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New Research Finds Americans Less Likely to Discuss Domestic Violence Today Than Four Years Ago, Despite Momentum of Women’s Movement

National survey from Allstate Foundation Purple Purse reveals gap between public concern and action on domestic violence and financial abuse

NORTHBROOK, Ill., April 11, 2018 -- As women around the country continue to bravely share their stories of harassment and abuse, a survey released today in honor of Financial Literacy Month by [Allstate Foundation Purple Purse](#) reveals the topic of domestic violence is becoming increasingly taboo. While survey findings show the American public ranks domestic violence as one of the most serious national issues, one-third think discussing domestic violence is taboo, a 10-point increase since [the 2014 survey](#) (34 percent in 2018 vs. 24 percent in 2014).

Sixty-two percent of Americans rank domestic violence as an extremely serious problem in the United States, placing it on par with issues such as substance abuse (70 percent), terrorism (65 percent), crime (65 percent), identity theft (62 percent) and poverty (60 percent). Still, the lack of discourse can make the most common form of domestic violence – financial abuse, which occurs in 99 percent¹ of domestic violence cases – even more difficult to detect and understand, especially when considering nearly half (47 percent) aren’t familiar with financial abuse as a form of domestic violence.

“Our new research validates that the public recognizes the severity of domestic violence and financial abuse and their long-term impact on survivors; yet, as a society, we are still afraid to speak up and provide help,” said Vicky Dinges, Allstate’s senior vice president of corporate social responsibility. “Now more than ever, we must stand up to abusers and speak out for survivors. By facing this issue head on, we can amplify the voice of the too-often silenced domestic violence victim, and accelerate the powerful momentum surrounding the women’s movement on a national scale.”

Since 2005, The Allstate Foundation has been committed to ending domestic violence through financial empowerment services for survivors. The Allstate Foundation conducted the national survey to inform its ongoing work, with a particular focus on public perception of domestic violence and financial abuse during this important moment in time.

A snapshot of the survey’s most compelling findings is included below:

- **Despite Americans’ reluctance to talk about domestic violence, nearly 69 percent think the recently shared stories around workplace harassment will spark more testimonials in the public sphere.**
- **The public struggles when it comes to recognizing the signs of financial abuse and knowing how to help victims.**
 - Forty-eight percent agree that financial abuse is the hardest form of abuse for an outsider to recognize – more than physical, sexual and emotional abuse.
 - Only 34 percent would know how to help if they suspected a family member or friend were a victim.
 - Fifty-one percent of survivors, even with their personal experience with the issue, wouldn’t know how to help another victim.
- **Fifty-five percent of respondents reported being or knowing a victim of domestic violence or financial abuse, but less than half (44 percent) have talked about the topic with a family member or friend.**

¹ Center for Financial Security; *Measuring the Effects of Domestic Violence on Women’s Financial Well-Being*; p. 1;



- **Seventy-one percent of those who have experienced financial abuse think the most effective way to keep victims from returning to their abusers is through financial empowerment.**

Since 2005, Allstate Foundation Purple Purse has empowered more than 1.3 million survivors on the road to safety and security through its educational resources, including The Allstate Foundation's *Purple Purse Moving Ahead* curriculum. The curriculum equips women with the necessary knowledge to empower themselves financially and recover from financial abuse. To date, The Allstate Foundation has invested more than \$60 million to help educate the public about financial abuse and provide critical survivor services, including financial education, asset-building, job training and readiness programs.

Visit PurplePurse.com today to donate to the cause and learn how to help a victim or start a conversation. Follow Purple Purse on social media ([Facebook](#), [Twitter](#)) for future updates on this year's initiative.

If you or someone you know is in a domestic violence situation, call the National Domestic Violence Hotline at 1-800-799-SAFE (7233) or TTY 1-800-787-3224.

Methodology

The Allstate Foundation Domestic Violence and Financial Abuse survey was conducted online between February 9-17, 2018, by [GfK](#) among 1,840 American adults over age 18. It was a nationally representative sample of 1,052, with demographic oversamples (age 22-37), as well as residents of Florida, Illinois, New York and Texas. The margin of error for the total sample is +/- 2.6 percentage points at the 95 percent confidence interval. The survey was offered in both English and Spanish.

About The Allstate Foundation

Established in 1952, The Allstate Foundation is an independent charitable organization made possible by subsidiaries of The Allstate Corporation (NYSE: ALL). Through partnerships with nonprofit organizations across the country, The Allstate Foundation brings the relationships, reputation and resources of Allstate to support innovative and lasting solutions that enhance people's well-being and prosperity. With a focus on building financial independence for domestic violence survivors, empowering youth and celebrating the charitable community involvement of Allstate agency owners and employees, The Allstate Foundation works to bring out the good in people's lives. For more information, visit www.AllstateFoundation.org.

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Contact:

Lily Merritt

MSL Chicago

lily.merritt@mslgroup.com

312.220.4226