



# ONE IN THREE VICTIMS OF FAMILY VIOLENCE IS MALE



## Fact Sheet No.1

### Overview of recent family violence research findings

Contrary to common beliefs, up to **One in Three** victims of sexual assault and at least **One in Three** victims of family violence is male (perhaps as many as one in two). *When reading the following quantitative statistics it should be remembered that family violence is extremely complex and doesn't just boil down to 'who does what to whom and how badly'. The context of the violence and abuse is extremely important. Abuse can occur without the use or threat of physical violence. Please refer to [oneinthree.com.au/faqs](http://oneinthree.com.au/faqs) for a more detailed and nuanced analysis of family violence and abuse.*

The Australian Bureau of Statistics Personal Safety Survey (2006)<sup>1</sup> is the largest and most recent survey of violence in Australia. It found that:

- 29.8% (almost one in three) victims of current partner violence since the age of 15 were male
- 24.4% (almost one in four) victims of previous partner violence since the age of 15 were male

**"She would kick me in the genital area, she'd bite me on the shoulders and scratch my face and neck. She'd threaten to kill herself if I didn't give her the gambling money. Then she'd threaten to kill our son. In the middle of her screaming fits she would tell me and my son that I wasn't his father, even though we both knew he was. She also threatened to have someone bash me up."**

Raymond<sup>8</sup>

- 29.4% (almost one in three) victims of sexual assault during the last 12 months were male
- 26.1% (more than one in four) victims of sexual abuse before the age of 15 were male

The SA Interpersonal Violence and Abuse Survey (1999)<sup>3</sup> found that:

- 32.3% (almost one in three) victims of reported domestic violence by a current or ex-partner (including both physical and emotional violence and abuse) were male
- 19.3% (almost one in five) victims of attempted or actual forced sexual activity since they turned 18 years of age were male (excluding activity from partners or ex-partners).

Both this survey and the Personal Safety Survey excluded the male prison population where over one quarter of young inmates experience sexual assault<sup>7</sup>.

The Crime Prevention Survey (2001)<sup>9</sup> surveyed young people aged 12 to 20 and found that:

- while 23% of young people were aware of domestic violence against their mothers or step-mothers by their

fathers or step-fathers, an almost identical proportion (22%) of young people were aware of domestic violence against their fathers or step-fathers by their mothers or step-mothers

**"I thought of my options. Lock her out of the house as she did to me? The cops would come and take me away. Complain of domestic violence? She was too pretty and dainty for that to work. Leave? I could not abandon my kids. I would rather have died, and thought of it. Fight back? Somehow I couldn't see myself doing it. I don't know if it was cowardice, chivalry or intellect saying 'lay a finger on her even once and all hell will break loose'."**

Alan<sup>8</sup>

- an almost identical proportion of young females (16%) and young males (15%) answered "yes" to the statement "I've experienced domestic violence"
- an almost identical proportion of young females (6%) and young males (5%) answered "yes" to the statement "my boyfriend/girlfriend physically forced me to have sex".

The NSW Bureau of Crime Statistics and Research (2005)<sup>10</sup> found that 28.9% (almost one in three) victims of domestic assault were male.

The Queensland Crime and Misconduct Commission (2005)<sup>2</sup> found that 32.6% (almost one in three) victims of family violence reported to police were male.

The Australian Institute of Criminology (2008)<sup>4</sup> found that 35.4% (over one in three) victims of intimate partner homicide in 2006-07 were male.

**"The next thing I knew there were two police officers at the door. They saw the lump on my head, the black eye, and the bleeding and I told them what had happened. They said my wife had made a complaint that I had assaulted her, so they handcuffed me and put me in a paddywagon. At the station the police said there was 'a high degree of probability' that I would assault my wife again!"**

Michael<sup>8</sup>

The Victorian Victims Support Agency (2008)<sup>15</sup> found that 31% (almost one in three) persons admitted to Victorian Public Hospitals for family violence injuries were male.

The Australian Institute of Family Studies (1999)<sup>16</sup> observed that, post-separation, fairly similar proportions of men (55 per cent) and women (62 per cent) reported experiencing physical violence including threats by their former spouse. Emotional abuse was reported by 84 per cent of women and 75 per cent of men.

