

DOMESTIC VIOLENCE AT THE WORKPLACE:

Investigating the Impact of
Domestic Violence Perpetration
on Workers and Workplaces



dv@worknet

generating knowledge on the impacts of domestic violence in the workplace



Western

Centre for Research & Education on
Violence Against Women & Children

SURVEY BACKGROUND

Impact of Domestic Violence Perpetration on Workers and Workplaces

An important part of our work to end domestic violence victimization must be raising awareness, starting dialogue, and offering prevention and intervention resources to perpetrators and potential perpetrators of abuse.

When workers are experiencing domestic violence (DV) at home, the impacts are felt in the workplace. The victimization Pan-Canadian Survey on DV and the Workplace, which surveyed over 8000 workers, found that among those experiencing DV, over half (54%) indicated that DV occurred at or near the workplace, 82% reported that DV negatively affected their workplace performance, and 38% reported being late or missing work due to DV victimization (Wathen, MacGregor, & MacQuarrie, 2014). These impacts are consistent with a recent study by Justice Canada which estimated that employers lose \$77.9 million annually as a result of DV victimization (Zhang, Ting, Hoddenbagh, McDonald, & Scrim, 2012).

For the current survey, we turned our attention to another intersection between DV and the workplace, that of DV perpetration. As employers, unions, and regulators begin to try to address concerns around DV victimization with policies, training, and resources, it seemed critical to us that the experiences of workers who had perpetrated violence were also considered. We wanted to understand the extent to which perpetration of violence extended from the home to the workplace and to document the cost to workplaces of failing to address the distress, distraction, anger, and preoccupation workers experience in association with DV issues. We also wanted to give voice to those who have perpetrated violence on their experiences sharing information with their workplaces and their opinions on the types of resources that should be available in the future.

Guiding our research on DV perpetration and the workplace is our broader position that an important part of our work to end DV victimization is raising awareness, starting dialogue, and offering prevention and intervention resources to perpetrators and potential perpetrators of abuse. Because DV is a gendered issue, we can understand this position more broadly as the need to focus on men (who are perpetrators of the majority of injurious, severe, fear-provoking, and repeat DV) as a central part of efforts to prevent and intervene to end DV.

Historically, models for ending DV have focused predominantly on increasing awareness of the impact of DV on victims, developing resources to help potential victims identify when they might be at risk, and ensuring that help is available to facilitate escape from violent relationships. Efforts to increase workplace safety, for example, have focused predominantly on raising awareness of the widespread impact of DV victimization and ensuring that workplaces are safe places for victims of DV. Such efforts have helped to galvanize workplace training and create provisions for paid leave for employees who have been victimized. We support all of these excellent initiatives.

Potential Unintended Consequences

Alongside this support is our concern that documenting workplace impact and creating responsibilities around dealing with DV victimization without paying similar attention to the impact and responsibilities of employers around DV perpetration may have unintended negative consequences. The first is the potential for DV to be perceived as a “women’s issue” within the employment sector, as opposed to an issue that is equally important to women (predominately as victims) and men (predominantly as perpetrators). Second, when focus remains solely on victimization, there is a tendency for discussion to centre on extreme, potentially lethal, high profile cases. Our inclination, in hearing these extreme stories, is to figure out how to screen for signs of DV, identify indicators of potentially lethal violence, and then make sure that “these people” are kept out of the workplace. We end up with a set of policies and responses that are most appropriate for a very small subset of severe cases.

Fundamental to our understanding must be that DV is a common social problem. According to the General Social Survey’s most recent data, the five-year prevalence rate of DV victimization among Canadian adults in relationships is 4% (Statistics Canada, 2016). In terms of lifetime prevalence, the victimization Pan-Canadian survey on DV and the Workplace indicates that about one-third (34%) of respondents reported ever experiencing DV from an intimate partner, 35% reported having at least one co-worker who they believed was experiencing or had previously experienced DV, and 12% reported having at least one co-worker who they believed was being abusive, or had been previously abusive, towards his/her partner (Wathen, MacGregor, & MacQuarrie, 2014). When we understand this prevalence, we can then appreciate that those who perpetrate DV are our co-workers, our supervisors, and those working under our supervision. Our intervention plan cannot be limited to screening out and removing everyone who has perpetrated DV – it is simply not feasible or reasonable to remove one-third, 12%, or even 4% of the workforce. We must instead develop a range of policy and intervention options to hold perpetrators accountable for their abuse.

Moreover, to the extent that we make screening and exclusion our starting point, the consequence of growing legislation and policies around DV may be to drive discussions of DV underground for fear that making DV experiences known will have severe negative consequences (e.g., being fired, suspended, written up, unable to get new employment). Police record checks are increasingly becoming a requisite component of employer hiring processes (John Howard Society of Ontario, 2014), thus potentially rendering perpetrators of DV, with or without conviction records, unemployed. This is ironic, as joblessness is one of the top ten risk factors for lethality in cases of domestic homicide (Ontario Domestic Violence Death Review Committee, 2015). With joblessness as a potential consequence, discussion around DV as an important social issue may become even more hidden and taboo in the workplace.

We need to document workplace impact and create responsibilities around dealing with

domestic violence victimization.

We need to pay similar attention to the impact and responsibilities of employers around

domestic violence perpetration.

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Survey Purpose

To avoid these unintended consequences, it is necessary to expand dialogue within workplaces of how our places of employment can contribute to efforts to end DV perpetration, as well as victimization. Lost work productivity and time, as well as decreased work performance are experienced by victims and perpetrators alike, making it necessary for employers to be responsive toward both parties. More importantly, in reviewing cases of domestic homicide, it has been found that friends, family, and colleagues of victims of DV homicide, including work colleagues, are often aware of the abuse occurring, but unaware of how to intervene (Campbell, Dawson, Jaffe, & Straatman, 2016). Such missed opportunities for DV intervention and prevention demonstrate that it is critical for workplaces to appropriately respond to the DV situations of workers.

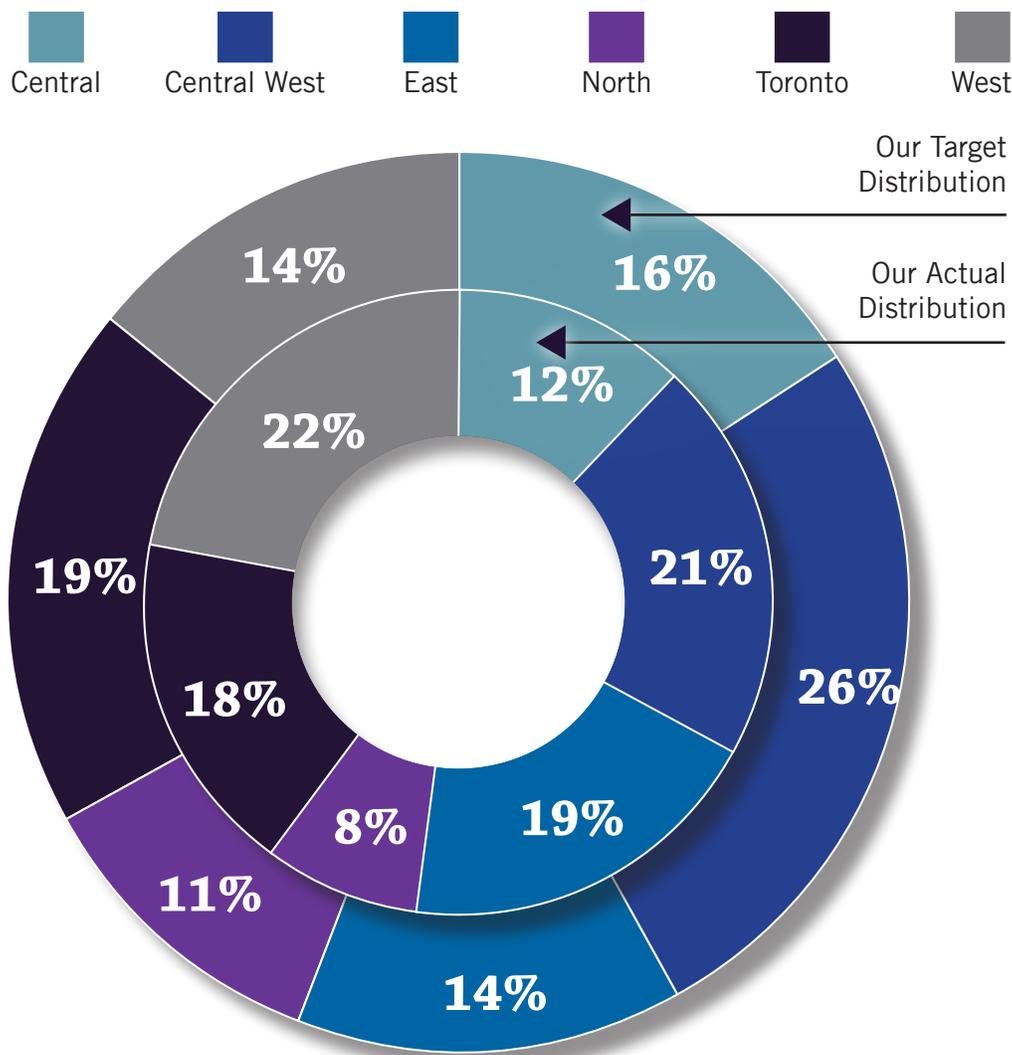
This survey, done by researchers at the University of Toronto and Western University, Partner Assault Response (PAR) programs across Ontario, and the DV@Work Network, was designed to increase our understanding of the impact of DV perpetration on workers and workplaces. Our aim was to raise awareness of the intersection of DV perpetration and workplace safety and productivity, and to provide data that could contribute to efforts to inform ongoing development of workplace policies, training, prevention, and intervention initiatives.

Survey Methods

Participants for this survey were recruited from Ontario's Partner Assault Response (PAR) programs between June of 2015 and February of 2017. PAR programs are part of Ontario's criminal justice response to DV. Individuals attend these programs following an arrest for perpetrating a DV offence as part of conditions of diversion (i.e., Early Intervention program), probation, or as a result of a peace bond. In a few programs across the province, perpetrators can attend voluntarily or as a result of a non-justice referral. PAR programs exist in all regions of the province and are attended by approximately 11 000 perpetrators each year.

In our collection of data, we aimed to get a sample representative of the six Ministry identified PAR service regions: central, central west, east, north, Toronto, and west. Twenty-two of Ontario's PAR programs partnered with us to complete this research (Table 1), and we were reasonably successful in our aim of getting an approximately proportional number of respondents from each region (Figure 1) with representation from regions all within 5% of our target proportion, except for the west service region, which was within 8%.

FIGURE 1: PAR Program Region Distribution



For this survey, domestic violence was defined as any form of physical, sexual, emotional, or psychological abuse, including financial control, stalking, and harassment. It occurs between opposite- or same-sex intimate partners, who may or may not be married, common law, or living together. It can also continue to happen after a relationship has ended.

Modelled after the victimization Pan-Canadian survey (Wathen, MacGregor, & MacQuarrie, 2014) and the Vermont perpetration survey (Schmidt & Barnett, 2011), our DV at the Workplace survey consisted of 49 questions. Survey questions tapped into the lost work productivity and time due to DV, examined the degree to which DV perpetration occurred in the workplace, explored workplace response to DV perpetration issues, and gave insight into the overall impact of DV perpetration on the workplace. In order to be eligible to participate in this study, participants needed to be able to read and write in English and to be currently or recently employed. This survey was reviewed and approved by the University of Toronto's research ethics board.

Survey questions tapped into the lost work productivity and time due to DV, examined the degree to which DV perpetration occurred in the workplace, explored workplace response to DV perpetration issues, and gave insight into the overall impact of DV perpetration on the workplace.

TABLE 1: Participating PAR Programs

REGION	AREA	AGENCY
Central	Barrie	Catholic Family Services of Simcoe County
	Peterborough	John Howard Society of Peterborough
Central West	Brantford	Nova Vita Women’s Shelter Incorporated
	Peel	Catholic Family Services Peel-Dufferin
	St. Catharines	Family Counselling Centre Niagara
	Guelph	Family Counselling and Support Services for Guelph-Wellington
East	Belleville	Conflict Resolution Counselling Services of Belleville
	Ottawa	Catholic Family Service Ottawa
North	Sault Ste. Marie	Algoma Family Services
	Thunder Bay	Catholic Family Development Centre of Thunder Bay
	Elliot Lake	Counselling Centre for East Algoma
Toronto	Toronto	Family Service Toronto
		Counterpoint Counselling and Educational Cooperative
		Elizabeth Fry Toronto
West	Chatham	Changing Ways Chatham
	Clinton	Huron-Perth Centre for Children and Youth
	London	Changing Ways London
	Counties of Grey and Bruce	Canadian Mental Health Association Grey Bruce Branch – Men’s Program
	Sarnia	Social Service Bureau of Sarnia-Lambton o/a Family Counselling Centre
	Strathroy	Changing Ways Strathroy
	St. Thomas	Changing Ways St. Thomas
	Woodstock	Children’s Aid Society of Oxford County – Family Violence Counselling Program

SURVEY RESULTS: OUR PARTICIPANTS

A total of 501 PAR program participants took part in this study. The vast majority (88%) were heterosexual men who met the study criteria of being employed or recently employed. 6% of participants responded to the survey but either did not meet study criteria (e.g., reported being retired) or did not provide a sufficient amount of information (e.g., completed only the first two pages) to be included in analyses. The remaining participants (6%) were women offenders and/or did not report being in a heterosexual relationship. Results for these subgroups will be considered separately.

Of the 443 heterosexual male respondents who met study criteria, most were between the ages of 25 and 44 (61%), with 16% between the ages of 15 to 24, 16% between the ages of 45 to 54, and 7% at ages 55 and above. The majority of respondents (84%) reported being born in Canada. Just over one-tenth (11%) identified as being Indigenous (69% First Nations, 4% Inuit, 15% Metis), and 13% identified as visible minorities. 13% of respondents reported having a disability, 2% identified as sexual minorities, yet also identified as being part of a heterosexual relationship, and 1% identified as other minorities (unspecified).

The vast majority of respondents (94%) came to be involved in Partner Assault Response (PAR) programs as a result of criminal justice referrals (i.e., probation order, early intervention program, peace bond), with only 6% referred by other statutory services (i.e., family court, children's aid) and 7% engaged in voluntary attendance (some men also indicated two sources of referral, so numbers sum to more than 100%). Less than 1% reported attending PAR due to a work referral. It is important to note, however, that workplace referrals are only possible in a limited number of Ontario sites.

SURVEY RESULTS: THEIR WORKPLACES

Employment Details

Participants were asked to report on details about their employment held at the time of the DV incident that led them to their PAR attendance. For slightly over half the sample (51%) this was their currently held position. The remaining respondents reported on a position they held prior to their DV incident (21%), a position they held recently (13%), a position they held shortly before/after their DV incident because they were not employed at the time of the incident (11%), or did not provide such specification (3%).

501 PAR program participants took part in this study.

443 of these participants were heterosexual male respondents.

Many of the men had jobs in construction or mechanical trades, or worked as drivers.

Compared to national averages, men were

less likely to hold permanent, full-time positions,

and more likely to be in temporary, casual, or seasonal jobs.

Job Sector

On the whole, at the time of their DV incident, most respondents held permanent, full-time, and non-unionized positions in small workplaces, where they were not responsible for supervising or managing others. Using the ten broad occupational categories of the National Occupational Classification (NOC) 2016 (Employment and Social Development Canada & Statistics Canada), it was found that half of those who responded with codeable information (50%) had job titles that were classified in the category of trades, transport, and equipment operators, and related occupations. Most who worked in this sector had jobs in construction or mechanical trades, or worked as drivers. Additionally, of the 4% who worked in management, the majority were construction, warehouse, or maintenance managers. Other common occupations among respondents were those in sales and service (20%), as well as those in manufacturing and utilities (9%; Table 2).

TABLE 2: *Job Sector

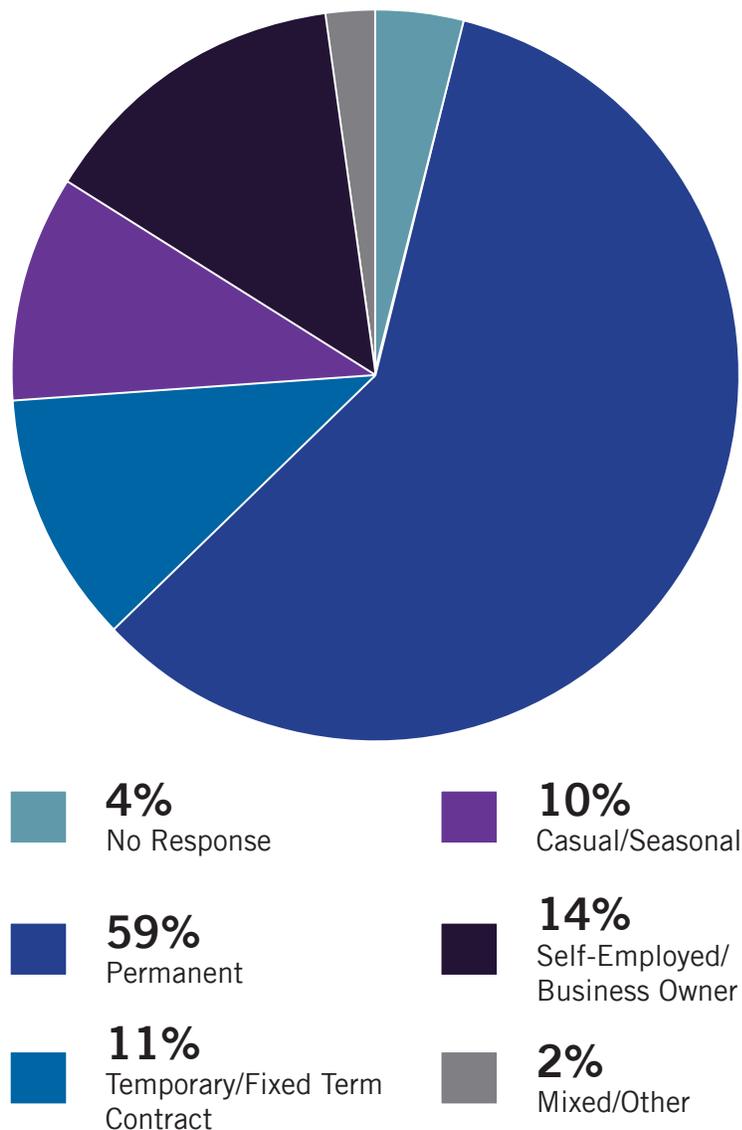
Trades, Transport, and Equipment Operators, and Related Occupations	50%
Sales and Service Occupations	20%
Occupations in Manufacturing and Utilities	9%
Business, Finance and Administration Occupations	5%
Natural and Applied Sciences, and Related Occupations	4%
Management Occupations	4%
Occupations in Education, Law, and Social, Community, and Government Services	3%
Natural Resources, Agriculture, and Related Production Occupations	3%
Health Occupations	2%
Occupations in Art, Culture, Recreation, and Sport	0%

*Of the 73% of men who responded to this question, the vast majority (90%) provided codeable information. The remaining 10% of responses did not contain sufficient information for coding, so these respondents were removed from this analysis.

Employment Status

More than half of respondents (59%) reported working as a permanent employee. The remaining were relatively equally distributed among temporary employment (11%), casual/seasonal employment (10%), and self-employment (14%), with an additional 2% employed in a combination of (e.g., mixed employment) or other types (e.g., apprenticeship; Figure 2). In comparing our sample of men to nationwide statistics on employed men aged 15 years and older, we found that the men in our study were significantly more likely to be casual/seasonal workers, with the corresponding national distribution at only 3% in 2016. They were also significantly less likely to be permanent workers, with the corresponding national distribution at 87% in 2016 (Statistics Canada, 2017).

FIGURE 2: Employment Status



Co-Working Partner

9% of respondents reported working at the same place as their partner. In a number of these cases, men were self-employed and owned/ran businesses with their partners. These men indicated that the communication, trust, and overall business partnership issues that arose as a result of their DV situations were significant challenges to their work, workplaces, and businesses.

Over one-third of respondents (38%) had a supervisory or managerial role in their workplace.

Around one-third of respondents (31%) worked in unionized environments, and another 18% were part of a worker association or oversight body.

Size of Workplace

Half of respondents (50%) were employed in workplaces with less than 20 workers, 26% with 20 to 99, 13% with 100 to 500, and just 10% in very large (i.e., 500+) workplaces. 1% of respondents did not indicate their workplace size.

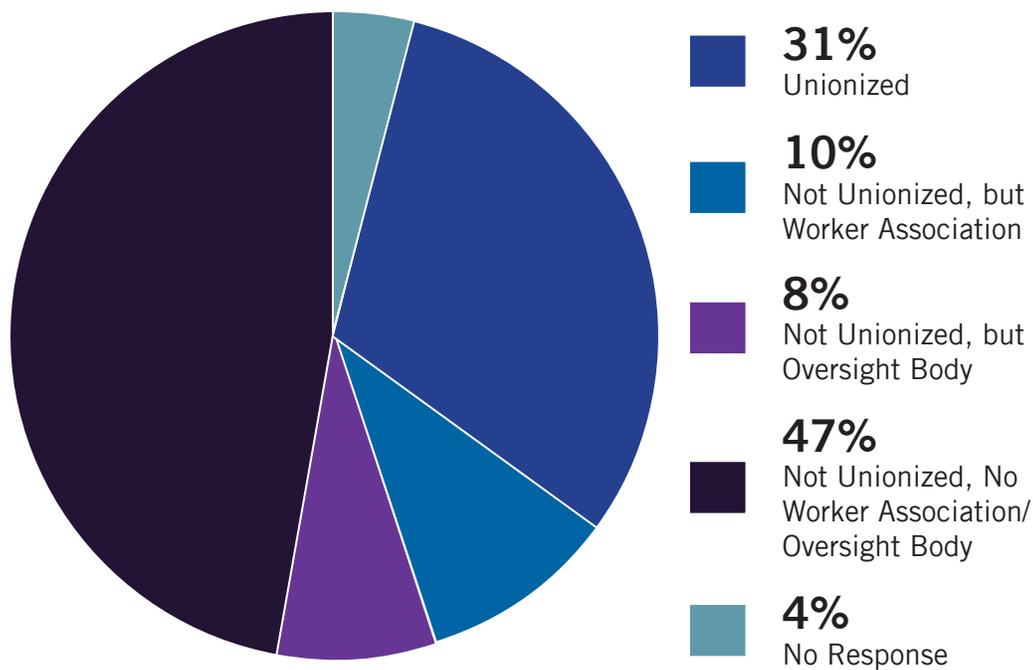
Supervisory Role

A sizable proportion of respondents (14%) were self-employed. Of those who reported working for an employer, most had their work overseen by others, with the vast majority of them (88%) answering to a supervisor or manager and 7% being responsible to an oversight body or organization. Additionally, over one-third (38%) had a supervisory or managerial role in their workplace.

Unionization

Almost half of respondents (47%) were not unionized and not part of a worker association/oversight body when working at the time of their DV incident. 31% of respondents were unionized, which aligned very closely with nationwide statistics, 32% of all Canadian employees being unionized workers in 2015 (Employment and Social Development Canada, 2016). Additionally, 10% of respondents were not unionized, but part of a worker association, and 8% were also not unionized, but part of an oversight body (Figure 3).

FIGURE 3: *Unionization



*Self-employed participants were excluded from this analysis.

SURVEY RESULTS: IMPACT OF DV

DV in the Workplace

We were first interested in understanding the extent to which DV continued into the workplace. We asked men to report on ongoing conflict, emotional abuse, and monitoring. The majority of the sample (71%) reported being in contact with their (ex)partner during work hours for at least one of these purposes, mostly to continue ongoing conflict. Importantly however, about one-third (34%) reported emotionally abusing and/or monitoring their (ex)partner during work hours (Figure 4). Of those who reported emotionally abusing their (ex)partner during work hours, most used messages (i.e., calls, emails, texts; 92%), though a sizable minority reported going by their (ex)partner's workplace (14%) or home (23%). Similarly, of those who reported that they checked on and/or found out about the activities or whereabouts of their (ex)partner, messages were again the most common method of connection (91%); however, over one-quarter reported that they went by their (ex)partner's workplace (27%) and/or by their (ex)partner's home or another place (29%) to monitor her. As examples of these kinds of behaviours, men wrote about texting and fighting with their (ex)partner “*all the time*” or “*while running machines*” and about being distracted by thinking about their (ex)partner's whereabouts: “*All I could think about was what was going on at home and if my wife was even going to be there.*”

Around one-fifth of respondents (21%) who reported engagement in conflict, emotional abuse, and/or monitoring also indicated that someone at work knew about these behaviours, mostly co-workers (82%). In 19% of these cases, someone at work “covered” for them while they engaged in these behaviours.

The majority of the sample (70%) also reported that their (ex)partner contacted them during work hours to engage in conflict, emotional abuse, and/or monitoring. Once again, the most common method of contact was via phone, email, text, or other messaging. Of those who reported conflict, emotional abuse, and/or monitoring by their (ex)partner, workplace visits by (ex)partners were reported by 30%, 26%, and 37% respectively.

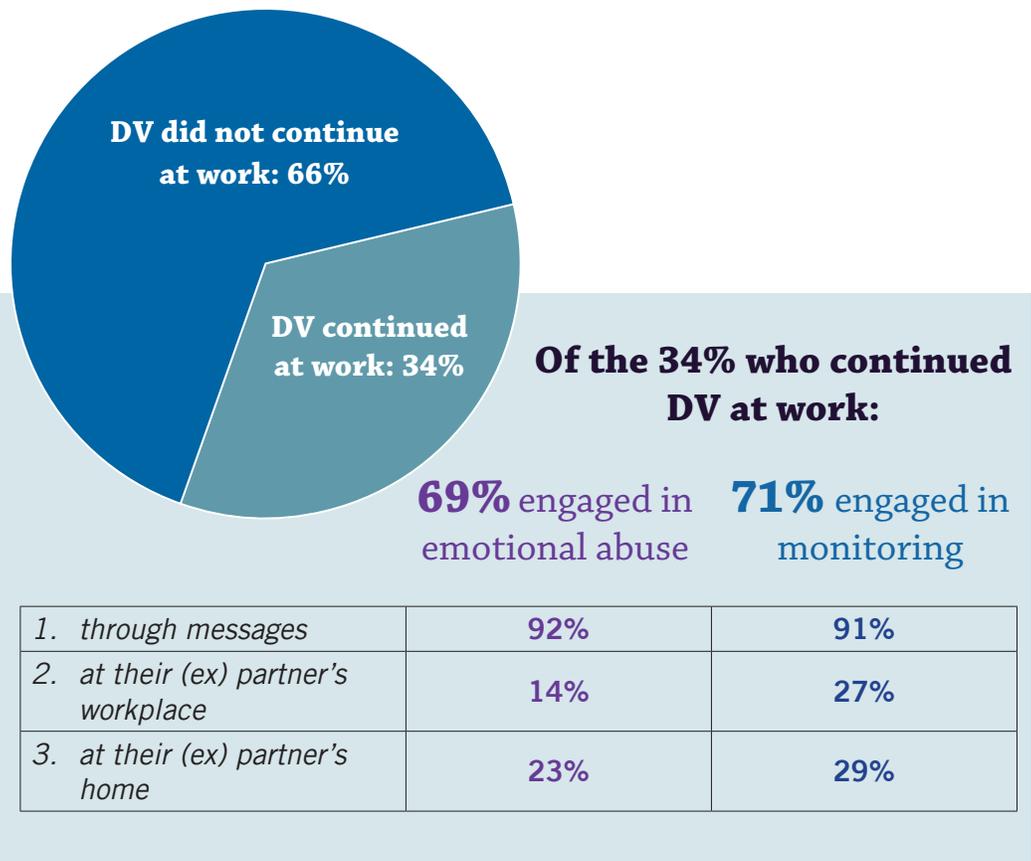
Of the respondents who reported that their (ex)partner engaged in conflict/emotional abuse/monitoring, about one-quarter (26%) also reported that a member of their workplace knew that these behaviours took place. 44% of those who knew were supervisors, 76% were coworkers, and 10% were other people.

We were also interested to know how often work itself was a source of conflict. When respondents were asked how often they fought with their (ex)partner about their work (e.g., about work hours, being in contact during the workday), half (50%) reported that these fights occurred rarely or never and another quarter (22%) reported that they happened sometimes. Conflict about work was often (12%) or very often (10%) an issue for fewer men.

About one-third of respondents (34%) reported being in contact with their (ex)partner during work hours to engage in emotional abuse and/or monitoring of their (ex)partner.

Men wrote about texting and fighting with their (ex)partners “all the time” or “while running machines” and about being distracted by thinking about their (ex)partners’ whereabouts.

FIGURE 4: DV in the Workplace



Of men who continued perpetration of DV during work hours, more than one-fifth (21%) indicated that someone at work knew about these behaviours.

TABLE 3: What Constituted Conflict, Emotional Abuse, and Monitoring in the Workplace?

In the past two years, have you ever:

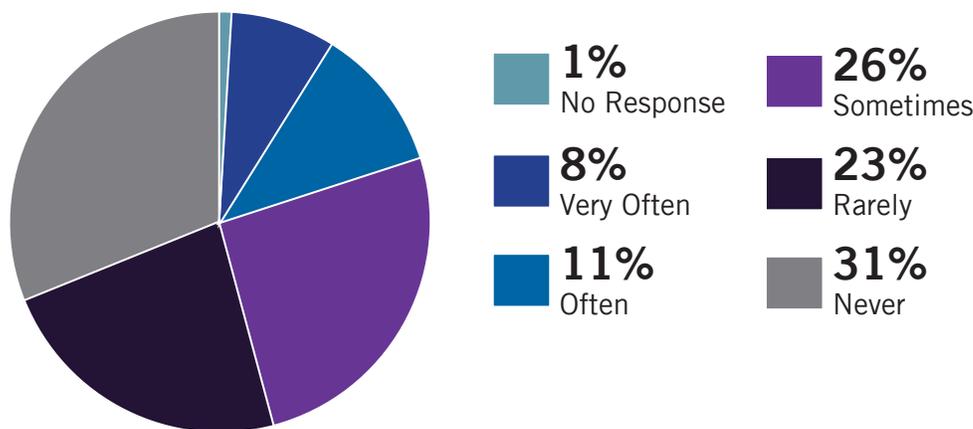
- used phone calls, texts, emails, or other messages while at work to...*
- went by your (ex)partner's workplace to...*
- went by your (ex)partner's home or other place where you thought they would be to...*

CONFLICT	EMOTIONAL ABUSE	MONITORING
continue an argument/ conflict	say something deliberately hurtful or degrading	check up on your (ex) partner to make sure they were doing what they said they would do
try to resolve an earlier conflict/argument	intimidate, threaten, or scare your (ex)partner	find out if your (ex)partner was where they said they would be

Degree of Negative Impact on Work Performance

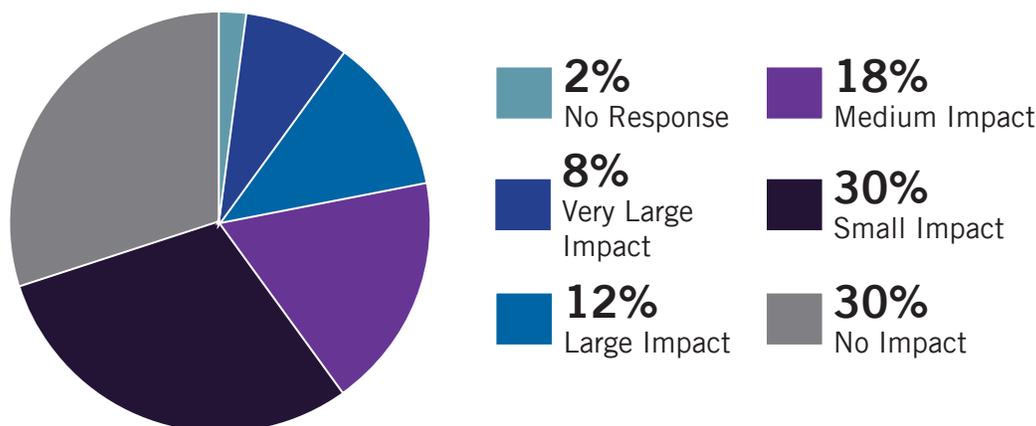
Participants were asked to report on how often and how much DV issues impacted their work performance. Close to half of respondents (45%) reported that DV issues sometimes, often, or very often negatively affected their job performance (Figure 5a). Most reported that the effect of DV issues was small or had no impact (60%); however, 38% of respondents reported that DV issues had a medium, large, or very large impact on their job performance (Figure 5b).

FIGURE 5a: Frequency of Impact



45% reported that DV issues sometimes, often, or very often negatively affected their job performance.

FIGURE 5b: Amount of Impact



38% reported that DV issues had a medium, large, or very large impact on their job performance.

Although not all respondents reported negative impact on work performance and productivity, those who did gave compelling examples and details. Many gave examples of how DV issues impacted their overall mood and level of interest in their jobs.

*“Unable to focus/
concentrate on my
work”*

*“Missed days
[...] loss of
sales, missed
information”*

*9% of respondents
reported causing
or almost causing
a work accident
because they were
distracted or
preoccupied with
DV issues.*

“Anxiety/depression resulted from conflicts and I was unable to focus/ concentrate on my work. When I did work, much of my work was sub-standard.”

Others spoke of having high levels of irritability and anger in the workplace.

“I am a cook at a busy restaurant and dealing with an argument before work would cause me to get annoyed when a lot of orders would come at once, when normally, I enjoy cooking many orders.”

Still, others made comments about the amount of time that they missed as a result of DV issues.

“Missed days when big clients were scheduled [...] loss of sales, missed information, [and] big contracts lost.”

“Just trying to tell my boss I need a day off for [PAR], but not telling him [about PAR].”

Incidence of Work Accidents

Of particular concern to workplaces are distractions that may lead to accidents. As part of this survey, participants were asked if they had caused or almost caused a work accident because they were distracted or preoccupied with DV issues. 9% of respondents reported such incidents. Examples men gave of the kinds of accidents caused or almost caused are as follows:

“I was working on a roof of a house [...] and I was missing a co-worker saying something and almost fell off roof.”

“I have slipped and [fallen] and nearly caught my foot in the blade.”

“I spent a night in jail, and got out in the morning, went to work, and due to lack of sleep and stress, I got into a car accident with a work vehicle.”

“Because of my preoccupation [with] my thoughts, I damaged two expensive units at work.”

“Not paying attention and misplaced a step, fell over equipment.”

“Dropping a load of bricks on somebody.”

“I thought I burned my hand on hot material few times. Knocked over skid part on forklift. Could have caused death.”

“I forgot that I was assigned six patients on day shift, so I missed one of them when it came to administering medication. The incident caused me to be reprimanded and questioned by my manager.”

“The last job I had I twice had an accident operating the zamboni. I ran into the same door on separate occasions due to exhaustion affecting my reflexes.”

“I have accidentally dropped pieces of stone [...] off of forklift while trying to fight off tears.”

SURVEY RESULTS: IMPACT BEFORE/AFTER DV INCIDENT

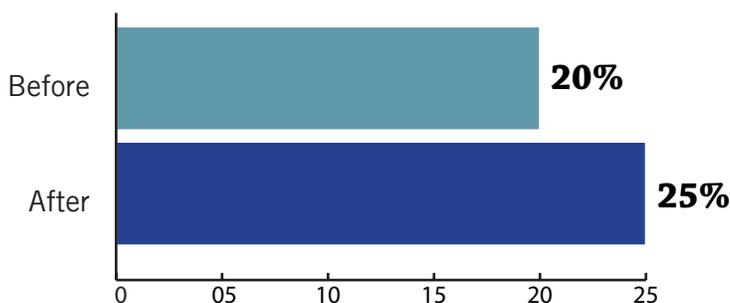
DV Incidents

As we considered the impact of DV on workplace productivity and accidents, it was important to try to distinguish between the impacts that might be associated with having been charged with DV as opposed to DV itself. For example, missed days might be associated with attending court or dealing with charges. To explore this issue, we asked respondents to tell us about the impact of DV on their work productivity and days off both before and after the incident that led them to attend PAR (almost always a police charge).

Work Productivity and Performance

Almost all respondents reported on their productivity and performance prior to the DV incident. For analyses of impact after the charge, we were limited to using data from respondents who did not report losing their job as a result of DV and who provided us with interpretable data on productivity and performance during both timeframes (59% of the sample). Surprisingly, DV issues were about equally disruptive to workplaces before and after DV brought men to the attention of authorities. As shown in Figures 6a and 6b, around one-fifth to one-quarter of respondents reported that DV issues affected their ability to get to or stay at work both before (20%) and after the incident (25%; Figure 6a). Most commonly, this was in the form of being late for work, leaving work early, or missing work entirely. About 30% of respondents reported that their work performance was negatively affected due to distraction, tiredness, etc., both before (32%) and after the incident (33%; Figure 6b). Most found themselves distracted by DV-related messages, tired due to sleep deprivation induced by their DV situation, or feeling unwell, experiencing anxiety and/or depression from DV issues.

FIGURE 6a: Impact on Work Productivity



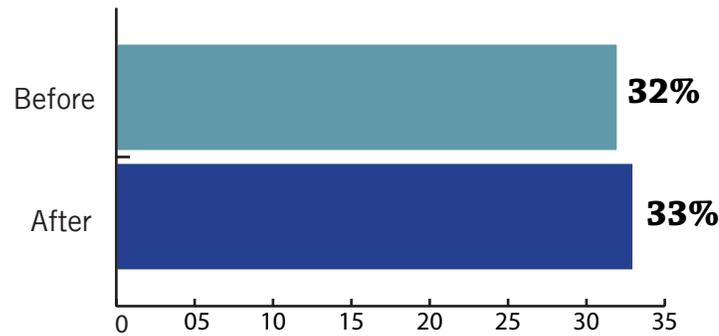
DV issues were about equally disruptive to workplaces before and after men came to the attention of the justice system.

DV issues affected workers' ability to get to and stay at work both before and after the incident.

Around one-quarter of respondents reported taking paid and/or unpaid time off to deal with DV issues.

When workers took time off to deal with DV issues, it was usually one or two weeks.

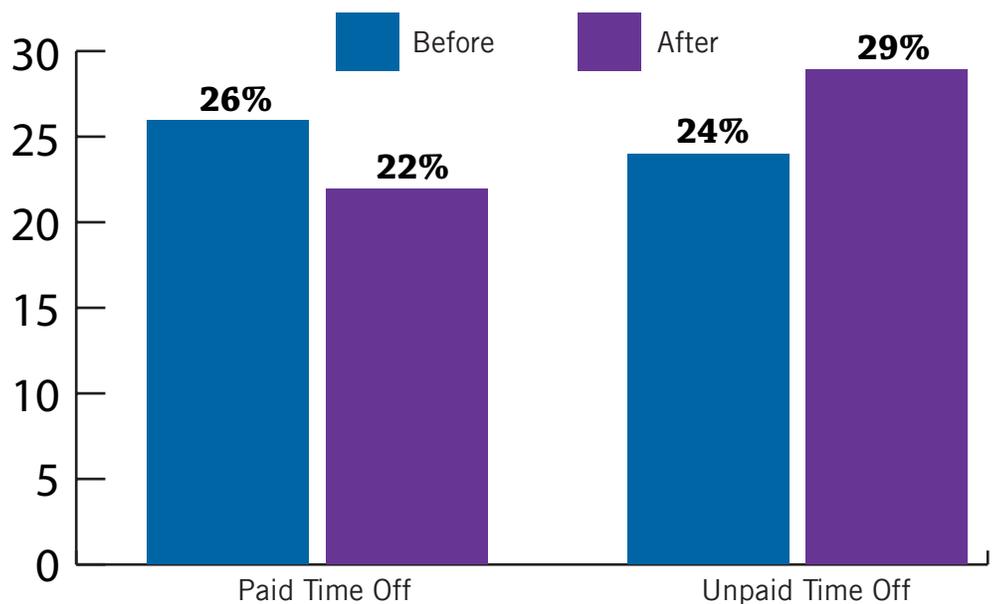
FIGURE 6b: Impact on Work Performance



Amount of Time Off

Moreover, DV issues led to substantial time off work both before and after the identified DV incident (often a charge). Over both timeframes, around one-quarter of respondents reported taking paid and/or unpaid time off to deal with DV issues (Figure 7). Of those who reported taking time off, both before and after the incident, a median of around one to two weeks was taken, though a sizable minority reported taking a month or more off work. Extended time off was more common before the incident than after.

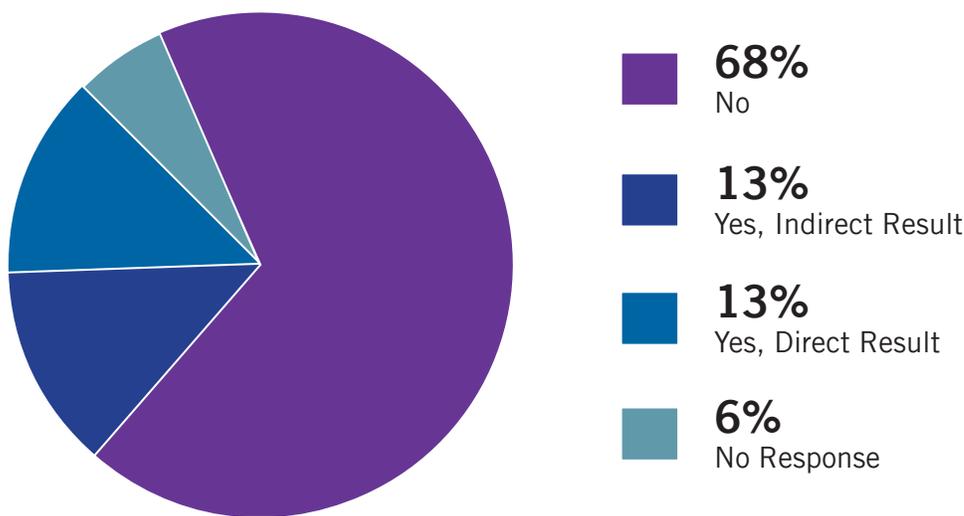
FIGURE 7: % of Respondents with Time Off



Job Loss

Our analyses of productivity and performance before and after men's identified DV incident did not include men who reported losing their jobs. Job loss was a frequent impact of DV perpetration. More than one-quarter of respondents (26%) indicated that they lost their job as a direct or indirect result (e.g., missed too many days, was often distracted, poor productivity) of DV issues (Figure 8). Of those who lost their job, about one-fifth (19%) collected unemployment insurance to make up for lost wages.

FIGURE 8: Job Loss



Almost half of these respondents (47%) also reported that DV issues have made it more difficult to seek new work, most mentioning that their criminal record has prevented them from passing mandatory police checks and/or that it has deterred employers from considering their application. Even respondents who did not experience job loss made note of the detrimental effects of having a criminal record. Some stated that although they did not lose their job, they lost their position or were demoted. Additionally, while some contract workers did not lose their job, once their term was complete, they were unable to find new work.

“After having gone to court and getting a record, no job place will hire me with my record, so I am forced to be on Ontario Works. I would much rather work!”

“A criminal record is a death sentence. I will go from junior policy advisor in a co-op program at university to a desperate man.”

More than one-quarter of respondents (26%) indicated that they lost their job as a direct or indirect result of DV issues.

Almost half of these respondents (47%) also reported that DV issues have made it more difficult to seek new work.

“If my workplace management knew I was charged or on probation, I may be terminated.”

SURVEY RESULTS: WORKPLACE RESPONSE

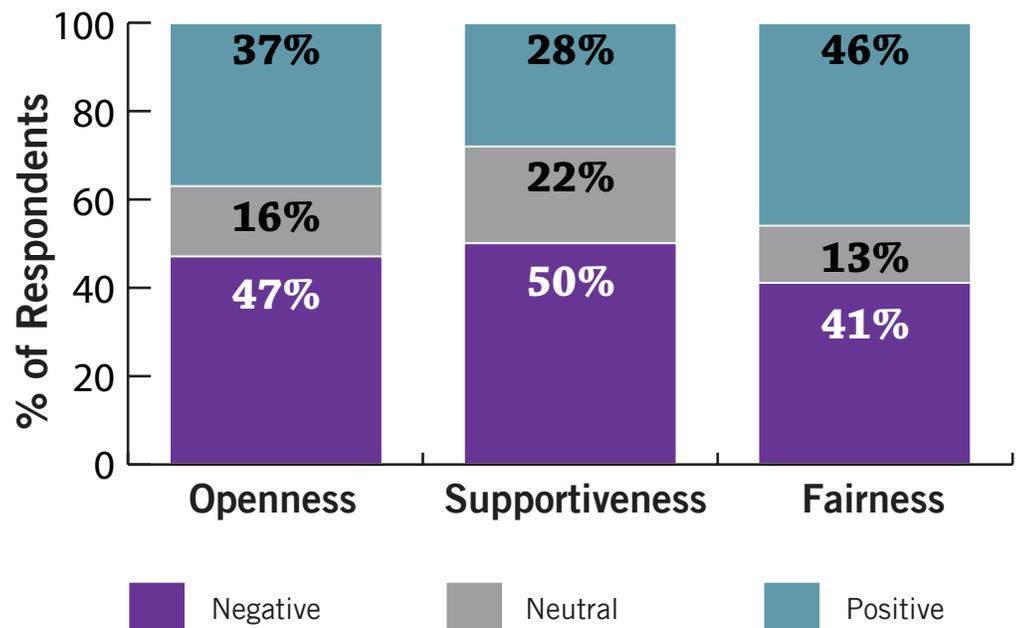
Workplace Climate

To measure workplace climate (i.e., participants' perception of their work environment) participants were asked to rate (on a scale of 1 to 7) how open, how supportive, and how fair their workplace was in dealing with issues surrounding their DV situation. Low (1 to 3) ratings were given to workplaces that quickly shut down discussion of these issues, upheld attitudes of dealing with issues alone and outside of work time, and workplaces that did not follow due process around allegations of DV. High (5 to 7) ratings were given to workplaces that were perceived as safe, caring, and helpful places to discuss issues, that acted as partners and tried to help deal with these issues, and that followed due process. As shown in Figure 9, around 40% to 50% of respondents reported that the climate of their workplace was closed, unsupportive, and unfair. Of particular concern, only 28% of workers felt that their workplace was supportive of helping them deal with their DV issues.

Almost half of respondents reported that the climate of their workplace was closed, unsupportive, and unfair.

Almost two-thirds of men (61%) did not talk about their DV situation at their workplace.

FIGURE 9: Workplace Climate

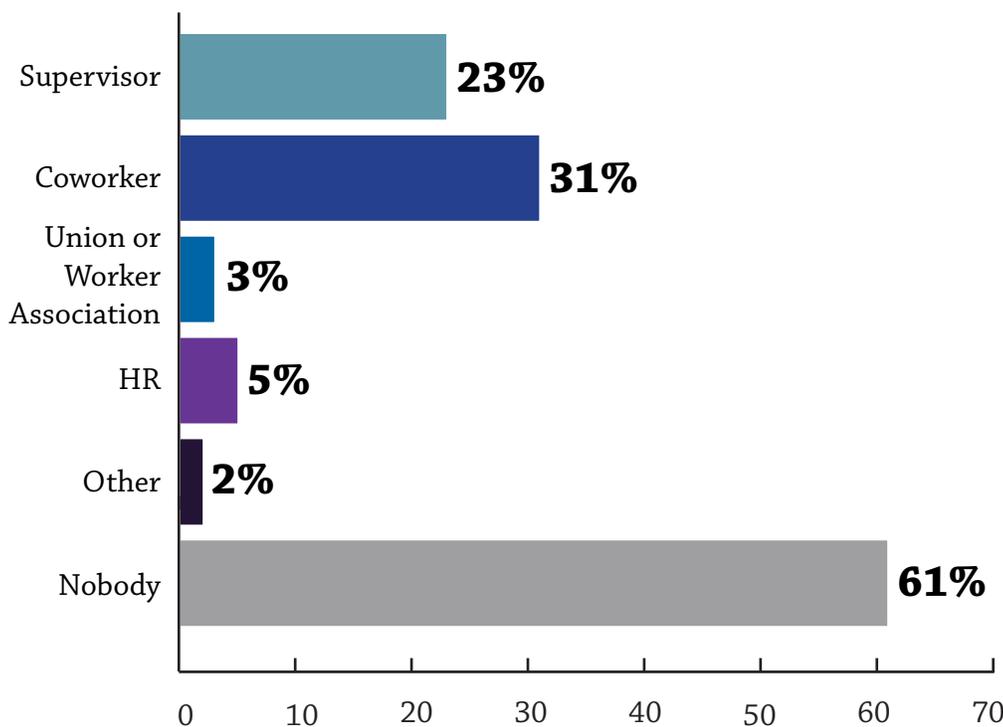


Discussion of DV Issues at the Workplace

Given men's view of the workplace climate on DV issues, it is perhaps unsurprising that almost two-thirds of men (61%) did not talk about issues around their DV situation with people at their workplace. When men did report speaking with someone at their workplace about their DV issues, however, most spoke with a coworker (31%) or supervisor (23%), and very few spoke with their union or worker association (3%) or human resources/personnel department (5%; Figure 10). Of these men who did report talking to someone, many found this discussion helpful (40%).

When asked about why they did not have discussions about their DV situation at work, men commonly reported that they felt embarrassed or ashamed (52%), wanted privacy and it was none of their workplace's business (52%), did not want to get others involved (42%), feared job loss (41%), and/or feared judgement (39%).

FIGURE 10: *Who Was Talked To?



*Categories are not mutually exclusive, so total percentage does not sum to 100%.

“I wish I could have felt that I could talk to my boss about my feelings prior to the incident.”

“You can’t talk to anyone, you are stressed, [...] depression [is] high, no resources, you are completely alone.”

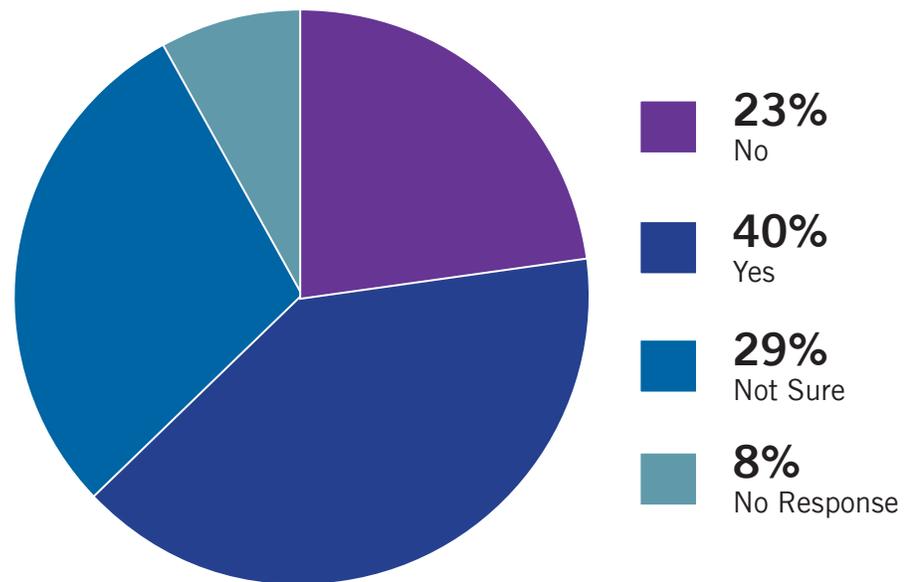
Workplace Resources

Finally, we asked men about the workplace resources available to them to help address DV issues. The majority of respondents to these questions (58%) reported that they did not know or were unsure of what resources were available to them at their workplace. 18% had employer-provided support required by their employment contract or collective agreement and 12% had union-provided support.

The majority of respondents (58%) reported that they did not know or were unsure of what resources were available to them at their workplace.

Respondents were divided in their opinions about whether they thought workplaces should be more involved in addressing the DV situations experienced by workers.

FIGURE 11: Opinion on Workplace Involvement



Respondents were divided in their opinions about how involved workplaces should be in addressing the DV situations experienced by workers. Most indicated that workplaces should be more involved (40%), though sizeable proportions also reported that workplaces should be less involved (23%) or that they were unsure (29%). However, workers did specifically comment that employers need to understand and be more open about discrimination that can occur as a result of prior DV charges.

“Employers need just as much information about domestic violence because it is tough getting a job if the employer thinks you’re a violent person.”

“Workplaces need to be more open to domestic violence victims and offenders. Just because we have a record, does not always make us unemployable.”

“Domestic violence happens more and more these days and people are just in denial. Employees and employers need to keep an open mind. We’re all human and make mistakes. It’s what we do with those mistakes and learn from them.”

SUMMARY

This survey aimed to raise awareness of the intersection of DV perpetration and workplace safety and productivity, and to provide data that could contribute to efforts to inform ongoing development of workplace policies, training, prevention, and intervention initiatives. Data were gathered from a geographically representative sample of DV perpetrators in Ontario's PAR programs. Results, based on data from a subsample of 443 heterosexual male respondents, found that:

- About one-third of respondents (34%) reported being in contact with their (ex)partner during work hours to engage in behaviours that were emotionally abusive or to monitor her actions or whereabouts. Of these men, as many as one-quarter used workplace time to drop by her home or workplace.
- Close to half of respondents (45%) reported that DV issues sometimes, often, or very often negatively affected their job performance. 9% reported that they caused or almost caused a work accident as a result of being distracted or preoccupied by DV issues.
- More than one-quarter of respondents (26%) reported losing their job as a direct or indirect (e.g., too many missed days, poor productivity) result of DV issues. Many more commented that DV issues have made it more difficult to seek new work.
- Around one-quarter to one-third of respondents indicated that DV issues led to difficulties getting to and staying at work and similar proportions reported taking time off as a result of DV. These impacts were independent of any DV charge, and were occurring before and after any identified DV incident.
- Almost two-thirds of men (61%) did not talk about issues around their DV situation with people at their workplace. Co-workers were the most likely to be aware of the situation if men did speak about DV issues at work.
- Around 40% to 50% of men reported that the climate of their workplaces was closed, unsupportive, and unfair when it came to dealing with DV issues.
- Respondents were divided on their opinions of whether or not workplaces should be more involved, with 40% wishing for more involvement, 29% unsure, and 23% feeling that workplaces should not be more involved.

Consistent with the victimization Pan-Canadian survey on DV and the Workplace, these results find that DV persists into the workplace and that DV perpetration is associated with substantial negative impacts on the productivity and safety of workers.

We would like to thank all of the PAR program participants for sharing their experiences and opinions.

NEXT STEPS

It is our hope that the information collected will act as a reminder that efforts to reduce the impact of DV on worker safety and productivity must include training, prevention, and intervention directed at DV perpetrators, as well as victims. Immediate next steps are to encourage use of these results by governments, unions, and employers to establish proactive policies to address the impact of DV at work, such as:

- Policies designed to encourage and support workers in disclosing concerns about DV (including DV perpetration) at work in a safe manner
- Building partnerships between employers and community-based intervention programs to develop better capacity to provide appropriate prevention and intervention to DV perpetrators
- Educating managers, supervisors, and workers about DV in the workplace, and providing them with specific protocols and tools to intervene with perpetrators or potential perpetrators

Further research is also needed. This report focused only on data from majority offenders, and do not reflect the experiences of women and sexual minority perpetrators of DV. Further analyses and study are needed on the impact and experiences of these groups. In addition, it would be useful to collect case examples from employers of the types of DV perpetration situations that they have encountered and the interventions that they have found to be most and least helpful. Such discussions will further inform the development of resources to intervene proactively to end DV.

We know that domestic violence is a common social issue. The results of this survey confirm that DV perpetration and its effects extend into the workplace. Those who have perpetrated DV are co-workers, colleagues, supervisors, and those working under our supervision. Developing education, resources, policies, and programs for workers who have perpetrated DV needs to be a part of our broader efforts to change DV in and through the workplace.

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For more information about the larger project that this is part of, you may visit the website at dvatworknet.org.

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