

# Supporting Our Troops and Feeding the Hungry

## Are the Top Causes for Americans

Nearly two in five Americans are personally involved with supporting our troops and feeding the hungry, and believe these will remain the most prominent causes in 2011

**Washington, D.C. (May 3, 2011)** — More Americans are involved with supporting our troops and feeding the hungry than any other causes or social issues today, according to the new *Dynamics of Cause Engagement* study released by Ogilvy Public Relations Worldwide and Georgetown University's Center for Social Impact Communication. The study, conducted among American adults age 18 and older in late 2010, showcases trends in the types of causes Americans support and how they learn about and choose to support those causes.

"For us, this study really validates that what's going on in the media and in Washington is reflected in what Americans are thinking and talking about," said Denise Keyes, Executive Director of the Center for Social Impact Communication. "But the question that remains is how this will translate to action."

### Timely Cause Concerns

Not surprisingly, concerns over the economy, joblessness and poverty abound among Americans. When asked what comes to mind when thinking about important social issues or causes, Americans reported unemployment and low wages, economic concerns, healthcare reform and poverty/hunger tops among a broad range of issues. Over four in ten Americans (45%) are involved in supporting social issues and causes, with the greatest involvement in found in health, education, spiritual and environment-related causes.

Which specific causes and issues are Americans most involved with? Supporting our troops and feeding the hungry, according to the survey. Health-related issues, such as breast cancer, diabetes and heart disease, are also near the top of the list. Overall, Americans tend to be more personally involved in causes they are knowledgeable about.

Looking ahead, Americans expect supporting our troops and feeding the hungry to continue to be the most prominent causes in 2011. Bullying and childhood obesity — both of which have received increasing media attention in the past year — also are expected to be among the top causes of 2011.

"We've seen the results of public campaigns around breast cancer, heart disease and drunk driving and what these can do to drive awareness and behavior change," said Jennifer Wayman, Executive Vice President and Director of Social Marketing at Ogilvy Washington. "And now we're beginning to see the same shifts taking place with increased resources being aimed at issues like childhood obesity."

### Polarizing the Population

Almost half of Americans (49%) believe that society is less open to supporting gay marriage, putting it at the top of the list of controversial issues. Interestingly, the Tea Party movement and global warming also appeared high on the list of issues that Americans believe society is less open to supporting, and at the same time ranked among the causes believed to be the most prominent in 2011. This indicates that "fame" is not always translated into widespread support, and that perhaps the controversial nature of these causes contributes to their perceived prominence.

### More than a Famous Face

While celebrity endorsements certainly play a role in garnering attention for causes among Americans, survey respondents identified several factors as being even more important than a famous face. Half of Americans indicated that many people being affected (51%) or a timely event or tragedy (49%) generate the greatest attention for a social issue or cause.

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## About the Survey

Ogilvy Public Relations Worldwide and Georgetown University's Center for Social Impact Communication developed the study with the objectives of showcasing trends in cause involvement and evaluating the role of a variety of activities in fostering engagement. An online survey was conducted by TNS Global among a nationally representative sample of 2,000 Americans ages 18 and over. The survey was fielded November 30 to December 22, 2010, and has a margin of error of +/-2.2% at the 95% confidence level.

## Additional key findings will be released in upcoming weeks:

**May 16** – Cause Involvement by Gender

**May 30** – Cause Involvement by Ethnicity

**June 13** – Cause Involvement by Generation

**June 27** – Cause Involvement and Behavior Change

## Key Findings

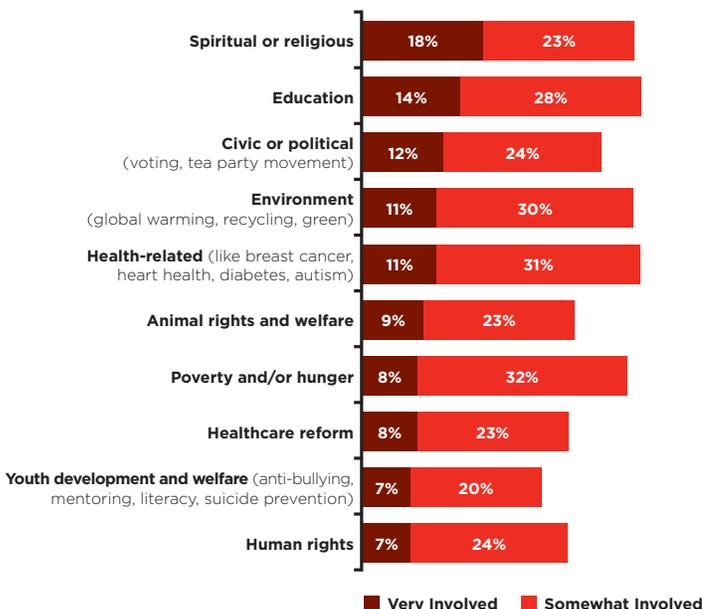
### Top-of-Mind Social Issues and Causes

When thinking of important social issues or causes, Americans report a broad range of concerns with economic considerations, healthcare reform and poverty/hunger most top-of-mind.



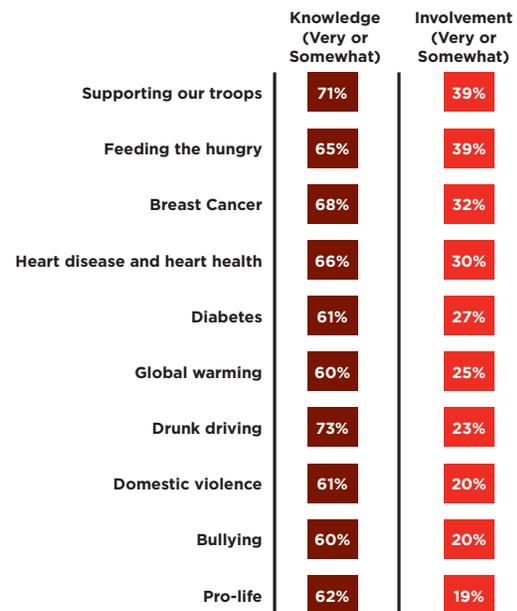
### Cause Involvement

Americans are most involved in spiritual, health, education, and environment-related causes.



(Only top ten causes shown)

### Knowledge & Involvement with Specific Causes



Overall, Americans tend to be more personally involved in social causes that they feel more knowledgeable about, including supporting our troops, feeding the hungry, breast cancer and heart disease.

## Prominent Causes in 2011

Americans believe that supporting our troops will remain the most prominent social issue or cause in 2011, followed by feeding the hungry and bullying.



**38%**  
Supporting our Troops



**26%**  
Tea Party Movement



**29%**  
Feeding the Hungry



**26%**  
Global Warming



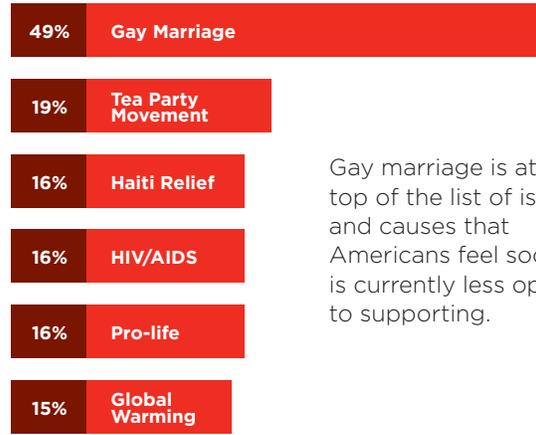
**29%**  
Bullying



**26%**  
Childhood Obesity

(Only top six causes shown)

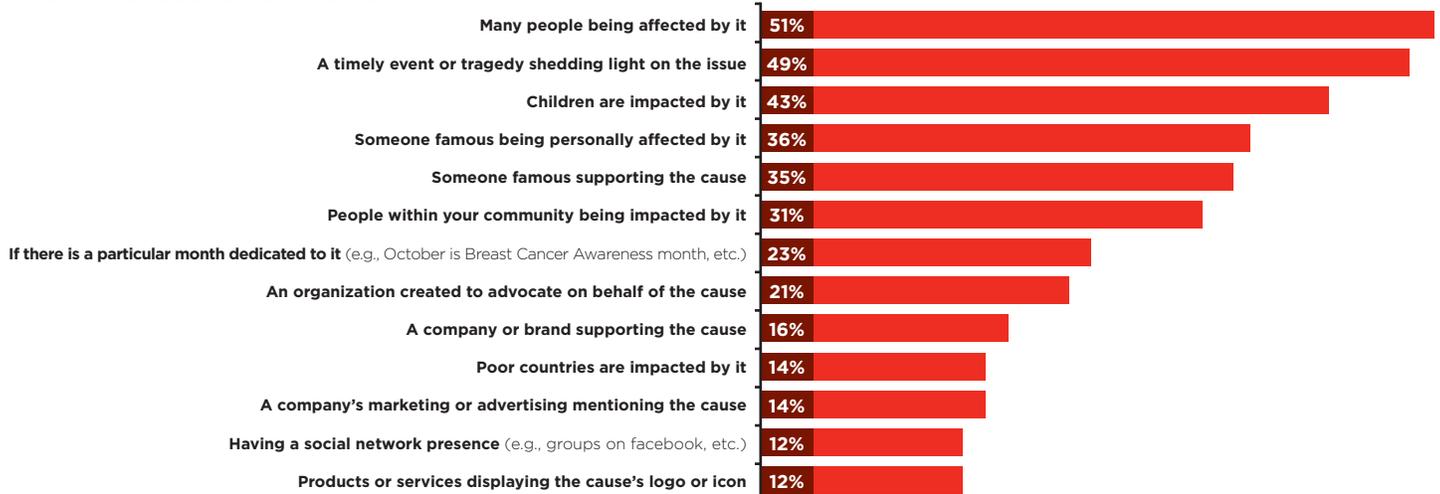
## Causes Society is Less Open to Supporting



Gay marriage is at the top of the list of issues and causes that Americans feel society is currently less open to supporting.

## Attention Drivers

Americans believe that the size of and population impacted, as well as the timeliness of the event, are the greatest attention drivers for a social issue or cause.



## About the Center for Social Impact Communication

Georgetown University's Center for Social Impact Communication (CSIC) is the nation's leading educational resource on social impact communication. Launched in 2008 and housed in the Master of Professional Studies program in Public Relations and Corporate Communications, CSIC aims to elevate the discipline by pioneering industry standards in responsible communication practices and by educating and inspiring the professionals who lead the way in creating positive social impact through their work. For more information, visit <http://csic.georgetown.edu>.

Twitter: @georgetowncsic

## About Ogilvy Public Relations Worldwide

Ogilvy Public Relations Worldwide (Ogilvy PR) is a global, multi-disciplinary communications leader operating in more than 80 markets. For more than two decades, Ogilvy PR has been at the forefront of social marketing—advancing personal and public health and safety and broader socially desirable goals via communications initiatives. We have developed numerous social marketing campaigns to successfully raise awareness, educate and prompt action regarding some of today's largest and most complex issues, ranging from cancer to cardiovascular health, substance abuse to homeland security, youth violence prevention to disaster preparedness, and much more.

Named Large Agency of the Year by The Holmes Report and PRNews, Ogilvy PR is a unit of Ogilvy & Mather, a WPP company (NASDAQ: WPPGY), one of the world's largest communications services groups. For more information, visit [www.ogilvypr.com](http://www.ogilvypr.com) and [smexchange.ogilvypr.com](http://smexchange.ogilvypr.com).

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