



New Poll Reveals Two in Three Americans say it is Hard to Recognize Domestic Violence

Thursday September 21, 2006, 9:17 am ET

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

NEW YORK, Sept. 21 /PRNewswire/ – A surprising survey on domestic violence released today reveals an information gap that may very well prevent Americans from taking action when they witness 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.

This survey, commissioned to better understand how to motivate bystanders to help stop domestic violence, was announced by Redbook magazine and Liz Claiborne Inc. during the third annual It's Time To Talk Day – a national movement designed specifically to engage the public to talk about domestic violence and learn what to do to help victims.

“The results of this bystander survey vividly demonstrate the urgent need to educate the public that domestic violence is everybody’s business and we all need to get involved,” states Jane Randel, vice president, Corporate Communications for Liz Claiborne Inc. “We must get past the stigma that domestic violence is a private matter and align all sectors of society – business, social service organizations and government – to provide information to empower victims and bystanders to stop the abuse.”

To raise awareness and educate Americans about domestic violence and all the resources available to help bystanders and victims, Redbook, Liz Claiborne Inc. and Talkers Magazine, the national magazine for Talk Radio are organizing more than 40 domestic violence service providers, public officials and advocates, celebrities, corporate sector leaders and congressional representatives to talk with radio hosts across the country about the importance of helping to stop domestic violence. Last year more than 12.5 million talk radio listeners were reached with this message.

Redbook’s October issue also details the heroic efforts of everyday Americans who took extraordinary measures to help domestic violent victims and the magazine offers tips for how to intervene and assist possible victims in a sensitive and effective way.

“The survey confirms that Americans continue to fail to recognize both the blatant and subtle signs of domestic abuse. Domestic violence ranges from pushing and shoving to demeaning talk and isolation from friends and family,” notes Stacy Morrison, editor in chief of Redbook magazine. “I feel it’s so important to talk and write and share stories about domestic violence. I want people to know what it looks like and not be afraid to step in and help someone who needs it.”

It’s Time To Talk Day is supported by Redbook magazine, Liz Claiborne Inc. and major domestic violence organizations around the country including the National Domestic Violence Hotline, Safe Horizon, the Corporate Alliance to End Partner Violence and Break the Cycle.

The survey commissioned by Liz Claiborne Inc. 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%.

Since 1991 Liz Claiborne Inc. has been working to end domestic violence. Through its Love Is Not Abuse Program, the company provides information and tools that men, women, children, teens and corporate executives can use to learn more about the issue and find out how they can help end this epidemic. <http://www.loveisnotabuse.com>.