



Gendered Violence & Work

Key findings – Safe at Home, Safe at Work?

National Domestic Violence and the Workplace Survey 2011

Never Stand Still

Gendered Violence Research Network

Prepared by the Australian Domestic and Family Violence Clearinghouse, UNSW and Micromex Research – October 2011.

The Gendered Violence Research Network (GVRN) at the University of New South Wales (UNSW Australia) has succeeded the Centre of Gender Related Violence Studies (CGRVS) which previously housed the Australian Domestic and Family Violence Clearinghouse (ADFVC). Researchers from GVRN have continued to develop certain work undertaken by CGRVS/ADFVC alongside many new initiatives such as the Gendered Violence & Work program.

Summary

Between February and July 2011, the Australian Domestic and Family Violence Clearinghouse at the University of New South Wales and Micromex Research conducted a national online domestic violence and the workplace survey. The survey was completed by over 3,600 union members.

This document presents the key findings of the research. A full copy of the research report is available at:

www.arts.unsw.edu.au/gvandwork

For more information, contact the Gendered Violence & Work program and/or the Gendered Violence Research Network:

Shabnam Hameed | +61 2 9385 4886
shabnam.hameed@unsw.edu.au

GVRN | +61 2 9385 2991
gvrn@unsw.edu.au

KEY FINDINGS – Safe at Home, Safe at Work? National Domestic Violence and the Workplace Survey (2011)

Ludo McFerran, ADFVC and Micromex

Between February and July 2011, the Australian Domestic and Family Violence Clearinghouse (ADFVC) at the University of New South Wales conducted a national online domestic violence and the workplace survey. The survey on the impact of domestic violence at work was completed by over 3600 union members. A full copy of the report is available on the website: www.dvandwork.unsw.edu.au

- The majority of the respondents were women (81%), two-thirds were in fulltime employment and nearly two thirds (64%) of the respondents were aged 45 and older.
- Nearly a third of respondents (30%) had personally experienced domestic violence.
- Nearly half those who had experienced domestic violence reported that the violence affected their capacity to get to work; the major reason was physical injury or restraint (67%), followed by hiding keys and failure to care for children.
- Nearly one in five (19%) who experienced domestic violence in the previous 12 months reported that the violence continued at the workplace
- The major form the domestic violence took in the workplace was abusive phone calls and emails (12%) and the partner physically coming to work (11%).
- The main reported impact was on work performance, with 16% reporting being distracted, tired or unwell, 10% needing to take time off, and 7% being late for work.
- 45% of respondents with recent experience of domestic violence discussed the violence with someone at work, primarily co-workers or friends rather than supervisors, HR staff or union representative.

“ Hiding mobile phone, deadlocking the door, taking house keys, taking the home phone out of wall and taking it with him. ”

“ The need to evacuate the family home with children at a moment's notice without ability to collect belongings, and the need to stay overnight with family or friends that complicated usual routines e.g. getting kids to childcare before getting to work. ”

“ Phoning work to say if I'm not home in 10 minutes, the children would be at home by themselves. ”

- 48% of respondents who had experienced domestic violence did disclose the violence to a manager/supervisor, though only 10% found them helpful.
- For those who did not discuss the problem at work, the major reason given was 'privacy', followed by reasons of shame and fear of dismissal.
- Over one third of all respondents who had experienced domestic violence reported the violence to the police. 25% of all respondents who had experienced domestic violence had obtained a protection order, but less than half (41%) included their workplace in the order.
- Only 14% of those who had experienced domestic violence are still living in the relationship, and only 40% are still living in the family home. Below average numbers (54%) of the respondents who had experienced domestic violence were currently living in mortgaged homes; above average (32%) were living in rented properties.
- All respondents thought that domestic violence can impact on the work lives of employees (100%) and a high percentage (78%) believed that workplace entitlements could reduce the impact of domestic violence in the workplace.

“ Partner transferred to same workplace, becoming my manager, rostered me on same shifts, took same breaks, and shared travel. ”

“ Having to lie to hide injuries, cancelling appointments, social isolated from friends/ family. ”

“ I live in a small town. My partner has mental health and alcohol issues exacerbated by unemployment. I did not want everyone to know, affecting his chances of work, recovery and fathering our son again. ”

“ (Co-workers) were very supportive of me, and this included accompanying me to court, inviting me to stay at their homes, signing affidavits. ”

“ My workplace swept the whole incident under the carpet - I felt totally unsupported. ”

Contacts:

Ludo McFerran:

(02) 9385 1806; 0423 231 058;
ludo.mcferran@unsw.edu.au

Tashina Orchiston:

(02) 9385 1733;
t.orchiston@unsw.edu.au

Robyn Dale:

(03) 9663 4555; 0414 706 148;
robyn@urcot.org.au

