

**MEDIA RELEASE**  
**Embargoed until: 9 November 2008**

**Bad drivers and telemarketers annoy Aussies most**

Inconsiderate drivers, telemarketing calls and unfriendly customer service staff are irritating Australians the most, according to a new survey released today.

The Australian Psychological Society online survey – completed by more than 4,400 people nationwide for National Psychology Week 2008 – also found 52 per cent of participants believed the number of irritating situations has increased in the past five years.

Inconsiderate people (71 per cent), being pushed for time (58 per cent), self-centred people (57 per cent) and a decline in social values (47 per cent) were among the factors that increased people's irritability when dealing with daily hassles.

"The survey suggests that some people are lacking the skills to deal with those situations that really get under their skin," said Australian Psychological Society spokesperson, Amanda Gordon.

"Our busy modern lifestyle and laidback culture can sometimes mean that we sweep those annoyances under the carpet and just get on with things, rather than trying to change the cause of your irritation. It's much easier to simply ignore those 'bug bears'," Ms Gordon said.

The most popular strategies participants used to manage their irritations include humour (36 per cent), taking a few deep breaths and staying calm (32 per cent), talking themselves through the issue (28 per cent), talking to someone else (27 per cent), planning how to avoid getting into the same situation again (23 per cent) and exercising (21 per cent).

Ms Gordon said learning how to be more assertive can help to manage daily hassles.

"We know that not responding in an assertive way can impact on self-esteem and in some cases, even lead to anxiety or depression. Being assertive is not generally a skill that comes naturally to us and requires effort and training, but helps to ensure a 'win/win' outcome," Ms Gordon said.

"If you are concerned or want to learn new skills for managing your daily hassles, we recommend contacting a psychologist who can help you to identify a range of positive coping strategies."

The online survey, *'Dealing with irritating events and situations'*, explored more than 30 common daily hassles, ranging from crowded public transport and traffic congestion, to bad language and hoon driving.

For more information, or to download the research report, visit: [www.psychologyweek.com.au](http://www.psychologyweek.com.au)

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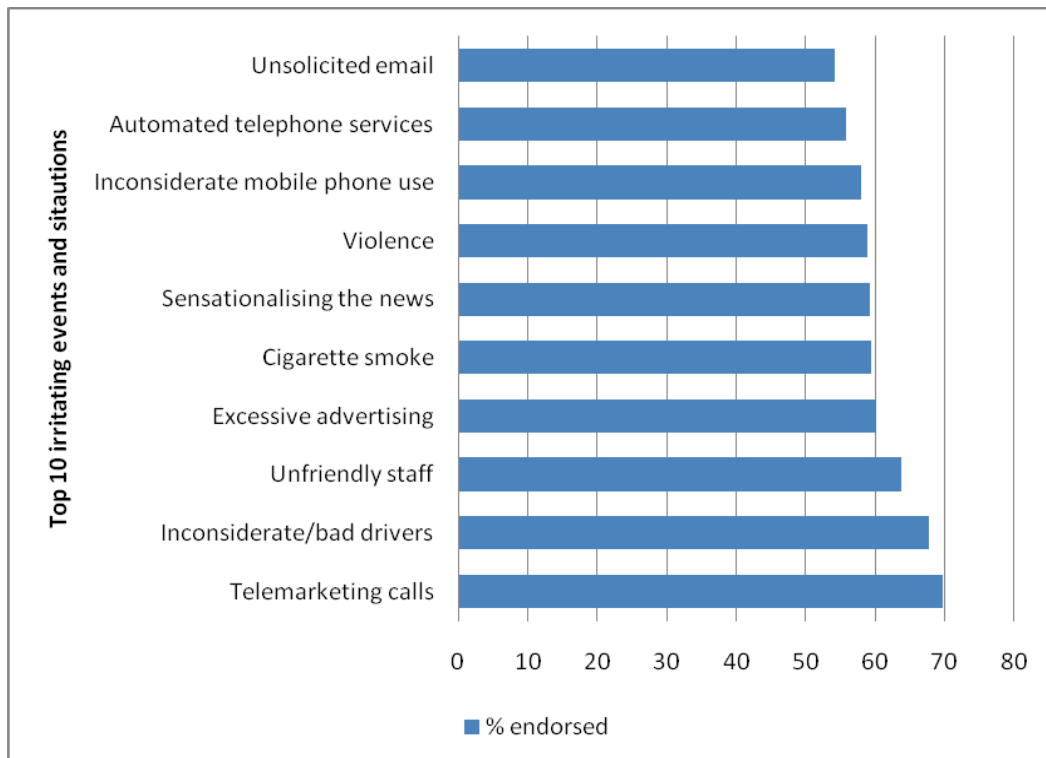
**Notes to editors:**

- APS spokesperson and psychologist, Amanda Gordon, and psychologist, Dr Helen Lindner, are available for interview during National Psychology Week (9-15 November 2008).
- Research report, fact sheet and top tips for managing daily hassles available on request.

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**Top ten most irritating events and situations:**



**About the survey:**

The APS survey, *'Dealing with irritating events and situations'*, was undertaken with 4,476 participants nationwide in 2008. The survey aimed to identify the daily hassles that lead to irritable and aggressive behaviour and whether this differed across age groups, gender or geographical locations; the tolerance of the community toward irritable and aggressive behaviour; and the coping strategies used to manage stress associated with daily hassles.

**National Psychology Week (9-15 November 2008):**

National Psychology Week is held annually in November. An Australian Psychological Society initiative, National Psychology Week aims to raise awareness of the benefits of a healthy mind and celebrates the role psychologists play in helping the Australian community. For more information visit: [www.psychologyweek.com.au](http://www.psychologyweek.com.au)

**APS referral service:**

The APS provides a free referral service for the general public, GPs and other health professionals who are seeking the advice and assistance of a qualified psychologist, online at [www.psychology.org.au](http://www.psychology.org.au) or call 1800 333 497.