“Mary Kay Truth About Abuse” Survey

National Findings from Third Survey of Domestic Violence Shelters in the United States

Released April 2011
Executive Summary

In light of the economy, shelters nationwide report:

- Domestic violence increases for third straight year
  - Three out of four shelters attribute this rise to financial issues
- Government cutbacks decrease shelters’ ability to help survivors
- Shelters expect the situation will only get worse in next 12 months
- Abuse is more severe
- Women are staying longer in abusive relationships
- Survivors struggle to find jobs
- Children are significantly affected
- Shelters are decreasing services and eliminating staff positions
Three out of four shelters report an increase in women seeking assistance from abuse.
75 percent of shelters note an increase in women with children seeking assistance from abuse.

Question 3
73 percent of shelters attribute rise in abuse to financial issues, 48 percent to job loss
Three out of four shelters indicate their funding has decreased the most from governmental organizations.
89 percent of shelters expect their overall situation during the next 12 months will be worse than now, or the same as now.
More than half of shelters report the abuse is more violent now than before economic downturn.
More than three-fourths of shelters indicate women they served stayed longer in abusive relationships because of the economy.
65 percent of women in shelters can’t find employment due to economy

Of the women who have sought assistance as a result of domestic violence, what percent of these women have also experienced the following situation due to the economy? (Insert percentage.)

Women who can't find a job

0%  20%  40%  60%  80%

65%
Shelters report more than 95 percent of children experience emotional and behavioral effects due to domestic violence.
95 percent of shelters state that a calming outdoor area would help their clients’ recovery process.

![Pie chart showing responses to the question: Would having a calming outdoor area at a shelter help survivors and/or their children in the recovery process?]

- **Yes, a calming outdoor area would greatly help our clients in the recovery process**: 68%
- **Yes, a calming outdoor area would somewhat help our clients in the recovery process**: 27%
- **No, a calming outdoor area would not help our clients in the recovery process**: 4%
47 percent of shelters decreased their services due to the economy
Of those shelters decreasing services, 72 percent canceled or scaled back their services, while 63 percent eliminated staff positions.
Of those shelters decreasing services, more than one-third couldn’t meet all their clients’ transitional housing needs
Survey Methodology

• The third “Mary Kay Truth About Abuse” survey polled 672 domestic violence shelters across the United States.
  – 24 percent are from the Northeast
  – 27 percent of shelters from the South
  – 27 percent from the Midwest
  – 22 percent from the West

• The survey focused on domestic violence and the economy since September 2008, a major turning point in the U.S. economy.

• The survey was designed to understand how the economy has impacted shelters during the time period of September 2008 until now. All questions were written with this time frame in mind.

• The study was conducted online between March 14-30, 2011.

• Mary Kay conducted its first nationwide survey of shelters in 2009 and the second in 2010.

• National survey findings are located at:

• Regional survey findings are available upon request.