

FOCUS SURVEY GUIDANCE

Established in 1996 by the Violence Against Women Act, the National Domestic Violence Hotline is the only national organization that provides direct services to anyone affected by domestic abuse. Services are available 24/7 and are completely free and confidential. In alignment with the mission to “answer the call to support and shift power back to those affected by relationship abuse”, our highly trained advocates offer lifesaving tools, immediate support, and hope to empower people to break free of abuse.

This guide provides information for organizations interested in conducting a brief survey through the National Domestic Violence Hotline (The Hotline). Potential partners who are interested in working with The Hotline are invited to review this document to understand the process to partner on a survey.

The Hotline’s Services

The Hotline is a vital service that answers the call to support and shift power back to victims and survivors of relationship abuse through human connection and practical assistance—24 hours a day, seven days a week, 365 days a year.

2022 Calendar Year Services Overview

In 2022, of those who contacted The Hotline, 77% were victims/survivors. Over 420,000 contacts reached out to The Hotline in 2022. More than 87,000 contacts disclosed that their abusive situation involved children or impacted children. In many cases, multiple abuse types were reported. Of those who reported a type of abuse:

- 93% reported emotional/verbal abuse
- 63% reported physical abuse
- 32% reported economic/financial abuse
- 18% reported digital abuse
- 14% reported sexual abuse

The Hotline’s highly trained advocates provide trauma-informed education, validation, and connection to services that empower victims and survivors to make life-changing decisions with dignity and respect. We maintain a robust database of approximately 4,500 carefully vetted providers and resources, including shelter and transitional housing, counseling, culturally and linguistically specific programs, and legal services. The Hotline’s services are available in English and Spanish, with 21% of our advocate staff being bilingual. Translation services are available in over 200 languages using a language interpretation service. We have been able to change lives by providing a path to safety, strength, and recovery.

Our love is respect program engages, educates, and empowers young people to prevent and end abusive relationships. Love is respect is the first 24-hour resource for teens who are experiencing dating violence and abuse and is the only teen helpline serving all the United States and its territories.

Survey Process

Below are the general steps for conducting a survey through The Hotline. The timeline has many variables, but from the time a launch date is identified, it generally takes between 20-28 weeks to complete the entire process.

Process/Deliverable	Description
Submit request	Partner organization reaches out to The Hotline with a potential survey request.
Request review	The Hotline team meets to evaluate applicability of the request and identify clarifying questions.
Initial meeting	The Hotline team and partner organization meet to answer any clarifying questions.
Survey Launch Date	Based on other surveys already in the pipeline, target date for survey launch will be identified and agreed upon.
Objective(s)	The Hotline team and partner organization agree in writing to the objective(s) of the survey. This is critical to ensure all follow-on activity is in alignment.
Scope, Marketing and Awareness, and Target participants	Identify key characteristics of the target audience for the survey. This is required to develop questions that will be used to qualify/disqualify respondents. Also agree on where the survey will be located, how it will be marketed, partners who can/should assist (especially for marginalized communities.)

Process/Deliverable	Description
Survey questions	<p>Partner organization will propose initial draft questions that align with the objective(s), and effectively identify valid participants.</p> <p>The Hotline team will review the draft questions and edit as necessary for:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • effectiveness • survivor-centered language • neutrality - ensure they do not lead respondents to specific answers • brevity - must be concise and clear
IRB approval (if needed)	<p>The partner organization will submit the final questions to their respective IRB for approval. The length of this process is determined by the IRB's processes.</p>
Survey translation (if needed)	<p>Translate final questions into Spanish if the scope of the project requires.</p>
Build and test survey	<p>The Hotline will build the survey in the proper tool in both English and other languages, as identified.</p> <p>Both The Hotline and partner organization will participate in testing the survey questions to ensure proper logic has been applied, questions read correctly, no spelling or grammar errors exist, etc.</p>
Create vanity URLs	<p>Each of the locations where the survey will be available will have a unique shortened URL to allow tracking of where the participant encountered and launched the survey.</p>
Survey deployment	<p>Most surveys run for 8 weeks. This can be adjusted depending on the number of survey responses desired.</p>
Data and reporting processes	<p>Once the survey is in production, regular (daily or weekly) data ingestion from the survey tool needs to occur. The data pipeline will automate the movement of data from the survey tool to The Hotline's data warehouse.</p> <p>A reporting dashboard will be built to track the responses during the survey period. This is important to ensure any issues that may arise are identified and remedied quickly. This dashboard will be used to assist with the final analysis.</p>
Publish final report	<p>The Hotline Comms team will work with the partner organization to build a final report that aligns with the data and the agreed upon objective(s).</p>

Survey Set Up

The following are suggestions for survey set up, based on best practices:

Surveys should begin with consent language so that participants are fully informed about the survey before they agree to participate. The consent language should be clear, brief, use only lay terms and include the following information:

- What the survey is about
- Any potential risks and/or benefits to the participant
- How long the survey will take to complete
- That survey participation is voluntary, and participants can stop at any time
- That survey participation will not affect the ability to seek services at The Hotline
- How you will maintain confidentiality of the data you collect
- How you will use the data you collect

Example survey consent language:

“Are you willing to take a brief (7-item) and confidential survey about seeking help for yourself or on behalf of others? Your participation is completely voluntary, and you can stop at any time. The survey will take between three to five minutes of your time. Whether you choose to take the survey or not will not affect your ability to get support from the National Domestic Violence Hotline. Your name or other facts that might identify you will not appear in presentations or reports of the survey. You may not benefit personally from participating in the survey. However, the information you share will help inform recommendations for how to work with people seeking help for intimate partner violence/dating abuse.

Are you willing to participate in this brief survey?

Yes

No

Organizations interested in conducting a survey may be asked to provide information and training to Advocates about the survey topic, as needed.

Depending on the survey topic, The Hotline may ask partner organizations to provide training and technical assistance, or resources to our Advocates before the launch of the survey. This will increase the effectiveness of Advocates to respond to questions

or concerns that may arise after participants complete the survey. The Hotline may work with the partner to provide training materials, tip sheets and/or direct training to Advocates.

Promotion of Survey Results

The Hotline's Communications department will lead the collaboration for survey result dissemination, as well as final report design. Appropriate contacts within the Communications department will be involved in the entire survey process.

Frequently Asked Questions

How many contacts can I expect to complete the survey?

For a survey hosted on The Hotline's website and promoted through social media an 8-week survey generally yields between 600-1000 responses depending on the topic and target audience. Response rates range between 15-35% and can be affected by factors like survey length, contact safety at the time of the contact, and general interest in the survey topic. Survey abandonment (respondent starts but does not complete the entire survey) is common and is most often caused by survey length or respondent no longer being safe to continue.

****Due to high contact volumes The Hotline no longer offers advocate-led surveys to contacts. Instead, advocates will refer contacts to URLs where they can participate if they wish. ****

How many survey-specific questions can we ask?

The Hotline recommends 5-7 primary questions. Logic within the survey can enable follow-on questions based on specific responses.

What demographic data is normally collected?

As part of the survey, The Hotline regularly requests the following data from participants:

- Age
- Gender
- Race/Ethnicity

- State of residency

In some instances, these questions will also function as participant qualifying questions. For example, the target audience of a survey may be to collect responses from Hispanic/Latinx participants only. Hence, anyone responding with another race/ethnicity would not continue through the survey.

In other instances, these questions are used to provide additional detail on specific population responses as part of the data analysis.

As part of our privacy policy, we do not collect personally identifiable information and in most instances, participants are not required to provide race, gender or location information. A response of “I prefer not to answer” is offered.

What kinds of questions can we ask?

The Hotline surveys can include the following question formats:

Question Type	Consideration	Example from Previous Surveys
Open-ended	Average length of response is about a sentence or two.	<p>* 9. Tell us a bit more about why you gave your experience the score that you gave it.</p> <div style="border: 1px solid black; height: 34px; width: 328px;"></div>
Yes/No	Can include basic skip logic (i.e., respondents who select ‘Yes’ can be presented with different questions that those who select ‘No’)	<p>* 3. Has the partner that has been abusive controlled and/or restricted your access to healthcare?</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Yes</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> No</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Not applicable</p> <p>Additional comments</p> <div style="border: 1px solid black; height: 14px; width: 464px;"></div>
Multiple Choice (single selection)	Can include basic skip logic	<p>* 11. What age best describes you?</p> <p><input type="radio"/> Under 13</p> <p><input type="radio"/> 13-18</p> <p><input type="radio"/> 19-24</p> <p><input type="radio"/> 25-33</p> <p><input type="radio"/> 34-45</p> <p><input type="radio"/> 46-51</p> <p><input type="radio"/> 52-63</p> <p><input type="radio"/> 64 and over</p> <p><input type="radio"/> Prefer not to answer</p>

<p>Multiple Choice (select all that apply with limits)</p>	<p>Can include basic skip logic</p>	<p>* 7. What do you like best about the Hotline website (thehotline.org)? (Select up to three)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> I do not visit the Hotline website <input type="checkbox"/> I get a good sense of The Hotline's mission and services <input type="checkbox"/> It's easy to connect with a live advocate <input type="checkbox"/> I can easily navigate and find my way around the site <input type="checkbox"/> The right balance of text, images, etc. on the site <input type="checkbox"/> I can easily find the information or resources I'm looking for <input type="checkbox"/> The content is easy to understand <input type="checkbox"/> The site search function is very helpful
<p>Multiple Choice (select all that apply)</p>	<p>Skip logic is limited</p>	<p>* 6. What protective strategies did you try to address the abuse you were experiencing? (Select all that apply)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Police/Police Report <input type="checkbox"/> Changed contact information <input type="checkbox"/> Asked for help <input type="checkbox"/> Reported content to app or website itself <input type="checkbox"/> Disconnected from online network or devices <input type="checkbox"/> Other (please specify) <input type="checkbox"/> Talked to teacher or school administrator <input type="checkbox"/> Sought help from a domestic violence or sexual assault program <input type="checkbox"/> Contacted a legal services provider <input type="checkbox"/> Talked with family/friends, or a trusted adult <input type="checkbox"/> Didn't seek help/support <div style="border: 1px solid black; width: 200px; height: 15px; margin-left: 40px;"></div>

How quickly can we set up a survey?

There are too many variables involved to give an accurate estimate, however, we generally require at least 20 weeks to plan, develop, test, and deploy a survey. We advise anyone interested in conducting a survey to submit their request as soon as possible to get it into the pipeline. We regularly work with multiple partners at the same time and have a waiting list of surveys.

How much does it cost to conduct a survey with The Hotline?

There are several variables that affect the overall cost for The Hotline to conduct a survey. A deeper discussion about the expectations, number of responses required, and more must be conducted in order to get a firm price. For budgetary purposes, the majority of surveys result in a cost between \$20,000 and \$30,000.

For additional information, email reporting@thehotline.org

If you or someone you know is affected by relationship abuse, 24/7 support is available.

Call: 1-800-799-SAFE (7233)

Chat: thehotline.org

Text: "START" to 88788