

Immediate Outcomes of Contacting the National Domestic Violence Hotline and loveisrespect

Accomplishments of the Domestic Violence Hotline, Online Connections, and Text



The National Domestic Violence Hotline (The Hotline) and loveisrespect (LIR) surveyed its contactors immediately after their telephone calls and online chat sessions with advocates or after they viewed the websites. The purpose of the survey was to assess the 'immediate outcomes' for contactors of accessing these services and resources. The survey asked about the following factors or outcomes:

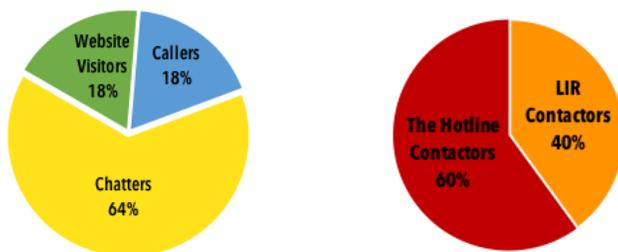
- Helpfulness of Services
- Ways to Plan for Safety
- Awareness of Community Resources
- Knowledge about Abusive/Healthy Relationships
- Emotional Support
- Emotional Well-Being

Callers completed a phone-based survey, chatters were provided a link to a web-based survey, and visitors to The Hotline or LIR websites completed a web-based survey.

Participants

As seen in Figure 1, a total of 3,406 participants completed the survey, of which 18% were callers, 64% were chatters, and 18% were website visitors. Forty percent of participants contacted LIR and 60% contacted The Hotline.

Figure 1. Sample Participants



Immediate Outcome: Helpfulness of Services

Callers, chatters, and website visitors were asked "With 1 being 'not at all' and 5 being 'a lot', how helpful did you find the overall services you received today through The Hotline/LIR?" Callers reported a higher mean helpfulness score than online chatters or website visitors as shown in Figure 2.¹ The Hotline contactors (mean = 4.40) reported a higher mean score than LIR contactors (mean = 4.25) for helpfulness of services.

Project Overview

The National Domestic Violence Hotline ('The Hotline') and loveisrespect ('LIR'; the helpline targeted toward young people) provide information and assistance to a range of people including:

- adult and youth victims and survivors of domestic violence or dating violence,
- friends and family of victims and survivors,
- service providers, and
- other interested stakeholders, including batterers/abusers.

They do this through:

- 24-hour national, toll-free telephone hotline and helpline,
- online chat platforms,
- text messaging services, and
- websites.

The Hotline and LIR provide:

- crisis intervention and emotional support
- information about national, state, and community resources
- direct connections to local providers.

The Office of Planning, Research, and Evaluation and the Family and Youth Services Bureau's Family Violence Prevention and Services Program within the Administration for Children and Families are collaborating with The George Washington University on the Accomplishments of the Domestic Violence Hotline, Online Connections and Text (ADVHOCaT) project.

In its first phase, ADVHOCaT seeks to describe the activities and immediate outcomes of The Hotline and LIR and to revise or create new performance measures.

Figure 2.
Helpfulness of Services



Immediate Outcome: Ways to Plan for Safety

Callers, chatters, and website visitors were asked "With 1 being 'not at all' and 5 being 'a lot', how much did your contact with The Hotline/LIR today provide ways to plan for your own safety or for the safety of a friend or family member?" Callers reported a higher mean for providing ways to plan for safety as compared to chatters and website visitors as shown in Figure 3. The Hotline contactors (mean = 4.25) reported a higher mean score than LIR contactors (mean = 4.06) for providing ways to plan for safety.

Figure 3.
Ways to Plan for Safety



Immediate Outcome: Awareness of Community Resources

Callers, chatters, and website visitors were asked "With 1 being 'not at all' and 5 being 'a lot', how much did your awareness of community resources increase as a result of contacting us today?" Callers reported a higher mean score for increase in awareness of community resources than online chatters or website visitors as shown in Figure 4. The Hotline contactors (mean = 4.10) reported a higher mean score than LIR contactors (mean = 3.35) for increasing awareness of community resources.

Figure 4.
Awareness of Community Resources



Immediate Outcome: Knowledge about Abusive/Healthy Relationships

Callers, chatters, and website visitors were asked "With 1 being 'not at all' and 5 being 'a lot', how much did your knowledge about abusive and healthy relationships increase as a result of contacting us today?" Callers reported a higher mean score for increase in knowledge about abusive/healthy relationships than online chatters or website visitors as shown in Figure 5. The Hotline contactors (mean = 3.96) reported a higher mean score than LIR contactors (mean = 3.73) for increasing knowledge about abusive relationships.

Figure 5.
Knowledge about Abusive Relationships



Immediate Outcome: Emotional Support

Advocates are able to provide emotional support to callers and chatters, which is a key feature of the services The Hotline and LIR offer. Callers and chatters were asked "With 1 being 'not at all' and 5 being 'a lot', how much did you think the person on the other end cared about your situation?" Callers reported a higher mean score of emotional support than online chatters as shown in Figure 6. There was no significant difference in the mean emotional support scores of those who contacted The Hotline and those who contacted LIR.

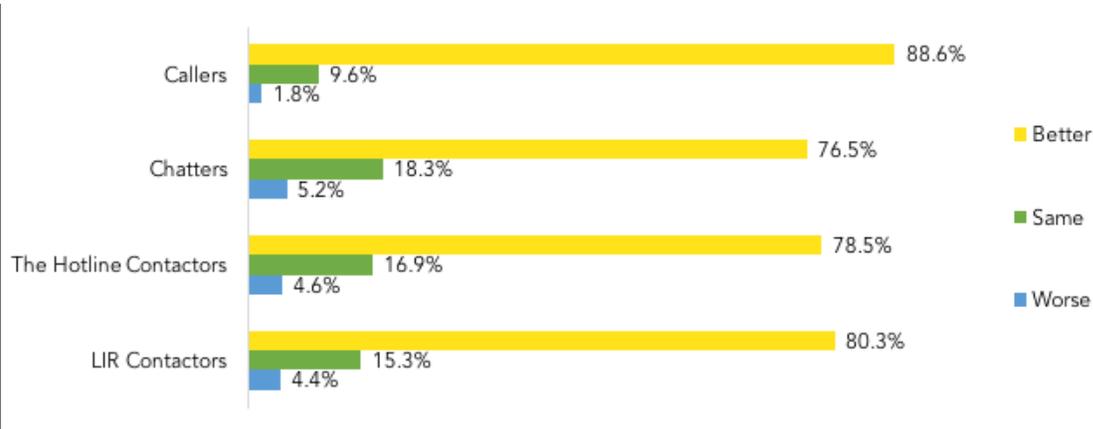
Figure 6.
Emotional Support



Immediate Outcome: Emotional Well-Being

Callers and chatters were asked "Do you feel the same, better, or worse after interacting with The Hotline/LIR?" A higher percentage of people who contacted The Hotline/LIR by phone (88.6%) reported feeling better than the percentage of people who contacted by chat (76.5%). There was no significant difference in the change in emotional well-being between those who contacted The Hotline and those who contacted LIR.

Figure 7.
Change in Emotional Well-Being



Conclusions

Across all outcomes, callers reported consistently higher scores (i.e., better outcomes) than online chatters and website visitors. Higher scores reported by the telephone callers may be a function of the in-person real time communication and engagement between the advocate and the caller. The emotional support services were nearly universally endorsed by contactors from both telephone and online chat and from both The Hotline and LIR. Outcomes reported by The Hotline and LIR contactors suggest that these services are meeting their goals of providing helpful services to assist contactors in ways to plan for safety, increasing knowledge about abusive relationships and awareness of resources. These results provide a benchmark for future performance measurement and monitoring for The Hotline and LIR.

¹ All reported differences in mean scores are statistically significant, unless explicitly stated.

Data Collection Methods: Those who contacted The Hotline or LIR by telephone between March 7, 2016 and April 30, 2016, were not directly connected to a resource or service provider, and called at a time when a staff manager was on duty were asked to participate in the survey. Callers who agreed were transferred to a staff manager, who administered the survey by phone. Those who contacted The Hotline or LIR by online chat between February 15, 2016 and April 30, 2016 were asked to voluntarily complete the survey immediately after ending their chat conversation with an advocate. Those who accessed The Hotline or LIR websites between February 15, 2016 and May 12, 2016 could voluntarily click on a link to complete the survey. The survey for website visitors included an additional question asking about the purpose of their website visit and did not include the questions on emotional support and emotional wellbeing.

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