

Americans Value Personal Responsibility But Don't See Enough Of It

(NAPSA)—With the current economic climate and the country's ongoing political changes, Americans' focus and opinion on responsibility—both personal and professional—seem to have become stronger.

Hollywood and America's most prominent businesses are two particular targets people tend to examine for examples of personal responsibility, mostly because they are so heavily covered in mainstream media. According to the Liberty Mutual "Responsibility Project Index," conducted in 2008, half of all Americans cannot name a responsible celebrity or business leader. The "Responsibility Project Index" is a national survey done by Liberty Mutual and fielded by Braun Research.

The "Index" asked which famous individuals best embody personal responsibility.

Nearly half (48 percent) of respondents said they could not name a celebrity who embodies personal responsibility and 56 percent said they could not name a business leader who is an example of personal responsibility.

Those who did name celebrities mentioned Oprah Winfrey and Angelina Jolie (tied at 8 percent) and the top business leader cited was Bill Gates (15 percent).

The survey also revealed that most Americans believe they are responsible but their neighbors and fellow Americans are not. Seventy percent of Americans believe they have become more responsible in the past five years, yet 74 percent of Americans believe people in general have be-



Most Americans believe they are responsible but think their fellow Americans are not.

come less responsible during the same time period.

"The Index shows that people want more responsibility in their lives but they're not always certain how to achieve that goal," said Kathy McManus, Responsibility Project online editor. "There's no playbook for responsibility, so increasingly we see individuals working to create their own. That's why ResponsibilityProject.com is such a valuable resource. It's a place to see what others think and say about personal responsibility, and to take part in a meaningful conversation."

The survey findings raise the question: Why do Americans have such a strong perception gap between their own personal responsibility and the personal responsibility of others?

The "Responsibility Project Index" explores the meaning behind

this gap and offers insight into why people responded the way they did.

People don't know their neighbors. Eighty-five percent of the survey respondents say Americans are less connected with their neighbors than people were 20 years ago.

People are focused inwardly on their own families versus the community. When asked to define personal responsibility, survey respondents score "taking care of yourself and your family" and "making sure your children behave appropriately" highest, but score "knowing your neighbors" and "putting the community before your own self-interests" lowest.

When people don't know their neighbors well, they fill their knowledge gaps with what they see in the media. The survey showed that 76 percent of Americans believe reality television shows and the media's attention to celebrity lifestyles have a negative effect on personal responsibility.

The Responsibility Project, created by Liberty Mutual, uses entertainment content to create a forum for people to discuss personal acts of responsibility. Through short films, online content and television programming, The Responsibility Project is a catalyst for examining the decisions that confront people trying to "do the right thing."

Additional information about The Responsibility Project and more survey results are available at www.ResponsibilityProject.com.