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May 14, 1993

MEMORANDUM

TO: Carol Rasco  
FROM: Betsey Wright *BW*  
RE: Appointments for representatives of (1) National Breast Cancer Coalition and (2) Family Violence Prevention Fund

Marie Bass and Joanne Howes are two long-time friends of mine who have a company which works only with non-profit organizations.

When I had lunch with them yesterday, they talked to me about their work with the above two groups and asked who I thought they should communicate with in the Administration about them.

Well, YOU won my vote on both. I hope you will set appointments with them to discuss ways to work together.

I am attaching materials about both organizations and more details in a memo from Joanne.

Many thanks.

MEMORANDUM

Roz

TO: Betsey Wright - Call her office & tell them we are setting up <sup>the</sup> 2 appts.

FR: Joanne Howes - Call, see notes by each meeting

RE: Carol Rasco's meeting with NBCC and FVPF

DATE: 5/13/93

---

First, thanks for lunch! It was great to see you and to have you back in town.

I also appreciate your facilitating a meeting with Carol Rasco and the two organizations. Again, they are as follows:

- 1) **Fran Visco**  
**President**  
**National Breast Cancer Coalition (NBCC)**

NBCC is a coalition of over 175 organizations representing thousand of women and their families, friends and physicians. On May 2nd, the NBCC launched a campaign to gather 2.6 million signatures to request President Clinton to declare the eradication of breast cancer a national priority and convene a group of experts to devise a national strategy.

NBCC wishes to deliver these signature to the President in October, National Breast Cancer Awareness Month and we would like to begin to plan how best to make that happen so that it is a win-win situation.

Although Fran Visco lives in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, she is willing to come to town whenever its convenient for Carol. Fran will be in Washington, D.C on May 19th.

No, I need the time to work on some stuff. Will have to see another day.

2:30 ?

→

Fine if it can be worked out on my schedule 30 minutes in

Betsey Wright  
Page 2

- 2) **Esta Soler**  
**Executive Director**  
**Family Violence Prevention Fund (FVPPF)**  
**San Francisco, CA**

FVPPF is the leading national organization providing services to victims of domestic violence and devising strategies to reduce the incidence. In October, the FVPPF will launch a national public awareness media campaign aimed at prevention. At the same time, we would like the President to announce the formation of an Interagency Task Force, perhaps led by the departments of HHS and Justice. We have had preliminary, positive discussions with Sarah Kovner at HHS and Nancy McFadden at Justice.

If you think it would be helpful, please share some additional information on both projects that is included in this package with Carol.

After you have had a chance to discuss this with Carol, I am looking forward to hearing from you to discuss the appropriate next steps to take. Thanks again for helping; it is very appreciated.

*Week of June 8, 30 minutes max.*

*June 8 is fine - anything I put "Week of" I mean anything during that week that is clear*

**THERE'S NO EXCUSE**

*for Domestic Violence*

**A Project of the Family Violence Prevention Fund**

THERE'S NO EXCUSE

**NEWS RELEASE**

April 19, 1993

**CONTACT:** Lisa Lederer  
202/371-1999  
Marissa Ghez  
415/821-4553

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ESTA SOLER**

**MANY MORE AMERICANS HAVE WITNESSED DOMESTIC VIOLENCE  
THAN MUGGINGS & ROBBERIES COMBINED, STUDY SHOWS**

***Public Is Gravely Concerned About Battering***

WASHINGTON, D.C. -- Nearly nine out of every ten Americans say that women being beaten by their husbands or boyfriends is a serious problem facing many families, and more than one in three Americans report witnessing an incident of domestic violence. These are among the findings of the first comprehensive nationwide survey on domestic violence, which was released here today by the Family Violence Prevention Fund at a hearing before the Subcommittee on Health and the Environment of the House of Representatives. The public opinion research, designed by EDK Associates President Ethel Klein, consisted of a national survey of 1,000 Americans, 12 focus groups in five cities, and additional surveys of 300 African-Americans, 300 Latinos and 300 Asian-Americans.

The survey found that 34 percent of Americans say they have witnessed an incident of domestic violence, while only 19 percent report witnessing a robbery or mugging.

more

*There's No Excuse for Domestic Violence.*

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Add One

"Domestic violence is a staggering social problem that affects every sector of American life," Fund Executive Director Esta Soler told the Subcommittee. "The FBI estimates that every 15 seconds, a woman is beaten by her husband or boyfriend. Domestic violence fills emergency rooms and morgues, contributes to juvenile delinquency, and destroys families."

Among the other findings in the public opinion research:

- Fourteen percent of women admit to having been violently abused by a husband or boyfriend. More than half (57 percent) of respondents report witnessing potentially violent circumstances. One in two women says battering is not uncommon in relationships.
- Americans of every age group and race agree that violence is not just a physical assault, but also an attack on women's dignity and freedom.
- The public no longer blames the woman or excuses the man. Nor do most Americans accept the excuse that "he was drunk." But Americans are not sure why there is so much violence against women.
- While 81 percent of respondents say that something can be done to reduce the amount of violence against women, 26 percent say they don't know what specific action to take. Twenty-two percent recommend more counseling and 15 percent recommend teaching school children to avoid violence.
- The public has doubt about when a private fight becomes a matter of public policy. Americans condemn such abusive behavior as shouting, threatening, grabbing and shoving. But few people believe that an arrest should be made or that the woman should leave until the likelihood of injury grows.
- Ninety-three percent of Americans say they would talk to friends, family or clergy if someone they knew was being beaten; and 90 percent say they would call the police if they witnessed a man beating a woman.

more

Add Two

"As we conducted this research, a surprisingly large number of women and men volunteered personal tales of battering and abuse," Klein said. "Most people don't really know why men beat women, but what they do know is that it is wrong and that there is no excuse for it."

"It is clear that we cannot build enough jails or shelters to resolve this problem," Soler said. "Prevention of violence is the key. We believe America is ready to expand its preventive response to this disgraceful epidemic."

Soler told the Subcommittee that, based on this research, the Family Violence Prevention Fund is launching a major, multi-year national public education and media campaign. **THERE'S NO EXCUSE FOR DOMESTIC VIOLENCE** is the theme of the new campaign, which will include national advertising, grassroots activity, and outreach to policymakers and the entertainment and journalism communities. The campaign's goals are to significantly reduce the incidence of domestic violence by reshaping public attitudes about battering.

Founded in 1980, the Family Violence Prevention Fund is the leading national organization working to develop innovative responses to the epidemic of domestic violence. The Fund's model programs and policies have been replicated in more than 40 states and seven foreign countries. In San Francisco, the Fund created the Family Violence Project, which provides direct support to thousands of victims of domestic violence every year.

# # # #

Full copies of the public opinion research are available to the media. To obtain a copy, call Lisa Lederer at 202/371-1999 or Marissa Ghez at 415/821-4553.



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Executive Director  
Esta Soler

Testimony of

Esta Soler

Executive Director

Family Violence Prevention Fund

Before the

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Energy and Commerce Committee

Subcommittee on Health and the Environment

April 19, 1993





Thank you, Chairman Waxman and members of the Health and Environment Subcommittee, for inviting me to testify today.

My name is Esta Soler. I am the Executive Director of the Family Violence Prevention Fund, a national organization that has been in the forefront of developing innovative responses to the epidemic of domestic violence for the past decade. The Family Violence Prevention Fund's model programs and policies have been replicated in more than 40 states and seven foreign countries.

Domestic violence is a staggering social problem that affects every sector of American life. The FBI estimates that every 15 seconds, a woman is beaten by her husband or boyfriend. More women are seriously injured by beatings than by car accidents, muggings, and rape combined. Domestic violence fills emergency rooms and morgues, contributes to juvenile delinquency, and destroys families, yet the issue is virtually absent from public discourse.

Indeed, while efforts to stem gang-related killings have captured the public imagination, the equally lethal impact of domestic violence has been largely ignored. As a result, there has been little public outrage over the growing number of dead and wounded. Ladies and gentleman, it is time to recognize domestic violence as the serious crime that it is.

Page Two, Soler

It is clear that America cannot build enough jails or shelters to resolve the problem; these are partial solutions. Prevention of violence is the key, and with an Administration and Congress both ready to address the issue of domestic violence, and 15 years of experience in the field, America is ready to expand its preventive response to this disgraceful national epidemic.

### PREVALENCE

In advance of launching a national prevention campaign, the Family Violence Prevention Fund recently conducted the first comprehensive and inclusive attitudinal survey on public awareness about domestic violence, designed by Ethel Klein, President of EDK Associates. One of the most startling findings of this survey is that 34% of Americans say they have witnessed an incident of domestic violence, while only 19% report witnessing a robbery or mugging. The overwhelming majority (87%) of Americans say that the beating of women by their husbands or boyfriends is a serious problem. Americans of every age group and race agree that violence is not just a physical assault but also an attack on women's dignity and freedom.

THERE'S NO EXCUSE

Despite the prevalence, most Americans are uncertain about why this behavior occurs. Our research shows that the American public no longer blames the woman or excuses the man.

Unlike in the past, traditional solutions that only stress "family values" are no longer accepted by today's American public. Solutions suggesting that women should stay home, or that women should stop men from drinking were accepted by a scant 2% of the population.

One woman echoed the sentiments of many by saying, "There are men who beat without drinking. [The] men who drink and beat women, they drink in order to beat. They don't beat because they drink."

Despite the myths perpetuated for generations, most Americans today believe that there is no excuse for domestic violence. As one college-educated man from Dallas said in a focus group, "I don't know [why her boyfriend beat her], but there's no reason to hit a woman. That's absolutely wrong. . . If she did something horrible, [he] can leave."

Page Four, Soler

Based on this public opinion research, the Family Violence Prevention fund is launching a major, multi-year national public education and media campaign. The message is THERE'S NO EXCUSE FOR DOMESTIC VIOLENCE. Our mission will be to significantly reduce the incidence of domestic violence by reshaping public attitudes about battering.

Ours is an ambitious goal. Like with drunk driving and cigarette smoking, it is time for the American public and our nation's leaders to recognize that domestic violence has become a public health crisis, and that it can no longer be approached as a private matter. When the American Medical Association estimates that one out of every three women who seeks emergency medical care does so because of an abusive partner, it is time to take action. The costs of continuing to ignore this disgraceful epidemic are simply too great to sustain.

The climate is right for Congress to support and fund a comprehensive national prevention program that will mobilize public action by demonstrating that domestic violence will no longer be tolerated -- by the police, the courts, the workplace, by friends, family and neighbors.

Honorable Members of Congress, There is no excuse for us to ignore this problem any longer.

## SUMMARY

Domestic violence is a staggering social problem that affects every sector of American life. The Federal Bureau of Investigation estimates that every 15 seconds, a woman is beaten by her husband or boyfriend. More women are seriously injured by beatings than by car accidents, muggings and rape combined. Domestic violence fills emergency rooms and morgues, contributes to juvenile delinquency and destroys families. Yet, the issue is virtually absent from public discourse.

It is clear that America cannot build enough jails or shelters to resolve this problem; these are partial solutions. With an Administration and Congress both ready to address the issue of domestic violence, and 15 years of experience in the field, America may be ready to expand its preventive response to this disgraceful national epidemic.

In advance of launching a national prevention campaign, the Family Violence Prevention Fund recently conducted extensive research to explore public attitudes about domestic violence. The Fund engaged Ethel Klein, President of the New York-based public opinion research firm EDK Associates, to conduct the most comprehensive attitudinal survey on this issue to date. The study consisted of 12 in-depth focus groups in five cities and a national survey of 1,000 men and women throughout the country. To allow for in-depth demographic analysis and comparisons across sex, race and ethnicity, additional surveys were conducted of 300 African-Americans, 300 Latinos and 300 Asian-Americans. The findings are presented here.

### PREVALENCE

Perhaps the most startling findings concern the actual prevalence of domestic violence in American life. Many more Americans say they have directly witnessed an incident of domestic violence than incidents of muggings and robberies combined (34 percent versus 19 percent). Fourteen percent of women admit to having been violently abused by a husband or boyfriend. More than half (57 percent) of respondents report witnessing potentially violent circumstances. One in two women believes that battering is not uncommon in relationships.

### HIGH LEVEL OF CONCERN

With battering so common, the public has tremendous concern. The overwhelming majority (87 percent) of Americans say that the beating of women by their husbands or boyfriends is a serious problem facing many families. Americans of every age group and race agree that violence is not just a physical assault but also an attack on women's dignity and freedom.

*There's No Excuse for Domestic Violence.*

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## **THERE'S NO EXCUSE**

Despite the prevalence of domestic violence, most Americans are uncertain about why this behavior occurs. This research shows that the American public no longer blames the woman or excuses the man. Unlike in the past, traditional solutions that only stress "family values" are no longer accepted by today's American public. Solutions suggesting that women should stay at home, or that women should stop men from drinking were accepted by a scant two percent of the population -- although older men and low income men are more likely to accept alcohol as an excuse. But despite the myths perpetuated for generations, most Americans today believe that there is no excuse for domestic violence.

## **PRIVACY**

Yet, the public has doubt about when and how to intervene. Most Americans say a fight becomes "someone else's business" when there are threats or injury -- but few people believe that an arrest should be made or the woman should leave until the likelihood of injury grows. When a situation involves violence without serious injury, Americans condemn the behavior but recommend counseling and improving communication skills, rather than arrest. Only when a fight escalates to the point that the man punches the woman do clear majorities of men and women advocate that he be arrested and she leave.

## **READY TO ACT**

People are trying to find solutions. More than nine in ten (93 percent of) Americans say they would seek advice from friends, family or clergy if someone they knew was being beaten. Ninety percent say they would call the police if they witnessed a man beating a woman. Most (79 percent) say they would intervene and tell him to stop. However, people are much more likely to intervene if the violence involves a close relationship than if it involves strangers. Eighty-seven percent of those surveyed said they would support legislation to increase funding for battered women's programs.

## **THE NEW CAMPAIGN**

Based on this public opinion research, the Family Violence Prevention Fund is launching a major, multi-year national public education and media campaign with the message, **THERE'S NO EXCUSE FOR DOMESTIC VIOLENCE**. Its mission will be to significantly reduce the incidence of domestic violence by reshaping public attitudes about battering. The climate is right to mobilize public action by demonstrating that domestic violence will no longer be tolerated.

THERE'S NO EXCUSE

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**ESTA SOLER**

*\*Affiliations listed for  
identification purposes only.*

## NATIONAL

Every year, an estimated 2 - 4 million women of all races and classes are battered by a spouse or intimate partner in the United States alone.

Domestic violence results in more serious injuries to women than muggings, automobile crashes and rape combined.

A woman is battered every 15 seconds in the United States.

At least 44 percent of all female murder victims are killed by their partners or ex-partners, and 39 percent are killed by family members or acquaintances. Therefore, women are most likely to be killed by someone they know (83 percent of the time).

At least 25 percent of domestic violence victims are pregnant when beaten.

95 percent of domestic violence incidents are perpetrated by men.

In almost three-fourths of spouse-on-spouse assaults, the victim was divorced or separated at the time of the incidents.

At least one-third of all visits by women to emergency medical services are caused by battering.

Ten to 14 percent of all married women and at least 40 percent of battered wives have been raped by their husbands.

## WASHINGTON, D.C.

D.C.'s Metropolitan Police responded to nearly 20,000 calls related to domestic violence last year.

The Emergency Domestic Relations Project (a joint project with Georgetown University Law Center's Sex Discrimination Clinic), which provides civil legal services and advocacy for battered women, served just under 5,000 women in 1992, and assisted 5200 in the in-court program.

*There's No Excuse for Domestic Violence.*

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BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH

***ESTA SOLER***

Esta Soler is the founder and Executive Director of the San Francisco-based Family Violence Prevention Fund, a national organization working to develop innovative responses to the epidemic of domestic violence.

Established in 1980, the Family Violence Prevention Fund is widely respected for its pioneering work. In addition to providing direct support to thousands of domestic violence victims each year, the Fund has created publications and model programs that have been distributed to and replicated in 47 states and seven foreign countries.

Ms. Soler has served as a consultant on domestic violence to many private and governmental organizations, including the National Institute of Justice, California's Office of Criminal Justice Planning, the Pacific Center of Violence Prevention, the National Battered Women's Law Center, and WGBH-TV. She is the former Chairperson of the San Francisco Human Rights Commission, and was instrumental in the enactment of landmark AIDS discrimination legislation that has been replicated throughout the nation.

Ms. Soler has received numerous awards for her work on domestic violence and women's rights. In 1989, she received the Koret Israel Prize to investigate the incidence of family violence in Israel and the role of women in the peace and human rights movements. In 1990, she was awarded a Kellogg Foundation National Fellowship.

###

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Esta Soler





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# **MEN BEATING WOMEN: ENDING DOMESTIC VIOLENCE**

**A Qualitative and Quantitative Study of Public  
Attitudes on Violence Against Women**

**April 1993**

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*Prepared for:*

**FAMILY VIOLENCE PREVENTION FUND**

Building One—Suite 200, 1001 Potrero Avenue

San Francisco, CA 94110

(PHONE) 415-821-4553/ (FAX) 415-824-3873

*Prepared by:*

**EDK ASSOCIATES**

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This study was conducted for the Family Violence Prevention Fund by EDK Associates,  
a New York based public opinion research firm.  
235 W. 48th Street, 38K  
New York, NY 10036  
PHONE (212) 582-4504 • FAX (212) 265-9348

**D**OMESTIC VIOLENCE IS A STAGGERING SOCIAL PROBLEM WITH FAR-REACHING consequences in every sector of American life. The Federal Bureau of Investigation estimates that every 15 seconds a woman is beaten by her husband or boyfriend. More women are injured or killed by being beaten than in car accidents, muggings and rapes combined. Juvenile delinquents are four times more likely to come from homes in which their fathers beat their mothers.

In the course of the past two decades the movement to end domestic violence has succeeded in raising public consciousness about male violence toward women. The movement has exposed the violence and made it clear that women don't ask for it. However, domestic violence incidents are still seen as isolated events. The blame is placed on the failures of individual men. To some extent it is still a "private problem."

The Family Violence Prevention Fund has launched the "There's No Excuse" National Domestic Violence Media Campaign to significantly reduce the incidence of violence against women in intimate relationships and to promote women's right to safety in the home by changing the attitudes of the American public and increasing their involvement in the issue.

Before launching this campaign, The Family Violence Prevention Fund set out to answer a variety of questions to help determine the current shape of public understanding of domestic violence. The objectives of the research were to assess how receptive or resistant people are to talking about domestic violence, to determine how much they already know and the perceived seriousness of the problem and to determine what people are willing to do to help end violence against women.

## **METHODOLOGY**

**P**RIOR TO THIS STUDY, THERE WAS NO COMPREHENSIVE, NATIONAL STUDY OF public knowledge or concern about domestic violence. In order to determine the public's understanding and knowledge about violence against women, the Family Violence Prevention Fund, funded by a grant from the Ford Foundation, hired EDK Associates, a New York based public opinion research firm, to conduct both qualitative and quantitative research on public attitudes toward domestic violence. The overall study was designed by Ethel Klein, President of EDK Associates, and James Robinson, President of Robinson and Muenster Associates.

## **FOCUS GROUPS**

FOCUS GROUPS, A RESEARCH TECHNIQUE BASED ON BRINGING APPROXIMATELY 10 people into a room to have a conversation about an issue, were assembled to explore the texture, language and psychological context that men and women bring to the issue of domestic violence. The study was designed to reach a broad cross-section of the population from differing education levels and ethnic backgrounds.

Twelve focus groups were conducted in five cities nationwide [Hartford (CT), Little Rock (AR), Dallas (TX), Los Angeles (CA) and San Francisco (CA)] in order to address these goals. We conducted three groups with white women, two groups with white men, two groups with African-American women and one group each with Latinas, Latinos, Asian-American women and Asian-American men. The groups were led by a gender and ethnic appropriate moderator. The Latino groups were conducted in both Spanish and English.

The participants were told they were coming to talk about relationships between men and women. They were not selected on the basis of their exposure to or knowledge of domestic violence--nor did they know that they would be talking about this issue prior to its being introduced during the groups. The groups were conducted between January 20 and January 29, 1992. Each group included an average of 10 participants.

## **PUBLIC OPINION SURVEY**

THE INFORMATION FROM THE UNSTRUCTURED FOCUS GROUPS WAS THEN translated into a series of structured questions to determine if the findings were representative of the general population. The Family Violence Prevention Fund Opinion Survey on Public Attitudes Toward Domestic Violence is the most comprehensive survey on this issue to be conducted to date. The survey was drawn from a national sampling of 1000 men and women aged 18 and older. The information was collected through telephone interviews made from April 15 through April 26, 1992. The margin of error is 3%.

In order to conduct an in-depth demographic analysis and comparison across sex, race and ethnicity, EDK Associates conducted three additional, slightly shortened surveys oversampling 300 African-Americans, 300 Latinos and 300 Asian-Americans. These telephone surveys were conducted from May 15 through May 22, 1992. The Latino interviewers were bilingual and most of the surveys were conducted in Spanish. The African-American surveys were conducted by African-American interviewers. The Asian-American surveys were conducted largely by Asian-American interviewers.

## VIOLENCE AS PART OF EVERYDAY LIFE

**O**UR PERSONAL LIVES ARE NOT FREE FROM VIOLENCE OR FEAR OF PHYSICAL harm from the people we love. Americans acknowledge a pervasive amount of violence in private relationships.

Getting people to talk about domestic violence was seen as a major obstacle to conducting both the focus groups and survey research. Experts believed that people would refuse to open up in the groups or stay on the phone once they understood the topic.

*We were wrong. One of the most striking findings of this research is that Americans across all race and ethnic backgrounds are both ready and willing to discuss this issue. People in the focus groups and on the phone discussed domestic violence as a real problem that they have seen in their own lives. And they want it to end.*

### WE HURT THE ONES WE LOVE

SHOVING, PUSHING AND THROWING OBJECTS ARE NOT A RARE OCCURRENCE when a man and a woman have a fight, according to this research. The public is not willing to draw a line where women are always good and men are always bad. When it comes to fighting, both men and women shove, push and throw objects during the course of an argument. But, as the level of physical violence escalates, both men and women acknowledge that men harm women more than women harm men. One in two women believes that battering is not an uncommon experience in women's relationships with men. [See Table 1]

When it comes to physical blows: men beat women. And men do beat women--44% of Americans report that when a man and a woman have a fight he could wind up hitting her. Some people say he does it often (19%), but more likely it happens sometimes (25%). Given the extreme nature of this behavior, the noteworthy point is that less than half say it rarely happens (43%).

Men also physically restrain or push women. Six out of 10 Americans believe that when a man and a woman have a fight there is a good chance he will grab and shove her to make his point (57%--24% often and 33% sometimes). A woman is less likely to get this physical with him (40%--11% often and 29% sometimes). This is not to say that women

**TABLE 1**  
**VIOLENCE IN PRIVATE RELATIONSHIPS**

*How common are the following situations when a man and a woman have a fight?*

	<u>He Says Nasty Things to Hurt Her</u>			<u>She Says Nasty Things to Hurt Him</u>		
	<b>All</b>	<b>Women</b>	<b>Men</b>	<b>All</b>	<b>Women</b>	<b>Men</b>
Often	48%	52%	45%	44%	52%	54%
Sometimes	33	30	36	34	32	37
Rarely	11	9	13	13	11	15
Don't Know	8	9	8	9	9	9
	<u>He Grabs Her and Shoves Her</u>			<u>She Grabs Him and Shoves Him</u>		
Often	24	28	20	11	13	9
Sometimes	33	33	32	29	29	28
Rarely	30	25	32	48	45	51
Don't Know	13	13	12	12	12	12
	<u>He Throws Something At Her</u>			<u>She Throws Something At Him</u>		
Often	13	16	9	26	28	24
Sometimes	26	27	24	29	31	27
Rarely	49	41	56	34	28	39
Don't Know	13	15	11	11	12	10
	<u>He Beats Her Up Badly</u>			<u>She Beats Him Up Badly</u>		
Often	19	23	15	5	6	4
Sometimes	25	29	22	11	11	10
Rarely	43	35	51	72	69	75
Don't Know	13	14	11	13	14	11

never express rage or anger. She is more likely to throw something at him (55%--26% often and 29% sometimes) than he is at her (39%--13% often and 26% sometimes).

Moreover, abusive behavior isn't only physical. Men and women are often nasty to one another. Almost half say that he often says nasty things to hurt her (48% say often and only 11% say this rarely happens). She also says nasty things to hurt him (44% say often and 13% say rarely).

## **IT HAPPENS TO US**

PUBLIC RECOGNITION OF THE SERIOUSNESS OF DOMESTIC ABUSE REFLECTS the violence people acknowledge in their own lives. [See Table 2] The majority of Americans have witnessed potentially violent circumstances (57%). *More people have directly witnessed an incidence of domestic violence (34%) than muggings and robberies combined (19%).*

*One out of three American men and women have stared domestic violence in the face.* Fourteen (14%) percent of American women acknowledge having been violently abused by a husband or boyfriend. Almost half of these are women who acknowledge having been abused. While domestic violence is not completely limited to men beating women--two out of 10 men report having witnessed a woman beating up on her husband or boyfriend--most Americans identify the case of men beating women as a very serious problem.

The survey results corroborate the surprising prevalence of experience with domestic violence found in the focus groups. Given that the people attending these groups were not selected on the basis of their exposure to incidents of violence nor were they told that the subject matter was domestic violence, the number of people who volunteered personal stories was quite striking.

White women told stories about their own experiences as victims of domestic violence--four had family members who were abused and two had family members who were abusers.

**TABLE 2**  
**PERSONAL EXPOSURE TO VIOLENCE (% YES)**

	ALL	WOMEN	MEN
<b>Witnessed people yelling loudly at one another and threatening to get violent.</b>	<b>57%</b>	<b>50%</b>	<b>63%</b>
<i>(of 57%) Were you ever in such a screaming match?</i>	20	19	21
Did you worry about the other person becoming violent?	16	17	16
Did you worry that you might get violent?	11	9	13
<b>Have you ever witnessed a man beating his wife or girlfriend?</b>	<b>34</b>	<b>33</b>	<b>35</b>
<i>(of 34%) Has a husband/boyfriend ever beaten your mother or your stepmother?</i>	7	8	5
Has a husband or boyfriend ever been violent with you?	14	14	inapp
<b>Have you ever witnessed a woman beating her husband/boyfriend?</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>20</b>
<i>(of 16%) Has a wife or girlfriend ever been violent with you?</i>	7	inapp	7
<b>Have you ever witnessed a parent beating a child?</b>	<b>23</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>25</b>
<i>(of 23%) Were you or any of your brothers or sisters beaten as a child?</i>	8	7	8
<b>Have you ever witnessed a robbery or mugging?</b>	<b>19</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>25</b>
<i>(of 19%) Were you ever robbed or mugged?</i>	11	8	14



"I put up with it at first. At first it was yelling, verbal attack. Then it was the jealousy. I couldn't go to the grocery store with him [her first husband] being afraid I was going to meet some man that had money. So I went through many months before it got physical. The physical wasn't as bad as what I've seen other women have. Mine was a slap across the face, and he hit me hard enough to cause me to fall down the stairs. So it wasn't as brutal as some women have had it, but it was bad enough that I felt completely emotionally and physically beat up."

*White woman (Little Rock); no more than high school education*

White men talked about colleagues, wives and girlfriends who had been beaten by former husbands and a few even admitted to past acts of violence.

"We had really physical fights. Throwing things. She was a very physical person. She'd start throwing things and hitting me and eventually I'd just slap the shit out of her."  
[Laughter]

*White man (Dallas); at least some college education*

Several African-American women talked about being abused by their ex-husbands and others admitted having a family member or close friend who is currently being abused.

"My first husband knew my father didn't rear me, so in his mind he felt that he was going to show me how a man is in the home. Whenever I said or did something that he didn't like, well, he would just hit me. [Moderator: And then you would...] Hit him back. That's really the reason I got out of the marriage because of the physical abuse. I felt like he was like that with me because he saw his dad with his mom."

*African-American woman (Los Angeles); high school graduate or some college education*

African-American men reluctantly admitted that family violence is a real problem in the black community. Two mentioned that their fathers beat their mothers, one talked about his grandmother having been abused and another was troubled that his young daughter had witnessed the abuse of her next door neighbor.

"I was over at my daughter's house. Her mother was telling me that the next door neighbor's boyfriend had gotten out of jail and he was out there beating on his girlfriend and my daughter was out there seeing all that stuff. She came and said, 'Mamma, you should see this--he slap her down and she said, 'Stop it,' and he just kept slapping her down.'"

*African-American man (Los Angeles); high school graduate or some college education*

Both Latinas and Latinos were also worried about the prevalence of violence. Three of the women had family members who were abused, two were beaten by their fathers while growing up and one woman currently had an abusive boyfriend. Three of the women also expressed fear that their husbands could become violent.

"My husband's father hit his wife and they separated. I think something has to do with the family. And my husband is violent. I try not to get him violent."

*Latina (Los Angeles); no more than some college education*

The Latinos made references to a sister being beaten, a cousin who abused his wife and a friend who beat his girlfriend. Several mentioned that their girlfriends push them to near violence, and one said he was forced to slap his girlfriend to "keep her in line."

"I had a friend who had these problems. The girl was making more money, and she was just putting down the guy. She would destroy that person. There is nothing he could feel nice about. A couple of times that person beat up this girl because he got to a point, he got so mad. She was pushing and pushing..."

*Latino (Los Angeles); no more than some college education*

These conversations became an education campaign in themselves. They turned into consciousness-raising sessions. Once people started telling personal stories either about being abused or knowing someone who had been abused, the participants' understanding of both the problem and the critical need to find solutions increased dramatically.

As with many social issues, breaking the silence leads to greater awareness and willingness to work for change.

## **WHERE DO YOU DRAW THE LINE?**

THERE IS A FAIR AMOUNT OF ABUSIVE BEHAVIOR THAT MOST AMERICANS MAY not like, but they are willing to tolerate it as a matter of privacy. When does a private fight become a matter of public policy?

One way of discriminating the public's definition of public and private is to determine at what point people are willing to support social intervention. Currently, the two most common forms of social intervention are mechanisms that help her leave (such as emergency shelters) and having him arrested. Neither of these interventions is ideal.

Both the focus group and the survey research indicate that while everyone feels something should be done to end this violence, what Americans really want is for it to never have happened in the first place. Once it happens, they are looking for a broader range of solutions in addition to the more dramatic measures such as her leaving or his being arrested.

According to this survey, a fight becomes a matter of public policy when it involves injury. [See Table 3] Most people do not think it is any of their business if a husband and wife are having a fight and he screams at her and says abusive things. Men and women, across all ethnic groups, agree that this is none of their business. They absolutely would not suggest that he be arrested and they do not think that this is a reason for her to leave.

Some of the people we talked to did say that the key defining characteristic of domestic violence was fear.

"If you are afraid, then whether it is a tickle or a smack, it's abusive. If you are afraid that you are going to be hurt, that's abuse."

*White woman (Hartford); no more than high school education*

But for most men and women the line between a fight and domestic violence has less to do with the psychological element of fear as it does with physical injury. Some level of violence--such as pushing, slapping or grabbing--seems to be the background noise of many relationships. While many people acknowledge that these forms of abuse are condemnable and want them stopped, only about a third of each race and ethnic group would put a man in jail for committing them and only a handful believe she should leave him because of this abuse. They are looking for some other remedy.

What they recommended in the focus groups is his learning how to communicate. Several women describe husbands who, in the past, have grabbed them and hurt them when they lost their temper and then straightened out.

"I've never been beaten, but I have been grabbed and pushed. I said I would never accept a man showing me enough anger to even think to grab and push me. We talked about it. I said we cannot have this. I cannot live like this. I will not be intimidated. [Moderator: And what happened?] We talked and he's not put his hands on me ever again."

*African-American woman (Los Angeles); high school graduate or some college education*

**TABLE 3**  
**WHEN DOES A FIGHT BECOME SOMEONE ELSE'S BUSINESS?**

	Someone Else's Business	Arrest	Leave
<u><i>When he screams abusive things</i></u>			
White Women	17%	1%	8%
White Men	14	2	5
Afr-Amer Women	30	9	12
Afr-Amer Men	19	6	9
Latinas	18	3	6
Latinos	14	3	3
Asian Women	26	32	16
Asian Men	19	23	24
<u><i>When he threatens her</i></u>			
White Women	69	22	39
White Men	63	17	28
Afr-Amer Women	60	33	31
Afr-Amer Men	57	29	21
Latinas	52	24	21
Latinos	42	22	16
Asian Women	54	47	33
Asian Men	67	39	57
<u><i>When he grabs and shoves her</i></u>			
White Women	72	35	44
White Men	71	29	38
Afr-Amer Women	60	33	36
Afr-Amer Men	59	25	28
Latinas	65	35	28
Latinos	57	26	20
Asian Women	65	49	34
Asian Men	61	56	58
<u><i>When he slaps her hard</i></u>			
White Women	86	52	61
White Men	88	51	54
Afr-Amer Women	66	47	46
Afr-Amer Men	62	39	39
Latinas	78	56	46
Latinos	74	49	43
Asian Women	77	58	51
Asian Men	77	69	55
<u><i>Punches her</i></u>			
White Women	94	83	81
White Men	96	77	73
Afr-Amer Women	75	64	53
Afr-Amer Men	69	57	62
Latinas	91	85	69
Latinos	84	78	62
Asian Women	88	82	66
Asian Men	88	84	86

Many of the men admitted that their first marriages failed because they did not know how to communicate or control their anger. They feel they have since learned how to do so. They do not think of themselves as abusers.

"I didn't hit, knock her with my fist. *I just slapped her down.* We both made each other mad. We pushed each others buttons like crazy, and we just didn't have any tools that are available nowadays for people to get along better. There's a lot of wonderful things that I've gotten into since then that I wish I'd have known back when I was married."

*White man (Dallas); at least some college education*

## **THE LINE IS DRAWN AT PHYSICAL INJURY**

PHYSICAL, VISIBLE INJURY OR POTENTIAL THREAT OF INJURY SEEMS TO BE the line that divides abusive behavior from domestic violence. It is when he threatens to hurt her physically that Americans are ready for society to pay attention. Once he has physically harmed her, the American public clearly says that at this stage it is no longer a private matter and large percentages say he should be arrested or she should leave.

While his arrest or her leaving are not popular solutions, once he has slapped her hard, whites and Asian-Americans believe it is their business to interfere, and they want to see him arrested and her out of the relationship. Once he punches her, Latinos and African-American men and women support his arrest or her leaving as the appropriate public resolutions.

## **DEFINING DOMESTIC VIOLENCE**

TO HELP CLARIFY THE PUBLIC'S DEFINITION OF DOMESTIC VIOLENCE, THE survey respondents were presented with a series of vignettes identified as common situations: A woman screaming or hitting her child at a mall; neighbors fighting; a fight at a family holiday meal; and a fight between a husband and wife. They were then asked to assess whether the described circumstance constituted domestic violence and whether the man should be arrested and the woman encouraged to leave. These vignettes compare similar circumstances that involve different degrees of physical violence. For example, in one scenario the daughter calls and reports that her husband or boyfriend grabbed her by the blouse and called her a worthless cow. In the following vignette the daughter reports that he called her a tramp and punched her in the face.

Here, too, we find people support public intervention like arrest or exit only in cases where injury is explicit in the description. [See Table 4] While the majority label a mother

**TABLE 4**  
**STATEMENTS ABOUT COMMON SITUATIONS: What would you do?**

	Is Domestic Violence	Arrest Him	She Should Leave
<i>Suppose your neighbors were having another huge fight screaming at each other at the top of their lungs. What would you do?</i>			
White Women	58%	13%	18%
White Men	50	7	12
Afr-Amer Women	63	27	21
Afr-Amer Men	61	23	17
Latinas	59	21	14
Latinos	45	12	12
Asian Women	41	15	19
Asian Men	44	19	17

*Suppose your neighbors were having a huge fight and you knew she was being beaten. What would you do?*

White Women	98%	78%	68%
White Men	98	71	54
Afr-Amer Women	85	72	59
Afr-Amer Men	84	65	51
Latinas	93	87	61
Latinos	91	78	49
Asian Women	91	65	47
Asian Men	94	78	64

*You are at a large family dinner and your cousin is fighting with his wife. He shoves her and smacks her across the face. What do you do?*

White Women	91%	31%	42%
White Men	91	24	30
Afr-Amer Women	81	52	40
Afr-Amer Men	73	35	33
Latinas	87	49	33
Latinos	78	35	21
Asian Women	79	22	30
Asian Men	79	30	31



	Is Domestic Violence	Arrest Him	She Should Leave
<i>Your daughter calls you after she and her husband or boyfriend had a big fight where he grabbed her by the blouse and called her a worthless cow. What would you do?</i>			
White Women	63%	15%	44%
White Men	55	13	35
Afr-Amer Women	72	29	42
Afr-Amer Men	68	29	41
Latinas	73	27	49
Latinos	64	24	38
Asian Women	58	19	45
Asian Men	62	20	43
<i>Your daughter calls you after she and her husband or boyfriend get into a big fight where he calls her a tramp and punches her in the face. What would you do?</i>			
White Women	97%	72%	78%
White Men	95	66	68
Afr-Amer Women	89	69	69
Afr-Amer Men	86	69	64
Latinas	93	81	67
Latinos	95	71	67
Asian Women	87	59	64
Asian Men	90	71	74

screaming at her child as child abuse and their daughter's husband grabbing her and calling her a worthless cow as domestic violence, they are nevertheless unwilling to impose strong sanctions under these circumstances. Only a few would remove the child from the home (6%) and a small number would arrest a neighbor screaming at the top of his lungs (10%) or the husband who grabbed his wife and called her a worthless cow (15%). Few men and women would tell their neighbor to leave her husband for screaming at her (15%) and less than half (41%) think their daughter should leave the husband who grabbed her.

However, people respond very differently to scenarios that involve clear injury, such as the mother smacking the child hard across the face and head or the husband or boyfriend punching their daughter in the face. In these cases they want the child removed from the home (40%) and the man arrested (69%). They also want her to leave him (72%).

The majority of men and women in each ethnic group believe that the scenario where a husband grabs his wife is a case of domestic violence, but calling it domestic violence does not translate into support for intervention. Less than a third of any group feels that the man should be arrested for this kind of behavior and only 40% would encourage the woman to leave. In the case where he punched her, everyone defines it as domestic violence and argues that he should be arrested and she should leave.

## THERE IS NO EXCUSE FOR DOMESTIC VIOLENCE

### WHY MEN BEAT WOMEN

**H**AVING FOUND THAT GRABBING, PUSHING, SHOVING AND PUNCHING WOMEN are not rare occurrences in male-female relationships, we asked people what leads to this violence. At first there was a sense that in order to find social remedies we must understand what people thought led to violence against women. *In reality we found that most people did not really know why men beat women nor did they care. The bottom line is that it is wrong and has to stop. There is no excuse for domestic violence.*

Most Americans have not spent a lot of time thinking about why there is violence against women. Most people don't know. The participants in the focus groups did not like being asked, "Why do men beat women?" The response began with a long pause or a question of clarification or an attempt to continue the previous topic of conversation. People shied away from answering the direct question because they did not want to say that people they knew and cared about (sometimes themselves) were bad. The criticism was too personal.

In the survey, people were given two chances to answer the question of why men are violent toward women. The first opportunity was an open-ended question. People were told to imagine that a woman whom they knew was beaten up by her husband or boyfriend. They were then asked why they think he did it. The single most common answer was "I don't know" (26% of women and 33% of men). [See Table 5]



**TABLE 5**  
**WHY MEN BEAT WOMEN**  
 (Volunteered Responses)

*Suppose I told you a woman you knew was beaten up by her husband or boyfriend. Why do you think he did it?*

	ALL	WOMEN	MEN
<b>Don't Know</b>	<b>29%</b>	<b>26%</b>	<b>33%</b>
<b>He could not help it</b>	<b>35%</b>	<b>37%</b>	<b>31%</b>
Drunk and didn't know what he was doing.	14	14	13
Didn't know how to communicate.	12	13	11
He is sick, disturbed, violent.	9	10	7
<b>He did it to control her</b>	<b>19%</b>	<b>21%</b>	<b>17%</b>
To keep her in line/get her to do what he wants.	9	11	8
He has bad self-esteem and is taking it out on her.	10	10	9
<b>She asked for it</b>	<b>12%</b>	<b>8%</b>	<b>14%</b>
She provoked it by yelling, screaming, hitting him.	5	4	5
She cheated on him.	7	4	9
<b>He learned it at home.</b>	<b>5%</b>	<b>6%</b>	<b>4%</b>

Later in the survey we gave people a set of explanations as to why a man would beat a woman and asked which came closer to their view. [See Table 6] The "don't know" responses dropped to 8% overall. But there was a high degree of inconsistency between the reasons given when the question was first asked without any structured answers and when the respondents were given a choice. Two thirds of the people who gave one answer to the unstructured question gave a different response when we later asked them which statement came closest to their view of why men beat women.

While there was no dominant explanation given for why men beat women, the most common answers to the structured question were that he wanted to control her (34%); he was beaten when he was young or saw his mother being abused (23%); and that he was out of control (21%). Few people thought he was acting out cultural images (8%) or purposefully trying to rob her of her self-esteem (5%).

**TABLE 6**  
**Why Would a Man Beat a Woman**  
 (Structured Responses)

	ALL	WOMEN	MEN
He got drunk/lost control	20%	16%	25%
Beaten when he was young	23	27	19
Acting out cultural images	8	9	8
Robbing her of self-esteem	5	6	4
Wants to control her	34	35	33
Don't know	8	6	10

**OLD EXCUSES DON'T HOLD: "He was drinking" or "She asked for it"**  
*THE MOST DRAMATIC FINDING REGARDING WHOM THEY BLAME IS THAT BOTH men and women no longer blame the victim or excuse the man.* People reject the age-old excuse of "he was drunk" as the reason that men beat women--only 14% believe that the man was being abusive because he was drunk and did not know what he was doing in response to the unstructured question (20% in response to the structured question).

Men are more likely than women to say he beat her because he was drunk and out of control (25% to 16%). Older people, both men (36%) and women (21%) are most likely to accept the "he got drunk" argument. And while some low-income men tend to agree with this argument, low-income women do not (30% to 19%).

These results underscore the widespread gains of decades-long efforts by the movement to end domestic violence, which has successfully educated the public that "getting drunk" is not a reason for beating women. In fact, many of the focus group participants believe men use drinking as an excuse.

"There are men who beat without drinking. Men who drink and beat women, they drink in order to beat. They don't beat because they drink."

*White woman (Hartford); no more than high school education*

"I think they are looking for an excuse to punch her out, too. Like drinking would be, 'Oh, I had a couple of drinks, and I didn't know I hit her.' That's the most stupid excuse I ever heard of. Or else, 'I hit her by mistake.' "

*Asian woman (San Francisco); high school or college graduate*

The movement to end domestic violence has also been successful in getting people to stop blaming the victim. Only 12% of the public said he beat her because "she asked for it" by yelling and screaming at him (5%) or cheating on him (7%).

And while some men did complain that women were abusive toward them, most do not condone beating her up. Someone in every group said, "He can always leave."

## **WHATEVER THE REASON, IT'S WRONG**

WHATEVER THE REASONS MEN BEAT WOMEN, AMERICANS STRONGLY AGREE that violence robs women of self-confidence, hope and self-esteem. Almost everyone recognized that violence against women is more than a physical assault, that it is also an attack on women's dignity and freedom. The participants in the focus groups showed a great deal of sympathy and caring for women who are abused. [See Table 7]

"When a woman gets hit like that or abused, it does lower her self-esteem and self-confidence to the point where maybe they can't even get back up."

*White woman (Hartford); some college education*

"You keep telling somebody long enough (that it is their fault, that they are stupid or bad) and they are going to start believing it."

*African-American man (Los Angeles); no more than some college education*

While everyone agreed with the sentiment, it was most salient to white women. They were most likely to *strongly* agree with this view. The focus group conversations provide some evidence as to why other groups did not agree as strongly. White men agreed that a woman's self-esteem and confidence are robbed, but resented the implication that this was the reason for why men hit them. Some African-American

**TABLE 7**

**Violence against women is more than a physical assault. It is an attack on a woman's dignity and freedom.**

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
White women (N=395)	59	37	2	--
White men (N=388)	39	48	10	1
African-American Women (N=154)	38	48	6	1
African-American Men (N=150)	35	43	12	3
Latinas (N=150)	43	46	5	1
Latinos (N=150)	24	51	18	1
Asian Women (N=150)	18	55	17	3
Asian Men (N=150)	41	44	8	1

women argued that a woman does not have to lose her self-esteem if she is battered. The women in their mother's generation stayed because they had a strong sense of self-esteem and chose not to breakup their families.

Latinas and Latinos said the loss of a woman's confidence depends on her spirit. The Asian-American women did not think most Asian-Americans focus on words like "self-esteem" and "self confidence."

Throughout all the conversations about men beating women, the focus group participants kept coming back to one dominant theme: *It doesn't matter why he beats her--it's wrong.*

"I don't know [why her boyfriend beat her], but there's no reason to hit a woman. That's absolutely wrong. ...If she did something horrible, you can leave."

*White man (Dallas); at least some college education*

"You never have justification for hitting."

*White man (Little Rock); no more than a college education*

People did not want to focus on the man who commits this abuse. It seemed easier to keep him out of the conversation. They were much more comfortable talking about the woman--why she stays, what happens to her, *how they could help her*--rather than talking about him. As far as they were concerned, *there is no excuse for domestic violence*.

## PREVENTING VIOLENCE

**A**mericans believe we can prevent the continuation of violence because violence is learned. They believe domestic violence will continue so long as men keep witnessing violence as accepted behavior in their homes and get away with it in their personal relationships. They also believe that if men do not learn to communicate in a constructive manner and that if society does not clearly communicate that violence in intimate relationships is unacceptable, many men will resort to physical abuse as a way of getting what they want.

### SOMETHING CAN BE DONE

**B**UT THERE ARE SOLUTIONS. ALMOST NINE OUT OF 10 AMERICANS (87%) SAY that women being beaten by their husbands or boyfriends is a serious problem facing many families. Most Americans believe that something can be done (81%).

People do not have a great deal of knowledge about public policy solutions to these problems. When asked how this problem might be solved, one out of four (26%) said they personally had no idea of what the solutions might be. "I don't know" was the most common answer to how do we solve this problem. [See Table 8]

Three out of four have thought about the issue enough to make some reasonable suggestions as to what can be done to change things. They tended to support changing social behavior rather than punishing the crime. The most common suggestion volunteered as to how domestic violence might be reduced is more counseling (22%). A number of people also suggested that we need to teach kids conflict resolution in school (15%). Some people did look for more punitive measures such as stronger laws (9%) and more arrests (5%).

The conservative "family values" movements which have dominated the policy debate on



**TABLE 8**  
**ENDING VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN**

*Can anything be done to reduce the amount of violence against women?*

	ALL	WOMEN	MEN
<b>% YES</b>	<b>81%</b>	<b>82%</b>	<b>79%</b>
<u>WHAT CAN BE DONE? (of 81%)</u>			
Don't Know	26	25	29
More Counseling	22	24	20
Teach kids in school	15	14	15
Stronger Laws	9	8	10
Women become less emotionally and economically dependent on men	7	7	6
Change Society	6	5	7
More Arrests	5	6	3
Reduce Violence in Media/ Change TV	4	5	3
More Respect	3	3	4
Less Drinking	1	1	1
More church	1	1	2
More families where mother should stay home/not have to work	1	1	--
Give women more pay	--	--	--

domestic violence in the past are not relevant to the public today. Solutions suggesting that women should stay home (1%), that people should go to church more (1%) or that we should stop men from drinking (1%) were very rare.

## **PERSONAL ACCOUNTABILITY**

ENDING DOMESTIC VIOLENCE IS NOT SEEN AS SOMEONE ELSE'S RESPONSIBILITY. There appears to be a high sense of personal accountability for helping to end physical abuse. Ignoring the problem is no longer socially acceptable. [See Table 9]

Almost everyone said that they would talk to friends, family or clergy to figure out how to help someone whom they knew was being beaten (93%). Ninety (90%) percent would call the police if they witnessed a man beating a woman and if they knew the abuser, most would intervene and tell him to stop (79%).

The majority of both men and women support public funding and collective efforts to reduce violence against women. Almost nine out of 10 would support legislation to increase funding for battered women's programs (87%) and two out of three would personally give money to an organization working on this issue (69%). Many say they would even give their time in support of efforts to reduce the level of violence (57% of women and 39% of men).

Realistically, most people do not act in this manner. This enthusiasm provides further evidence of the high level of recognition that domestic violence is, in fact, a real social problem. The study reveals that it is not socially acceptable to say you would "ignore the violence." People have learned that they "should" call the police.

## **VIOLENCE IS LEARNED**

MOST AMERICANS ARGUE THAT VIOLENCE IS LEARNED IN THE HOME. THE public believes that when there is violence in the family, it sets up a chain of violence that often, but not always, keeps repeating itself. A man who beats a woman saw his father beat his mother. Then he beats his girlfriend, wife and next wife. His children learn from him and their children learn from them. They cycle is endless. Domestic violence must be condemned if the chain of violence is to be broken.

Both men and women acknowledge that some people learn to be violent because when they were young, they were beaten or witnessed violence in their homes. [See Table 10]

**TABLE 9**  
**PERSONAL COMMITMENT TO ENDING VIOLENCE**  
 (% Yes)

*Would you do any of the following to help reduce the amount of violence against women?*

	ALL	WOMEN	MEN
If you knew someone who was being beaten, would you talk to your friends, family or clergy to try to figure out how to help this person?	93%	93%	92%
Would you tell the person to stop?	79	75	83
Would you call the police if you saw a man beating his wife or girlfriend?	90	93	86
Would you support legislation to increase funding for battered women's programs?	87	91	84
Would you give money to an organization working on this issue?	69	73	64
Would you volunteer some time and work in a program for battered women?	48	57	39

There is very little disagreement with this statement. There was strong agreement with this statement across race, class, and ethnic groups.

"They were emotionally abused as a kid and that is all they know. The only way to get what you want--if you saw daddy beat up mommy or daddy beat him up--that's how it continues. My father was very abusive to my brother. He carried that through in his marriage. [They were the perfect couple and suddenly they got a divorce.] We just found out that he used to beat her up."

*White woman (Hartford); no more than high school education*

White men also felt that male violence is often learned in the home.



**TABLE 10**

Beating up on women is often learned in the home. Some people learn to be violent because when they were young, they were beaten or witnessed violence in their home.

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
White women (N=395)	57%	36%	3%	2%
White men (N=388)	44	42	7	3
African-American Women (N=154)	35	48	11	1
African-American Men (N=150)	33	40	14	6
Latinas (N=150)	41	40	17	1
Latinos (N=150)	27	53	16	1
Asian-American Women (N=150)	32	47	14	5
Asian-American Men (N=150)	41	41	6	4

"A lot of how you reckon your relationship today is how your parents reacted and how you and your parents interacted. That has a lot to do with how you deal with your spouse and your kids."

*White man (Dallas); at least some college education*

While Latinos in general agreed with this statement, it was more salient to Latinas than to Latinos.

"My husband's father hit his wife and they separated...I think something has to do with the family. And my husband is violent. I try not to get him violent...I can't talk to him--yell at him when I want to tell him something. I can't, but he can. He tells me to be quiet. I have to be quiet, because I'm afraid he might hit *me*."

*Latina (Los Angeles); no more than some college*

In Los Angeles, where gangs were a major concern, and in Dallas, where both white men and African-American were particularly women worried about crime, both the men and women in these groups were concerned with how domestic violence affects children. African-American men referred to kids who were potential gang members as "their kids" and were worried about losing another generation.

"...the rage and the anger in the gangs is from young men whose fathers beat their mothers and abandoned them, when they were kids. That's the anger and the rage. You got the violence."

*African-American (Los Angeles); no more than some college*

Both Asian-American men and women agree that children are influenced by the violent behavior they witness in their parents. Asian-American men, however, are slightly more apt to strongly agree that violence is learned in the home.

"I think some of it is learned, you know, when the child saw the parents doing that and when they grew up and to them it was life and so they did it. They may not realize why they are doing it, they are just thinking on the circumstances similar to what they saw and learned."

*Asian woman (San Francisco); high school graduate or some college*

Not all men who grow up in abusive households become batterers and some men who commit violence against women did not learn it at home. Many people believe that part of the problem is one of communication. They point to our failures in learning how to communicate and that men are taught that violence is an acceptable way to resolve conflict.

The public believes that men and women have different patterns of communication and they use different techniques to get their way. Men grow up learning to be aggressive--yelling and fighting are part of how they get their way. Women learn to be expressive--talking about feelings is their primary way of being understood. While both men and women manipulate to get their way, men and women agreed that it is men who have the serious problems of needing to control and being unable to express themselves. [See *Table 11*]

The survey respondents were asked whether they agreed with a series of statements that characterized the emotional context of male/female relationships. First we asked about

**TABLE 11**  
**THE COMMUNICATION GAP**

	<u>Women Often Want Men to Take Care of Them</u>			<u>Women Often Cry to Get Their Way</u>		
	<b>ALL</b>	<b>WOMEN</b>	<b>MEN</b>	<b>ALL</b>	<b>WOMEN</b>	<b>MEN</b>
Strongly Agree	39%	38%	41%	20%	18%	22%
Agree	39	41	37	39	38	40
Disagree	15	15	15	24	24	24
Strongly Disagree	5	6	5	14	17	10
	<u>Women Are Too Emotional</u>			<u>Women Expect Too Much From Men</u>		
Strongly Agree	21	22	21	17	17	17
Agree	33	31	34	27	25	29
Disagree	28	27	28	33	31	35
Strongly Disagree	15	17	13	19	22	16
	<u>Men Expect Too Much From Women</u>			<u>Men Often Want To Be In Control</u>		
Strongly Agree	30	36	24	59	65	54
Agree	32	30	34	29	26	32
Disagree	24	22	27	29	26	32
Strongly Disagree	10	8	11	6	6	7
	<u>Men Need to Learn How to Express Themselves</u>			<u>Men Think They Can Solve Everything By Yelling</u>		
Strongly Agree	61	69	52	18	23	13
Agree	29	22	36	25	25	25
Disagree	6	6	6	33	32	34
Strongly Disagree	3	2	4	20	16	25

women: Did they agree that women often want men to take care of them; that women cry to get their way; that they are too emotional; or that they expect too much from men. Then we asked about men: Did they agree that men expect too much from women; that they often want to be in control; that they need to learn how to express themselves; and that they think they can solve everything by yelling.

The two statements that garnered the most agreement were that men need to learn to express themselves (69% women and 52% men--17% difference in saliency) and that men often want to be in control (65% women and 54% men--11% difference). Women are more likely than men to agree that men think they can solve everything by yelling (48% to 38%), but both sexes agree that men need to learn how to express themselves (91% women and 88% men).

"When we get frustrated, we just talk it out with someone else. Men don't. They just keep it inside."

*White woman (Hartford); at least some college education*

"Men don't talk. We could sit here and talk until 12:00 tonight. But men, it will take you years to get things out of them. They want to get along with you and they think that talking will disturb the relationship."

*African-American woman (Los Angeles); high school graduate or some college*

"...to myself, stop being so belligerent and mean, start showing it. Men have this thing about hiding their true feelings. I put a lot of time and effort into this relationship, and in my mind, I want it to work and be good, so why don't you verbalize it, express it, let her know."

*African-American man (Los Angeles); high school graduate or some college*

"I think most Asian men don't talk about their feelings or I don't think they talk about problems and things. At least, in my family--my brother-in-law, my brother."

*Asian woman (San Francisco); high school or college graduate*

"I think that it is true that men have more of a tendency to be more explosive on the spur of the moment than a woman can be. Women, I think, are more controlled."

*Asian man (San Francisco); high school or college graduate*

Both women and men acknowledge that women contribute to the communications gap and that they too manipulate to get their way. And both men and women agreed women often want men to take care of them (79% women and 78% men), they cry to get their way (56% women and 62% men), and that women are too emotional (53% to 55%).

Men believe that women can be very nasty to one another, but, unlike men, women learn not to translate that behavior into violence.

"It's the way boys and girls grew up fighting. Boys are physical when they grow up. We don't scream at each other. If we scream, we get into a fist fight. Boys try to reason, to get along. If they get into a confrontation, they're either going to reach an agreement or get into a fight. Girls talk rough at each other, give each other dirty looks and scream. So when we get into relationships, they start that with us and we are not used to standing there for long periods of hollering they're gritting their teeth and giving dirty looks. We lose our temper after a while because in all the time growing up it was either walk away or fight."

*White man (Dallas); at least some college education*

## **CULTURAL IMAGES**

WHEN IT COMES TO UNDERSTANDING VIOLENCE, THE PUBLIC PREFERS TO focus on social learning that takes place in the home or in male/female relationships rather than on the larger cultural context. In recent years, the movement to end violence against women has raised concerns about the constant images of women getting beaten, raped and terrorized on television and in movies. They believe that these images condone violence.

The public, however, is divided as to how much cultural representations influence behavior. Forty-eight (48%) percent of Americans agree with this statement while 50% disagree. [See Table 12] About 20% strongly agree with the statement and a similar number strongly disagree. Concern over cultural representation is strongest among white women (57%) and African-American women (47%) and finds least support among both Latinas and Latinos (37%).

## **POWER RELATIONSHIPS**

THERE WAS SOME RECOGNITION THAT VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN IS NOT only about bad communication skills or learning that violence is acceptable at home, but it is also about power. Most Americans agree that men who beat up their wives are using physical force to get their way (36% strongly agree; 50% agree with this statement). [See Table 13]

Women were more likely to strongly agree with the argument that battering results from power inequalities and white women expressed the strongest agreement (43% strongly agree).

**TABLE 12**  
**People May Say It Is Wrong To Hit Women, But The Constant Pictures Of Women Getting Beaten, Raped Or Terrorized On Television And In Movies Says That This Violence Is Acceptable.**

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
White Women (N=395)	27%	30%	21%	18%
White Men (N=388)	17	23	36	22
African-American Women (N=154)	13	34	30	12
African-American Men (N=150)	15	27	37	15
Latinas (N=150)	14	23	43	15
Latinos (N=152)	12	24	47	8
Asian-American Women (N=150)	9	34	39	17
Asian-American Men (N=150)	16	26	37	19

"He was frustrated because he couldn't control me and he would make remarks about what I could do and what I couldn't do. He would treat me with disrespect."

*White woman (Hartford); no more than a high school education*

African-Americans were also likely to see violence as an issue of power (30% strongly agree) and that when a man hits a woman he is trying to hurt her. He is trying to control her.



**TABLE 13**  
**Men Who Beat Up Their Wives Are Using Physical Force To Get Their Way.**

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
White Women (N=395)	43%	45%	9%	1%
White Men (N=388)	29	55	12	2
African-American Women (N=154)	30	53	9	2
African-American Men (N=150)	29	45	17	2
Latinas (N=150)	37	45	13	2
Latinos (N=152)	20	47	26	1
Asian-American Women (N=150)	22	46	24	1
Asian-American Men (N=150)	28	53	11	2

"[They look for someone they can intimidate.] When I met my husband--we're not married now--we both were putting on our best behavior. He thought I was meek and mild. If you hit me, you're trying to hurt me. My father told me, 'When a man hits you with his fist, make no mistake about it. He is trying to hurt you.'"

*African-American woman (Los Angeles); high school graduate or some college education*

"I used to date a guy that, he would stand in front of the door, and I couldn't get out. You might have to throw something at him, maybe [Laugh] to make him move. That's how he would show his masculine power or whatever, standing there not letting me out."

*African-American woman (Dallas); some college education*

While women were more likely to strongly agree that violence was about power, the majority of men in all the ethnic groups we interviewed in both the survey and the focus

groups said physical force was often used as a way of retaining control. This was particularly true for white men (29% strongly agreed with the statement and 55% agreed).

"I think all the men who do assault women are using it to control the dominance, because they are afraid. My wife's ex-husband would take the coil wire off the car when he'd go to work so that she couldn't go anywhere. That's what he would do to dominate. He would come in and emotionally and verbally abuse her, not only physically. He felt threatened and inferior to her."

*White man (Dallas); at least some college education*

Latinos also agreed with this statement (20% strongly agreed and 47% agreed), but in their conversations they focused on force as a means for compensating for lack of other forms of power or sources of self-esteem.

"The biggest problem where the violence and abuse, whether verbal or physical, is that men have a fear of losing their identity. If a person doesn't like himself, he is going to take it out on somebody else...When our manhood is challenged by a woman's success, we have that inferiority complex where we are gonna take it out on somebody, somewhere. Fear causes anger. A guy just shot and killed his wife. The whole difference from a high of anger and rage of being the dominant man, the macho man that was going to control her by force, I go to him and talk to him the next morning after he shot and killed his wife, and find him just whimpering."

*Latino (Los Angeles); no more than some college education*

"Violence enters because you become accustomed to having things your own way. When things don't go your way, you want to push your weight. And women don't stand up to you, physically. They stand up to you by going out with somebody else."

*Latino (Los Angeles); no more than some college education*

"I think the decline for the man came about in the early '60s. That's when the women began to stand up for their rights. Began to get educated and they sort of have a tendency to stop being pushed around. Nowadays, it's hard to admit it; but there are very powerful women in the world and they are very well-educated."

*Latino (Los Angeles); married, high school graduate*

Asian men also agreed that violence often results from an effort to control (28% strongly agreed and 53% agreed). They believe that control is important and that men have difficulty learning how to exert control, especially when raising their daughters.

"When raising a daughter, it is not always easy. A father is trying to teach his kids, girl or boy, the male's perspective about life and sometimes girls will not listen to the male's viewpoint. Thank God she found a man who could hopefully control her or tame her down. And you say, 'Good luck, Charlie. Maybe you can teach her something about reality...'"

*Asian man (San Francisco); high school or college graduate*



## CONCLUSION

**V**IOLENCE IS OFTEN PART OF THE LANDSCAPE IN WHICH WE LIVE. MORE Americans have had direct experience with domestic violence than robbings and muggings. A surprisingly large number of women and men volunteered personal tales of battering and abuse.

People do not blame the woman or excuse the man in these violent incidents. Being drunk is not considered an acceptable reason to batter. The American public does not believe that "she asked for it." Violence is truly avoidable since the man can always walk away from violent circumstances. Most people don't really know why men beat women, but what they do know is that it is wrong and that there is no excuse for it.

Americans express strong discomfort in intervening in other people's private relationships. Yes, they would call the police. But it would take them a while to see if the fight was bad enough for them to get personally involved. Usually it takes the threat of physical injury before getting personally involved. They know the behavior is wrong, that men should not beat women, but there is still that pause where they ask what gives them the right to intrude in a private relationship.

What allows them to cross the line is the knowledge that domestic violence can be prevented. They believe that this violence is learned. It is perpetuated when children see their fathers beat their mothers and sanctions are not applied to say this behavior is unacceptable. It is perpetuated when men do not learn to communicate their feelings and are allowed to get away with resorting to violence to assert control or to compensate for low self-esteem.

The Family Violence Prevention Fund's "There's No Excuse" Media Campaign can work to reduce the incidence of domestic violence in America by increasing public awareness of the frequency of domestic violence and by emphasizing that while there is no excuse for domestic violence, there are solutions.

## Muggings in the Kitchen

Early this week a popular singer's husband was arrested for allegedly kicking her in the face and smashing her with a chair. The story made headlines because she's famous — but it is hardly news. After all, an American woman is beaten by her husband or boyfriend every 15 seconds.

This week the Family Violence Prevention Fund, a 13-year-old nonprofit group, released a study that reveals just how familiar Americans are with domestic violence. While only 19 percent of those surveyed had witnessed a robbery or mugging, 34 percent had witnessed a battering.

There aren't enough jails in the country to hold the men who've taken a fist, or a chair, to their female partners. Nor are there enough shelters to house their victims. What's true about any number of social pathologies is true of domestic violence:

the best treatment is prevention, as the fund points out in preparing a public education campaign.

For too long Americans have lived in a culture that condoned domestic violence. Less than 10 years ago a Presidential Task Force on Family Violence found that many Americans saw nothing wrong in working over a wife who "needed a lesson." One of five college couples surveyed in 1981 reported exchanging kicks, slaps and fisticuffs; more than a third thought it "helped" their relationship.

That kind of nonsense doesn't show up in this new survey. Battering, the respondents said, is wrong. "He was drinking" is no excuse. Neither is that old canard "She asked for it." Americans seem finally aware that a woman socked in the kitchen by her husband is as much a victim as a woman mugged in the street by a stranger.

A16 Thursday, April 22, 1993

# THE ATLANTA CONSTITUTION

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## Finding a cure for domestic violence

Once again the numbers are staggering: 14 percent of American women say they have been violently abused by the men in their lives. One in three Americans have witnessed such violence in their own homes. One half of American women assume that the battering of women by men is the rule of thumb in intimate relationships.

The findings released this week by the Family Violence Prevention Fund underscored what many of us already knew. More American women today suffer serious injuries from the men they love than from rapes, muggings and car wrecks combined.

For too long, we treated this crime as just another "family matter." We trained our police to mind their own business and avoid escalating a private family affair to a crime. We told the bruised and battered women to "patch things up" and blamed them for being too afraid to leave.

We're learning the tragic error of those ways.

Today police are being retrained to treat domestic violence as seriously as stranger-on-stranger violence.

Most importantly, this new national survey shows that the vast majority of Americans — 87

percent — now consider violence against women a major problem.

That heightened awareness has reached the U.S. Capitol, where President Clinton is requesting \$10 million to create a national prevention program. Sensitivity to the issue moved the Georgia General Assembly this year to pass a bill that makes stalking women a crime.

But clearly we need to do more.

Officials with the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) say it's time we start treating domestic violence not just as a criminal justice matter, but as a problem that threatens the public health. They want to use the same dogged methods for eradicating this social ill as they have for eradicating smallpox and other diseases.

Those methods include defining and tracking the problem, developing and testing interventions, then putting those that work into widespread use.

Violence against women does not have to be the rule of thumb — an idiom from an old English law that said a man could beat his wife if the stick was no thicker than his thumb.

Domestic violence is a problem in our midst. But it's one we can change.

# 1 in 3 Say They Have Seen Domestic Violence

By George Lardner Jr.  
Washington Post Staff Writer

More than one of every three Americans say they have witnessed a man beating his wife or girlfriend, and 14 percent of the women say it has happened to them, according to a nationwide survey on domestic violence released yesterday.

The poll, conducted for the San Francisco-based Family Violence Prevention Fund, found that 34 percent of those surveyed, both men and women, have seen such incidents, far more than the 19 percent who have ever witnessed a robbery or mugging.

Esta Soler, executive director of the fund, said the study, made public at a House hearing and news conference yesterday, was the first comprehensive nationwide telephone survey on family violence and

was based on a national sampling last April of 500 men and 500 women aged 18 or older. The margin of error was 3 percent.

It was not clear, however, whether the violence is rising or whether more people are being asked about it and reporting it or both. "Prior to 1980, nobody kept any statistics [on domestic violence]," Soler said. Before 1989, she added, only 10 questions had ever been asked about the problem by any nationally recognized polling firm.

But now "the overwhelming majority [87 percent] of Americans say that the beating of women by their husbands or boyfriends is a serious problem," Soler said. "More women are seriously injured by beatings than by car accidents, muggings and rape combined."

The research, conducted by EDK Associates, a New York-based public opinion research firm, with a grant from the Ford

Foundation, found that 44 percent believe a man will beat a woman badly when they have a fight (19 percent say this happens "often" and 25 percent say "sometimes." Sixteen percent say the woman will beat the man badly (5 percent say this happens "often" and 11 percent "sometimes.")

Ethel Klein, a former Columbia University professor who heads EDK, said the study included discussions with 12 focus groups in five cities and additional telephone polls of 300 African Americans, 300 Latinos and 300 Asian Americans.

"They believe it's prevalent, they believe it's serious and they believe it's solvable," Klein said her research showed. "But they don't know what to do about it. They're looking for leadership."

Eighty-one percent said they thought something could be done to end violence against women. But of these, 26 percent said

they didn't know what, 22 percent said "more counseling," 15 percent said "teach kids in school" and 9 percent said "stronger laws." Seven percent said "women should become less emotionally and economically dependent on men"; 5 percent called for "more arrests"; 4 percent said "reduce violence in media/change TV"; and 3 percent favored "more respect" for women.

The 34 percent who said they had seen a man beating his wife or girlfriend were almost evenly divided between men (35 percent) and women (33 percent). Fourteen percent of the women said they were the victims of such violence, and 7 percent of the men and women said they had seen it happen to their mother or stepmother.

Twice as many men as women were among the 16 percent who said they had seen a woman beating her husband or boyfriend. Seven percent of the men said it had happened to them.

Soler said the research was the opening step for a multiyear public education campaign that her fund is launching.

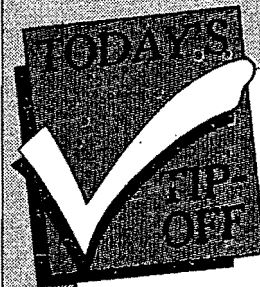
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THE NATION'S NEWSPAPER

SECTION D




TUESDAY, APRIL 20, 1993



**Roxette's 'Almost Unreal' . . .** from Capitol's 'Super Mario Bros.' soundtrack is due May 3. A video featuring singer Marie Fredriksson, who is 8½ months pregnant, was taped this week. Other tracks: Divinyls' 'Love Is the Drug,' George Clinton's 'Walk the Dinosaur,' Marky Mark's 'I Want You,' Queen's 'Tie Your Mother Down.'

**George Michael speaks . . .** for the first time in more than three years in 'George Michael and Brian May: A Conversation . . . ' on MTV. This 30-minute exclusive airs today at 9:30 ET/PT.



By Alex Oliveira, DMI  
**STEVEN TYLER:** Leads hard rockers Aerosmith back with 'Get a Grip.' 10D.

## FOLLOWING FLOW OF FOSSILS

THE NEW HALL OF HUMAN BIOLOGY AND EVOLUTION TRACES THE ROOTS OF HUMANKIND. PAGE 5D.

## CLASSIFIED ADS

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# 34% say they've witnessed domestic violence

By Anita Manning  
 USA TODAY

More than a third of Americans say they have seen a man hit his wife or girlfriend, says a survey on domestic violence released Monday.

The poll of 1,000 U.S. adults, sponsored by the Family Violence

Prevention Fund, found:

► While 19% say they have witnessed a robbery or mugging, 34% have witnessed a man hitting a woman.

► 14% of the women say they have been beaten by a husband or boyfriend.

► 88% agree or agree strongly with the statement, "Some

people learn to be violent because when they were young, they were beaten or witnessed violence in their home."

The results are in line with what sociologist Murray Straus of the University of New Hampshire, Durham, found in surveys he conducted in 1975 and 1985. In fact, he says, fam-

ily violence is more common than surveys indicate. "My best guess is the true figures are probably double those, that in any one year, about a third of American couples will experience a physical attack, and over the course of a relationship, two-thirds will."

Esta Soler, executive direc-

tor of the San Francisco-based violence prevention group, says the survey highlights "a real problem going on in families across this country." Noting that most people believe violence is learned in the home, she says, "the good news is if you learn something, you can unlearn it."

APn 04/19 1704 Domestic Violence  
Copyright, 1993. The Associated Press. All rights reserved.  
By JENNIFER DIXON, Associated Press Writer

WASHINGTON (AP) -- Fourteen percent of American women say they have been battered by husbands or boyfriends, according to a survey released Monday that found a "pervasive amount of violence in private relationships."

"More women are seriously injured by beatings than by car accidents, muggings, and rape combined," said Esta Soler, executive director of the Family Violence Prevention Fund, a San Francisco-based advocacy group that financed the survey.

"Domestic violence fills emergency rooms and morgues, contributes to juvenile delinquency and destroys families," Soler said in releasing the survey at a hearing of the House Energy and Commerce subcommittee on health and the environment.

Based on telephone interviews with 1,900 Americans 18 and older, the survey found that 34 percent of Americans say they have witnessed an episode of domestic violence.

"They're not unaffected bystanders," said Dr. Mark Rosenberg, a psychiatrist and acting associate director for public health practices at the National Center for Injury Prevention and Control, a part of the federal Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

"Their lives are affected by what they're witnessing. Boys who witness violence in the home have an increased chance of growing up to be perpetrators of violence when they create their own family, and girls who witness repeated violence in the home have an increased likelihood of growing up and becoming victims of their spouse," Rosenberg said in an interview from the CDC in Atlanta.

President Clinton's 1994 budget proposal includes \$10 million for a new national prevention and public education program on violence against women, including family violence and violence against women by strangers or their dates.

Soler's survey, which has a statistical margin of error of plus or minus 3 percent, found that half of all women believe battering is not uncommon in relationships with men.

"Our personal lives are not free from violence or fear of physical harm from the people we love. Americans acknowledge a pervasive amount of violence in private relationships," the group's report said.

The researchers said they found that shoving, pushing and throwing things are not rare when a man and woman fight. But as the level of physical violence escalates, both men and women acknowledge that men harm women more than women harm men.

The public, according to the survey, no longer blames the woman or excuses the man for domestic violence. Soler said some of the myths about family violence of even a decade ago include the belief that a man beat his wife because he had been drinking, or that she "deserved" it for cooking the wrong meal.

Rep. Henry A. Waxman, D-Calif. and the subcommittee chairman, said public health workers must address domestic violence.

"We need to understand domestic violence better. We need to train health workers about violence and to train law enforcement workers about injury. And we need to find interventions that a community can use to end the cycle of abuse," Waxman said.

"Even though domestic violence results in injury, disability, hospitalization and death, it has traditionally not been approached as a health issue," Waxman said.

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PM-Domestic Violence,510

Survey Finds One-Third of Americans Have Witnessed Domestic Violence

By JENNIFER DIXON, Associated Press Writer

WASHINGTON (AP) \_ One in three Americans have witnessed domestic violence, and 14 percent of the nation's women say they have been battered by men, according to a survey.

"Our personal lives are not free from violence or fear of physical harm from the people we love," said researchers who conducted the survey for the Family Violence Prevention Fund, an advocacy group based in San Francisco.

The survey, released at a House hearing Monday, found that half of all women believe battering is not uncommon in relationships with men. One-third of Americans reported eyewitness knowledge of violence in the home.

And such witnesses are not merely "unaffected bystanders," says Dr. Mark Rosenberg, a psychiatrist with the federal Centers for Disease Control and Prevention in Atlanta.

"Boys who witness violence in the home have an increased chance of growing up to be perpetrators of violence when they create their own family, and girls who witness repeated violence in the home have an increased likelihood of growing up and becoming victims of their spouse," Rosenberg said.

Esta Soler, executive director of the Family Violence Prevention Fund, said the survey showed more women are seriously injured by beatings than by car accidents, muggings and rape combined.

"Domestic violence fills emergency rooms and morgues, contributes to juvenile delinquency and destroys families," Soler told the House Energy and Commerce subcommittee on health and the environment.

The survey found that shoving, pushing and throwing things are not rare when a man and woman fight. But as the level of physical violence escalates, both men and women acknowledge that men harm women more than women harm men.

The survey was based on telephone interviews with 1,900 Americans 18 and older, with a statistical margin of error of plus or minus 3 percentage points.

The public, according to the survey, no longer blames the woman or excuses the man for domestic violence. Soler said some of the myths about family violence have included the belief that a man beat his wife because he had been drinking, or that she "deserved" it for cooking the wrong meal.

Rep. Henry Waxman, D-Calif., the subcommittee chairman, said public health workers must address domestic violence.

"We need to understand domestic violence better. We need to train health workers about violence and to train law enforcement workers about injury. And we need to find interventions that a community can use to end the cycle of abuse," Waxman said.

"Even though domestic violence results in injury, disability, hospitalization and death, it has traditionally not been approached as a health issue," Waxman said.

President Clinton's 1994 budget proposal includes \$10 million for a new national prevention and public education program on violence against women, including family violence and violence against women by strangers or their dates.

AP-DS-04-20-93 0142EDT

JUDY MANN

## Standing Up to the 'Basically Nice Guys'

**E**sta Soler has a male friend who plays tennis with a man who beats his wife. One day she asked him why he continues to play tennis with that kind of person.

"Because," her friend replied, "he's basically a nice guy."

It was not an answer that Soler, the executive director of the Family Violence Prevention Fund, could tolerate. "I said, 'No. If you know he beats his wife, he is not a nice guy. If you knew he'd made a racist comment or an antisemitic comment, you wouldn't be playing tennis with him. I know you.'"

The Family Violence Prevention Fund, a decade-old organization headquartered in San Francisco, is launching a national campaign to drive home the theme that "there's no excuse for domestic violence."

"We have to create a milieu where people understand you are not a nice guy if you do this," Soler said in an interview.

With support from the Ford Foundation, the fund conducted 12 focus groups last year to explore attitudes toward domestic violence. The fund also sponsored a series of telephone polls. Soler said that when the staff members set out, they were convinced it would be difficult to get people to talk about the problem. But within five minutes after group members met and the moderator introduced the subject, "everybody was talking about knowing somebody in their family or a friend who was violent, or a brother who had abused several wives."

That willingness to discuss domestic violence was one of the surprises that came out of the research. Another surprise, however, was the prevalence of family abuse: 34 percent of those polled said they had directly witnessed an incident of domestic violence. Fourteen percent of the women said they had been physically abused by a husband or boyfriend, and half of the women said they believe that battering is not uncommon in relationships.

Wife beating used to be a hidden crime, denied by the husbands and wives involved, and by society in general. Nearly two decades of activism by women's advocates, however, have produced an important shift: 87 percent of poll respondents said that the battering of women is a serious problem and that it amounts to an attack on a woman's dignity and freedom as well as being a physical assault.

I asked Soler what people should do when they witness an incident of family violence. For instance, what should you do when you see a mother verbally or physically abuse a child at the mall? Soler, the mother of a 5-year-old, said that for years she did nothing. "But in the last couple of years, I felt it was absolutely imperative that I say something." She told of starting a conversation with a woman in a supermarket checkout line who was screaming at her two children. Soler said she tried to defuse the situation by being empathetic, and then gave the woman a phone number where she could get help coping with family stress.

Soler referred to the time in November 1990 when Charles Barkley, then of the Philadelphia 76ers, remarked to a reporter that basketball "is a game that if you lose, you go home and beat your wife and kids. Did you see my wife jumping up and down at the end of the game? That's because she knew I wasn't going to beat her." When the reporter asked him if he wanted to change or retract his remark, Barkley said, "Nah, print it." Later, the 76ers announced that he had apologized—a mild rebuke.

"That's an awful thing to say, but there was no public outcry and no public response from the NBA," Soler said. "If he had said something antisemitic, as we have seen, there would have been an outcry. It is still acceptable to say the things that he said."

The Clinton administration has requested \$10 million for the Centers for Disease Control to conduct a public education campaign on domestic violence and to gather better data on the extent to which it occurs. Soler hopes that her organization's efforts will fuel a social movement that will transform family violence from something that is ignored to the kind of behavior that society deems completely unacceptable.

For that to happen, Americans who believe that there is no excuse for domestic violence will have to stop condoning it by silence and by playing tennis with wife-beaters. This is not just a problem that affects battered women: Every father and mother who has a daughter has a stake in this. "Hopefully, by the time my daughter and your daughter are dating and are out in the world, it will be a lot less risky for them than it was for you and me," said Soler. "That is part of the reason I do this work."



# Study says 34 pct. in U.S. have seen women beaten by men

In a survey, 14 percent of women said they had been battered by a husband or boyfriend.

By George Lardner Jr.  
WASHINGTON POST

WASHINGTON — More than one of every three Americans say they have witnessed a man beating his wife or girlfriend, and 14 percent of the women say it has happened to them, according to a nationwide survey on domestic violence released yesterday.

The poll, conducted for the San Francisco-based Family Violence Prevention Fund, found that 34 percent of those surveyed, both men and

women, have seen such incidents, far more than the 19 percent who have ever witnessed a robbery or mugging.

Esta Soler, executive director of the fund, said the study, made public at a House hearing and news conference Friday, was the first comprehensive nationwide telephone survey on family violence and was based on a national sampling last April of 500 men and 500 women of 18 or older. The margin of error was 3 percent.

It was not clear, however, whether the violence is rising or whether more people are being asked about it and reporting it, or both.

"Prior to 1980, nobody kept any statistics [on domestic violence]," Soler said. Before 1989, she added, only 10 questions had ever been asked about the problem by any nationally recognized polling firm.

But now "the overwhelming majority [87 percent] of Americans say that the beating of women by their husbands or boyfriends is a serious problem," Soler said. "More women are seriously injured by beatings than by car accidents, muggings and rape combined."

The research, conducted by EDK

Associates, a New York-based public opinion research firm, with a grant from the Ford Foundation, found that 44 percent believe a man will beat a woman badly when they have a fight. (Nineteen percent say this happens "often" and 25 percent say "sometimes.") Sixteen percent say the woman will beat the man badly (5 percent say this happens "often" and 11 percent "sometimes.")

Ethel Klein, a former Columbia University professor who heads EDK, said the study included discussions with 12 focus groups in five cities and additional telephone polls of 300 African Americans, 300 Hispanics and 300 Asian Americans.

"They believe it's prevalent, they

believe it's serious and they believe it's solvable," Klein said her research showed. "But they don't know what to do about it. They're looking for leadership."

Eighty-one percent said they thought something could be done to end violence against women. But of these, 26 percent said they did not know what, 22 percent said "more counseling," 15 percent said "teach kids in school" and 9 percent said "stronger laws."

Seven percent said "women should become less emotionally and economically dependent on men," 6 percent said "change society," 5 percent called for "more arrests," 4 percent said "reduce violence in media/

change TV" and 3 percent favored "more respect" for women.

The 34 percent who said they had seen a man beating his wife or girlfriend were almost evenly divided between men (35 percent) and women (33 percent). Fourteen percent of the women said they were the victims of such violence, and 7 percent of the men and women said they had seen it happen to their mother or stepmother.

Twice as many men as women were among the 16 percent who said they had seen a woman beating her husband or boyfriend. Seven percent of the men said it had happened to them.

# Domestic Violence Widespread, Study Says

*Associated Press*

Washington

More than a third of Americans say they have witnessed an episode of domestic violence, and 14 percent of American women say they have been battered by husbands or boyfriends, according to a survey released yesterday.

"More women are seriously injured by beatings than by car accidents, muggings and rape combined," said Esta Soler, executive director of the Family Violence Pre-

vention Fund, a San Francisco-based advocacy group that financed the survey.

"Domestic violence fills emergency rooms and morgues, contributes to juvenile delinquency and destroys families," Soler said in releasing the survey at a hearing of the House Energy and Commerce subcommittee on health and the environment.

Based on telephone interviews with 1,900 Americans 18 and older, the survey found that 34 percent

of Americans say they have witnessed an episode of domestic violence, many of them when they were children.

"They're not unaffected bystanders," said Dr. Mark Rosenberg, a psychiatrist and acting associate director for public health practices at the National Center for Injury Prevention and Control, a part of the federal Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

"Their lives are affected by what they're witnessing. Boys who

witness violence in the home have an increased chance of growing up to be perpetrators of violence when they create their own family, and girls who witness repeated violence in the home have an increased likelihood of growing up and becoming victims of their spouse," Rosenberg said in an interview.

Soler's survey, which has a statistical margin of error of plus or minus 3 percent, found that half of all women believe battering is not uncommon.

"Our personal lives are not free from violence or fear of physical harm from the people we love. Americans acknowledge a pervasive amount of violence in private relationships," the report said.

The researchers said they found that shoving, pushing and throwing things are not uncommon when a man and woman fight. But as the level of physical violence escalates, both men and women acknowledge that men harm women more than women harm men.

The public, according to the survey, no longer blames the woman or excuses the man for domestic violence.

Representative Henry Waxman, D-Calif. and the subcommittee chairman, said public health workers must address domestic violence.

# Report shows domestic violence occurs often

■ Group determined to change society's perception of problem

By Ikimulisa Sockwell  
STAFF WRITER

Domestic violence is so prevalent in society today that more people have been exposed to spousal abuse than to robberies and burglaries combined, according to a nationwide study released Thursday by the Family Violence Prevention Fund.

More women receive treatment at hospitals because they've been beaten by a mate than because they are victims of rape and other assaults, said Esta Soler, executive director of the group.

In light of these findings, the group Thursday kicked off a national campaign to transform the public's perception of domestic violence as a private problem to a problem of society — much in the way advocates transformed America's perception of drunken driving.

Violence in the home isn't limited to the home. It seeps into every aspect of society, Soler said.

"The violence just keeps going," she said. For example, Soler said, a woman was admitted to a San Francisco hospital after her husband beat her with a hammer, and three days later, the woman's 5-year-old son was expelled from school because he kept hitting another child with a toy hammer.

"We need to create a (social)

conscience," said Ethel Klein, president of EDK Associates. The company surveyed close to 2,000 people in San Francisco, Los Angeles, Dallas, Little Rock, Ark., and Hartford, Conn. Respondents were asked whether they'd ever witnessed domestic abuse, how they would define it, and what can be done to prevent it.

Years ago, people thought drunken driving was wrong, but there wasn't a public outcry until groups and individuals spotlighted the problem and made it a public issue instead of a private problem, Klein said.

The campaign, called "There is No Excuse For Domestic Violence," includes advertising, and reaches out to corporations, schools and entertainment figures to spread the message that hitting a spouse will not be tolerated by society, Soler said.

It took 30 years for Marya Grambs to hear the term "battered woman," but when she did hear it, she knew it perfectly described her mother, she said at a news conference in San Francisco.

Grambs, the founder of La Casa de las Madres in San Francisco, said she tried to fall asleep at night to the sounds of her mother being punched, slapped and knocked around by her father.

"There is no excuse. There is nothing to justify it," she said of the abuse her mother endured or that of any other woman who has been abused by a mate.

# 1 in 3 Polled Say They've Seen Women Being Beaten

By GEORGE LARDNER Jr.  
THE WASHINGTON POST

WASHINGTON—More than one of every three Americans say they have witnessed a man beating his wife or girlfriend, and 14% of the women say it has happened to them, according to a nationwide survey on domestic violence released Monday.

The poll, conducted for the San Francisco-based Family Violence Prevention Fund, found that 34% of those surveyed, both men and women, have seen such incidents, far more than the 19% who have ever witnessed a robbery or mugging.

Esta Soler, executive director of the fund, said the study, made public at a House hearing and news conference Friday, was the first comprehensive nationwide telephone survey on family violence and was based on a national sampling last April of 500 men and 500 women aged 18 or older. The margin of error was 3 percentage points.

It was not clear, however, whether the violence is rising or more people are being asked about it and reporting it or both. "Prior to 1980, nobody kept any statistics [on domestic violence]," Soler said. Before 1989, she added, only 10 questions had ever been asked about the problem by any nationally recognized polling firm.

But now "the overwhelming majority [87%] of Americans say that the beating of women by their husbands or boyfriends is a serious problem," Soler said. "More women are seriously injured by beatings than by car accidents, muggings and rape combined."

The research, conducted by EDK Associates, a New York-based public opinion research firm,

with a grant from the Ford Foundation, found that 44% believe a man will beat a woman badly when they have a fight. (Nineteen percent say this happens "often" and 25% say "sometimes." Sixteen percent say the woman will beat the man badly (5% say this happens "often" and 11% "sometimes.")

Ethel Klein, a former Columbia University professor who heads EDK, said the study included discussions with 12 focus groups in five cities and additional telephone polls of 300 African-Americans, 300 Latinos and 300 Asian-Americans.

"They believe it's prevalent, they believe it's serious and they believe it's solvable," Klein said her research showed. "But they don't know what to do about it. They're looking for leadership."

Eighty-one percent said they thought something could be done to end violence against women. But of these, 26% said they didn't know what, 22% said "more counseling," 15% said "teach kids in school" and 9% said "stronger laws."

Seven percent said "women should become less emotionally and economically dependent on men"; 6% said "change society"; 5% called for "more arrests"; 4% said "reduce violence in media/change TV"; and 3% favored "more respect" for women.

The 34% who said they had seen a man beating his wife or girlfriend were almost evenly divided between men and women. Fourteen percent of the women said they were the victims of such violence, and 7% of the men and women said they had seen it happen to their mother or stepmother.

# Survey finds 'pervasive' domestic violence, deep effects

Associated Press

WASHINGTON — Fourteen percent of U.S. women say they have been battered by husbands or boyfriends, according to a survey released yesterday that found a "pervasive amount of violence in private relationships."

"More women are seriously injured by beatings than by car accidents, muggings and rape combined," said Esta Soler, executive director of the Family Violence Prevention Fund, a San Francisco-based advocacy group that financed the survey.

"Domestic violence fills emergency rooms and morgues, contributes to juvenile delinquency and destroys families," Ms. Soler said in releasing the survey at a hearing of the House Energy and Commerce subcommittee on health and the environment.

Based on telephone interviews with 1,900 Americans 18 and older, the survey found that 34 percent of

Americans say they have witnessed an episode of domestic violence.

"They're not unaffected bystanders," said Dr. Mark Rosenberg, a psychiatrist and acting associate director for public health practices at the National Center for Injury Prevention and Control, a part of the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention in Atlanta.

"Their lives are affected by what they're witnessing. Boys who witness violence in the home have an increased chance of growing up to be perpetrators of violence when they create their own family, and girls who witness repeated violence in the home have an increased likelihood of growing up and becoming victims of their spouse," Dr. Rosenberg said.

(complete writer thru \_ adding quotes, more statistics)

Study shows 'epidemic' of domestic violence

By WILLIAM D. MURRAY

SAN FRANCISCO (UPI) \_ An "epidemic" of domestic violence has swept the nation with as many as 4 million American women battered by their husbands or boyfriends each year, a study revealed Thursday.

The Family Violence Prevention Fund in San Francisco released the results of its first ever national survey on domestic violence and found that almost twice as many Americans have witnessed acts of spousal abuse as have seen a mugging or robbery (34 percent to 19 percent).

"No. 1 you have to understand that this is an epidemic," said Esta Soler, the foundation's executive director. "It's something the public must be made aware of and must no longer tolerate."

The study found that 14 percent of women asked admitted to being a victim of some kind of abuse. In addition, 57 percent of both men and women report they have witnessed an act of domestic violence.

The report also showed women are more likely to verbally abuse their mates, while men are more inclined to take violent action.

"Our study, police data and emergency room records show women are the ones most likely to suffer a physical injury as the result of domestic violence," Soler said.

But Soler noted that public perception about the problem is slowly changing.

"We were surprised that the American public no longer blames the women or excuses the man," she said. "That's progress. But we are at the same place the anti-drunk driving people were 10 years ago."

Soler also said the study showed that law enforcement response and a tougher judicial system on domestic abuse alone would not cure the problem.

"It is clear that we cannot build enough jails or shelters to resolve this problem," the foundation president said. "Prevention is the key. We believe that America is ready to expand its preventive response to this disgraceful epidemic."

To aid in prevention, the foundation announced it was about to launch a public awareness program about the issue.

"Most people realize that this is a serious problem," Soler said.

"And they want something done about it. But when you ask 'what?' They tell you they really do not know."

The foundation believes an across the board effort, including classes for youngsters, is needed.

Soler said she was also encouraged by U.S. Attorney General Janet Reno's stand on the link between domestic violence and other crimes. She also believed that President Clinton's admissions about his stepfather's abuse of his mother will help her cause.

## Study shows 'epidemic' of domestic violence

SAN FRANCISCO (UPI) \_ A study released Thursday revealed that an "epidemic" of domestic violence has swept the nation with as many as 4 million American women battered by their husbands or boyfriends each year.

The Family Violence Prevention Foundation in San Francisco released the results of its first ever national survey on domestic violence. The findings were shocking even to the group.

Esta Soler, the foundation's executive director, said researchers found 14 percent of women surveyed admitted to being a victim to some kind of abuse.

In addition, 57 percent of both men and women report they have witnessed an act of domestic violence.

She said it was "time to talk about domestic violence as an epidemic because that's exactly what it has become."

Soler noted that public perceptions about the problem are changing, but slowly. She said most people no longer blame the woman or excuse the man's behavior.

Soler said her organization was about to launch a public awareness program about the issue.

"We are where the anti-drunk driving campaign was 10 years ago," she said. "We need to change attitudes across the board. Many still see domestic violence as a private issue."

Soler said she was encouraged by U.S. Attorney General Janet Reno's stand on the link between domestic violence and other crimes. She also believed that President Clinton's admissions about his stepfather's abuse of his mother will help her cause.

# Uncertainty on dealing with home violence

Monday, April 19, 1993  
San Francisco Examiner  
p. A7

But most in U.S. think it's a serious problem, says study

By Jane Kay  
OF THE EXAMINER STAFF

Though most Americans believe domestic violence and abuse are serious problems facing families today, a new poll finds much less agreement on how to prevent and deal with the problems.

Billed as the largest study ever on attitudes toward domestic violence, the study commissioned by the San Francisco-based Family Violence Prevention Fund was released Monday.

Among its findings: A majority of respondents said outsiders should not intervene in a fight between a man and woman unless physical violence occurs.

While the majority labels a mother screaming at her child as child abuse and a husband grabbing his wife and calling her a worthless cow as domestic violence, it doesn't support strong sanctions under most circumstances, the study found.

Only 6 percent would want the child removed from the house in the first instance, and in the second fewer than a third said the man should be arrested.

But if a mother smacks her child hard across the face and head, 40 percent said the child should be removed from the home.

When parents were asked about husbands or boyfriends punching their daughters, 69 percent said the man should be arrested. Seventy-two percent said the mother should then leave the spouse or boyfriend.

Yet the study, involving 2,140 men and women, reveals a new way

of thinking about the old crime of wife beating. Americans no longer blame the woman and excuse the man, the study concludes.

"Unlike in the past, traditional solutions that only stress 'family values' are no longer 'accepted by today's American public,'" it says.

Solutions suggesting that women should stay at home or stop men from drinking or that people should go to church more often were accepted by a mere 3 percent of those questioned.

Most Americans are uncertain about why a man would beat a woman. But when given a choice, more than a third of women and men said the man "wants to control her." The second-most-popular response of women was that he was "beaten when he was young." The second choice of men was that he "got drunk and lost control."

Esta Soler, executive director of the Family Violence Prevention Fund, will use the study in testimony before Congress Monday to promote a national prevention program.

## 'Major shift in attitude'

"We see a major shift in the attitude from 10 years ago," Soler said. "It was, 'What did she do to make this happen?' Now the debate is: 'Does there have to be serious injury to be domestic violence?'"

"We have to create the same kind of cultural shift that we did with drunk driving," Soler said. "The workplace, friends, family, courts and police won't tolerate it. That just doesn't happen overnight."

In the study, 14 percent of American women said they have been violently abused by a husband or boyfriend, and more people have directly witnessed domestic violence than muggings and robberies

combined — 34 vs. 19 percent.

The 32-page study was prepared by Ethal Klein, of EDK Associates in New York, who calls it the most comprehensive attitude survey on the issue.

The study was based on information taken from 12 in-depth focus groups in five cities, including San Francisco, and a national survey.

## San Franciscans surveyed

Researchers conducted additional surveys of African Americans, Latinos and Asian Americans, some in San Francisco, to provide data on sex, race and ethnicity.

Regarding the communications gap between them, men and women agreed that they have different patterns of communicating and use different techniques to get their way.

Both men and women — 79 and 78 percent — agree women often want men to take care of them.

And 65 percent of women and 54 percent of men think men often want to be in control.

Women are more likely than men to agree that men think they can solve everything by yelling — 48 to 38 percent. But both sexes agree that men need to learn how to express themselves — 91 percent of women and 88 percent of men.



Stephen J. Sullivan writes in a N.Y. TIMES op-ed: "Even as Hillary Rodham Clinton embarks on cutting the costs of health care, her 82-year-old father, the victim of an acute stroke, appears to have received a level of hospital care well beyond the norm for his condition and outrageously excessive in the new world her task force is trying to fashion." This case highlights the difficulty in trying to apply a cost-containing policy to a friend or family member. However, he notes, "If we as a society decide to limit medical spending, let us not pretend that this will not involve rationing" (4/18).

===== SURVEYS & POLLS =====

**\*9 STUDIES: PUTTING WOMEN AND CHILDREN FIRST**

"Mandate for Children," a new report based on surveys conducted by Tarrance Group (R) and Greenberg/Lake (D) 2/93 (see AHL, 3/12) and 4/93 will be released today by the Coalition for America's Children. The report's findings "counter conventional wisdom that children's issues are marginal to the public's political agenda." According to the surveys, when voters think of "stimulating the economy for the long term," 37% chose investing in the health and education of the nation's children as the solution. On health care reform, 45% chose children as the first group to address. And even if it meant an increase in taxes, 84% supported proposals to "guarantee basic health care for pregnant women and children" (Coalition for America's Children release, 4/19).

**WOMEN:** The Family Violence Prevention Fund will release results today of a new public opinion survey on domestic violence. Based on the results, the fund is "launching a major, multi-year national public education and media campaign," entitled "There's No Excuse for Domestic Violence." The survey explored the prevalence, public attitudes on domestic violence, the range of actions people consider acceptable, possible solutions, and definitions of domestic violence. The survey found 14% of women "admit to having been violently abused by a husband or boyfriend" (Family Violence and Prevention Fund release, 4/19).

===== ON THE WATCH =====

**\*10 TUNE IN: PBS' "MEDICINE AT THE CROSSROADS" AIRS TONIGHT**

Parts five and six of PBS' eight-part series examines "the latest lifesaving surgical techniques and 'miracle drugs.'" Check local listings.

**National report**

**Inmates appear ready to end Ohio standoff**

From Chicago Tribune wires

LUCASVILLE, Ohio—Inmates barricaded in a state prison for more than a week displayed a banner from a cellblock window Monday that indicated they're willing to end the standoff but want to talk to a lawyer first. A prison spokeswoman said negotiations Monday were "positive." Prisoners reportedly were arming themselves with makeshift weapons and may have booby-trapped some prison entrances in case authorities decide to rush the cellblock at the maximum-security Southern Ohio Correctional Facility, the Dayton Daily News reported. About 450 inmates have held the cellblock since an April 11 riot.

**Study: 14% of women see selves as battered**

WASHINGTON—Fourteen percent of American women say they have been battered by husbands or boyfriends, according to a survey released Monday that found a "pervasive amount of violence in private relationships." More women are seriously injured by beatings "than by car accidents, muggings and rape combined," said Esta Soler, executive director of the Family Violence Prevention Fund, an advocacy group that financed the survey. Soler's telephone survey of 1,900 Americans at least 18 years old found that half of all women believe battering is not uncommon in relationships with men. The study had a statistical margin of error of plus or minus 3 percent.

**Milwaukee water may have sickened 400,000**

WASHINGTON—Up to 400,000 people, about half of those served by the Milwaukee water system, might have been sickened by a parasite that got into its tap water, city Health Commissioner Paul Nannis said Monday. The parasite, cryptosporidium, causes diarrhea and nausea and is believed to have been carried by the runoff from farm fields into Lake Michigan, from which Milwaukee draws its water. Nannis also told the House Health and Environment Subcommittee that the contamination may have stemmed from a change in purification methods made to bring down the amount of lead in the drinking water.

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