



Submission in response to the
Discussion Paper:
*Implementation considerations
should coercive control be
criminalised in South Australia*



Table of Contents

ABOUT THE ONE IN THREE CAMPAIGN	3
TERMS OF REFERENCE	5
A SIGNIFICATION PROPORTION OF FAMILY VIOLENCE VICTIMS ARE MALE	5
MANY MALES NEVER REPORT THEIR VICTIMISATION NOR SEEK HELP	5
COERCIVE CONTROL AFFECTS MALES TOO	7
WHAT DO CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE REPORT ABOUT PARENTAL DOMESTIC VIOLENCE?	9
LACK OF SUPPORT SERVICES FOR MALE VICTIMS AND THEIR CHILDREN	11
RECOMMENDATIONS	13
APPENDIX A - MALE VICTIMS OF FAMILY VIOLENCE: KEY STATISTICS	14



ABOUT THE ONE IN THREE CAMPAIGN

One in Three is a diverse group of male and female professionals – academics, researchers, social workers, psychologists, counsellors, lawyers, health promotion workers, trainers and survivor/advocates. The Campaign aims to raise public awareness of the existence and needs of male victims of family violence and abuse; to work with government and non-government services alike to provide assistance to everyone affected by family violence; and to reduce the incidence and impacts of family violence on Australian men, women and children. We believe our society has the capacity to support all victims of family violence, whether male or female, young or old, gay or straight, rich or poor, wherever they live.

One in Three is primarily a lobbying and advocacy organisation. While we would love to do more, and there is a desperate need for additional services, we lack the resources to provide our own services or work extensively with other NGOs to provide services.

The main resource we provide is our website oneinthree.com.au. It provides:

- information about the experiences of male victims of family violence and the barriers they often face to disclosing;
- research and statistics about male victims;
- opportunities for men to tell their own personal story and read almost 300 stories from other men;
- news from around the globe; and
- a comprehensive list of national and international resources to assist males in crisis.

We have produced some powerful videos¹ of men telling their personal stories of family violence and abuse. We regularly give conference presentations, provide research assistance to students, and give talks at high schools. We have produced a series of seven free digital poster designs² aimed at educating boys and young men about respectful and healthy relationships. Unless we give men and boys the courage and support to disclose their experience as victims of family violence, they will continue to suffer in silence.

We have collaborated with various NGOs to establish better services for male victims, most notably working with *Victims & Witnesses of Crime Court Support* (VWCCS), *NSW Police* and *Women's Domestic Violence Court Advocacy Service* to develop the *Insight* trial court support scheme for male victims of violence at the Downing Centre and Parramatta Courthouses in inner and western Sydney. The scheme operated between 2013 and 2015. Unfortunately, because of issues such as resistance to the scheme from other agencies including the Police, who failed to help advertise or promote the service, the work of the program was eventually folded into the day-to-day work of VWCCS.

Some other examples of collaborative work with NGOs include:

- assisting the *Men's Advocacy Network* in WA in developing the groundbreaking 2010 *Intimate Partner Abuse of Men*³ report conducted by researchers from the School of Psychology and Social Science at Edith Cowan University
- collaborating with the *Western Sydney Men's and Relationship Services Network* to produce a poster⁴ listing domestic violence services available to male victims, which was distributed widely amongst service providers in Western Sydney.

¹ https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=h_VhEXei2s8

² <http://www.oneinthree.com.au/posters>

³ Tilbrook, E., Allan, A. & Dear, G. (2010), [Intimate Partner Abuse of Men](#). East Perth: Men's Advisory Network, May 26, 2010.

⁴ http://www.oneinthree.com.au/s/Domestic_Violence_Services_for_Male_Victims_2015.pdf

One in Three regularly lodges submissions, attends consultations and appears before government inquiries and royal commissions into family violence. As a result, many recent state and federal inquiries have acknowledged the existence and needs of male victims of family violence and have recommended that better support services be provided for them.

For example:

- The 2012 NSW Legislative Council's Inquiry into *Domestic violence trends and issues in NSW*⁵ found that:
 - "There was a broad recognition among inquiry participants that women offenders and male victims do exist". "Of [reported] victims of domestic assault in 2010, 69.2% were female, while 30.8% were male."
 - "Male victims have been much less visible and able to access supports than should be the case"
 - "The experience of [males]... is equally as bad as that of other victims"
 - "We recognise the gap in services for male victims and encourage the government to examine how services can most appropriately be provided to male victims of domestic violence"
 - "Male victims... were identified during the inquiry as in need of special consideration with regard to domestic violence" along with "older people; young people; Aboriginal people; GLBTI people; people from culturally and linguistically diverse (CALD) backgrounds; and people with a disability."
- The 2015 Victorian *Royal Commission Into Family Violence*⁶ recommended that:
 - The Victorian Government publicise and promote the Victims Support Agency in any information campaign relating to family violence as the primary source of assistance for male victims. The agency should also provide appropriate online resources for male victims [within 12 months].
 - The Victims Support Agency continue to receive all police referrals (L17 forms) relating to male victims, including after the establishment of the Support and Safety Hubs. The agency and all other relevant support services should develop joint arrangements to ensure that male victims of family violence are supported in obtaining the help they need [within two years].
- The 2015 Federal Parliamentary Inquiry into *Domestic Violence in Australia*⁷ recommended that:
 - The committee recommends that the Commonwealth Government recognise the need to provide appropriate services to male victims of domestic and family violence.
- The 2021 Federal *Inquiry into Family, Domestic and Sexual Violence*⁸ recommended that:
 - "...the next National Plan be inclusive of the diversity of victim-survivors. In particular, the next plan should recognise the rights and needs of women; children in their own right; men; older Australians; LGBTQI people; and people living with a disability."
 - "...the next National Plan be named the National Plan to reduce family, domestic and sexual violence"

⁵ New South Wales Parliament (2012), Legislative Council, Standing Committee on Social Issues, [Domestic violence trends and issues in NSW](#) (Report ; no. 46), p.xxxii.

⁶ State of Victoria (2016), [Royal Commission into Family Violence: Summary and recommendations](#), Parl Paper No 132 (2014–16), p93.

⁷ The Senate Finance and Public Administration References Committee (2015), [Domestic violence in Australia](#), August 2015, p109.

⁸ House of Representatives Standing Committee on Social Policy and Legal Affairs (2021). [Inquiry into family, domestic and sexual violence](#). Canberra: Parliament of the Commonwealth of Australia.



- "...the Australian Government commission research into the prevalence of family, domestic and sexual violence against men, and its impact on male victim-survivors..."
- "...the Department of Social Services review the adequacy of advice and referral services for men as victim-survivors of family, domestic and sexual violence."

One in Three receives no funding and operates on an entirely voluntary basis.

TERMS OF REFERENCE

We would like to address the following question raised in the Discussion Paper:

14. Is there anything else that should be considered as part of implementing a criminal offence relating to coercive control?

A SIGNIFICANT PROPORTION OF FAMILY VIOLENCE VICTIMS ARE MALE

The following data taken from the most recent Australian Bureau of Statistics *Personal Safety Survey* (2016)⁹ provides an overview of the experience of violence by males and females in South Australia and Australia over the 12 months prior to the survey.

Table 1 – Experiences in the last 12 months, type of experience by sex of respondent, estimate – S.A. and Australia

	South Australia		Australia	
	Males	Females	Males	Females
Violence by an intimate partner	11,400* (45.2%)	13,800 (54.8%)	113,900 (35%)	211,700 (65%)
Violence by a cohabiting partner	11,800* (48.0%)	12,800 (52.0%)	75,500 (33%)	155,900 (67%)
Emotional abuse by a partner	51,100** (58.7%)	35,900 (41.3%)	381,200 (46%)	451,500 (54%)
Emotional abuse by a current partner	39,900^ (63.2%)	23,200 (36.8%)	265,800 (47%)	298,700 (53%)
Emotional abuse by a previous partner	19,600^^ (62.0%)	12,000 (38.0%)	125,400 (44%)	161,200 (56%)

* Estimate has a relative standard error greater than 50% and is considered too unreliable for general use due to the relatively small number of males surveyed by the ABS

** Estimate has a Relative Standard Error (RSE) of 32.7% and should be used with caution due to the relatively small number of males surveyed by the ABS

^ Estimate has a Relative Standard Error (RSE) of 41.8% and should be used with caution due to the relatively small number of males surveyed by the ABS

^^ Estimate has a Relative Standard Error (RSE) of 46.1% and should be used with caution due to the relatively small number of males surveyed by the ABS.

We have attached a more in-depth, externally verified analysis of the data from the latest ABS *Personal Safety Survey* and the Australian Institute of Criminology's *National Homicide Monitoring Program* as **Appendix A** to this submission.

The above figures demonstrate that males make up a significant proportion of persons who experience family and domestic violence - between one in three and almost two thirds, depending on the type of violence or abuse measured.

MANY MALES NEVER REPORT THEIR VICTIMISATION NOR SEEK HELP

Male victims of family violence and abuse – like women – often face many barriers to disclosing their abuse. However, male victims face a set of unique barriers which make them much less likely to report being a victim of family violence.

⁹ Australian Bureau of Statistics (2017). [Personal Safety Survey, Australia, 2016](#) (Cat. No. 4906.0). Canberra: Australian Bureau of Statistics.



Men are 2 to 3 times more likely than women to have *never* told *anybody* about experiencing partner violence¹⁰. 54.1% of males who have experienced current partner violence have *never* told anybody about it, along with 20.9% of males who have experienced previous partner violence.

Men are also around 50% more likely than women to have *never* sought advice or support about experiencing partner violence¹¹. 68.1% of males who have experienced current partner violence have *never* sought advice or support, along with 59.2% of males who have experienced previous partner violence.

Many barriers to male victims disclosing their abuse are created or amplified by the lack of public acknowledgement that males can also be victims of family violence, the lack of appropriate services for male victims and their children, and the lack of appropriate help available for male victims from existing services. Such barriers include:

- not knowing where to seek help
- not knowing how to seek help
- feeling there is nowhere to escape to
- feeling they won't be believed or understood as victims
- feeling that their experiences would be minimised or they would be falsely blamed for the violence and/or abuse
- feeling that services would be unable or unwilling to offer them appropriate help
- fear that they would be falsely arrested because of their gender and that their children would be left unprotected from the perpetrator.

Many male victims face barriers to disclosing their abuse because of the challenges such disclosure brings to their sense of manhood. Such barriers include:

- shame, embarrassment and/or social stigma
- shame at feeling unable to protect themselves and/or feeling less independent
- fear of being laughed at or ridiculed
- fear of being called 'weak' or 'wimpy'
- disbelief, denial, and making excuses for their partner's violence and abuse.

Some people may raise the question, "have male victims who don't seek advice or support done so because the violence they experienced was so minor or trivial?" There doesn't appear to be evidence to support this theory. The only Australian study we are aware of to have explored this question is the large-scale South Australian *Interpersonal Violence and Abuse Survey*¹² which found that "females (22.0%) were more likely to report the [domestic violence] incident(s) to the police than males (7.5%)" Respondents who did not leave their partner as the result of the violence were asked their reasons for staying in the abusive relationship. 28 per cent of males and 20.8 per cent of females answered "violence not serious enough" – slightly higher for males but not significantly so. Respondents who had left or stayed apart because of the violence and

¹⁰Australian Bureau of Statistics (2013), [Personal Safety Survey, Australia, 2012](#), cat no 4906.0, ABS, Canberra. Table 23 EXPERIENCE OF PARTNER VIOLENCE SINCE THE AGE OF 15, Whether ever told anyone about partner violence. 54.1% of males and 25.6% of females have never told anyone about violence by their current partner since the age of 15. 20.9% of males and 6.7% of females have never told anyone about violence by their previous partner since the age of 15.

¹¹ Australian Bureau of Statistics (2017). [Personal Safety Survey, Australia, 2016](#) (Cat. No. 4906.0). Canberra: Australian Bureau of Statistics. Table 17.1 EXPERIENCE OF CURRENT PARTNER VIOLENCE SINCE AGE 15, By sex of respondent, Estimate. 102,400 males in 2016 did not seek advice or support after incident of violence by a current partner, while 150,300 males had experienced violence by a current partner since the age of 15. 126,900 females in 2016 did not seek advice or support after incident of violence by a current partner, while 275,000 females had experienced violence by a current partner since the age of 15. Table 18.1 EXPERIENCE OF PREVIOUS PARTNER VIOLENCE SINCE AGE 15, By sex of respondent, Estimate. 235,300 males in 2016 did not seek advice or support after incident of violence by a previous partner, while 397,300 males had experienced violence by a previous partner since the age of 15. 506,800 females in 2016 did not seek advice or support after incident of violence by a previous partner, while 1,372,900 females had experienced violence by a previous partner since the age of 15.

¹² Dal Grande et al. (1999). [Interpersonal Violence and Abuse Survey](#). Adelaide: South Australian Department of Human Services.

abuse were asked their reasons for leaving. 50 per cent of males and 64.1 per cent of females answered “continuation of violence/abuse” – once again slightly higher for females but not significantly so.

Internationally, Watson & Parsons’ *Domestic Abuse of Women and Men in Ireland: Report on the National Study of Domestic Abuse*¹³ (a large-scale community survey) found that “women are more likely than men to report [severe abuse] to the Gardaí [Irish Police]. Over a quarter of women reported their experience to the Gardaí compared to about one man in 20” (a statistically significant difference).

COERCIVE CONTROL AFFECTS MALES TOO

Some claim that coercive control – a pattern of abuse that degrades, humiliates and isolates victims, and takes away their freedom and autonomy – is predominantly or almost exclusively perpetrated by men towards women and children.

Recent research from the UK challenges this assertion. In 2014 Elizabeth Bates from the University of Cumbria, along with Nicola Graham-Kevan and John Archer from the University of Central Lancashire published their study titled *Testing predictions from the male control theory of men’s partner violence*¹⁴:

The aim of this study was to test predictions from the male control theory of Intimate Partner Violence (IPV) and Johnson’s (1995) typology. A student sample (N = 1104) reported on their use of physical aggression and controlling behaviour, to partners and to same-sex non-intimates. Contrary to the male control theory, women were found to be more physically aggressive to their partners than men were, and the reverse pattern was found for aggression to same-sex non-intimates. Furthermore, there were no substantial sex differences in controlling behaviour, which significantly predicted physical aggression in both sexes. IPV was found to be associated with physical aggression to same-sex non-intimates, thereby demonstrating a link with aggression outside the family. Using Johnson’s (1995) typology, women were more likely than men to be classed as “intimate terrorists”, which was counter to earlier findings. Overall, these results do not support the male control theory of IPV. Instead, they fit the view that IPV does not have a special aetiology, and is better studied within the context of other forms of aggression.

The most recent Australian Bureau of Statistics *Personal Safety Survey* (2016)¹⁵ measured several types of emotional abuse by current and previous partners which are commonly cited as components of coercive controlling behaviour. For example, abusive behaviours such as the following were experienced by significant numbers of Australian males:

- Controlled or tried to control them from contacting family, friends or community
- Kept track of where they were and who they were with (e.g. constant phone calls, GPS tracking, monitoring through social media)
- Controlled or tried to control their income or assets
- Deprived them of basic needs such as food, shelter, sleep or assistive aids
- Damaged, destroyed or stole any of their property
- Constantly insulted them to make them feel ashamed, belittled or humiliated (e.g. put downs)
- Shouted, yelled or verbally abused them to intimidate them
- Lied to their child/ren with the intent of turning them against them
- Lied to other family members or friends with the intent of turning them against them
- Threatened to take their child/ren away from them.

¹³ Watson, D., & Parsons, S. (2005). [Domestic Abuse of Women and Men in Ireland: Report on the National Study of Domestic Abuse](#). Dublin: National Crime Council.

¹⁴ Bates, E. A., Graham-Kevan, N. and Archer, J. (2014), [Testing predictions from the male control theory of men’s partner violence](#). *Aggr. Behav.*, 40: 42–55. doi:10.1002/ab.21499.

¹⁵ Australian Bureau of Statistics (2017). [Personal Safety Survey, Australia, 2016](#) (Cat. No. 4906.0). Canberra: Australian Bureau of Statistics.



Table 2 – Types of emotional abuse behaviours experienced by partner, by sex of respondent and partner type, Estimate – Australia

Australian Bureau of Statistics

49060DO0004_2016 Personal Safety, Australia, 2016

Released at 11.30am (Canberra time) 8 November 2017

Table 28.1 TYPES OF EMOTIONAL ABUSE BEHAVIOURS EXPERIENCED BY PARTNER, By sex of respondent and part

	FEMALES	MALES	FEMALES	MALES
	CURRENT PARTNER(a) EMOTIONAL ABUSE		PREVIOUS PARTNER(b) EMOTIONAL ABUSE	
	ESTIMATE ('000)			
Types of emotional abuse behaviours experienced by a partner(c)				
Controlled or tried to control them from contacting family, friends or community	131.3	97.1	838.5	435.1
Controlled or tried to control them from using the telephone, internet or family car	69.8	*39.0	494.0	177.8
Controlled or tried to control where they went or who they saw	112.2	91.1	783.0	330.5
Kept track of where they were and who they were with (e.g. constant phone calls, GPS tracking, monitoring through social media)	56.7	*47.9	455.1	172.6
Controlled or tried to control them from knowing about, having access to or making decisions about household money	122.6	82.2	635.0	233.6
Controlled or tried to control them from working or earning money	58.1	*25.5	372.7	116.2
Controlled or tried to control their income or assets	52.3	*35.3	449.6	231.7
Controlled or tried to control them from studying	*19.9	**8.4	235.1	*38.0
Deprived them of basic needs such as food, shelter, sleep or assistive aids	36.8	*65.5	218.3	77.9
Damaged, destroyed or stole any of their property	63.4	*29.2	541.8	283.4
Constantly insulted them to make them feel ashamed, belittled or humiliated (e.g. put downs)	181.8	105.6	1,004.2	373.3
Shouted, yelled or verbally abused them to intimidate them	334.6	177.1	1,071.7	484.2
Lied to their child/ren with the intent of turning them against them	31.4	*21.3	425.0	403.1
Lied to other family members or friends with the intent of turning them against	38.1	*34.8	552.4	394.3
Threatened to take their child/ren away from them	26.4	*42.0	406.4	287.5
Threatened to harm their child/ren	*7.8	0.0	158.7	*44.8
Threatened to harm their other family members or friends	*9.6	**3.1	230.8	*40.0
Threatened to harm any of their pets	*8.0	0.0	141.6	*33.6
Harmed any of their pets	*4.0	0.0	90.7	**15.0
Threatened or tried to commit suicide	59.9	*49.7	414.6	169.7
Total persons who experienced emotional abuse	575.4	473.6	1,690.3	1,048.0

* estimate has a relative standard error of 25% to 50% and should be used with caution

** estimate has a relative standard error greater than 50% and is considered too unreliable for general use

Cells in this table have been randomly adjusted to avoid the release of confidential data. Discrepancies may occur between sums of the component items and totals.

(a) A partner the person currently lives with in a married or de facto relationship.

(b) A person that the respondent lived with at some point in a married or de facto relationship from whom the respondent is now separated, divorced or widowed from.

(c) Components are not able to be added together to produce a total. Where a person has experienced more than one type of emotional abuse behaviour, they are counted separately for each type of behaviour but are counted only once in the aggregated total.

The Australian Institute of Family Studies' *Experiences of Separated Parents Study (Evaluation of the 2012 Family Violence Amendments)*¹⁶ is based upon interviews with a nationally representative sample of 6,079 parents who had separated between 1 July 2012 and 31 December 2013.

Fathers were statistically significantly more likely than mothers to report having often felt controlled or coerced after experiencing physical violence or emotional abuse since separation. When it came to severity, fathers were also more likely than mothers to report experiencing the highest level of fear, control and coercion (10 on a 10-point scale) that they felt arising from the focus parent's behaviour since separation. Experiences of control and coercion were statistically significantly higher for fathers than mothers.

¹⁶ Kaspiew, R., Carson, R., Dunstan, J., De Maio, J., Moore, S., Moloney, L. et al. (2015). [Experiences of Separated Parents Study \(Evaluation of the 2012 Family Violence Amendments\)](#). Melbourne: Australian Institute of Family Studies.



Researchers at Deakin University investigating Alcohol/Drug-Involved Family Violence in Australia¹⁷ surveyed a representative sample of 5,118 Australians and found that males accounted for between 11% and 37% of victims in incidents attended by police, and 24% of intimate partner violence victims and 34% of family violence victims in a panel survey. It also found that “there were no significant differences in the proportion of male and female respondents classified as engaging in no, low, and high Coercive Controlling Behaviours (ps > 0.05).”

WHAT DO CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE REPORT ABOUT PARENTAL DOMESTIC VIOLENCE?

The most recent Australian population survey on young people and domestic violence is *Young people and domestic violence – national research on young people’s attitudes to and experiences of domestic violence*¹⁸ (YPADV). Published in 2001 by the National Crime Prevention division of the Commonwealth Attorney General’s Department and the Department of Education, Training and Youth Affairs, the national research involved a quantitative survey of 5,000 young Australians aged between 12 and 20, and in-depth discussions with special groups, namely homeless youth, victims of domestic violence, and youth from different ethnic backgrounds. This is the largest and most recent sample of young people ever surveyed about their experience of and attitudes towards domestic violence in Australia or, most likely, the world. Regrettably the survey data is now 21 years old and hasn’t been replicated since.

The survey looked at young people’s experience of parental domestic violence. The principal aim was to provide a baseline measure of the extent to which young people in Australia are directly exposed to domestic violence between carers. Some of the results of the survey are presented in the following tables and graphs. We have highlighted the South Australian figures for abusive behaviours commonly cited as components of coercive controlling behaviour.

Table 3 – Young people’s experience of male to female parental violence by State

Table 4.24: Young people’s experience of male to female parental violence by State — percentage stating violence had been perpetrated

	NAT	NSW	VIC	QLD	WA	SA	TAS	NT	ACT
	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
Yelled loudly at her	58	59	56	62*	59	58	48*	52	58
Put her down/humiliated her	31	30	30	36*	27	28	34	30	29
Not let her see her family or friends	11	12	10	13	9	8	14	8	9
Not let her have any money for her own use	11	10	12	12	8	10	17*	11	11
Thrown something at her	16	17	16	18	13	14	20	15	15
Threatened to hit her	19	20	18	22*	16	18	20	19	15
Tried to hit her	16	17	15	19*	13	15	17	18	11
Hit her because she was hitting him	8	9	8	8	8	8	13*	8	8
Actually hit her (even though she didn’t hit him)	14	14	12	15	12	12	15	16	13
Threatened her with a knife or gun	6	7	6	7	4	5	14*	7	6
Used a knife or fired a gun	4	5	4	3	2	3	8*	5	2
Total Any Physical Domestic Violence	23	24	23	25	21	22	28	21	20

* significantly different to national results at 95% confidence level

¹⁷ Miller, P, et al (2016), [Alcohol/Drug-Involved Family Violence in Australia \(ADIVA\) Final Report](#), Deakin University.

¹⁸ National Crime Prevention (2001), [Young People and Domestic Violence: National Research on Young People’s Attitudes to and Experiences of Domestic Violence](#). Barton: Attorney-General’s Dept., September 18, 2001.

Table 3 – Young people's experience of female to male parental violence by State

Table 4.25: Young people's experience of female to male parental violence by State — percentage stating violence had been perpetrated

	NAT	NSW	VIC	QLD	WA	SA	TAS	NT	ACT
	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
Yelled loudly at him	55	56	51	59*	55	56	45	51	57
Put him down/humiliated him	22	22	20	26*	19	23	25	24	26
Not let him see his family or friends	6	6	5	5	5	7	9	7	8
Not let him have any money for his own use	5	5	5	3	4	5	9*	7	5
Thrown something at him	17	18	16	18	17	15	21	19	17
Threatened to hit him	10	10	10	12*	9	9	17*	9	8
Tried to hit him	13	12	11	15*	11	12	19*	14	8
Hit him because he was hitting her	8	9	8	9	7	7	13*	8	5
Actually hit him (even though he didn't hit her)	9	9	8	10	9	9	13	11	6
Threatened him with a knife or gun	4	4	4	4	5	3	10*	5	5
Used a knife or fired a gun	3	3	3	2	4	2	7*	4	3
Total Any Physical Domestic Violence	22	23	20	24	22	20	28*	26	20

*significantly different to national results at 95 per cent confidence level

Once again, a significant proportion of victims of these coercive controlling behaviours are male. 58% of young South Australians have witnessed a male parent “yelling loudly at” a female parent and 56% have witnessed a female parent “yelling loudly at” a male parent. 28% of young South Australians have witnessed a male parent “put down/humiliate” a female parent and 23% have witnessed a female parent “put down/humiliate” a male parent. 8% of young South Australians have witnessed a male parent “not let a female parent see her family or friends” and 7% have witnessed a female parent “not let a male parent see his family or friends”. 10% of young South Australians have witnessed a male parent “not let a female parent have any money for her own use” and 5% have witnessed a female parent “not let a male parent have any money for his own use”.

THE USE OF CHILDREN TO COERCIVELY CONTROL

During the hearings¹⁹ of the recent NSW Inquiry into Coercive Control, Ms Elisabeth Shaw, CEO of Relationships Australia NSW, made the following points when asked to provide examples of how coercive control behaviour is perpetrated through systems, particularly through the family law system:

“I think probably the starkest example is through the use of children's contact centres. Withholding access to children or interrupting the possibility of effective handover or access time is a key point for abusive interaction. We know that using the children in a variety of ways is a very common lever in terms of abusive behaviour. So where there are family law orders obviously related to children or property, then it is a prime opportunity to get back at your partner through either saying you are not available or not doing what you are supposed to do.

¹⁹ Hansard NSW (2021), REPORT ON PROCEEDINGS BEFORE JOINT SELECT COMMITTEE ON COERCIVE CONTROL. COERCIVE CONTROL IN DOMESTIC RELATIONSHIPS At Jubilee Room, Parliament House, Sydney, on Monday 29 March 2021. <https://www.parliament.nsw.gov.au/ladocs/transcripts/2549/Transcript%20-%2029%20March%202021%20-%20coercive%20control%20in%20domestic%20relationships.pdf>



“Of course, children are always the sufferers in that because they might actually be looking forward to seeing their parents and they become invisible in this sort of war that can happen around Family Court orders. It is very important to understand how children and property and money are all the key levers through which ongoing abuse can be enacted and to make sure that children in particular do not become invisible, and the least understood and the great sufferers in those sorts of interactions.”

We agree with Relationships Australia NSW that controlling access to children is a damaging form of coercive control. Coercive control which seeks to limit or prevent contact and communications between children and their parents, grandparents or other family members, including lying to or misleading children about contact arrangements, is the one of the most harmful forms of coercion because more than one person is harmed, and the consequences are so long-lasting.

LACK OF SUPPORT SERVICES FOR MALE VICTIMS AND THEIR CHILDREN

What support services are available in South Australia for male victims and their children? Some generic (i.e. not male-specific or male-friendly) support is certainly available (e.g. Police, Lifeline) but such services are often unaware of the unique issues faced by male victims of family violence and are therefore unable to offer effective and appropriate help. Some generic – and even specialist male – services do not believe male victims, minimise their experiences or even blame them for the abuse. Another issue is that while individual workers within generic services might be aware of the issues facing male victims, they often face workplace cultures and systems that aren’t supportive.

The Australian *Intimate Partner Abuse of Men* study found that service providers “rated themselves and their agencies as only moderately effective in (1) overcoming the barriers to men disclosing and (2) harnessing the factors that facilitate disclosure... there is a lot of work needed in terms of training and service design if agencies are to be effective in assisting men to disclose abuse.”²⁰

Government-funded services are often suspicious of “male perpetrators claiming to be victims” (but not “female perpetrators claiming to be victims”). The MARAM Framework²¹, which provides guidance to national telephone support lines such as 1800-RESPECT and MensLine Australia states:

“A smaller number of heterosexual, cisgender men do experience violence from cisgender female intimate partners. Professionals should exercise caution when responding to family violence where this relationship dynamic is reported. There may be potential for perpetrators and victim survivors to be misidentified where male perpetrators report or present as a victim survivor, adopting a victim stance. Male perpetrators may adopt a victim stance generally, or in relation to their experience of violent resistance from a victim survivor. Men who experience violent resistance from victim survivors (violence that responds to their own ongoing use of family violence risk behaviours, such as coercive and controlling behaviours) are not victim survivors.”

The Judicial College of Victoria’s *Family Violence Bench Book*²² similarly advises members of the judiciary that,

“The research evidence and experience of family violence professionals unambiguously demonstrates that relatively few men in heterosexual relationships are solely victims of intimate partner violence. The majority of women who use some form of violence towards their partner have been subjected to (worse) violence by that man before, or on the same occasion. Often, men who are genuinely victims of family violence experience the violence from a same

²⁰ Tilbrook, E, Allan, A, and Dear, G (2010). *Intimate Partner Abuse of Men*. East Perth: Men’s Advisory Network, May 26, 2010.

²¹ State of Victoria, Australia, Family Safety Victoria (2021). MARAM PRACTICE GUIDES. FOUNDATION KNOWLEDGE GUIDE. Melbourne: Victorian Government.
https://content.vic.gov.au/sites/default/files/2021-07/MARAM%20practice%20guides_Guidance%20for%20professionals%20working%20with%20adults.pdf

²² Judicial College of Victoria (2014). *Family Violence Bench Book*. Melbourne: Judicial College of Victoria.
<http://www.judicialcollege.vic.edu.au/eManuals/FVBBWeb/index.htm#34578.htm>



sex partner, carer or a male relative. Men who are the principle users of family violence often try to present as a victim or the victim of violence. Sometimes they succeed in convincing themselves, police and others.”

These policies fail to support male victims of family violence and fail to challenge female perpetrators who claim to be victims.

While it is undeniable that the range of family violence services currently provided in South Australia are inadequate to meet all the needs of female victims, male victims are denied access to the vast majority of such services that are available to women. Despite males making up a significant proportion of victims of family violence overall in the South Australian community, there are far fewer support services available to male victims and their children compared to female victims.

Thankfully, family violence legislation in South Australia is gender-neutral. However only men are discriminated against in policy and service provision.

The South Australian Government's main domestic and family violence and sexual assault support services web page²³ lists four primary services that women can access for support:

- The 24 hour Domestic Violence Crisis Line 1800 800 098 (crisis counselling, support and referral to safe accommodation)
- 1800RESPECT (sexual assault, domestic and family violence counselling)
- The Women's Information Service (referrals to domestic violence services and safety information)
- The Migrant Women's Support Program (MWSP) (works with migrant women and children of diverse cultural and linguistic backgrounds in unsafe relationships).

Only one of them (1800RESPECT) is available to men, but it follows the MARAM Framework which assumes that heterosexual natal males who present as victims of domestic and family violence are actually perpetrators.

The government web page also lists three primary services that men can access for support:

- MensLine Australia (to manage conflict and anger, relationship issues and violence in the home)
- 1800RESPECT (sexual assault, domestic and family violence counselling)
- Men's Referral Service (works with men who use family violence, and the sector that supports them to change their abusive and violent behaviour).

Two of these services (MensLine Australia and the Men's Referral Service) are listed as services for *perpetrators*, not victims, while 1800RESPECT follows the MARAM Framework which assumes that heterosexual natal males who present as victims of domestic and family violence are actually perpetrators.

This is an appalling, unjust state of affairs that denies basic human rights to half of South Australia's citizens on the basis of their gender.

For those who argue this discrimination is appropriate because the majority of victims of family violence are women, our response would be that we do not discriminate in this way on any other issue.

We don't deny services to suicidal women because more men kill themselves, or deny workplace health and safety programs to women because more men die in the workplace.

²³ <https://www.sa.gov.au/topics/family-and-community/safety-and-health/domestic-violence-and-sexual-assault/support-services>



We have the capacity to support all victims of family violence, whether male or female, young or old, gay or straight, rich or poor, whatever their religion or cultural background, and wherever they live.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. We urge the *Joint Select Committee on Coercive Control* to consider the needs of ALL victims of family violence and abuse equally, no matter their gender, geography, socio-economic status, age, ability, sexual preference, culture, race or religion, when undertaking this important inquiry. Any recommendations made by the inquiry must be applicable equally to victims and perpetrators of all genders, and not be affected by gender bias in any respect.

2. It is our recommendation that coercive control, and especially the use of children as a means of coercive control, should be dealt with at the first instance as a civil matter under South Australian Intervention Order Legislation and that breaches of any such order should be dealt with accordingly under existing mechanisms to deal with people who persistently breach orders of the court.

On behalf of all male victims of family violence and abuse, we request that you give serious consideration to this submission.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide input into this inquiry.

Greg Andresen
Senior Researcher
30th March 2022



APPENDIX A - MALE VICTIMS OF FAMILY VIOLENCE: KEY STATISTICS



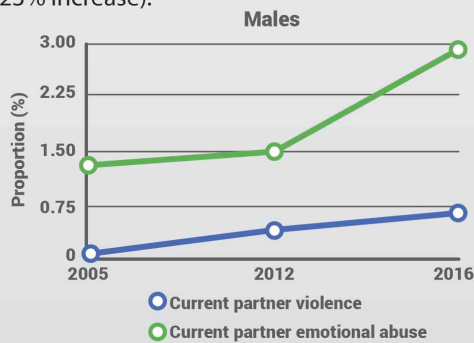
Research from the 2016 ABS Personal Safety Survey and Australian Institute of Criminology shows that both men and women in Australia experience substantial levels of violence.

Males make up a significant proportion of victims of family and sexual violence, yet are excluded from government anti-violence programs.

32 males were killed in domestic homicide incidents between 2018-2019. **This equates to one death every 11 days.**

EXPERIENCE OF FAMILY VIOLENCE BY GENDER

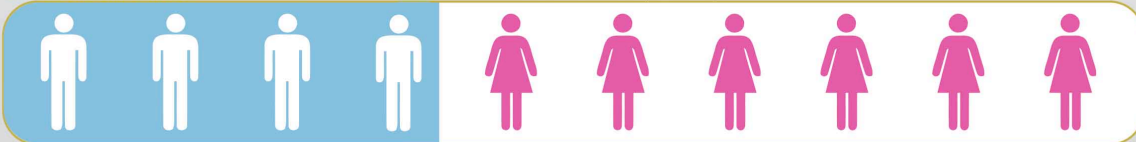
The proportion of men experiencing **current partner violence** in the last 12 months between the 2005 and 2016 ABS Personal Safety Surveys rose **more than five-fold** (a 552% increase), while the proportion of men experiencing **emotional abuse** from a current partner in the last 12 months **more than doubled** (a 223% increase).



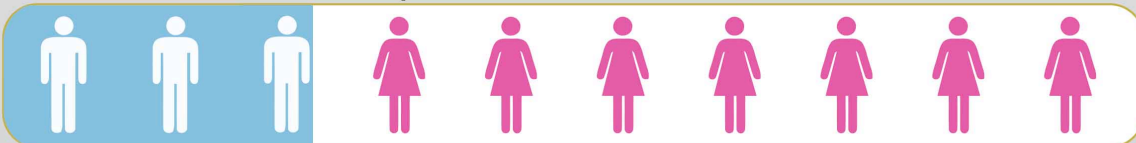
The majority of men that experienced intimate partner violence experienced it by a female perpetrator (93.6%). The remainder were in same-sex relationships with male perpetrators*.

DURING THE PERIOD 2018-2019:

More than 1 in 3 victims of **domestic homicide** were male (38.1%)



More than 1 in 4 victims of **intimate partner homicide** were male (27.1%)



* Some men may have experienced violence by both a male and female intimate partner.



For more information and research about male victims of family violence, or for media comment visit www.oneinthree.com.au

If you are experiencing family violence, seek support, call MensLine Australia on 1300 78 99 78

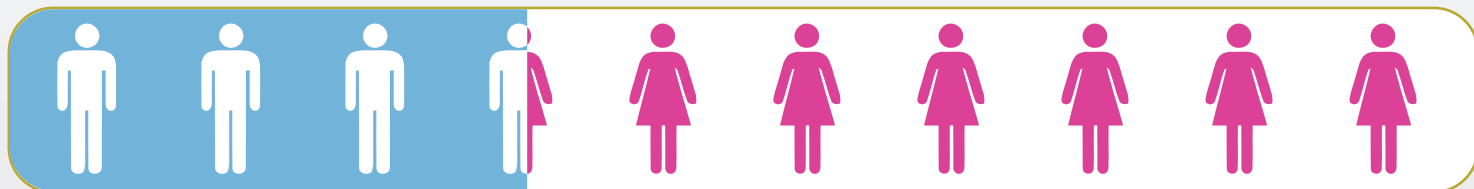
Information has been sourced from the ABS and the AIC. Produced by the One in Three Campaign (oneinthree.com.au/infographicrefs)

MALE VICTIMS OF FAMILY VIOLENCE: KEY STATISTICS

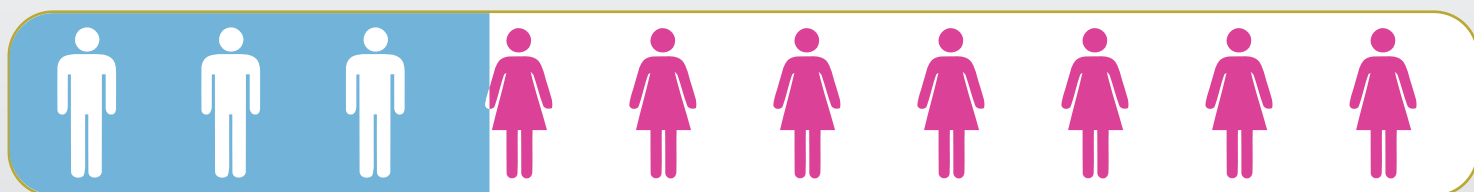
EXPERIENCE OF FAMILY VIOLENCE BY GENDER

DURING THE LAST 12 MONTHS*:

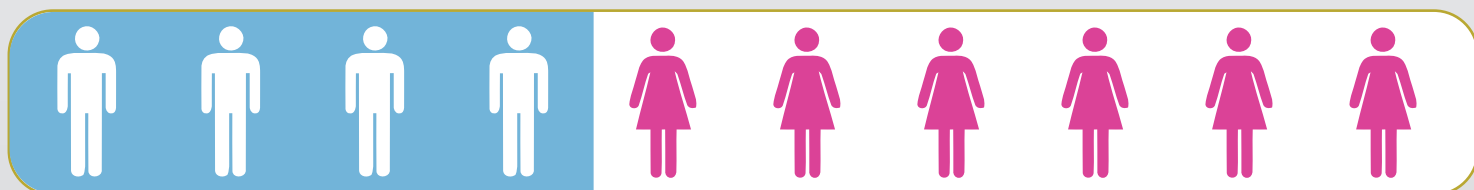
Over 1 in 3 persons who experienced violence from an **intimate partner** were male (35.3%)



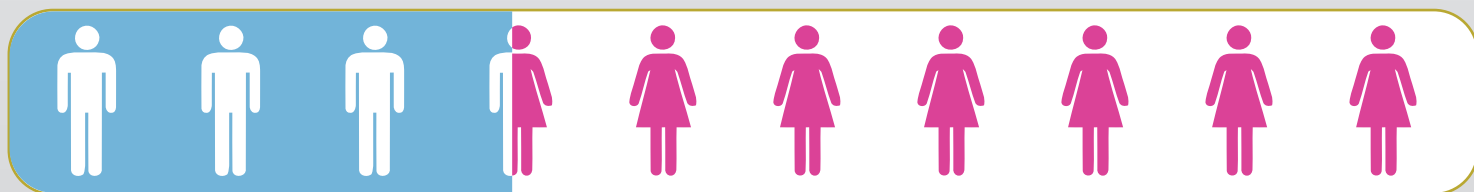
Almost 1 in 3 persons who experienced violence from a **cohabiting partner** were male (32.7%)



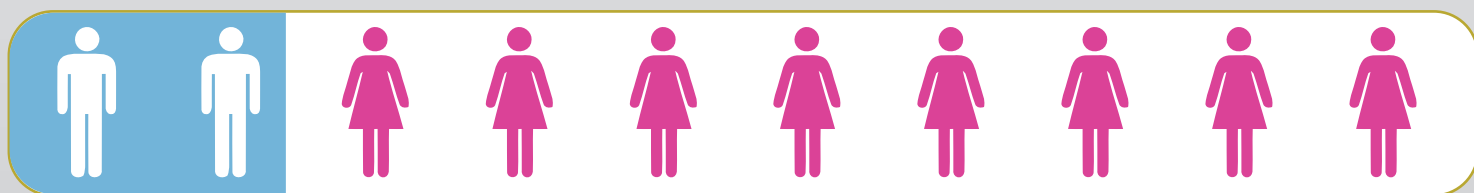
Almost 2 in 5 persons who experienced violence from a **current partner** were male (39.9%)**



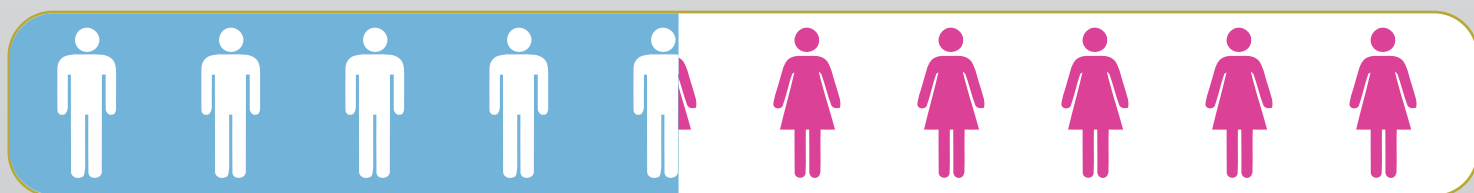
Over 1 in 3 persons who experienced violence from a **boyfriend/girlfriend or date** were male (34.3%***)



Almost 1 in 5 persons who experienced violence from a **previous partner** were male (18.8%****)



Almost half the persons who experienced violence from a **known person** were male (45.5%)



* Last 12 month data are better measures of current rates of violence than are lifetime data ("since the age of 15"), as lifetime data include incidents that happened many years ago.

** Estimate has a Relative Standard Error (RSE) of 25.5% and should be used with caution due to the relatively small number of males surveyed by the ABS (34.8% of persons since the age of 15 were male with no RSE warning)

*** Estimate has a Relative Standard Error (RSE) of 40.1% and should be used with caution due to the relatively small number of males surveyed by the ABS (20.0% of persons since the age of 15 were male with no RSE warning)

**** Estimate has a Relative Standard Error (RSE) of 26.7% and should be used with caution due to the relatively small number of males surveyed by the ABS (22.5% of persons since the age of 15 were male with no RSE warning)



For more information and research about male victims of family violence, or for media comment visit www.oneinthree.com.au

If you are experiencing family violence, seek support, call MensLine Australia on 1300 78 99 78

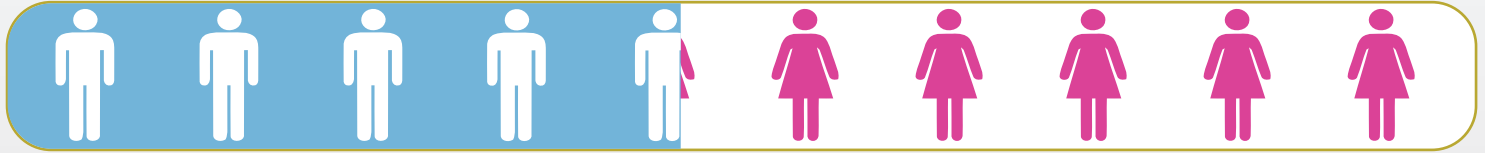
Information has been sourced from the ABS and the AIC. Produced by the One in Three Campaign (oneinthree.com.au/infographicrefs)

MALE VICTIMS OF FAMILY VIOLENCE: KEY STATISTICS

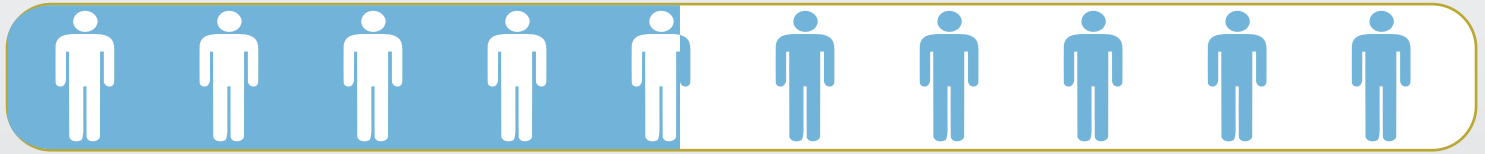
EXPERIENCE OF FAMILY VIOLENCE BY GENDER

DURING THE LAST 12 MONTHS*:

Almost half the persons who experienced emotional abuse by a **partner** were male (45.8%) (47.7% of persons who experienced it by a **current partner** and 43.4% by a **previous partner**)



Almost half of these males experienced **anxiety or fear** due to the emotional abuse (41.4% of males who experienced current partner abuse and 43.1% of males who experienced previous partner abuse)



13.8% of men that experienced emotional abuse by a current partner had their partner **deprive them of basic needs** such as food, shelter, sleep, or assistive aids, compared to 6.4% of women.



8.9% of men that experienced emotional abuse by a current partner had their partner **threaten to take their child/ren away from them**, compared to 4.6% of women.



38.5% of men that experienced emotional abuse by a previous partner had their partner **lie to their child/ren** with the intent of turning them against them, compared to 25.1% of women.



7.3% of men that experienced emotional abuse by a current partner had their partner **lie to other family members or friends** with the intent of turning them against them, compared to 6.6% of women.



10.1% of men that experienced current partner emotional abuse had their current partner **keep track of where they were and who they were with**, compared to 9.9% of women.



* Last 12 month data are better measures of current rates of violence than are lifetime data ("since the age of 15), as lifetime data include incidents that happened many years ago.



For more information and research about male victims of family violence, or for media comment visit www.oneinthree.com.au

If you are experiencing family violence, seek support, call MensLine Australia on 1300 78 99 78

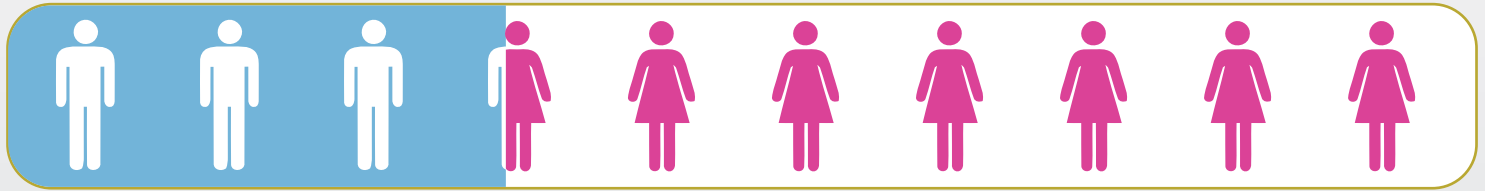
Information has been sourced from the ABS and the AIC. Produced by the One in Three Campaign (oneinthree.com.au/infographicrefs)

MALE VICTIMS OF FAMILY VIOLENCE: KEY STATISTICS

EXPERIENCE OF FAMILY VIOLENCE BY GENDER

DURING THE LAST 12 MONTHS*:

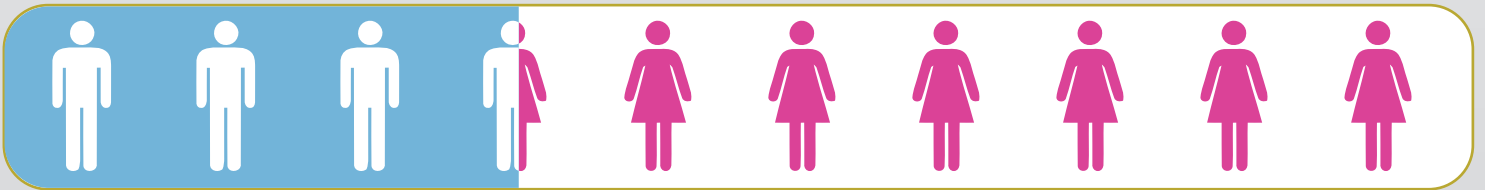
Over 1 in 3 persons who experienced **sexual harassment** were male (34.0%). Most males who experienced sexual harassment were harassed by a female perpetrator (72.2% were harassed by a female while 48.2% were harassed by a male**).



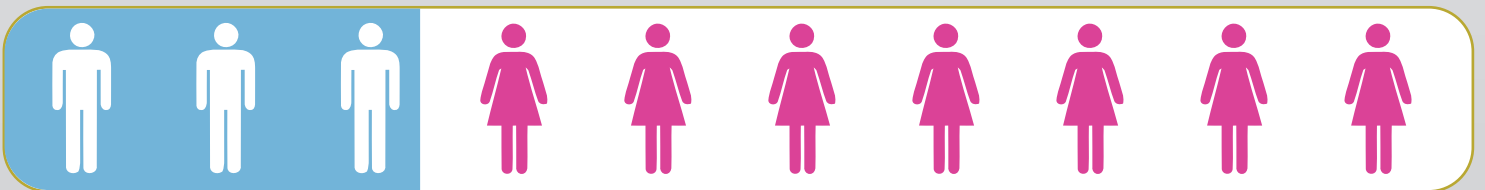
The largest category of increase in sexual harassment between 2012 and 2016 was in **males harassed by a female perpetrator**, which rose by a massive 67.5%. Females harassed by a male perpetrator rose by 15% during the same period.



Over 1 in 3 persons who experienced **stalking** were male (35.0%). Most males who experienced stalking were stalked by a male perpetrator (68.9% were stalked by a male while 36.3% were stalked by a female***).



Almost 1 in 3 persons who experienced **sexual assault** were male (28.4%). Most males who experienced sexual violence were assaulted or threatened by a female perpetrator (82.9%****).



6 per cent of all males experienced **violence** compared to 4.7% of all females.



* Last 12 month data are better measures of current rates of violence than are lifetime data ("since the age of 15"), as lifetime data include incidents that happened many years ago.

** Proportions don't add up to 100% because some respondents may have been sexually harassed by both a male and a female perpetrator.

*** Proportions don't add up to 100% because some respondents may have been stalked by both a male and a female perpetrator.

**** Estimate has a Relative Standard Error (RSE) of 25.0% and should be used with caution due to the relatively small number of males surveyed by the ABS (55.2% of males experienced sexual violence from a female since the age of 15 with no RSE warning).



For more information and research about male victims of family violence, or for media comment visit www.oneinthree.com.au

If you are experiencing family violence, seek support, call MensLine Australia on 1300 78 99 78

Information has been sourced from the ABS and the AIC. Produced by the One in Three Campaign (oneinthree.com.au/infographicrefs)

MALE VICTIMS OF FAMILY VIOLENCE: KEY STATISTICS

EXPERIENCE OF FAMILY VIOLENCE BY GENDER

MEN WHO HAVE EXPERIENCED PARTNER VIOLENCE ARE:

2 to 3 times more likely than women to have **never told anybody*** about experiencing

• Current partner violence



• Previous partner violence



Around 50% more likely than women to have **never sought advice or support** about experiencing

• Current partner violence



• Previous partner violence



Almost 20% more likely than women to have **not contacted police** about experiencing

• Current partner violence



• Previous partner violence



Less than half as likely as women to have had a **restraining order** issued against the perpetrator of

• Previous partner violence



* This data is taken from the 2012 ABS PSS, as it was not published in the 2016 ABS PSS.

** Estimate has a Relative Standard Error (RSE) of 25.2% and should be used with caution due to the relatively small number of males surveyed by the ABS



For more information and research about male victims of family violence, or for media comment visit www.oneinthree.com.au

If you are experiencing family violence, seek support, call MensLine Australia on 1300 78 99 78

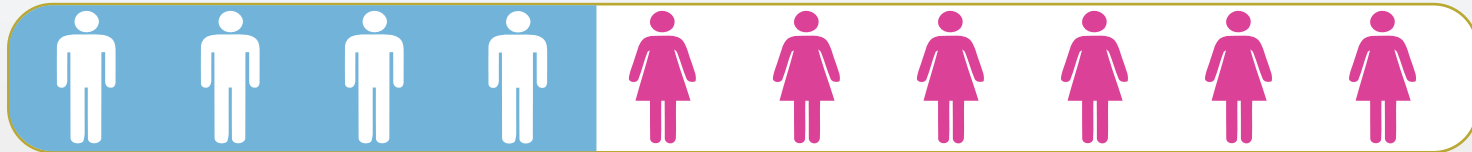
Information has been sourced from the ABS and the AIC. Produced by the One in Three Campaign (oneinthree.com.au/infographicrefs)

MALE VICTIMS OF FAMILY VIOLENCE: KEY STATISTICS

EXPERIENCE OF FAMILY VIOLENCE BY GENDER

BEFORE THE AGE OF 15:

2 in 5 persons who experienced **physical and/or sexual** abuse were male (40.1%)



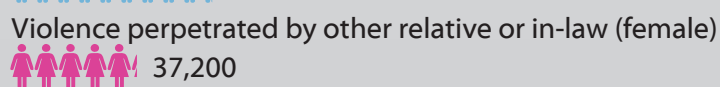
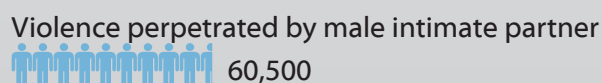
Around 1 in 20 persons (4.5%) witnessed **violence towards their father** by a partner and more than 1 in 10 persons (11.3%) witnessed **violence towards their mother** by a partner.



SINCE THE AGE OF 15*:

While a greater percentage of males experienced violence from an intimate partner or family member of the same sex than did females, the majority of males experienced family violence **perpetrated by a female**. The **perpetrators of family violence** against males by gender, ranked in order of prevalence, were as follows:

Violence since the age of 15. Violence by relationship to and sex of perpetrator, estimate, males (n)



* Lifetime data (since the age of 15) is used here because the ABS didn't publish data from the last 12 months.



For more information and research about male victims of family violence, or for media comment visit www.oneinthree.com.au

If you are experiencing family violence, seek support, call MensLine Australia on 1300 78 99 78

Information has been sourced from the ABS and the AIC. Produced by the One in Three Campaign (oneinthree.com.au/infographicrefs)