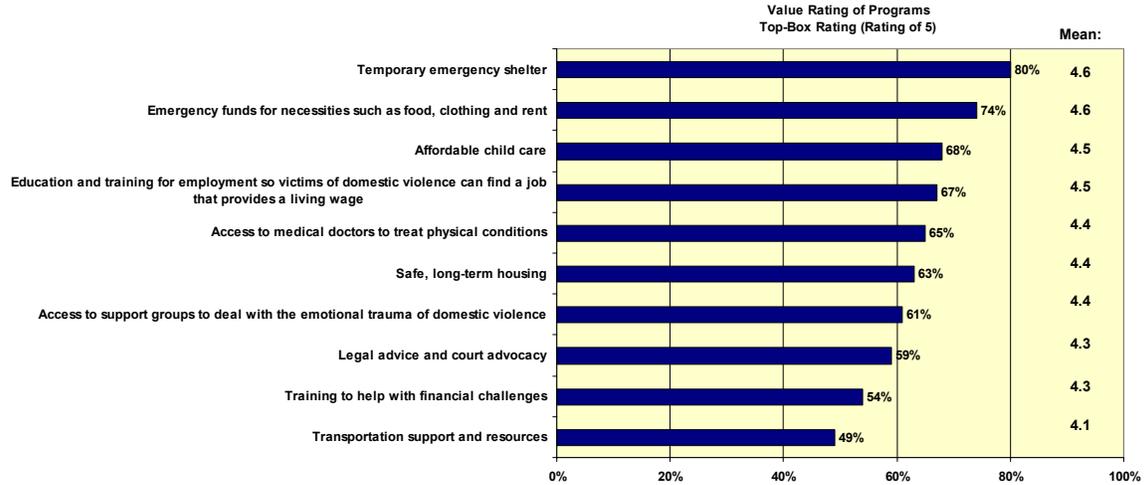
**“Please rank on a scale of 1 to 4 the problems a victim of domestic violence may face after they have left an abusive situation. A ranking of 1 would mean it is the ‘most difficult’ problem after leaving a violent situation and a 4 would mean it is the ‘least difficult’ problem.”**

The chart below shows that 43% of respondents ranked “Fear that the abuser will find the victim” first as the most difficult problem after leaving a violent situation. “Finding access to money/income to support victim and/or children” ranked second with 28% of respondents citing it as the most difficult problem after leaving a violent situation.



**Question:**

**“Please rate each program that may be available to victims of domestic violence on a 5-point scale based on how valuable you believe the program would be. A rating of 5 means you think it would be ‘very valuable’ and 1 means you think it would be ‘not valuable at all.’”**



**Question:**

**“Yes or no. I personally know people who are (have been) victims of domestic violence.”**

74% of survey respondents agreed that they personally know a victim of domestic violence.

**Gender and Ethnicity of Those Who Know a Victim of Domestic Violence  
Total Sample (n = 1001)**

	Total (n = 1001)	Gender		Ethnicity				All Others (n = 35*)
		Male (n = 348)	Female (n = 653)	White (n = 638)	Black (n = 140)	Asian (n = 53*)	Hispanic (n = 135)	
		(a)	(b)	(c)	(d)	(e)	(f)	
	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
Agree	74	71	76	76(e,g)	79(e,g)	49	73(e)	60
Disagree	26	29	24	24	21	51(c,d,f)	27	40(c,d)

The Allstate Foundation’s National Poll was a nationwide, random-digit-dialed telephone survey among 1001 respondents. Response quotas closely mirror the ethnicity of the current U.S. population – approximately 16 percent African-American, 14 percent Hispanic and 6 percent Asian. The survey was translated into Spanish and administered to Hispanics or Latinos by bilingual interviewers when necessary. All interviewers participated in a sensitivity training session before administering the poll. The total sample size of 1001 yields a margin of error of +/- 3.1 percentage points at the 95 percent confidence level.