

Family Violence Prevention Fund

The Facts on the Workplace and Domestic Violence

Domestic violence doesn't stay home when its victims go to work. It can follow them, resulting in violence in the workplace. Or it can spill over into the workplace when a woman is harassed by threatening phone calls, absent because of injuries or less productive from extreme stress. With nearly one-third of American women (31 percent) reporting being physically or sexually abused by a husband or boyfriend at some point in their lives,ⁱ it is a certainty that in any mid-to-large sized company, domestic violence is affecting employees. It is crucial that domestic abuse be seen as a serious, recognizable, and preventable problem like thousands of other workplace health and safety issues that affect a business and its bottom line.

Prevalence:

- A study of domestic violence survivors found that 74 percent of employed battered women were harassed by their partner while they were at work.ⁱⁱ
- Between 1993 and 1999 in the United States, an average of 1.7 million violent victimizations per year were committed against persons age twelve or over who were at work or on duty.ⁱⁱⁱ
- Homicide was the second leading cause of death on the job for women in 2000.^{iv}
- More than 29,000 acts of rape or sexual assault are perpetrated against women at work each year.^v
- More than 1 million women are stalked each year in the U.S., and over a quarter of them report missing work as a result of the stalking.^{vi}
- Of the 4 million workplace crime incidents committed against females from 1993 through 1999, only 40 percent were reported to the police.^{vii}
- In a 1997 national survey, 24 percent of women between the ages of 18 and 65 who had experienced domestic violence said that the abuse caused them to arrive late at work or miss days of work.^{viii}

Employer's Perspectives:

- Business leaders agree that domestic violence is a problem that affects their workplaces: 57 percent of senior corporate executives believe domestic violence is a major problem in society. One-third of them think this problem has a negative impact on their bottom lines, and 40 percent said they were personally aware of employees and other individuals affected by domestic violence. Sixty-six percent believe their company's financial performance would benefit from addressing the issue of domestic violence among their employees.^{ix}

Costs:

- The annual cost of lost productivity due to domestic violence is estimated as \$727.8 million, with over 7.9 million paid workdays lost each year.^x
- In one case, a wrongful death action against an employer who failed to respond to an employee’s risk of domestic violence on the job cost the employer \$850,000.^{xi}
- The costs of intimate partner violence exceed \$5.8 billion each year, \$4.1 billion of which is for direct medical and mental health care services,^{xii} much of which is paid for by the employer.
- Employers are aware of this economic burden: 44 percent of executives surveyed say that domestic violence increases their health care costs.^{xiii}

ⁱ *Health Concerns Across a Woman’s Lifespan: 1998 Survey of Women’s Health*. 1999. The Commonwealth Fund. New York, NY.

ⁱⁱ Family Violence Prevention Fund. 1998. *The Workplace Guide for Employers, Unions and Advocates*. San Francisco, CA.

ⁱⁱⁱ Duhart, Delis T. 2001. “National Crime Victimization Survey: Violence in the Workplace, 1993-1999.” U.S. Department of Justice, Bureau of Justice Statistics. Washington, DC. Retrieved January 9, 2004 <http://www.ojp.usdoj.gov/bjs/pub/pdf/vw99.pdf>

^{iv} *Census of Fatal Occupational Injuries: Table A-6 Fatal occupational injuries by worker characteristics and event or exposure, 2000*. U.S. Dept. of Labor, Bureau of Labor Statistics. Washington, DC. Retrieved January 9, 2004 <http://www.bls.gov/iif/oshwc/cfoi/cftb137.txt>

^v *Crime Characteristics: Summary Findings*. 2001. U.S. Dept. of Justice, Bureau of Justice Statistics. Washington, DC. Retrieved January 9, 2004. http://www.ojp.usdoj.gov/bjs/cvict_c.htm

^{vi} Tjaden, Patricia and Nancy Thoennes. 2000. *Extent, Nature and Consequences of Violence Against Women: Findings from the National Violence Against Women Survey*. The National Institute of Justice and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. Retrieved January 9, 2004. <http://www.ncjrs.org/pdffiles1/nij/183781.pdf>

^{vii} Duhart, Delis T. 2001. “National Crime Victimization Survey: Violence in the Workplace, 1993-1999.” U.S. Department of Justice, Bureau of Justice Statistics. Washington, DC. Retrieved January 9, 2004 <http://www.ojp.usdoj.gov/bjs/pub/pdf/vw99.pdf>

^{viii} *The Many Faces of Domestic Violence and its Impact on the Workplace*. 1997. EDK Associates. New York, NY.

^{ix} *Addressing Domestic Violence: A Corporate Response*. 1994. Roper Starch Worldwide. New York, NY.

^x *Costs of Intimate Partner Violence Against Women in the United States*. 2003. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, National Center for Injury Prevention and Control. Atlanta, GA. Retrieved January 9, 2004. http://www.cdc.gov/ncipc/pub-res/ipv_cost/IPVBook-Final-Feb18.pdf

^{xi} Burke, D.F. January, 2000. “When Employees are Vulnerable, Employers are Too.” *The National Law Journal*. Retrieved January 9, 2004. <http://www.semmes.com/publications>.

^{xii} *Costs of Intimate Partner Violence Against Women in the United States*. 2003. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, National Center for Injury Prevention and Control. Atlanta, GA. Retrieved January 9, 2004. http://www.cdc.gov/ncipc/pub-res/ipv_cost/IPVBook-Final-Feb18.pdf

^{xiii} *Addressing Domestic Violence: A Corporate Response*. 1994. Roper Starch Worldwide. New York, NY.

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