

# **Fathers' Day Poll 2007**

A Survey Among Men

Conducted On Behalf Of:

**The Family Violence Prevention Fund  
and  
Verizon Wireless**

**By Peter D. Hart Research Associates, Inc.**

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*From April 23 to May 3, 2007, Peter D. Hart Research Associates, Inc., conducted a national survey for the Family Violence Prevention Fund and Verizon Wireless among a representative sample of 1,020 American men. The margin of error for this survey is  $\pm 3.1$  percentage points. This survey was conducted to measure men's awareness of the prevalence of domestic violence and sexual assault, their recognition of the role they can play in addressing this problem, their willingness to get involved in efforts to stop it, and their impressions of efforts by institutions to address it.*

## Overview

American men recognize the prevalence of domestic violence and sexual assault in the United States, and many think that a woman or girl they know will be a victim.

- Two-thirds (67%) of men think that domestic violence and sexual assault are very (34%) or fairly (33%) common in the United States. Fewer than one in three men believe that it is just somewhat common (25%) or pretty rare (6%).
- More than half (56%) of men think that it is very or fairly likely that, at some point in their lives, a woman or girl they know will be a victim of domestic violence or sexual assault; only 15% think it is not at all likely.
- The majority (56%) of men have had reason to believe that a member of their immediate or extended family, a close friend, or an acquaintance has been in a domestic violence or sexual assault situation.

Nearly all men agree that our society should do more to respect women and girls, and they believe that many institutions should be doing more to raise awareness and address the problem of domestic violence and sexual assault.

- Eighty-eight percent (88%) of men think that our society should do more to respect women and girls.
- Men were asked whether 12 selected institutions or groups are doing enough to raise awareness and address the problem of domestic violence and sexual assault or whether each group should be doing more. In no case do a majority of men think that an institution is doing enough. Most men say that the entertainment industry (83%), government leaders and elected officials (78%), the sports industry (72%), schools (68%), colleges and universities (67%), the news media (65%), and employers (61%) should be doing more.
- Men broadly support employer-based efforts to assist victims and prevent domestic violence and sexual assault.

The survey results reveal encouraging findings about men's recognition of the role that they personally can play in addressing the problem and their willingness to get involved in efforts to promote healthy, violence-free relationships and prevent domestic violence and sexual assault.

## Peter D. Hart Research Associates, Inc.

- Fifty-seven percent (57%) of men believe that they personally can make at least some difference in preventing domestic violence and sexual assault.
- Seventy-three percent (73%) of men think they can make at least some difference in promoting healthy, respectful, non-violent relationships among young people.
- Men are willing to take time to get involved in a variety of efforts to address the problem of domestic violence and sexual assault and promote healthy, violence-free relationships. They are most inclined to get involved in the following four ways:
  - Seventy percent (70%) are willing to make time to talk to children about healthy, violence-free relationships (up from 55% in 2000).
  - Seventy percent (70%) are willing to make time to donate their old wireless telephone to assist victims and prevent domestic violence and sexual assault.
  - Sixty-six percent (66%) would sign a pledge to promote respect for women and girls.
  - Sixty-five percent (65%) would sign a petition or contact elected officials to urge them to strengthen laws against domestic violence.

Many men already are taking action by talking to children (their own and others) about healthy, violence-free relationships.

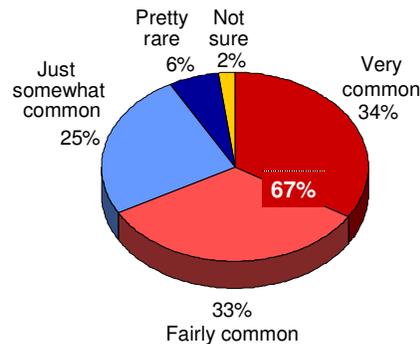
- Sixty-eight percent (68%) of fathers have talked to their sons about the importance of healthy, violence-free relationships, and 63% of fathers have talked to their daughters.
- Fifty-five percent (55%) of all men have talked to boys who are not their sons; 47% have talked to girls who are not their daughters.

## Key Findings

**1** Men recognize the prevalence of domestic violence and sexual assault in this country, and more than half of them think it is very or fairly likely that a woman that they know will be a victim. Two in three (67%) men think that domestic violence and sexual assault are very (34%) or fairly (33%) common in the United States, while fewer than one in three believe that it is just somewhat common (25%) or pretty rare (6%).

### Men Recognize Prevalence Of Domestic Violence/Sexual Assault

How common are domestic violence and sexual assault in the United States?

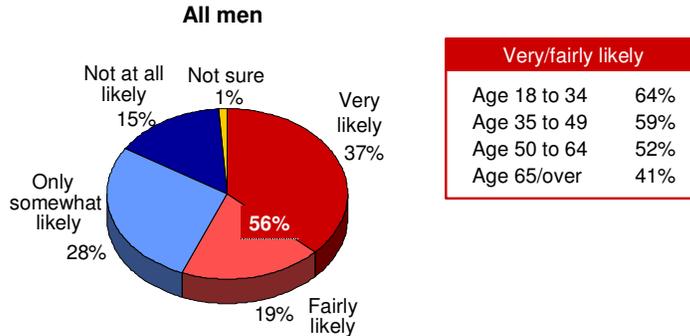


Men under 65, particularly 50- to 64-year-olds (73%), perceive it to be more prevalent than do seniors (58%). Men with a high school education or less (77%) think it is more common than do college graduates (56%).

Fifty-six percent (56%) of men say that it is very or fairly likely that, at some point in their lives, a woman or girl they know will be a victim of domestic violence or sexual assault, including 37% who say that it is very likely. Only 15% of men say that it is not at all likely that a woman they know will be a victim.

## More Than Half Think A Woman They Know Will Be A Victim

How likely is it that at some point in your life a woman or girl you know will be a victim of domestic violence or sexual assault?

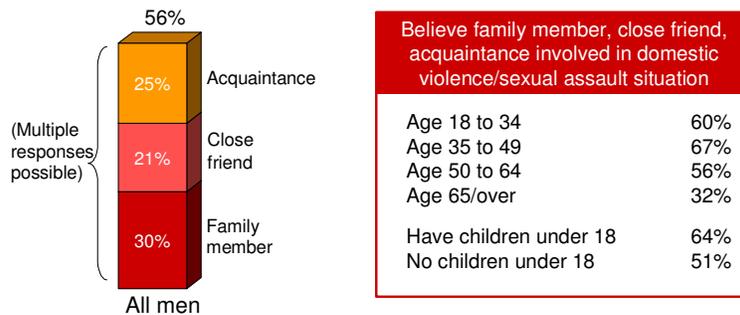


Eighteen- to 34-year-olds (64%) are among those most inclined to think that a woman they know will be a victim. Seniors are least likely to think that a woman they know will be a victim—41% say it is very/fairly likely, 34% only somewhat likely, and 24% not at all likely.

**2 Domestic violence and sexual assault already have touched the lives of more than half of American men.** Fifty-six percent (56%) of men have had reason to believe that a member of their immediate or extended family, a close friend, or an acquaintance has been in a domestic violence or sexual assault situation.

## Many Believe They Know Someone Already Involved

Have you ever had reason to believe a member of your family, a close friend, or an acquaintance was involved in a domestic violence or sexual assault situation?



Men under 50, especially 35- to 49-year-olds, are the age cohort most apt to suspect that someone they know has been involved in a domestic violence or sexual assault situation. Men 65 and over (32%) are the least likely to say they know someone involved.

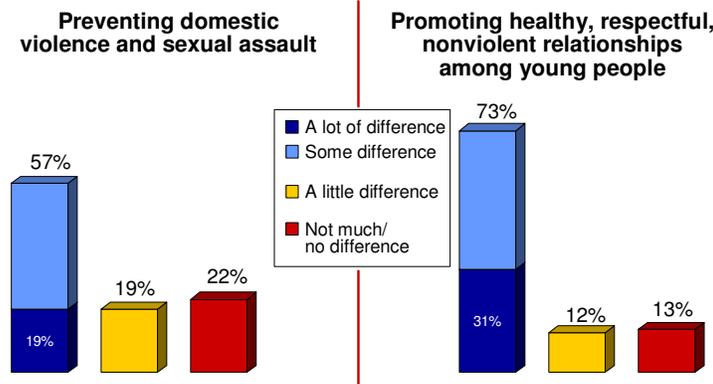
### **3 Many men believe that they personally can make a difference in addressing the problem of violence against women, particularly when it comes to promoting healthy, violence-free relationships.**

Fifty-seven percent (57%) of men believe that they personally can make a lot (19%) or some (38%) difference in preventing domestic violence and sexual assault; only 22% believe they cannot make much difference or will make no difference at all.

Men are even more confident in their ability to make an impact on young people's attitudes about violence. Fully 73% percent say that they can make a lot (31%) or some (42%) difference in promoting healthy, respectful, non-violent relationships among young people. Only 13% think that they cannot make much difference or will make no difference at all.

## **Many Men Believe They Can Make A Difference**

How much difference do you think you can make in these areas?



Seniors are least likely to believe that they can play a constructive role in these areas, while men under 65 are more hopeful. Eighteen- to 34-year-olds (65% can make a lot/some difference) are most optimistic about their potential to prevent domestic violence and sexual assault. More 35- to 49-year-olds (81%) and younger men (78%) are positive than are older men about their ability to promote healthy relationships among young people. In both cases, men with children under 18 are among those most likely to think they can make a difference.

## Many Men Believe They Can Make A Difference

How much difference do you think you can make in these areas?

Preventing domestic violence and sexual assault		Promoting healthy, respectful, nonviolent relationships among young people	
	A lot/some difference		A lot/some difference
Age 18 to 34	65%	Age 18 to 34	78%
Age 35 to 49	58%	Age 35 to 49	81%
Age 50 to 64	59%	Age 50 to 64	71%
Age 65/over	39%	Age 65/over	52%
Have children under 18	64%	Have children under 18	83%
No children under 18	53%	No children under 18	67%

**4** Most men are willing to get involved in efforts to address the problem of domestic violence and sexual assault and promote healthy, violence-free relationships. Men were asked about their willingness to get involved in selected activities to address the problem of domestic violence and sexual assault, and whether each was something they were willing to do and make time for, were willing to do but might not have time for, or whether they were not interested at all. Nearly all (93%) men say that they would be willing to make time to do at least one of the nine activities tested.

Men are most willing to talk to children about healthy, violence-free relationships and to donate their old wireless phone to programs that assist victims and prevent domestic violence and sexual assault, with seven in 10 saying that they are willing to make time to do each.

Men's interest in talking with children about this issue has increased notably since 2000, when 55% of men said that they would be willing to make time to do it. Not only do 82% of fathers of children under 18 say that they would be willing to make time, but also 63% of men who do not have children under 18 say the same. Seniors (54%) are the only group among whom fewer than three in five say that they would be willing to make time to talk to children.

Two-thirds of men say that they would sign a pledge to promote respect for women and girls (66%) or contact elected officials to urge them to strengthen laws against domestic violence (65%). This reveals a slight increase since 2000, when 58% of men said that they would be willing to make time to do this.

**Proportion Of Men Willing To Engage In Selected Activities To Address Domestic Violence And Sexual Assault**

	<b>Willing To Do/Make Time For</b>	<b>Willing To Do/Might Not Have Time For</b>	<b>Not Really Interested In Doing</b>
	<b>%</b>	<b>%</b>	<b>%</b>
Talk with children about importance of healthy, violence-free relationships	70	18	11
Donate old wireless phone to programs that assist victims/prevent violence	70	14	12
Sign pledge to promote respect for women/girls and end violence	66	18	14
Sign petition or contact elected officials to urge strengthening laws	65	22	11
Purchase small item or product that raises awareness and funds	51	25	20
Make \$1.00 donation on any bill, such as a credit card or utility bill, to group working to prevent domestic violence	50	16	29
Participate in programs at work, including events, donation programs, cell phone drives to raise awareness and help prevent domestic violence ( <i>among employed men only</i> )	43	31	21
Contribute money to group working to prevent domestic violence	43	29	23
Participate in or attend an event, such as a dinner, concert, or walk to raise awareness and funds	34	41	24

Half of men say they would be willing to financially support efforts to address the problem: 51% say that they would be willing to make time to purchase a small item or product that raises awareness of and funds for domestic violence prevention, and 50% say they that would be willing to make time to make a \$1.00 donation on a bill to a domestic violence and sexual assault prevention group. Forty-three percent (43%) are willing to contribute money to a domestic violence prevention organization.

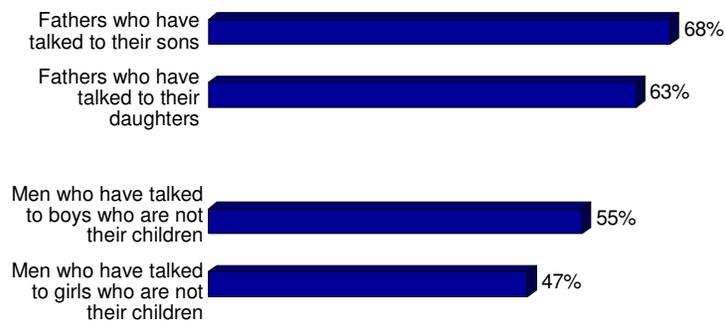
More than four in five (74%) employed men are willing to participate in workplace programs to raise awareness of and help prevent domestic violence; however, a notable portion say they might not have time to do so (31%). Professionals and managers (51% willing/make time for, 37% willing/might not have time) and white-collar workers (51%, 31%) are more likely than are blue-collar workers (40%, 38%) to say that they would make time to participate in these types of programs at their workplace.

Similarly, while 75% of men are willing to participate in an event to raise awareness of and funds for domestic violence and sexual assault prevention, only a third (34%) say they would be willing to make time to do it.

**5 Many men already are getting involved in addressing the problems of domestic violence and sexual assault by talking to children about healthy, violence-free relationships.** More than two in three (68%) fathers have talked to their sons about the importance of healthy, violence-free relationships, and 63% have talked to their daughters. Even among fathers who do not know someone who has been involved in a domestic violence or sexual assault situation, significant proportions say that they have talked to their sons (66%) and daughters (60%). Eighteen- to 34-year-old fathers, whose children are likely to be younger than older fathers', are the least likely to have spoken to their children about healthy relationships.

### Many Have Talked To Children About Violence-Free Relationships

Have you ever talked to your son/daughter, boys/girls not your children about the importance of healthy, violence-free relationships?



Furthermore, men have started this discussion with more than their own children. Fifty-five percent (55%) of men say that they have talked to boys who are not their sons about healthy, violence-free relationships, and 47% say that they have talked to girls who are not their daughters.

**6 Many men are willing to express their disapproval when individuals—either friends or celebrities—make jokes or demeaning comments about women or exploit them.** Men were presented with a variety of hypothetical scenarios of things that people might say or do that show a lack of respect or worse for women, and asked what the chances are that they would demonstrate their objection in each situation. As the corresponding table reveals, in every case, at least three in five men indicate that there is a good chance that they would say or do something to protest the comment or action. Men indicate the greatest inclination to communicate their disapproval if one of their favorite music artists released a song or video that demeans or exploits women, if a radio disc jockey or TV host makes a joke about rape or wife-beating, or if a

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favorite movie actor is convicted of sexual assault or domestic violence. In each of these scenarios, three in four men say there is a very or fairly good chance that they would demonstrate their objection to what was said or done.

<b>Men's Reactions To Selected Scenarios</b>		<u>%</u>
<b>If one of your friends made a joke that made light of domestic violence or sexual assault, what are the chances that you would tell your friend that you object to the joke?</b>		
Very/fairly good chance		51
Fairly good chance		19
Only some chance		13
Very small chance/no chance		15
<b>If a sports figure you follow and support made comments that demean women, and the team's leadership did not take any action in response, what are the chances you would stop supporting and rooting for that team?</b>		
Very good chance		42
Fairly good chance		20
Only some chance		14
Very small chance/no chance		20
<b>If one of your favorite music artists released a song or music video that demeans or exploits women, what are the chances you would stop listening to and purchasing that person's music?</b>		
Very good chance		59
Fairly good chance		16
Only some chance		7
Very small chance/no chance		15
<b>If a radio disc jockey or TV host that you like makes a joke about rape or wife-beating, what are the chances you would stop listening to or watching that person's show?</b>		
Very good chance		57
Fairly good chance		18
Only some chance		10
Very small chance/no chance		12
<b>If a movie actor whom you follow and enjoy watching is convicted of sexual assault or a domestic violence crime, what are the chances you would stop seeing, attending, and purchasing that person's movies?</b>		
Very good chance		55
Fairly good chance		20
Only some chance		11
Very small chance/no chance		11

Only slightly fewer (70%) men say there is a good chance they would state their objection to a friend's joke that made light of domestic violence or sexual assault. They are the least likely to say they would stop rooting for a sports team if it did not take any action in response to a player's demeaning

comments about women (62%). Nonetheless, the majority of men say there is a good chance they would stop rooting for the team, and even 58% of major sports fans give this response.

While the majority of 18-to 34-year-olds and single men say there is a good chance they would demonstrate their objection in each case, young men and singles are consistently less likely than are older men and married men to say this. For instance, regarding the sports team scenario, 58% of 18-to 34-year-olds say that there is a very or fairly good chance they would stop rooting for the team, compared to 62% of 35-to 49-year-olds, 64% of 50-to 65-year-olds, and 71% of seniors. Singles (57% very/fairly good chance) also are less inclined to object in this way than are married men (67%). The gap is the most pronounced for the music scenario: 60% of 18-to 34-year-olds and 84% of seniors say there is a very or fairly good chance they would stop listening to and purchasing that person's music.

**7 Men do not give *any* institutions high marks for doing enough to raise awareness and address the problem of domestic violence and sexual assault, and they are most likely to recognize the entertainment industry, lawmakers, and the sports industry as needing to make more of an effort.** Men were asked whether they think that 12 institutions or groups are doing enough to raise awareness and address the problem of domestic violence and sexual assault or if that group should be doing more. In no case do a majority of men think that an institution is doing enough, and more than three in five feel that seven of the institutions should be doing more.

Most men say that the entertainment industry (83% should be doing more), government leaders and elected officials (78%), the sports industry (72%), schools (68%), and colleges and universities (67%) should be doing more. More than three in five men also think that the news media (65%) and employers (61%) should be doing more.

**Are Selected Institutions Doing Enough To Raise Awareness And Address Domestic Violence/Sexual Assault, Or Should They Be Doing More?**

	<b>Doing Enough</b> %	<b>Should Be Doing More</b> %
The entertainment industry	12	83
Government leaders/elected officials	17	78
The sports industry	19	72
Schools	26	68
Colleges and universities	25	67
The news media	29	65
Businesses and employers	32	61
Community groups or organizations	33	59
Churches, synagogues, or places of worship	36	54
Police or law enforcement	42	53
Retail stores	27	49
Health care providers, including doctors, nurses, hospitals, and clinics	44	48

While law enforcement and health care providers—two groups who often are involved in domestic violence response efforts—are given the most credit for doing enough in this area, a plurality of men think that they should be doing more.

**8 Men broadly support employer-based efforts to address domestic violence and sexual assault.** Large majorities of men endorse a variety of ways for employers to address violence against women, and most support employers assisting victims. Fully 87% think that employers should provide information for victims and 83% believe that they should have policies to help victims get help and access available services, including guaranteed job security for victims who take leave to get help. More than three in four think that employers should train supervisors on how to support victims, and 72% believe that they should provide information and resources to provide guidance to employees on how to promote healthy, violence-free relationships to children.

## Broad Support For Employer-Based Efforts

