

## Report: Community Survey on Domestic Violence

Conducted June – July 2011

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# BWCCADV

Bellingham - Whatcom County  
Commission Against Domestic Violence



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## Introduction: Domestic Violence Community Survey and Its Respondents

In 2011, the DV Commission began to develop a new strategic plan for the organization’s work, and decided to conduct a community survey to get input about community responses to domestic violence from as many people as possible in the community, with the goal of using the survey as a source of information to help guide the future direction of the DV Commission.

It is important to note that this survey was not conducted using a random sampling, thus its findings cannot be generalized or extrapolated. Instead, the survey is intended to provide qualitative information about domestic violence in our community.

### Community Stakeholder Survey

A community stakeholder survey was conducted using snowball sampling; a link to the survey was distributed via email to the DV Commission and its community partners, as well as to a variety of community listervs. An effort was made to distribute the survey to stakeholders from a variety of disciplines within the community. Recipients of the email were asked to forward the email link on to others. The community stakeholder survey had:

- 299 total respondents
- 249 respondents who completed the survey (83% completion rate)

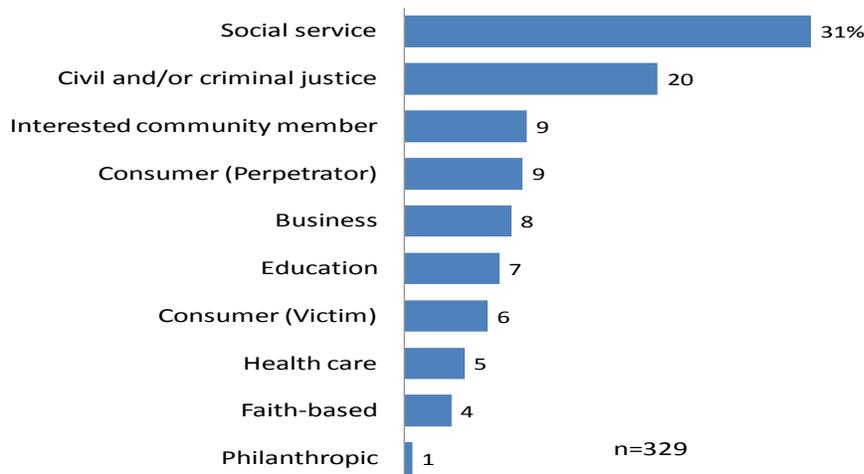


Figure 1 Respondent Field of Service by Percentage

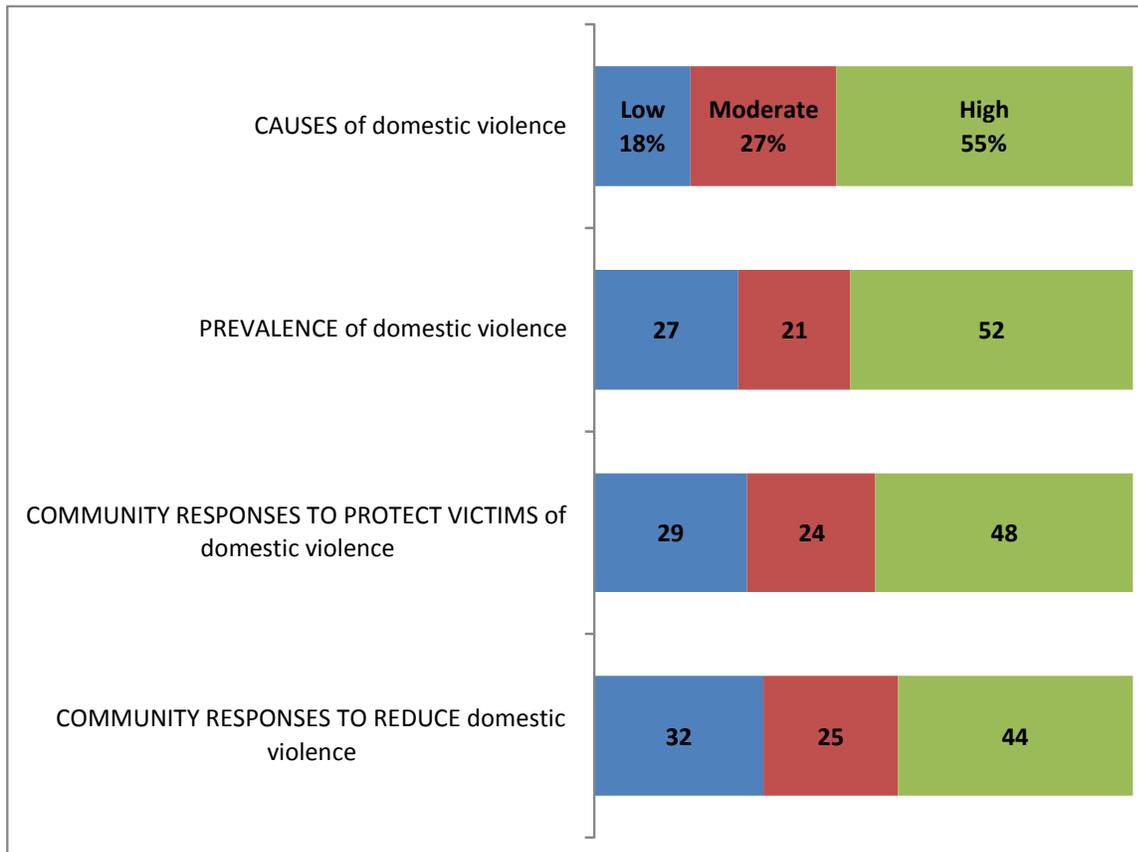
The majority of respondents to the survey were from the social service (31%) or criminal justice (20%) fields. The lowest number of respondents was from the field of philanthropy (1%). All other fields had response rates between 4% and 9%.

### Consumer Survey

A consumer survey was conducted using community agencies. Perpetrator treatment providers distributed a shorter version of the stakeholder survey to people during perpetrator treatment groups, and victim advocacy agencies distributed the same shorter version of the survey to victims/survivors using their services. Respondents to the consumer survey included:

- 30 perpetrator treatment consumers
- 21 victim/survivor services consumers

## Community Knowledge of Domestic Violence



*Figure 2 Knowledge of Domestic Violence in our Local Communities*

The survey found fairly high knowledge of domestic violence in the local communities of Whatcom County, with more than two-thirds of respondents declaring either moderate or high knowledge of each of the aspects of domestic violence.

- 82% of respondents declared either moderate or high knowledge of the CAUSES of domestic violence.
- 73% of respondents declared either moderate or high knowledge of the PREVALENCE of domestic violence.
- 72% of respondents declared either moderate or high knowledge of COMMUNITY RESPONSES TO PROTECT VICTIMS of domestic violence.
- 69% of respondents declared either moderate or high knowledge of the COMMUNITY RESPONSES TO REDUCE domestic violence.

## Community Experience with Domestic Violence

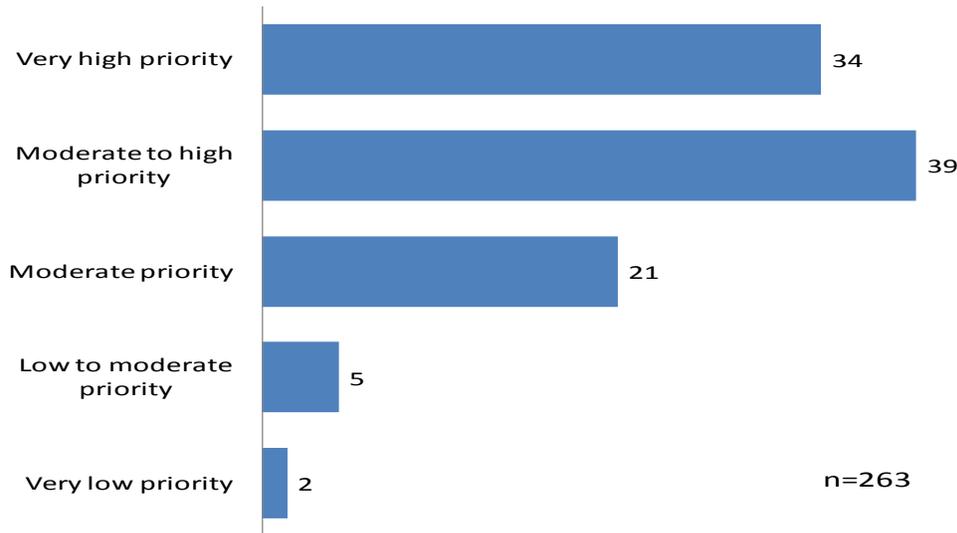
The survey found that almost everyone had been touched by domestic violence in some way.



**Figure 3 Personal Familiarity with Instances of Domestic Violence**

Respondents in both the community stakeholder and consumer surveys were asked if they had ever personally known anyone who had been impacted by domestic violence in the ways listed in Figure 3. Ninety-three percent of all survey respondents at least knew someone who had been a victim of domestic violence.

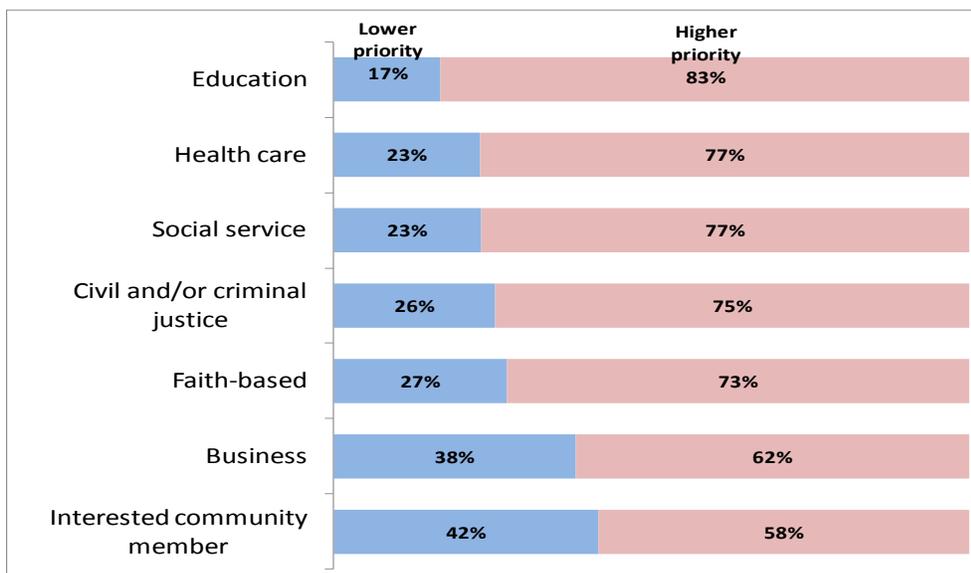
## Domestic Violence as a Community Priority



**Figure 4 Domestic Violence as a Priority in the Community**

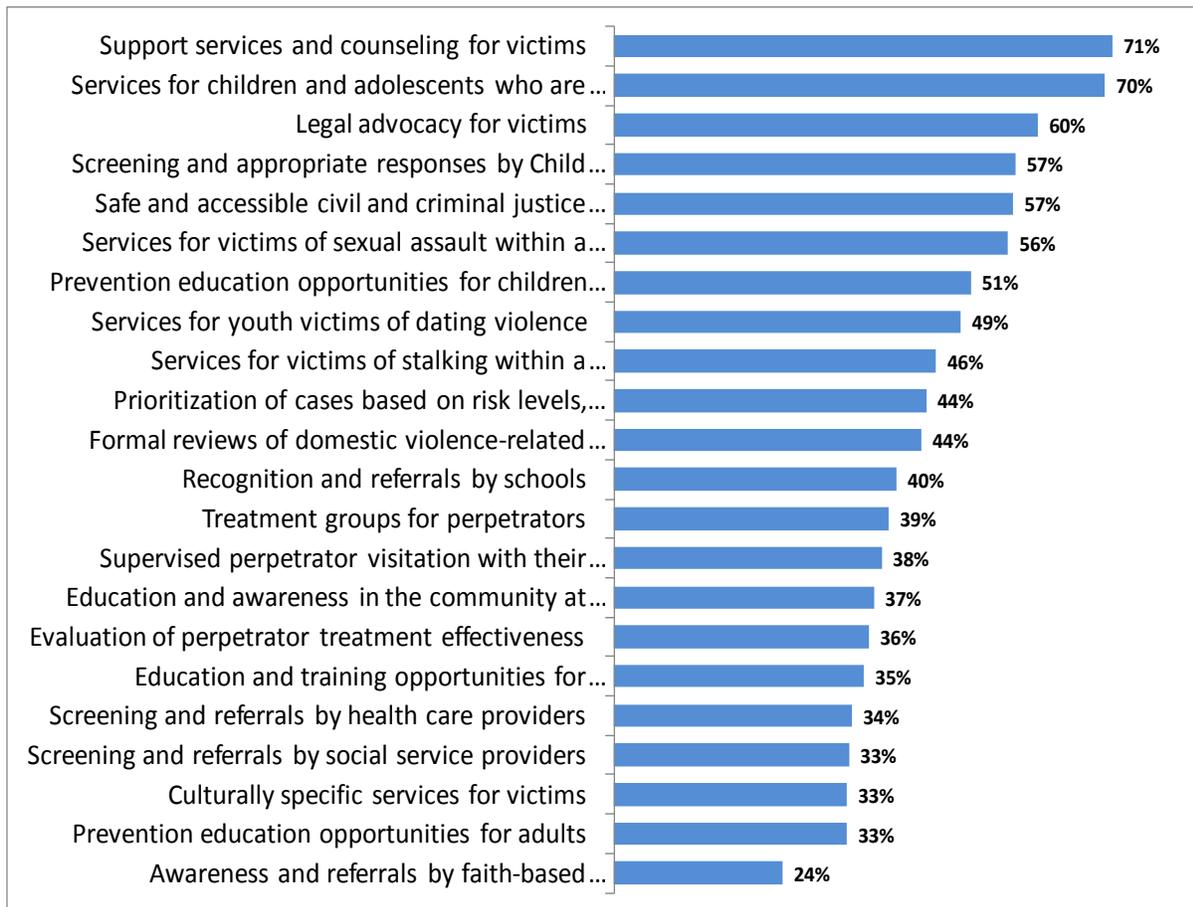
Respondents to the community stakeholder survey were asked to rank domestic violence as a community priority, taking into account all of the other priorities that a community must consider.

- 94% considered domestic violence to be between a moderate and very high priority.
- Only 7% considered domestic violence to be between a very low and moderate priority.
- 83% in the education field considered domestic violence to be a higher priority.
- Approximately 75% in the faith based, civil/criminal justice, social service, and health care fields considered domestic violence to be a higher priority.
- Approximately 60% in the business field and of interested community members considered domestic violence to be a higher priority.



**Figure 5 Domestic Violence as a Community Priority, by Field of Service**

## Importance of Community Responses to Domestic Violence

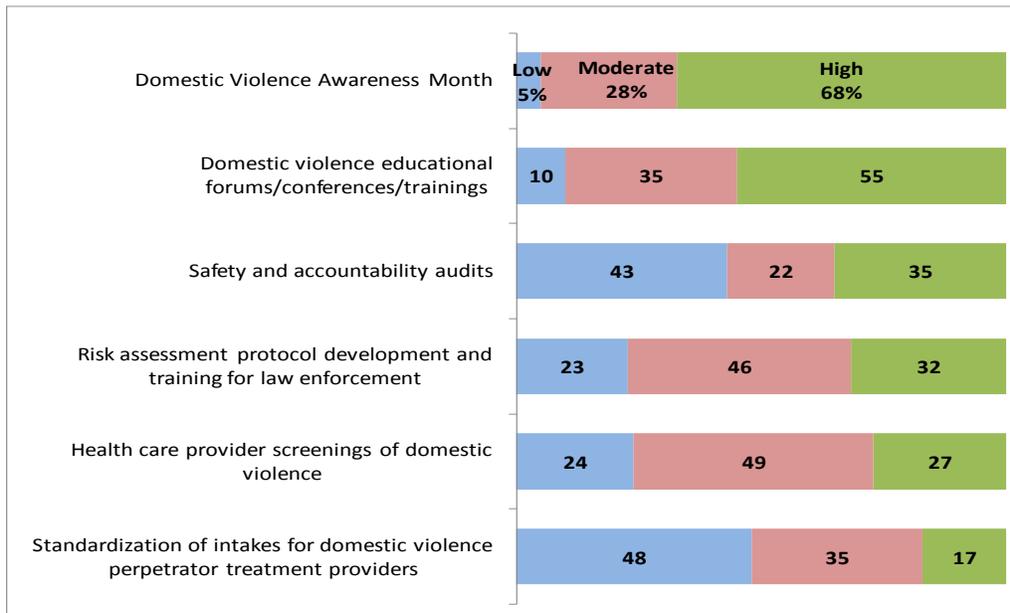


**Figure 6 Responses to Domestic Violence, Ranked by Importance**

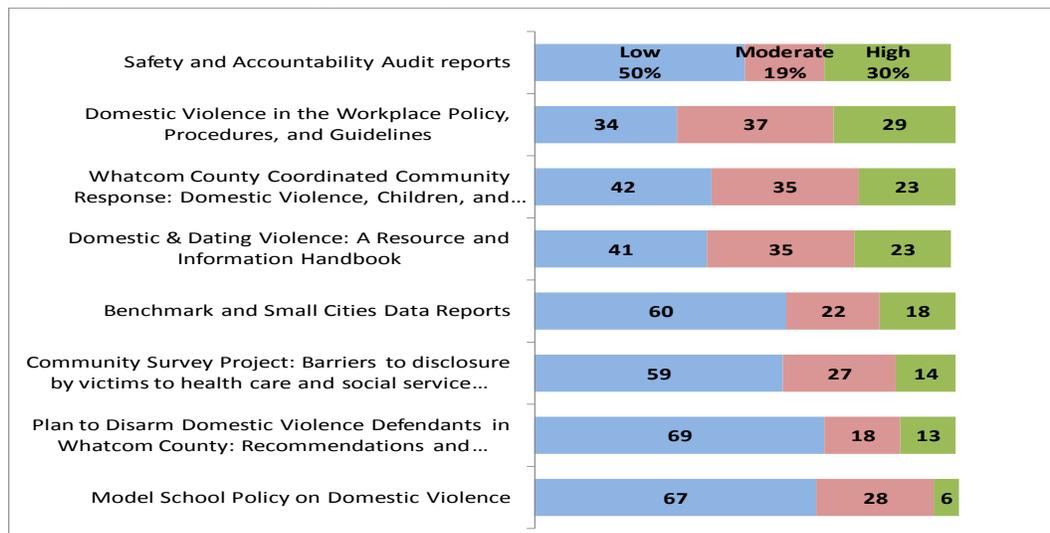
Respondents to the community stakeholder and consumer surveys were asked to rank the importance of the above community responses to domestic violence, keeping in mind the reality of limited resources and prioritizing those responses that were most important. Respondents could also indicate “don’t know” if they were unsure.

- The responses with the highest importance were victim services, including support services and counseling for victims (71%), services for children and adolescents who are impacted by domestic violence (70%), legal advocacy for victims of domestic violence (60%), and services for victims of sexual assault within a relationship (56%).
- The systems responses that were ranked of highest importance were screening and appropriate responses by Child Protective Services and in child custody cases (57%), safe and accessible criminal justice responses (57%), prioritization of cases based on risk levels, patterns of power and control, and histories of violence (44%), formal reviews of domestic-violence related homicides (44%), and recognition and referrals by schools (40%).
- Responses related to perpetrators were ranked with relatively low importance, including treatment groups for perpetrators (39%), supervised perpetrator visitation with their children (38%), and evaluation of perpetrator treatment effectiveness (36%).

## Community Familiarity with DV Commission Activities, Reports, and Guides



**Figure 7 Familiarity with ACTIVITIES Supported by the DV Commission**



**Figure 8 Familiarity with REPORTS AND GUIDES Developed by the DV Commission**

When asked about their familiarity with the DV Commission’s work, respondents to the community stakeholder survey were most familiar with DV Awareness Month activities as well as educational forums, conferences, and trainings. Less people were aware that the DV Commission has conducted Safety and Accountability Audits, developed a risk assessment protocol and training for law enforcement, trained health care providers on screening for domestic violence, and developed a standardized intake for perpetrator treatment providers. People also were not aware of the DV Commission’s development of model policies and procedures, or its collection and compilation of local domestic violence statistics and data.

## Acknowledgements

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