



MESSAGE TESTING

Shaping powerful messages that cut through the clutter to drive change.

Effectively communicating that preventing domestic violence is possible through anti-oppression work – that is, addressing gender, racial, economic, health and other systemic inequities – is almost as important as the anti-oppression work itself. To ensure external communication would be meaningful, digestible and clear among the general public, the Pennsylvania Coalition Against Domestic Violence deployed a survey to test domestic violence prevention messages.

Here are the important takeaways to inform prevention-based messaging.



Overview

1,536

Pennsylvanians were surveyed

All ages 18 and over with quotas set to match the Pennsylvania census distribution on gender, age and ethnicity.

15 MIN

Online survey fielded in English

Fielded between January 15 and February 2, 2021

3

Point-of-view statements

One of the three statements was shown at random per survey respondent

10

Supporting messages

Five of the ten messages were shown at random and respondents were asked head-to-head questions

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Key Takeaways

Just because behavior isn't physically violent or sexually abusive doesn't mean it's not a form of domestic violence. Know the behaviors, patterns and warning signs that make domestic violence, domestic violence.

37% of respondents viewed it as important

31% of respondents believed it had an impact on prevention

Educational messages shedding light on domestic violence behaviors and effects are viewed as highly important and as having an impact on prevention.

Domestic violence impacts 1 in 3 women, 1 in 5 men and over half of LGBTQIA individuals. Shocking as they are, the numbers don't give us the full picture because nearly half of domestic violence goes unreported.

38% of respondents believed it was effective at raising awareness

Taking steps to set the foundation for domestic violence as a priority and raise the needed awareness to understand the problem creates more impactful and effective communication of prevention-based messages.

Key Takeaways

Domestic violence is underreported, misunderstood and often overshadowed by a myriad of societal issues. It's time to sound the alarm on this stealth epidemic and recognize its impact on our communities. We have a collective responsibility to create safe and healthy communities that our future generations will inherit.

42% of respondents viewed it as important

40% of respondents believed it had an impact on raising awareness

36% of respondents believed it had an impact on prevention

Educational messages shedding light on domestic violence behaviors and effects are viewed as highly important and as having an impact on prevention.

Factors like poverty, lack of opportunity and social acceptance of violence put people in our community at risk for experiencing or perpetrating domestic violence. In order to prevent domestic violence we need to create communities where healthy relationships thrive and abusive relationships don't. Strategies to prevent domestic violence can effectively strengthen the health of our communities, saving both lives and dollars.

34% of respondents viewed it as important

37% of respondents believed it had an impact on raising awareness

37% of respondents believed it had an impact on prevention

Messages that communicate prevention as a concept appear equally effective, but successful communication needs to make prevention more tangible and actionable to make an actual impact.

What learnings from the research can be applied to deliver messages that resonate?

Messages should build up to prevention.

Structure messages so there is a logical progression from awareness of domestic violence to prevention. Prevention messaging must first be grounded in an understanding of what domestic violence is and its impacts. With many misconceptions and a general lack of understanding about domestic violence, it's imperative to level set the national conversation.

Messages should make prevention something more tangible, making it possible for everyone to take action.

Statements that message directly to domestic violence prevention, made possible through anti-oppression actions, can feel overwhelming for the average person. Messages should start small, communicating to audiences that every action no matter how little is impactful.

Messages should educate, captivate and inspire through common language that is easy to understand, relatable and meaningful.

Based on the survey's tested messages, messages that activated empathy by featuring people instead of policy performed better on key metrics. Therefore, give audiences someone to connect to and use powerful words to grab their attention.

For more information on the Pennsylvania Coalition Against Domestic Violence please visit pcadv.org.