

Statistics: Domestic Violence

Incidence and prevalence of domestic violence: General

- Domestic violence accounts for between **16%** and **one quarter** of all recorded violent crime. (Home Office, 2004; Dodd et al., 2004; BCS, 1998; Dobash and Dobash, 1980)
- One incident is reported to the police every minute. (Stanko, 2000)
- 45% women and 26% men had experienced at least one incident of inter-personal violence in their lifetimes. (Walby and Allen, 2004) – however when there were more than 4 incidents (i.e. ongoing domestic or sexual abuse) 89% of victims were women.
- In any one year, there are 13 million separate incidents of physical violence or threats of violence against women from partners or former partners. (Walby and Allen, 2004)
- **Women** are much more likely than men to be the victim of **multiple incidents of abuse**, and of **sexual violence**: 32% of women who had ever experienced domestic violence did so four or five (or more) times, compared with 11% of the (smaller number) of men who had ever experienced domestic violence; and women constituted 89% of all those who had experienced 4 or more incidents of domestic violence. (Walby and Allen, 2004)
- Women are more likely than men to have experienced all types of intimate violence (partner abuse, family abuse, sexual assault and stalking) since the ages of 16. And nearly half the woman who had experienced intimate violence of any kind, were likely to have been victims of more than one kind of intimate abuse. (Coleman *et al.*, 2007)
- 54% of UK rapes are committed by a woman's current or former partner. (Walby and Allen, 2004)
- On average **2 women a week are killed** by a male partner or former partner: this constitutes around one-third of all female homicide victims. (Povey, (ed.), 2004, 2005; Home Office, 1999; Department of Health, 2005.)

International statistics

- An analysis of 10 separate domestic violence prevalence studies by the Council of Europe showed consistent findings: **1 in 4 women** experience domestic violence over their lifetimes, and between 6-10% of women suffer domestic violence in a given year. (Council of Europe, 2002).
- In one study by the World Health Organisation, domestic violence was found to be widespread in all 10 countries studied, though there was considerable variation between countries, and between cities and rural areas. (Garcia-Moreno, C., *et al.*, 2005)

- Partner violence accounts for a high proportion of homicides of women internationally: between 40% - 70% of female murder victims (depending on the country) were killed by their partners/former partners, whereas the comparable figure for men is 4% - 8%. (Krug *et al.* 2002)
- Domestic violence is internationally acknowledged to be one of the health inequalities affecting women particularly, and forms a significant obstacle to their receiving effective health care. (World Health Organisation, 1997; United Nations, 1993).

Calls to the National Domestic Violence Helpline

- The Freephone 24-Hour National Domestic Violence Helpline (run in partnership between Women's Aid and Refuge) received just over a quarter of million calls during its first 12 months.
- During 2006-7, the National Helpline answered an average of 387 calls per day: 500 a day on weekdays, 250 on Saturdays and 200 on Sundays.

• Types of violence

- Since the age of 16, partner abuse (non-sexual) was the most commonly experienced type of intimate violence among both men and women. 28% of women and 17% of men reported having experienced such abuse. (Coleman *et al.* 2007)
- In the last 12 months stalking was the most commonly experienced type of intimate violence with 9% of women and 7% of men reported having experienced it in the last year. (Coleman *et al.* 2007)
- Nearly half of women (48%) who had experienced intimate partner violence since the age of 16 had experienced more than one type of intimate violence. Men were less likely to have experienced multiple forms of intimate violence (33%). (Coleman *et al.* 2007)
- Serious sexual assault was most likely to be committed by someone known to the victim (89% of female and 83% of male victims). Just over half (54%) of female victims reported that a partner or ex-partner had been the offender. (Coleman *et al.* 2007)
- Just under a quarter of women (23%) reported having experienced stalking since the age of 16. Obscene or threatening phone calls or letters were the most common types of stalking behaviour experienced. (Coleman *et al.* 2007)
- Around one in ten women (12%) had been victims of non-sexual family abuse. (Coleman *et al.* 2007)
- 16% of women who had been a victim of any type of partner abuse had experienced sexual assault and 26% stalking by a partner. Many victims of

partner abuse had experienced more than one type of intimate violence by a partner. (Coleman et al. 2007)

Impact of Domestic Violence on Children

- At least **750,000 children a year** witness domestic violence. (Department of Health, 2002).
- Children who live with domestic violence are at increased risk of behavioural problems and emotional trauma, and mental health difficulties in adult life. (Kolbo, *et al.*, 1996; Morley and Mullender, 1994; Hester *et al.*, 2000)
- Nearly three quarters of children on the 'at risk' register live in households where domestic violence occurs and 52% of child protection cases involving domestic violence. (Department of Health, 2002; Farmer and Owen, 1995).
- In 75% to 90% of incidents of domestic violence, **children** are in the same or the next room. (Hughes, 1992; Abrahams, 1994).
- The link between child physical abuse and domestic violence is high, with estimates ranging between 30% to 66% depending upon the study (Hester et al, 2000; Edleson, 1999; Humphreys & Thiara, 2002).
- **70%** of children living in UK refuges have been abused by their father. (Bowker et al., 1998)
- A survey of 130 abused parents found that **76%** of the 148 children ordered by the courts to have contact with their estranged parent were said to have been abused during visits: 10% were sexually abused; 15% were physically assaulted; 26% were abducted or involved in an abduction attempt; 36% were neglected during contact, and 62% suffered emotional harm. Most of these children were under the age of 5 (Radford, Sayer & AMICA, 1999.)
- Information received from local Family Court Welfare Services suggests that **domestic violence is present in almost 50% of cases**, where a welfare report is ordered. (Association of Chief Officers of Probation, 1999).
- In a survey of domestic violence service providers, Women's Aid found that **48%** stated that adequate safety measures are **not** being taken to ensure the safety of the child and the resident parent before, during and after contact. (Saunders, 2001). Two years later, **only 3%** said they believed that appropriate measures were now being taken to ensure safety. (Saunders with Barron, 2003).
- Respondents to the same survey (May 2003) reported cases since April 2001 in which a total of **18 children** were ordered to have contact with a parent who had committed offences against children (Schedule 1

offenders); **64** children were ordered to have contact with a parent whose behaviour had previously caused that child to be put on the Child Protection Register; and **21** of these children were ordered to have **unsupervised contact** with the perpetrator. (Saunders with Barron 2003)

- **46%** of respondents knew of cases where a violent parent had used contact proceedings to track down his partner. (Saunders with Barron 2003).
- **29 children** in 13 families were **killed** between 1994 and 2004 as a result of contact arrangements in England and Wales, 10 of them since 2002. In five of these families contact was ordered by the court. (Saunders, 2004)
- In the year 2001, there were 55,743 applications for contact orders under the Children Act 1989. Of those, only 713 (1.3%) were refused. (Lord Chancellor's Department, 2002).

Nature and Impact

- A study of 200 women's experiences of domestic violence commissioned by Women's Aid, found that 60% of the women had left because they feared that they or their children would be killed by the perpetrator. (Humphreys & Thiara, 2002).
- In the same study, 76% of separated women suffered post-separation violence. Of these women:
 - 76% were subjected to continued verbal and emotional abuse;
 - 41% were subjected to serious threats towards themselves or their children;
 - 23% were subjected to physical violence;
 - 6% were subjected to sexual violence;
 - 36% stated that this violence was ongoing.In addition to this, more than half of those with post-separation child contact arrangements with an abusive ex-partner continued to have serious, ongoing problems with this contact (Humphreys and Thiara, 2002).
- Women are at greatest risk of homicide at the point of separation or after leaving a violent partner. (Lees, 2000).
- 42% of all female homicide victims, compared with 4% of male homicide victims, were killed by current or former partners in England and Wales in the year 2000/01. This equates to 102 women, an average of 2 women each week (Home Office, 2001).
- In a study by Shelter, 40% of all homeless women stated that domestic violence was a contributor to their homelessness. Domestic violence was found to be "the single most quoted reason for becoming homeless" (Cramer and Carter, 2002).

- **Repeat victimisation** is common. **44%** are victimised more than once, and almost one in five (18%) are victimised three or more times. (Dodd et al., 2004) An earlier British Crime Survey found even higher rates of repeat victimisation: 57%. (Home Office, July 2002).
- Men are less likely to have been repeat victims of domestic assault, less likely to be seriously injured and less likely to report feeling fearful in their own homes. (Scottish Executive Central Research Unit, 2002).
- Nearly 1 in 5 counselling sessions held in Relate Centres in England on 28/9/00 mentioned domestic violence as an issue in the marriage. (Stanko, 2000).

Health consequences of domestic violence

- Violence against women has serious consequences for their physical and mental health, and women who have experienced abuse from her partner may suffer from or chronic health problems of various kinds. (Stark and Flitcraft, 1996; Williamson, 2000; British Medical Association, 1998; Crisp and Stanko, 2001)
- Abused women are more likely to suffer from depression, anxiety, psychosomatic systems, eating problems and sexual dysfunction. Violence may also affect their reproductive health. (WHO, 2000).
- **70%** of incidents of domestic violence result in **injury**, (compared with 50% of incidents of acquaintance violence, 48% of stranger violence and 29% of mugging.) (Dodd et al., 2004)
- **75%** of cases of domestic violence result in physical injury or mental health consequences to women. (Home Office, 2001)
- The cost of treating **physical health** of victims of domestic violence, (including hospital, GP, ambulance, prescriptions) is £1,220,247,000, i.e. 3% of total NHS budget. (Walby, 2004)
- The cost of treating **mental disorder** due to domestic violence is £176,000,000. (Walby, 2004).
- Between 50% and 60% of women mental health service users have experienced domestic violence, and up to 20% will be experiencing current abuse. (Department of Health, 2003; Bowstead, Janet, 2000; ReSisters, 2002).
- Domestic violence and other abuse is the most prevalent cause of depression and other mental health difficulties in women. (Astbury, 1999; O'Keane, 2000; Humphreys, 2003; Humphreys and Thiara, 2003; Vidgeon, 2003).

- 70% women psychiatric in-patients and 80% of those in secure settings have histories of physical or sexual abuse. (Phillips, 2000; Department of Health, 2002).
- Domestic violence commonly results in self-harm and attempted suicide: one-third of women attending emergency departments for self-harm were domestic violence survivors; abused women are five times more likely to attempt suicide; and one third of all female suicide attempts can be attributed to current or past experience of domestic violence. (Stark and Flitcraft, 1996; Mullender, 1996)

Police

Every minute in the UK, the police receive a call from the public for assistance for domestic violence. This leads to police receiving an estimated 1,300 calls each day or over 570,000 each year. (Stanko, 2000). Of these, 89% were calls by women being assaulted by men. However, according to the government National Delivery Plan, less than 24% of domestic violence crime is reported to the police (Walby and Allen, 2004).

- However, only a minority of incidents of domestic violence are reported to the police, varying between 23% (Walby and Allen, 2004) and 35% (Home Office, 2002; see also British Crime Survey, 1998; Dodd, et al., 2004).

Attitudes

- 1 in 5 young men and 1 in 10 young women think that abuse or violence against women is acceptable. (Zero Tolerance Charitable Trust, 1998).

Forced marriages

- The Forced Marriage Unit received 5,000 enquiries and handled approximately 400 cases in 2007, 167 of which involved repatriation to the UK. (From answer to Parliamentary question, Vernon Coaker MP, 30/1/08)

Perpetrators

- From April 2000 to June 2001 there were 30,314 offences under the Protection from Harassment Act 1997 in London alone (Metropolitan Police Service). A study carried out by the Home Office found that more than a third (41%) of cases brought to the courts under the Protection from Harassment Act 1997, the suspect had previously had an intimate relationship with the complainant. 33% of the suspects were ex-partners, 4% were relatives, 1% a current partner and 4% were friends. In situations where the suspect previously or currently had an intimate relationship with the victim, 94% of the suspects were men (Home Office Research Study 203, 2000).

- The British Crime Survey conducted in 2000 found that women are most likely to be sexually attacked by men who are known to them. 45% of rapes reported to the survey were perpetrated by current partners. (Home Office Research Study 237, 2002).
- One Scottish survey found that a majority of men who said that they were victims of domestic violence, were also perpetrators of violence (13 of 22), and on being re-interviewed, a further 13 later said they had actually never experienced any form of domestic abuse. (Scottish Executive Central Research Unit, 2002).
- During the year 2001, there were a total of 20,968 non-molestation orders made under part IV of the Family Law Act 1996 (17,414 with a power of arrest attached and 3,554 without a power of arrest attached). (Lord Chancellor's Department, July 2002).
- 75% of the women with non-molestation orders in the "Routes to Safety" study said that these orders had made some difference. (Humphreys & Thiara, 2002).

Cost of domestic violence

- The cost of **physical healthcare** treatment resulting from domestic violence, (including hospital, GP, ambulance, prescriptions) is £1,220,247,000, i.e. 3% of total NHS budget. (Walby, 2004, p.53);
- The cost of treating **mental disorder** due to domestic violence is £176,000,000. (Walby, 2004).
- The **overall costs** of domestic violence are estimated to be £278 million p.a. in greater London alone. In 2001 in England and Wales, domestic violence was estimated to cost a total of £23 billion. (Walby, 2004; Stanko, 1998, 2000)

Pregnancy and childbirth

- **30%** of domestic violence **starts** in pregnancy. (Lewis and Drife, 2001, 2005; McWilliams and McKiernan, 1993)
- Domestic violence has been identified as a **prime cause of miscarriage or still-birth** (Mezey, 1997), and of **maternal deaths** during childbirth (Lewis and Drife, 2001, 2005).
- Between **4 and 9 women in every 100** are abused during their pregnancies and/or after the birth. (Taft, 2002)

- Legally, if a miscarriage is caused by abuse, the assailant can be charged under S.58 of the Offences against the Person Act, “using an instrument with intent to cause a miscarriage¹.
- If a baby is born prematurely as a result of an assault, and then dies, the assailant may be charged with manslaughter².
- Within the six weeks following birth, 11 new mothers were known to have been murdered by their male partners during 2000-02, and 14% of all the women who died during or immediately after pregnancy (43 women) had reported domestic violence to a health professional during the pregnancy. (Lewis and Drife, 2005)
- **12%** of the 378 women whose death was reported to the Confidential Enquiry on Maternal Deaths had voluntarily reported domestic violence to a healthcare professional during their pregnancy. (Lewis and Drife, 2001) None had routinely been asked about domestic violence so this is almost certainly an underestimate.
- One study in the USA found a significant relationship between pregnancy, domestic violence, and suicide: pregnant women who attempt suicide are very likely to have been abused. (Stark and Flitcraft, 1996)
- In one study, 23% of women receiving care on antenatal and postnatal wards had a lifetime experience of domestic violence, and 3% had experienced violence in the current pregnancy. (Bacchus, 2004)
- Routine enquiry about domestic violence in maternity settings is **accepted by women**, provided it is conducted in a safe confidential environment. A pilot project in Leeds found that 92% of women questioned were in favour of routine enquiry. (Price 2004; Leeds Inter-agency Project, 2005).

Court Orders

Restraining Orders under the Protection from Harassment Act 1997

Number of persons given restraining orders under the Protection from Harassment Act 1997, s5, England and Wales are:

2003 - 1,943

2004 - 2,178

2005 - 2,414³

¹ See *Bristol Evening Post* 18th December 2004, report on Nycoma Edwards whose assault on his girlfriend led to miscarrying at 4 and half months.

² See report from July 2000 of a Carlyle case where assault resulted in birth of baby (born at 8 and a half months by caesarean section).

³ Basis of counting relates to persons who were given restraining orders for their principal offences, in cases where a person may be dealt with for more than one offence at a given time, but the restraining orders may not have been the principal court disposal for this offence, as restraining orders are often a subsidiary disposal.

Domestic violence injunctions under the Part IV of the Family Law Act 1996:

The most recent annual figures are as follows:

Non-molestation orders-

Non – molestation - ex parte	13,037
Non – molestation – on notice	4,303
Non –molestation – orders with power of arrest attached	20,566
Non – molestation – orders without power of arrest	2, 098

Occupation orders

Occupation orders – ex parte	6,817
Occupation orders – on notice	3,166
Occupation orders - with power of arrest attached	7,576
Occupation orders - without power of arrest	1,263

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