

Compendium

Intimate personal violence and partner abuse



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Correction

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A correction has been made to the 'Attitudes to partner abuse' section of Chapter 4: Intimate personal violence and partner abuse. This was due to a small error when the wrong age groups were provided in the commentary and the wrong axis label was used in Figure 4.15. You can see the original data [here](#). We apologise for any inconvenience.

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1 . Summary

This chapter presents findings from the year ending March 2015 Crime Survey for England and Wales (CSEW) self-completion module on intimate violence which is asked of adults aged 16 to 59. The module covers experience of emotional, financial and physical abuse by partners or family members, as well as sexual assaults and stalking by any person. In the year ending March 2015, the module additionally focused on the nature of partner abuse, findings from which are presented here.

2 . Main points

The CSEW estimates that 8.2% of women and 4.0% of men reported experiencing any type of domestic abuse in the last year (that is, partner / ex-partner abuse (non-sexual), family abuse (non-sexual) and sexual assault or stalking carried out by a current or former partner or other family member). This is equivalent to an estimated 1.3 million female victims and 600,000 male victims.

There were 6.5% of women and 2.8% of men who reported having experienced any type of partner abuse in the last year, equivalent to an estimated 1.1 million female victims and 500,000 male victims.

Overall, 27.1% of women and 13.2% of men had experienced any domestic abuse since the age of 16, equivalent to an estimated 4.5 million female victims and 2.2 million male victims.

The decline in domestic abuse for all victims between the year ending March 2005 and the year ending March 2009 CSEW surveys was statistically significant. However, the current figure (6.1% for both men and women combined) continues a fairly stable trend seen since the year ending March 2009.

Women were more likely than men to have experienced intimate violence across all headline types of abuse asked about, for example, 2.7% of women and 0.7% of men had experienced some form of sexual assault (including attempts) in the last year.

3 . Introduction

This chapter includes headline findings from the year ending March 2015 self-completion module of the Crime Survey for England and Wales (CSEW) on the extent of, and trends in, intimate violence among men and women aged 16 to 59 resident in households in England and Wales. Intimate violence is a collective term used here to refer to a number of different forms of physical and non-physical abuse consisting of partner abuse, family abuse, sexual assault and stalking. The term reflects the intimate nature either of the victim-offender relationship or of the abuse itself.

A self-completion module¹ on intimate violence was included in the CSEW in 2001 and then on a continuous basis since April 2004². The use of self-completion on laptops allows respondents to feel more at ease when answering questions on sensitive issues due to increased confidence in the privacy and confidentiality of the survey. The self-completion module is currently restricted to respondents aged 16 to 59. The age range has previously been reviewed³, however, because testing found that a high proportion of respondents aged between 60 and 69 (around a quarter) requested help from the interviewer to fill in the self-completion module, the age range was not extended. This will be reviewed again in the near future as part of a wider review of statistics on intimate personal violence.

In the year ending March 2011 CSEW, a split sample experiment was started to test a set of alternative questions on intimate violence. This was prompted by the extension of the survey to cover 10 to 15 year olds in 2009, where anecdotal feedback from interviewers suggested that the explicit language in some of the IPV (Intimate Personal Violence) questions, which are asked just before the interviewer seeks parental permission to carry out the child survey, may have led to a higher than anticipated parental refusal rate. The split sample experiment tested the use of less explicit language in the questions and assessed the ease of answering the questions as a respondent. For more information see the section on 'Prevalence of intimate personal violence – trends'.

Notes for introduction

1. 'Self-completion' means that the respondent reads the questions themselves and records their answers directly onto a laptop
2. The 2001 module differed from the one used since the year ending March 2005 and therefore the year ending March 2005 is used as a baseline for trends.
3. The review looked at extending the age range to 69.
4. More details are available from the [GOV.UK website](#).

4 . Definitions of abuse in the intimate violence self-completion module

Intimate violence is the collective term used to describe domestic abuse, sexual assault and stalking. Categories used in the presentation of these statistics are defined as follows:

- domestic abuse: this category combines partner abuse (non-sexual), family abuse (non-sexual) and sexual assault or stalking carried out by a current or former partner or other family member - this broadly matches the Government's definition of domestic violence and abuse¹
- non-sexual abuse by a partner: physical force, emotional or financial abuse or threats to hurt the respondent or someone close to them carried out by a current or former partner
- non-sexual abuse by a family member: physical force, emotional or financial abuse or threats to hurt the respondent or someone close to them carried out by a family member other than a partner (father/mother, step-father/mother or other relative)
- sexual assault: rape or assault by penetration including attempts ('serious'), indecent exposure or unwanted touching ('less serious') carried out by any person
- stalking: 2 or more incidents (causing distress, fear or alarm) of receiving obscene or threatening unwanted letters, emails, text messages or phone calls, having had obscene or threatening information about them placed on the internet, waiting or loitering around home or workplace, or following or watching by any person, including a partner or family member¹.

On 29 December 2015 the government introduced a new criminal offence of domestic abuse of "[coercive and controlling behaviour](#)". The new law captures coercive control through psychological and emotional abuse that stops short of physical violence. The CSEW has attempted to measure some elements of such non-physical abuse since April 2004 by asking if the respondent has experienced the following behaviours by a partner / ex-partner or family member:

- prevented you from having your fair share of the household money
- stopped you from seeing friends and relatives
- repeatedly belittled you to the extent that you felt worthless

Figures for this category of non-physical abuse (emotional, financial), are presented in the appendix tables for both non-sexual abuse by a partner and family member categories.

There are 2 headline measures of intimate violence in the CSEW: one relates to experiences since the age of 16 and the other is limited to those experiences in the 12 months prior to interview. As well as questions on experience of intimate violence, the CSEW self-completion module also includes a set of questions asking victims for further details about the nature of the incidents they experienced. These questions usually focus on partner abuse or sexual assault in alternate survey years². The questions in the year ending March 2015 CSEW focused on the nature of partner abuse and as a result this bulletin also includes analyses of these questions, including information about the context of victimisation and whether or not incidents came to the attention of the police and others.

Notes for definitions of abuse in the intimate violence self-completion module

1. In the new questions (from the year ending March 2013 survey onwards), the definition of stalking has been changed to be in line with the legal definition of 2 or more incidents that was introduced in April 2013.
2. In the year ending March 2016 survey an alternative set of questions was included which focus on childhood experience of abuse.

5 . Reporting

The under-reporting of crime to the police is known to be particularly acute for intimate violence offences. One of the strengths of the CSEW is that it covers many crimes that are not reported to the police. Estimates of the prevalence of domestic violence (a narrower definition than domestic abuse, which excludes non-physical abuse and threats) based on face-to-face¹ CSEW interviews are regularly published². However, this crime type is particularly liable to under-reporting due to the unwillingness of some victims to disclose such incidents in the context of a face-to-face interview. The prevalence of domestic abuse in the self-completion module is higher than the prevalence of domestic violence in the face-to-face interview. This is likely to be due to both:

- the increased reporting of sensitive issues expected on account of the greater confidentiality provided by self-completion methods
- the broader definition of domestic abuse used in the self-completion module³

Comparing those who reported physical domestic abuse in the self-completion module with those who reported the similar category of domestic violence in the face-to-face interview provides evidence that respondents are more likely to report sensitive issues in the self-completion module. Of those aged 16 to 59 who reported being victims of physical domestic abuse⁴ in the self-completion module, 14% reported being a victim of domestic violence in the last 12 months in face-to-face interviews (14% for women and 13% for men).

Findings from the self-completion module are supplemented with some high level findings from the face-to-face module in this chapter. The self-completion module provides a more complete measure of intimate violence victimisation and, as there are several differences in the coverage of the self-completion and face-to-face figures, care should be taken when making comparisons between the two.

The small number of sexual offences identified in face-to-face CSEW interviews and the likelihood of under-reporting means that figures are too unreliable to report and these data are excluded from the headline CSEW estimates. Therefore the self-completion module is the only source for estimates on these crimes.

Notes for reporting

1. In a 'face-to-face' interview, an interviewer reads the questions out to the respondent and records the answers given.
2. See Appendix Table A3 of [quarterly crime statistics publications](#).
3. Mainly that the self completion definition of domestic abuse includes emotional or financial abuse or threats to hurt the respondent or someone close to them.
4. Victims of force by a partner or family member and victims of any sexual assault by a partner or family member in the last year.

6 . Prevalence of intimate violence - extent

The self-completion module on intimate violence includes questions covering experiences since the respondent was 16 (treated here as a measure of adult lifetime prevalence) and in the 12 months prior to interview (treated here as a measure of recent experience).

As in previous years, women were more likely than men to have experienced intimate violence across all the headline types of abuse asked about ([Appendix Table 4.01 \(1.59 Mb Excel sheet\)](#)). This is in contrast to findings on overall violent crime victimisation (from the face-to-face survey) in which men, particularly young men, were more likely to have experienced violent crime¹. However, it is known that in these overall violence estimates from the face-to-face interview, that domestic violence is substantially under-estimated (see Introduction). If domestic violence was accurately captured by the face-to-face interview, it would increase the overall estimate of violent incidents, with the increase occurring more for women than for men.

Intimate violence experienced since the age of 16

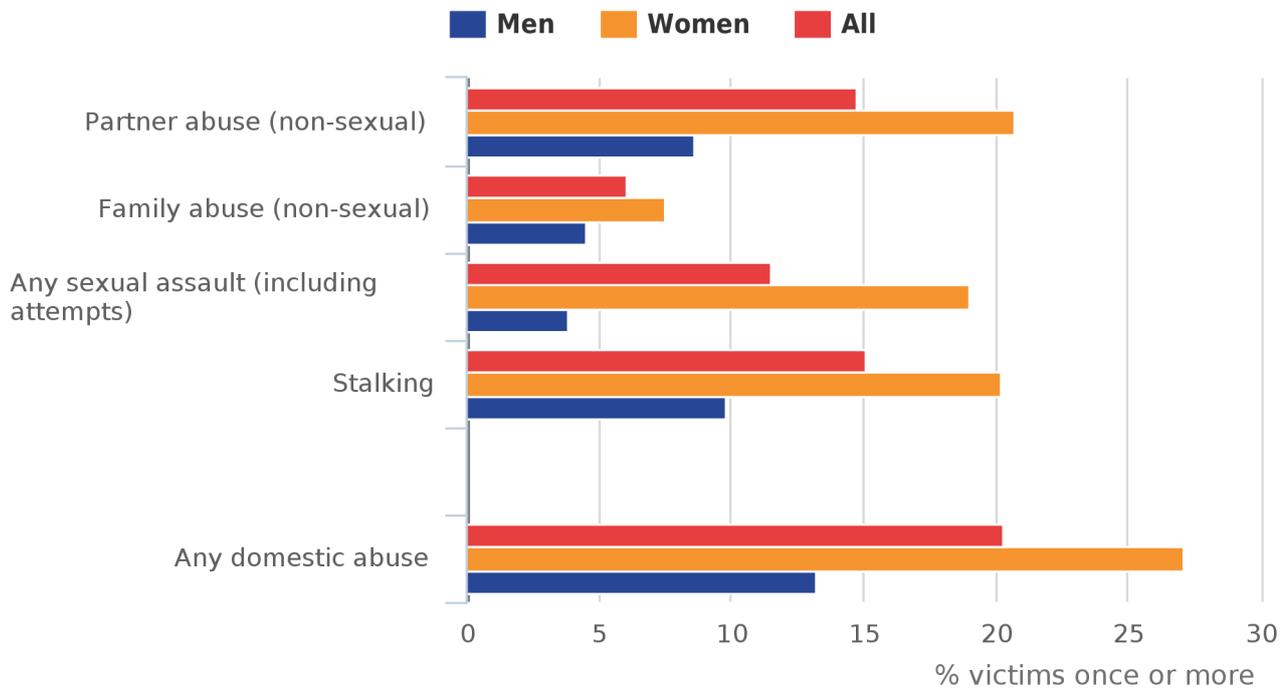
Latest estimates showed that for each of the categories of abuse, women had significantly higher prevalence compared with men. As in previous years, women were twice as likely to have experienced any domestic abuse since the age of 16 (27.1%) than men (13.2%) ([Appendix Table 4.01 \(1.59 Mb Excel sheet\)](#); Figure 4.1).

The year ending March 2015 CSEW showed that ([Appendix Table 4.01 \(1.59 Mb Excel sheet\)](#)):

- 27.1% of women and 13.2% of men reported being a victim of any domestic abuse since the age of 16, equivalent to an estimated 4.5 million female victims and 2.2 million male victims aged 16 to 59 ([Appendix Table 4.02 \(1.59 Mb Excel sheet\)](#))
- for women, the most commonly experienced types of intimate violence since age 16, covered by the survey, were non-sexual partner abuse (20.7%), stalking (20.2%) and sexual assault (19.0%)
- for men, the most commonly experienced types of abuse were stalking (9.8%) and non-sexual partner abuse (8.6%) ([Appendix Table 4.01 \(1.59 Mb Excel sheet\)](#); Figure 4.1)
- the largest difference between men and women was for experience of sexual assault (including attempts), with women (19.0%) being 5 times as likely as men (3.8%) to have experienced it since the age of 16 ([Appendix Table 4.01 \(1.59 Mb Excel sheet\)](#) and Figure 4.1)

Looking across all the sub-categories of intimate violence, estimates for females were significantly higher than estimates for males. The sub-category of threats within partner abuse shows the largest difference between males and females. Women were over 4 times as likely to be a victim of threats as men, with 14.1% of females and 3.2% of males experiencing this type of abuse since the age of 16. This is compared with all non-sexual partner abuse, where women were over twice as likely to experience this abuse (20.7% for females and 8.6% for males).

Figure 4.1: Percentage of adults aged 16 to 59 who experienced intimate violence since the age of 16, by sex and headline category, year ending March 2015 Crime Survey for England and Wales



Source: Crime Survey for England and Wales, Office for National Statistics

Intimate violence experienced in the last year

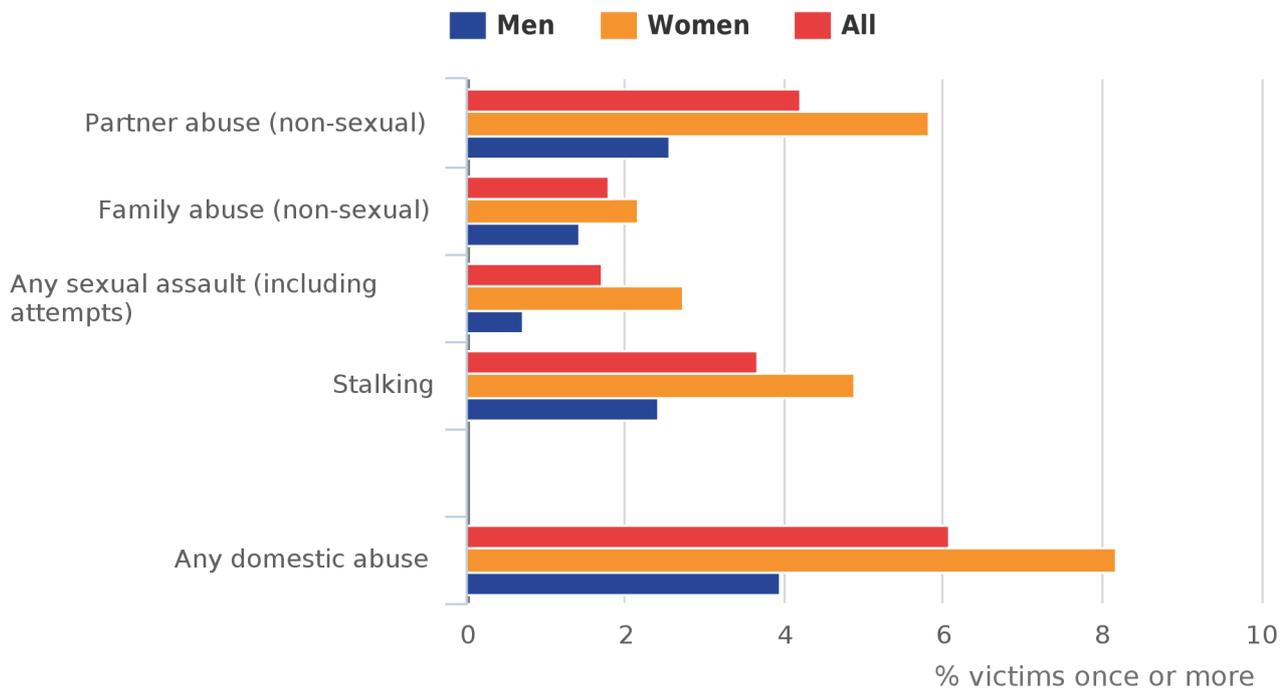
Respondents who had reported at least 1 incident of being a victim of intimate violence since they were 16 were asked whether they had been a victim in the last year. Women were twice as likely as men to have been a victim in the last year (8.2% compared with 4.0%), which is consistent with the difference in adult lifetime prevalence (27.1% compared with 13.2%).

The year ending March 2015 CSEW showed that ([Appendix Tables 4.01 and 4.03 \(1.59 Mb Excel sheet\)](#); Figure 4.2):

- 8.2% of women and 4.0% of men reported having experienced any type of domestic abuse in the last year, equivalent to an estimated 1.3 million female victims and 600,000 male victims aged between 16 and 59
- in the last year, non-sexual partner abuse and stalking were the most common forms of the separate types of intimate violence - twice as many women as men reported having experienced non-sexual partner abuse (5.8% of women and 2.5% of men) and stalking (4.9% of women and 2.4% of men)
- of the separate types of intimate violence sub-categories, non-sexual family abuse had the smallest difference between the prevalence experienced by men compared with women (1.4% and 2.2% respectively) - however, this difference was still statistically significant.
- in the last year, 2.7% of women and 0.7% of men had experienced some form of sexual assault (including attempts) - the majority of these were less serious sexual assault, which includes indecent exposure and unwanted sexual touching
- around 4 times as many women as men had experienced less serious sexual assault (2.4% of women compared with 0.6% of men) - less than 0.1% of men had experienced serious sexual assault (including attempts) compared with 0.7% of women, and less than 0.1% of men had experienced serious sexual assault (excluding attempts) compared with 0.4% of women

For all headline measures and sub-categories of abuse experienced in the last year, the prevalence for women was significantly higher compared with men. This pattern is broadly similar to patterns seen in previous years. The sub-category of threats within partner abuse shows the largest difference between males and females. Women were over 3 times as likely to be a victim in the last year as men, with 2.9% of females and 0.8% of males experiencing this type of abuse. This is compared with all partner abuse, where women were over twice as likely to experience this abuse (5.8% for females and 2.5% for males).

Figure 4.2: Percentage of adults aged 16 to 59 who experienced intimate violence in the last year, by sex and headline category, year ending March 2015 Crime Survey for England and Wales



Source: Crime Survey for England and Wales, Office for National Statistics

Police recorded domestic abuse incidents

An additional source of information on domestic abuse is available from the police. The police supply data to the Home Office on the number of domestic abuse incidents they have dealt with in their force area². This collection is wider than police recorded crime – not all domestic abuse incidents will be recorded as notifiable offences as defined by the Home Office Counting Rules for recorded crime. Domestic abuse incidents are defined as any incidence of threatening behaviour, violence or abuse (psychological, physical, sexual, financial or emotional) between adults, aged 16 and over, who are or have been intimate partners or family members, regardless of gender or sexuality³.

In the year ending March 2015, the police recorded 943,628 domestic abuse incidents ([Appendix Table 4.08 \(1.59 Mb Excel sheet\)](#))⁴. It is known that only a small proportion of domestic abuse incidents are reported to the police. These figures are therefore not directly comparable with the estimates from the CSEW, which will include information on domestic abuse that was not reported to the police. Furthermore, CSEW estimates relate to the number of victims rather than the number of incidents.

While incidents are recorded under the National Standard for Incident Recording⁵ in accordance with the same 'victim focused' approach that applies for recorded crime, it was previously reported that there were substantial variations between police forces in how they record domestic abuse incidents, and 2 forces were unable to supply data in previous years. The number of police recorded domestic abuse incidents has been increasing in recent years; it is thought that this increase is due to more victims coming forward and police forces improving their recording of these incidents.

One of the recommendations from a HM Inspectorate of Constabulary (HMIC) inspection in March 2014 stated that "data collected on domestic abuse needs to be consistent, comparable, accessible and accurate so that it can be used to monitor progress". In response to this the Home Office, since April 2015, has been collecting data from police forces on the number of recorded crimes that are domestic abuse-related. These data have been collected based upon the governmental definition of domestic abuse as stated above. Data on domestic abuse incidents are also being collected as part of this new collection. The first 2 quarters of data are published for the first time in the 'Experimental Statistics: Domestic abuse offences recorded by the police, April to September 2015' section of this release. The [latest report by HMIC on the police response to domestic abuse](#), published in December 2015, states that the variation between forces in domestic abuse related crimes is quite small, with all forces reporting that between 8% and 12% of recorded crimes were flagged as domestic abuse. This suggests that police are improving their identification of crimes that are domestic abuse-related.

Notes for prevalence of intimate violence - extent

1. Overall violent crime in the CSEW is measured as part of the face-to-face interview. For estimates of victimisation from the face-to-face interview see [Appendix Tables 1.01 to 1.04 \(1.59 Mb Excel sheet\)](#).
2. These figures are not National Statistics.
3. Police domestic abuse incident data follow the government definition of domestic abuse. This definition changed in September 2012 to include those aged 16 and 17. The CSEW figures are restricted to respondents aged 16 to 59.
4. Data exclude British Transport Police.
5. The police record domestic abuse incidents in accordance with the National Standard for Incident Recording (NSIR); for further details, see Chapter 5 of the [User Guide](#).

7 . Prevalence of intimate violence - trends

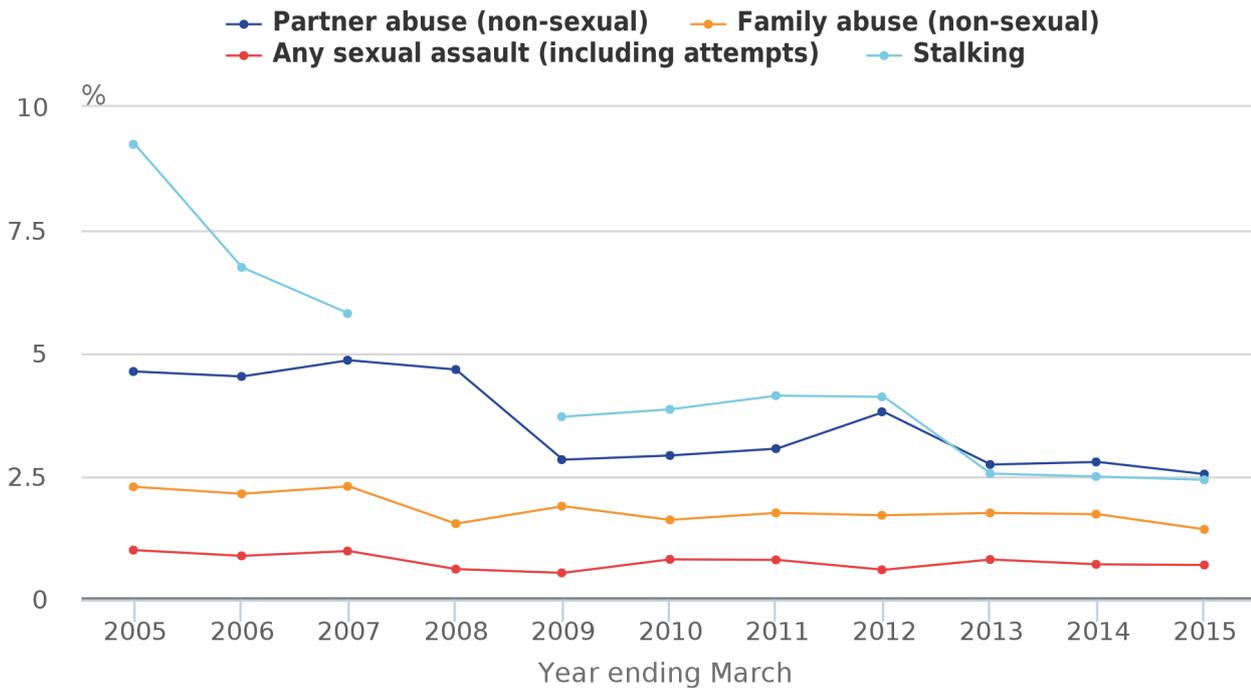
A split sample experiment to test new questions was conducted for the IPV module ¹ as a result of a review prompted by the extension of the survey to cover 10 to 15 year olds in 2009. From April 2013, the new questions were used for the whole sample for the first time. Estimates calculated from the new questions are not directly comparable with estimates calculated from the original questions published in previous bulletins. Where estimates have been calculated from the original questions, an adjustment has been applied to make the estimates as comparable as possible across the time series. More information on the new questions and how the adjustment has been calculated can be found in the [methodological note: split sample for intimate personal violence \(497 Kb Pdf\)](#).

The year ending March 2015 CSEW self-completion module shows that 6.1% of adults aged 16 to 59 experienced domestic abuse in the last year, the lowest estimate since the series began.

For the period covering the years ending March 2005 to March 2007, the CSEW estimated that between 8.8% and 9.0% of adults experienced some form of domestic abuse in the last 12 months. The level decreased significantly to 6.5% in the year ending March 2009² and has been followed by a period of stability where estimates have ranged between 6.5% and 7.0%. The year ending March 2015 figure of 6.1% continues this fairly stable trend and represents the equivalent of an overall fall from around 2.7 million victims in the year ending March 2005 to 2.0 million victims per year according to the year ending March 2015 CSEW ([Appendix Table 4.06 \(1.59 Mb Excel sheet\)](#)).

Overall, between the survey years ending March 2005 and March 2007, domestic abuse experienced by women ranged from 11.0% to 11.5%. Since the year ending March 2010, the level has made small but consistent declines which resulted in a statistically significant change between the year ending March 2005 and the year ending March 2015. Domestic abuse experienced by men in the last year also saw a decrease between the survey years ending March 2007 and March 2009 (6.5% to 4.2%). Since then the prevalence has fluctuated between 4.0% and 4.9%. For both women and men, the latest estimates are the lowest figures recorded since the year ending March 2005 baseline. A time series for the 4 main categories (see 'Definitions of abuse' section above) that make up domestic abuse can be found in Figures 4.3 and 4.4.

Figure 4.3: Percentage of men aged 16 to 59 who experienced intimate violence in the last year, by headline category, year ending March 2005 to year ending March 2015 Crime Survey for England and Wales



Source: Crime Survey for England and Wales, Office for National Statistics

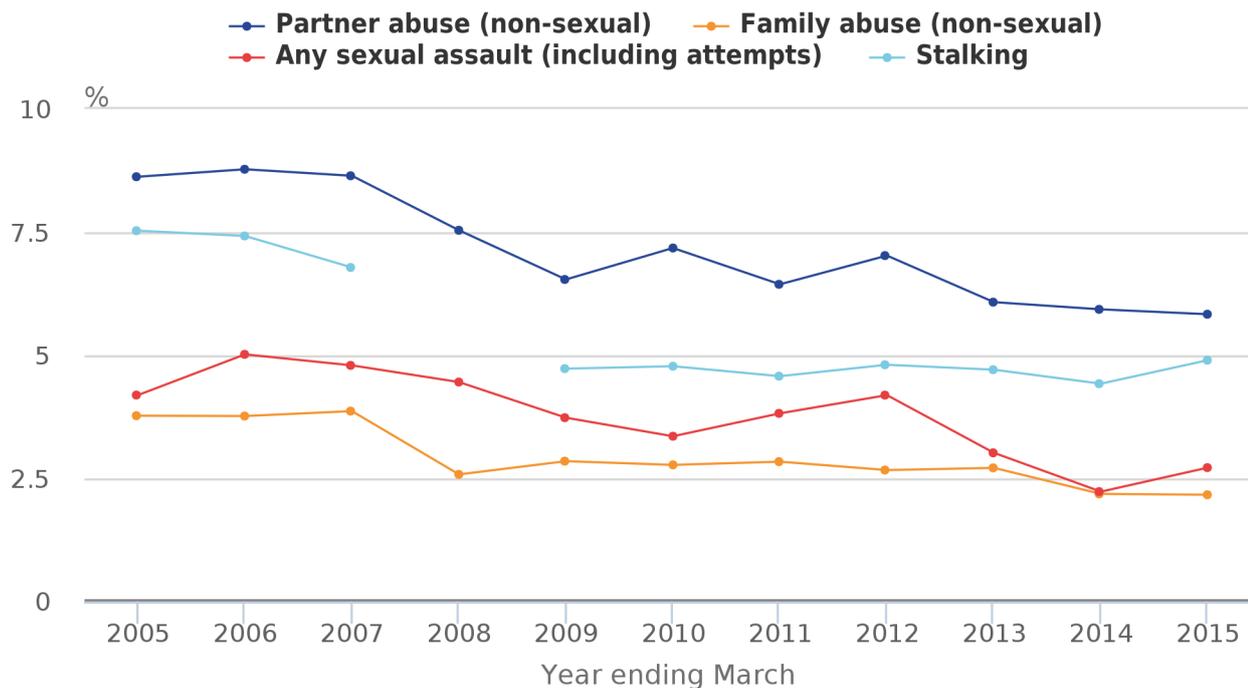
Notes:

1. The stalking time series excludes a data point for the year ending March 2008 survey due to comparable questions on stalking not being included that year.
2. In the year ending March 2012 survey the stalking question was changed to separately ask about receiving emails and an additional behaviour added of putting personal, obscene or threatening information about you on the internet.
3. The definition of stalking changed in the year ending March 2013 survey to be in line with the legal definitions by referring to at least two incidents.

Of the headline measures, stalking has shown the largest decrease in prevalence over the series (9.2% to 2.4% for men and 7.5% to 4.9% for women) ([Appendix Table 4.04 \(1.59 Mb Excel sheet\)](#), Figure 4.3 and Figure 4.4).

The latest estimates for all headline categories showed no significant change compared with the previous year. The apparent increases in any sexual assault (from 1.5% to 1.7%) and stalking (from 3.5% to 3.7%) and the apparent decreases in family abuse (from 2.0% to 1.8%) and partner abuse (from 4.4% to 4.2%) were not statistically significant.

Figure 4.4: Percentage of women aged 16 to 59 who experienced intimate violence in the last year, by headline category, year ending March 2005 to year ending March 2015 Crime Survey for England and Wales



Source: Crime Survey for England and Wales, Office for National Statistics

Notes:

1. The stalking time series excludes a data point for the year ending March 2008 due to comparable questions on stalking not being included that year.
2. In the year ending March 2012 the stalking question was changed to separately ask about receiving emails and an additional behaviour added of putting personal, obscene or threatening information about you on the internet.
3. The definition of stalking changed in the year ending March 2013 to be in line with the legal definitions by referring to at least two incidents.

Notes for prevalence of intimate violence - trends

1. For CSEW survey years ending March 2011 to March 2013.
2. The next survey year for which estimates are available.

8 . Intimate violence in the last year by personal characteristics

In addition to women being more likely than men to have experienced intimate violence in the last year, victimisation varied by other personal characteristics ([Appendix Tables 4.10 and 4.11 \(1.59 Mb Excel sheet\)](#)). Many of these characteristics will be closely associated (for example, marital status and age) so caution is needed in the interpretation of the effects of these different characteristics when viewed in isolation.

Multivariate analysis performed on year ending March 2010 CSEW data found that the characteristics that were most closely associated with domestic abuse were use of any drug in the last year, marital status, having a long-term illness or disability and the respondent's sex ([Homicides, Firearm Offences and Intimate Violence 2009/10: Supplementary Volume 2 to Crime in England and Wales 2009 to 10](#)). Other variables such as household structure, age, tenure, occupation, household income, alcohol consumption and number of visits to a nightclub in the last month were also important.

Age

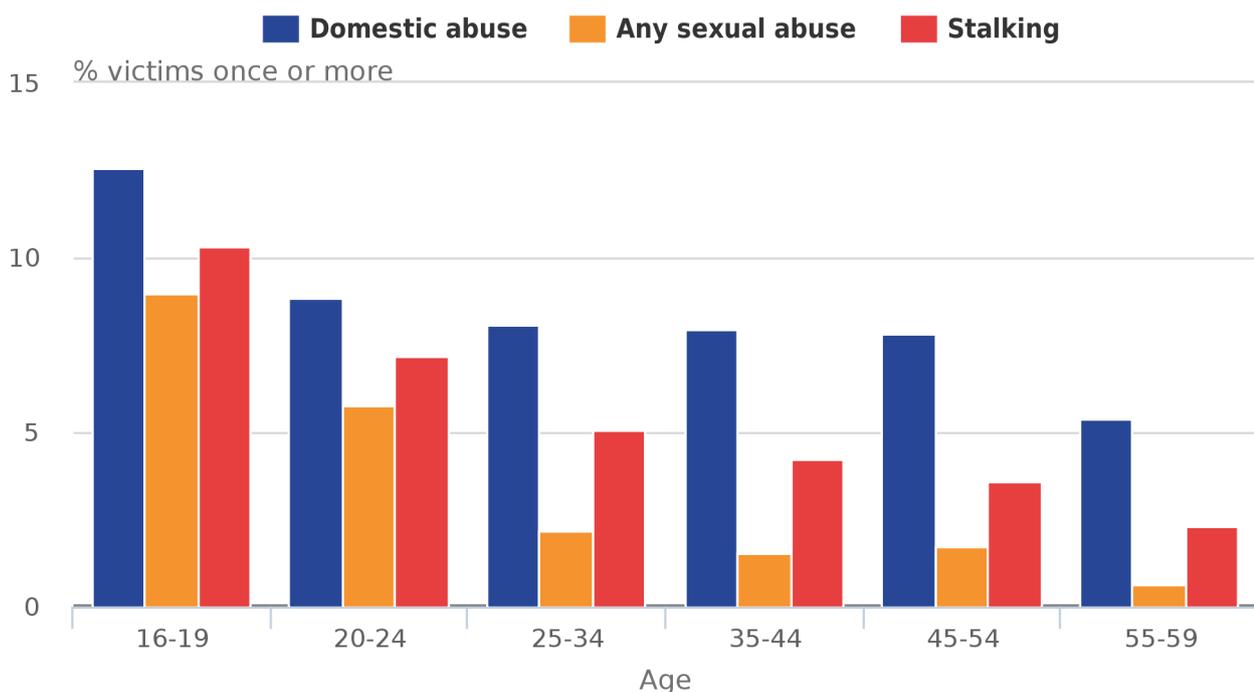
Latest estimates showed that among both men and women, the prevalence of intimate violence was highest amongst younger age groups and decreased with age. Those aged 55 to 59 were least likely to be a victim of intimate violence (2.0% for men and 5.4% for women). Women aged between 16 and 19 and between 20 and 24 were more likely to be victims of any domestic abuse (12.6% and 8.9% respectively) compared with those aged between 55 and 59 (5.4%) (Figure 4.5).

Similarly, younger men were also more likely to have experienced domestic abuse than older men (Figure 4.6). Those aged between 16 and 19 (6.6%) and between 20 and 24 (5.0%) were more likely than those aged between 55 and 59 (2.0%) to have experienced domestic abuse in the last year ([Appendix Table 4.10 \(1.59 Mb Excel sheet\)](#)).

Young women were also more likely to be victims of any sexual assault in the last year, with the prevalence of sexual abuse decreasing with age. Around 9.0% of women aged between 16 and 19 were a victim of any sexual abuse in the last year, significantly higher compared with women aged 25 to 34 (2.2%), 35 to 44 (1.6%), 45 to 54 (1.7%) and aged 55 to 59 (0.6%). The only age group which was not statistically significant when comparing with women aged 16 to 19 was women aged 20 to 24 (5.8%).

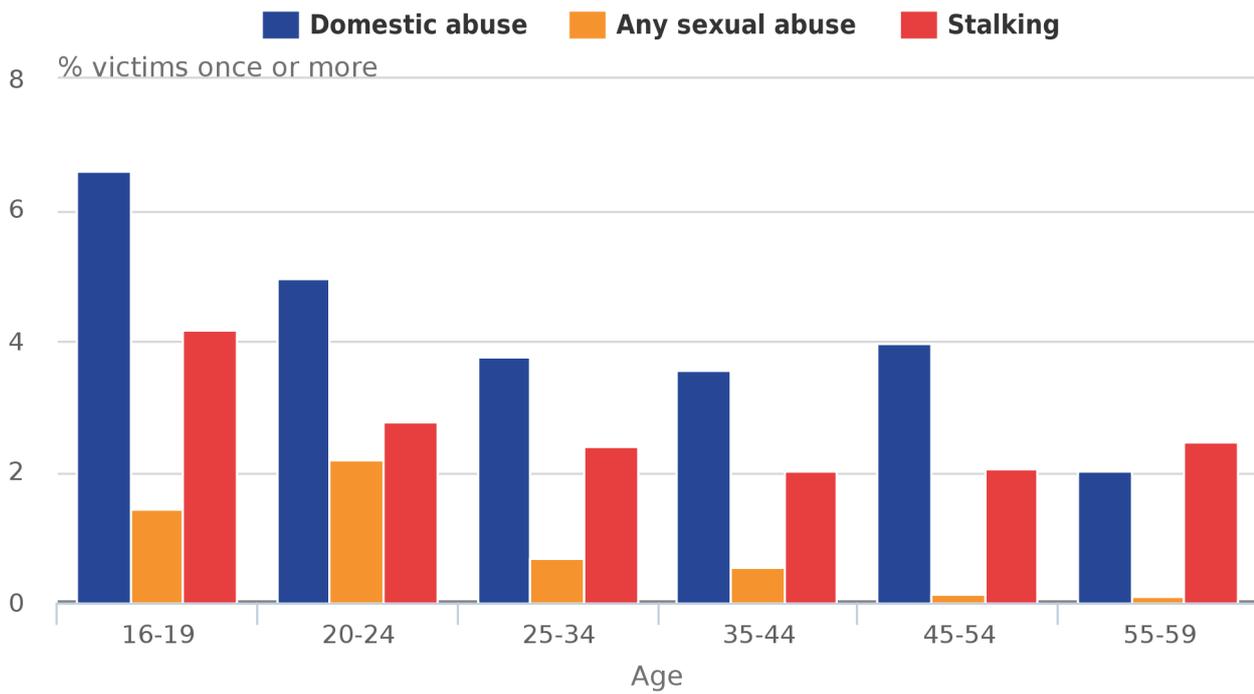
Stalking showed a similar trend, with young women most likely to be a victim and those aged 55 to 59 least likely to be a victim. Women aged between 16 and 19 and aged between 20 and 24 were more likely to be victims of stalking (10.3% and 7.2% respectively) compared with all other age groups.

Figure 4.5: Percentage of women aged 16 to 59 who were victims of intimate violence, in the last year by age and type of abuse, year ending March 2015 Crime Survey for England and Wales



Source: Crime Survey for England and Wales, Office for National Statistics

Figure 4.6: Percentage of men aged 16 to 59 who were victims of intimate violence, in the last year by age and type of abuse, year ending March 2015 Crime Survey for England and Wales

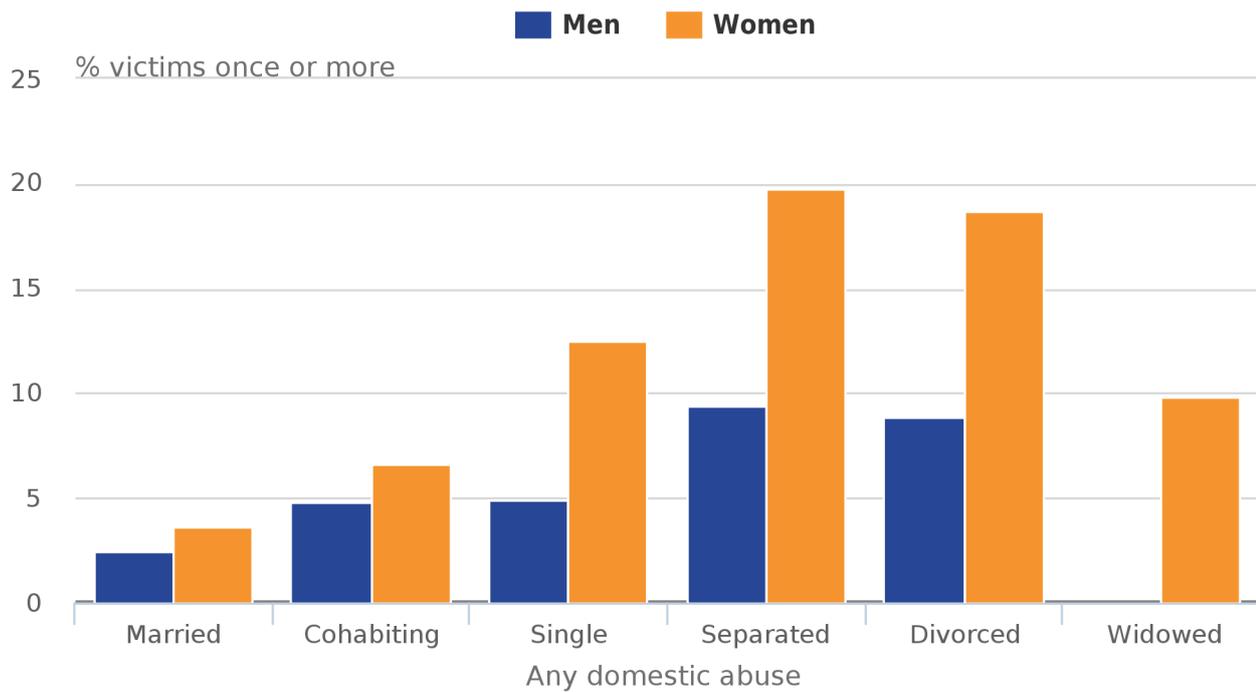


Source: Crime Survey for England and Wales, Office for National Statistics

Marital status

Women who were separated had the highest prevalence of any domestic abuse in the last year (19.8%) compared with other marital status groups (such as married/civil partnered (3.6%) or cohabiting (6.6%)). Married/civil partnered men were less likely to experience any domestic abuse (2.4%) compared with all other marital status groups (Figure 4.7). The percentage of widowed women who were a victim of domestic abuse in the last year was higher in the year ending March 2015 than in previous years, however, this is based on a small number of respondents, therefore it is too early to draw any conclusions on whether this is a real increase in the prevalence for this demographic group.

Figure 4.7: Percentage of adults aged 16 to 59 who were victims of domestic abuse in the last year, by marital status and sex, year ending March 2015 Crime Survey for England and Wales



Source: Crime Survey for England and Wales, Office for National Statistics

Notes:

1. Data for widowed men not shown as the unweighted base is less than 50.

The pattern was slightly different for sexual assault, with single women (5.7%) being more likely to be victims compared with those who were married/ civil partnered (0.8%), cohabitating (1.4%) or divorced¹ (3.5%).

Long-term illness or disability

Both women and men with a long-term illness or disability were more likely to be victims of any domestic abuse in the last year (16.0% and 8.8% respectively), compared with those without a long-term illness or disability (6.8% and 3.2% respectively). This pattern was consistent across the sub-categories of domestic abuse, with the exception of sexual assault where there was no significant difference. The largest percentage point difference occurred within the sub-category of partner abuse for female victims, where 11.1% of women with a long-term illness or disability were estimated to be a victim of partner abuse compared with 4.9% of women without a long-term illness or disability.

Education

Women with a degree or diploma were less likely than women with other qualifications or no qualifications to be a victim of any domestic abuse in the last year (6.3% of women with a degree or diploma compared with 10.3% of women with 'A level or equivalent qualifications', 9.4% of those with 'GCSE or equivalent qualifications', and 10.0% of women with no qualifications).

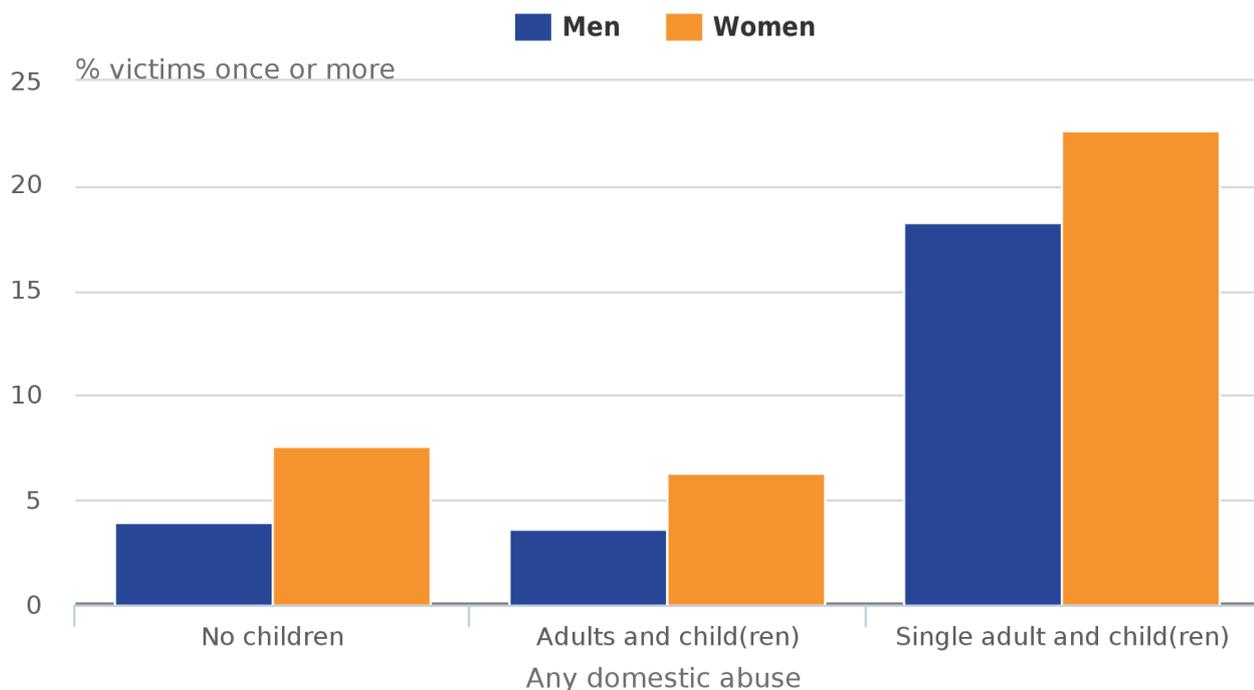
Visits to a nightclub in the last month

Women who said they visited nightclubs at least once in the last month were more likely than those who said they never visited a nightclub to have been victims of sexual assault. The number of times they visited nightclubs may be closely associated with age which may be the main driver of this finding. The biggest difference was for women visiting nightclubs once a week or more, where 16.6% were estimated to be victims of sexual assault compared with 2.0% of those that did not visit nightclubs.

Household structure

Just over 1 in 5 women living in lone parent households were victims of domestic abuse in the last year (22.6%) compared with around 1 in 15 of those living in a household with other adults and children (6.3%) or a household with no children (7.6%). The pattern was similar for men, with an estimated 18.3% of men from lone parent households experiencing domestic abuse compared with 3.7% of men living in a household with other adults and children and 4.0% living in a household with no children (Figure 4.8). For both men and women this pattern is driven by the high proportion of victims living in lone parent households experiencing partner abuse (17.0% for men and 18.8% for women) ([Appendix Table 4.11 \(1.59 Mb Excel sheet\)](#)).

Figure 4.8 Percentage of adults aged 16 to 59 who were victims of domestic abuse in the last year, by household structure and sex, year ending March 2015 Crime Survey for England and Wales

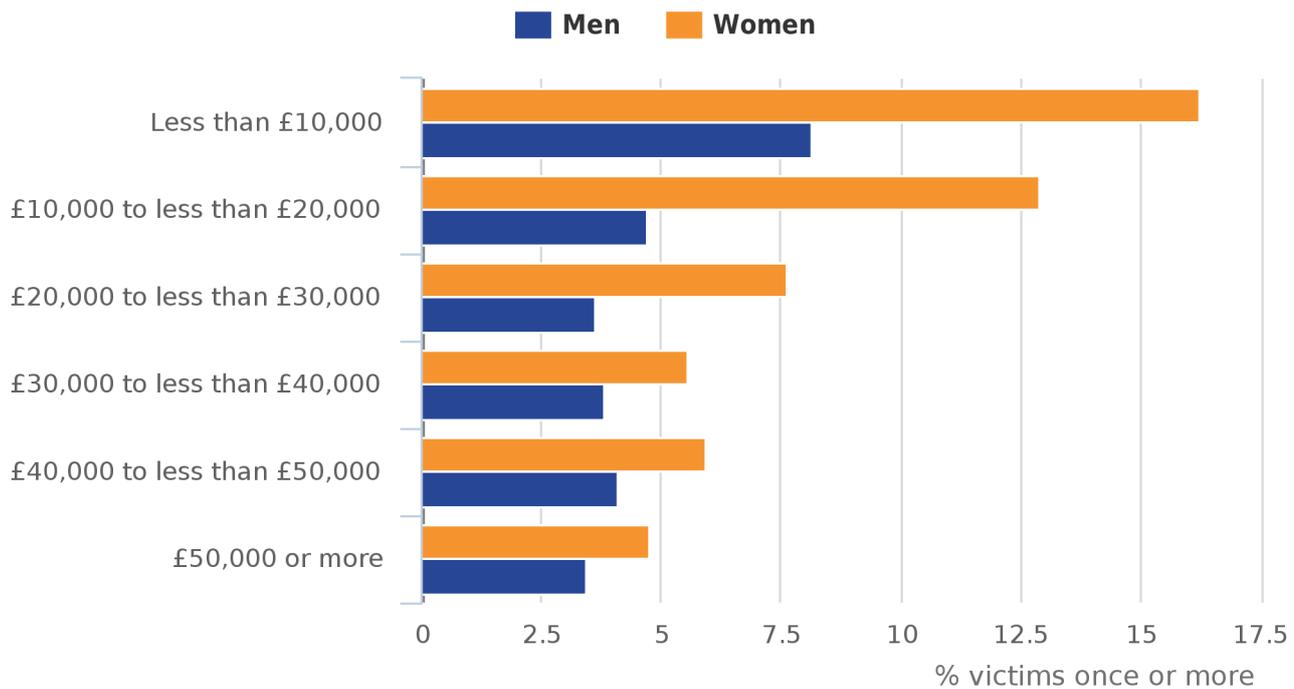


Source: Crime Survey for England and Wales, Office for National Statistics

Household income

Women living in the lowest income households (less than £10,000) were much more likely than those within higher household income brackets to have experienced any domestic abuse in the last year. Over 3 times as many women in the lowest income bracket had experienced any domestic abuse compared with those in the highest household income bracket of £50,000 and over (16.2% compared with 4.8%). The same pattern appeared for men, where 8.1% of men in the lowest income households experienced any domestic abuse compared with 3.4% in the highest household income bracket (Figure 4.9).

Figure 4.9: Percentage of adults aged 16 to 59 who were victims of domestic abuse in the last year by household income and sex, year ending March 2015 Crime Survey for England and Wales



Source: Crime Survey for England and Wales, Office for National Statistics

Physical disorder

Women living in areas where there was a high level of physical disorder² were more likely to be victims of any domestic abuse in the last year (11.6%) than women living outside these areas (7.9%). The prevalence of domestic abuse for men was not statistically different between these 2 area types. However, both men and women who lived in the 20% most deprived areas of England and Wales were more likely to be victims of domestic abuse: 11.1% of women and 4.8% of men living in these areas were estimated to have been victims of any domestic abuse compared with 5.6% of women and 3.0% of men living in the 20% least deprived areas of England and Wales ([Appendix Table 4.11 \(1.59 Mb Excel sheet\)](#)).

Number of types of abuse

Additional analysis has been carried out showing the number of types of abuse suffered by victims of any domestic abuse in the last year ([Appendix Table 4.12 \(1.59 Mb Excel sheet\)](#)). Due to the relatively small number of victims of the different types of domestic abuse interviewed in any one year, the analysis for this section has been completed on a 3 year dataset from the year ending March 2013 to the year ending March 2015.

It was found that 72% of domestic abuse victims suffered one type of abuse. The most common type of abuse suffered was partner abuse, with 46% of victims experiencing this type of abuse in the last year. Over one-quarter (28%) of victims of domestic abuse suffered more than one type of abuse, with partner abuse and stalking the most commonly experienced combination (10% of victims of domestic abuse). Female victims were more likely to experience more than 1 type of abuse than male victims (31% compared with 23%). For victims experiencing 3 types of abuse (6%), partner abuse and family abuse and stalking was most commonly experienced (3% of victims). Less than 1% of victims of domestic abuse suffered all 4 types of abuse (partner abuse, family abuse, sexual assault, and stalking).

Notes for intimate violence in the last year by personal characteristics

1. This category includes those who have legally dissolved partnerships.
2. Physical disorder is a measure based on the interviewer's assessment of the level of (a) vandalism, graffiti and deliberate damage to property; (b) rubbish and litter; and (c) homes in poor condition in the area.

9 . Sexual assault and stalking by relationship to offender

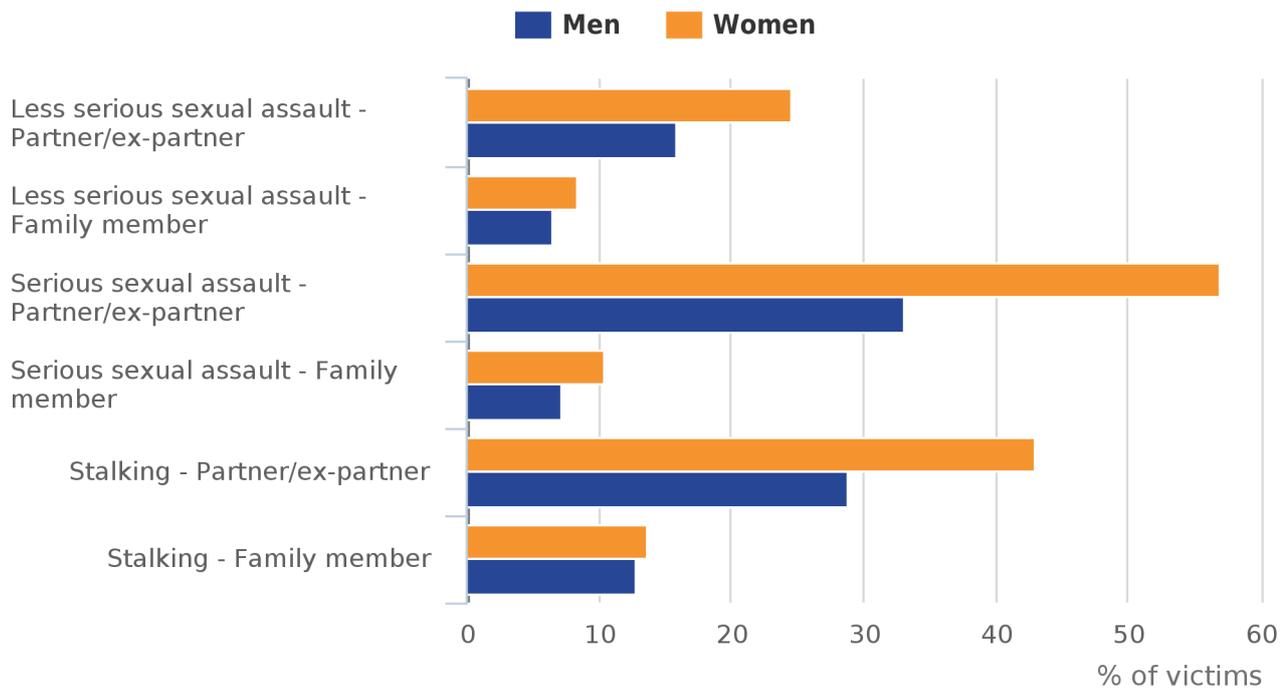
The survey module on intimate violence asks whether respondents have experienced sexual assault or stalking by a partner/ex-partner or a family member. The question refers to all experiences of abuse since the age of 16, rather than the most recent. This means that respondents may report abuse from multiple offenders. Due to the low number of male sexual assault victims interviewed in any one year, the analysis for this section has been completed on a 3 year dataset from the year ending March 2013 to the year ending March 2015.

It is not possible to establish the victim-offender relationship for all types of abuse experienced by each respondent from the questions asked¹. While it is possible to tell if a respondent has experienced abuse from a partner/ex-partner and a family member, it is not possible to tell whether or not they have also experienced abuse by another offender, such as a friend, acquaintance or stranger. For this reason, the results presented here (Figure 4.10, [Appendix Table 4.09 \(1.59 Mb Excel sheet\)](#)) are as a percentage of all victims, that is, all respondents who have experienced that type of abuse, irrelevant of the type of relationship with the offender.

In over half (57%) of serious sexual assaults on women since the age of 16, the offender was a partner or ex-partner in at least one incident. In contrast, the proportion of less serious sexual assaults experienced by women since the age of 16, where the offender was a partner or ex-partner in at least one incident was lower (24.6%).

The percentage of victims who reported that the offender was a partner was significantly higher for women compared with men. There was no significant difference between men and women for the percentage reporting that they had been abused by a family member in each of the 3 types of abuse asked about.

Figure 4.10: Victim-offender relationship for sexual assault or stalking experienced since age 16, by sex for age 16 to 59, year ending March 2013 to year ending March 2015 Crime Survey for England and Wales



Source: Crime Survey for England and Wales, Office for National Statistics

Notes:

1. Figures are the percentage of victims who reported experiencing each type of offence by the relationship described.
2. These data is based on combined data from year ending March 2013 and year ending March 2015.

Notes for sexual assault and stalking by relationship to offender

1. Previous versions of the CSEW questionnaire allowed estimates for stranger and other known (who wasn't a partner/ex-partner or family member) to be derived.

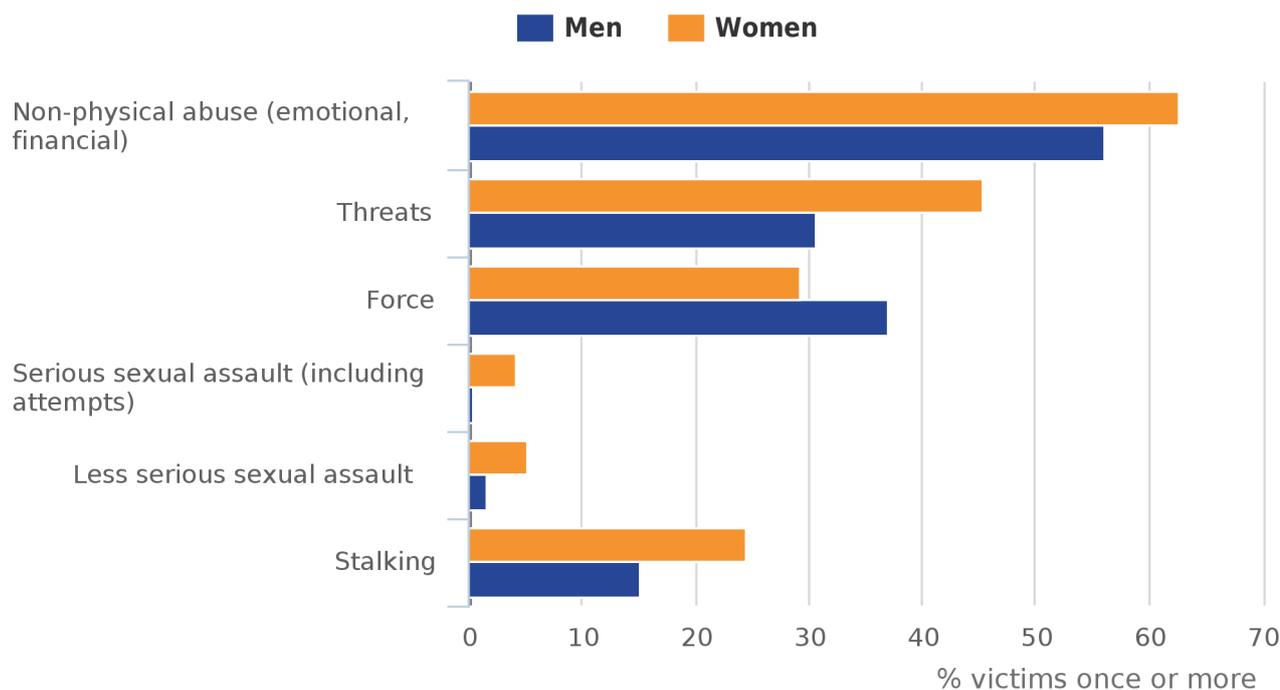
10 . Nature of partner abuse – types of abuse

Further questions were asked in the year ending March 2015 CSEW to provide more detail on the circumstances of partner abuse experienced in the past year.

Female partner abuse victims were more likely to experience non-physical abuse (emotional, financial) (63%) than to experience physical abuse such as force (29%), or threats (45%). Male partner abuse victims were also more likely to experience non-physical abuse (56%) than force (37%), or threats (31%) ([Appendix Table 4.13 \(1.59 Mb Excel sheet\)](#); Figure 4.11).

Female victims of partner abuse reported a higher level of 'threats' than men (45% and 31% respectively; Figure 4.6). Female victims of partner abuse also experienced higher levels of sexual assault than men (7% and 2% respectively) ([Appendix Table 4.13 \(1.59 Mb Excel sheet\)](#)). There was no significant difference between female and male victims in prevalence of experiences of force or non-physical abuse.

Figure 4.11: Type of partner abuse experienced by partner abuse victims in the last year, by sex, year ending March 2015 Crime Survey for England and Wales



Source: Crime Survey for England and Wales, Office for National Statistics

Notes:

1. Respondents are asked to select all types of abuse they have experienced in the last year.

The definition of stalking applied in the CSEW covers a wider range of actions and behaviours than the legal definition, and includes being followed, being sent unwanted messages that were obscene or threatening and having personal property interfered with. The CSEW asks respondents about typical behaviours associated with stalking rather than the term itself. This ensures that actions and behaviours experienced are picked up by the survey rather than the respondent's interpretation of them.

Female partner abuse victims were more likely to have experienced stalking than male victims (24% compared with 15%). Between the year ending March 2009 and the year ending March 2015, the percentage of male partner abuse victims experiencing stalking had declined from 37% to 15%. For female victims the decrease has been smaller, with 40% of partner abuse victims experiencing stalking in the year ending March 2009 compared with 24% in the year ending March 2015. These figures capture the percentage of partner abuse victims experiencing stalking and not the number of times that they experience such incidents. The decrease in the proportion of partner abuse victims experiencing stalking is likely to be affected by a change in the definition of stalking in the CSEW in April 2012 where the definition changed from '1 or more incidents' to '2 or more incidents'.

11 . Partner abuse - repeat victimisation

For both female and male victims of partner abuse, the most common response when asked about how many times they had experienced abuse¹ was 'Don't wish to answer' (50% for females and 43% for males; [Appendix Table 4.15 \(1.59 Mb Excel sheet\)](#)). Combining this response with the 'Don't know' response category shows that nearly 70% of respondents did not provide an answer to this question; therefore the figures should be interpreted with caution as it is likely that this reduces the estimate of the proportion of victims who were victimised more than once.

For male and female victims of partner abuse, there was no significant difference between being abused once or more than once (18% and 14% respectively for males and 17% and 16% respectively for females). The level of repeat victimisation is not statistically different between men and women. It is likely that any differences between men and women are being masked by the high percentage of 'Don't wish to answer' and 'Don't know' responses. Information on the number of times victims were abused by type of abuse experienced and by sex is available in [Appendix Table 4.16 \(1.59 Mb Excel sheet\)](#).

Information from the face-to-face module of the CSEW shows that 70% of domestic violence victims suffered 1 victimisation, 15% of victims experienced 2 victimisations and 16% of victims experienced 3 or more victimisations within the 12 month reference period. The 30% of victims of domestic violence who experienced more than one victimisation attributed to over half (60%) of domestic violence incidents estimated by the CSEW ([Appendix Table 4.14 \(1.59 Mb Excel sheet\)](#)).

Notes for partner abuse - repeat victimisation

1. Respondents are given range categories to respond to how many times they had experienced abuse rather than giving a single number of incidents.

12 . Heavily victimised groups of partner abuse

Using the demographic breakdowns in Appendix Tables 4.10 and 4.11, a small number of groups of heavily victimised individuals were identified and some further analysis was carried out to see if these groups were more likely to: suffer from particular types of partner abuse, suffer from repeat victimisation, report any physical injuries or other effects, or tell someone about their experience of partner abuse ([Appendix Table 4.37 \(1.59 Mb Excel sheet\)](#)). Due to small numbers of individuals from these heavily victimised groups being interviewed in any one year, a 3 year dataset from the year ending March 2013 to the year ending March 2015 was used to carry out this analysis¹.

Marital status

Women who were separated were more likely to experience non-physical partner abuse or threats than women who were not separated. Women who were separated were also more likely to experience partner abuse more than once than those who were not separated. Looking at the effects felt as a result of the partner abuse, women who were separated were more likely to experience other effects from the abuse, specifically mental or emotional problems. This heavily victimised group were also more likely to tell someone known personally, tell someone in an official position or tell a support organisation than women who were not separated.

Household structure

Lone parent women were more likely to experience threats, force or stalking than women who had no children or were in a 2 parent household. Women who were lone parents were also more likely to experience partner abuse more than once. This group were also more likely to experience mental or emotional problems as a result of the abuse and were more likely to tell anyone about their experience of partner abuse.

Age

Women who were aged 16 to 24 were less likely to experience non-physical abuse than women aged over 25, however they were more likely to experience sexual assault or stalking than women aged over 25. The 16 to 24 age group were more likely to experience difficulty in other relationships and to stop trusting people as a result of the abuse, and were less likely to receive medical attention for their injuries or other effects. Women from this age group were also less likely to tell someone in an official position and less likely to tell someone from a support organisation about their experience.

Long-term illness or disability

Women with a long-term illness or disability were more likely to experience non-physical abuse and serious sexual assault than women without a disability. They were also more likely to experience other effects as a result of their abuse specifically, mental or emotional problems, difficulty in other relationships and trying to kill themselves. Women with a disability were more likely to tell someone in an official position or a support professional/organisation about their abuse.

Notes for heavily victimised groups of partner abuse

1. The nature of partner abuse module was asked in the survey year ending March 2013 and survey year ending March 2015 (with the nature of serious sexual assault asked in the survey year ending March 2014), therefore the 3 year dataset includes 2 years of data for nature of partner abuse.

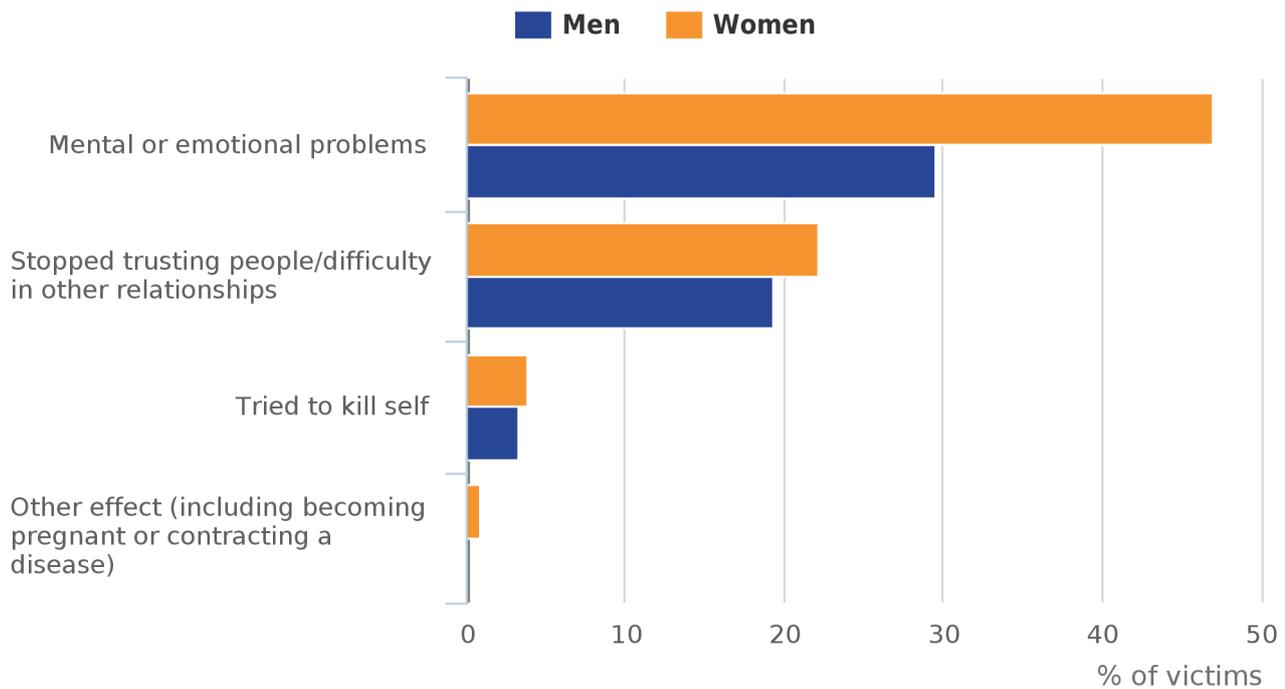
13 . Effects of partner abuse and medical support

The CSEW intimate violence module also asks partner abuse victims questions on physical injury and other, non-physical, effects experienced as a result of the abuse. If the victim had experienced more than one incident of partner abuse, the question was asked of the most recent incident ([Appendix Table 4.17 \(1.59 Mb Excel sheet\)](#)).

The majority of partner abuse victims (75%) did not sustain a physical injury as a result of the abuse, and for those that did sustain an injury, these were often relatively minor injuries. This is in the context that over half of partner abuse victims (61%) reported experiencing non-physical abuse ([Appendix Table 4.13 \(1.59 Mb Excel sheet\)](#)). A quarter (25%) of partner abuse victims reported that they sustained some sort of physical injury. The most common type of injuries sustained were minor bruising or black eye (17%) and scratches (12%). There were no significant differences between the prevalence of physical injury for male and female victims (29% and 23% respectively).

Victims were presented with a list of other non-physical effects¹ and were asked if they had sustained any of these as a result of the abuse. Female victims were more likely than male victims to report that they had sustained non-physical effects (51% compared with 37%; [Appendix Table 4.17 \(1.59 Mb Excel sheet\)](#)). For both male and female victims, the category most likely to be reported was 'mental or emotional problems' (30% of male victims and 47% of female victims) followed by 'stopped trusting people or difficulty in other relationships' (19% of male and 22% of female victims) (Figure 4.12).

Figure 4.12: Non-physical effects felt as a result of the partner abuse experienced in the last year, by sex, year ending March 2015 Crime Survey for England and Wales



Source: Crime Survey for England and Wales, Office for National Statistics

Partner abuse victims who had sustained a physical injury or had experienced other effects as a result of the abuse were also asked if they had received medical attention ([Appendix Table 4.18 \(1.59 Mb Excel sheet\)](#)). Around a third (32%) of partner abuse victims who had experienced any physical injury or other effects received some sort of medical attention.

Victims who had received medical attention were also asked where they received it; with the majority (84%) doing so at a GP/doctor’s surgery, 13% had gone to a hospital’s Accident and Emergency department and 28% to a specialist mental health or psychiatric service².

Using the 3 year combined dataset³ for the year ending March 2013 to the year ending March 2015, additional analysis was carried out on victims who received medical attention. It was found that of those victims who received medical attention, 73% were female and 27% were male. Stalking was the most common type of abuse suffered by those who received medical attention⁴ (33%), followed by force (27%), and non-physical abuse (22%). Looking at the type of effects felt by those who received medical attention, 51% experienced non-physical effects, 44% experienced both a physical injury and other effect and 5% had experienced a physical injury ([Appendix Table 4.18 \(1.59 Mb Excel sheet\)](#)).

Notes for effects of partner abuse and medical support

- Such as “mental or emotional problems” or “stopped trusting people/difficulty in other relationships”.
- Figures do not add to 100 as respondents can give more than one answer.
- The nature of partner abuse module was asked in the survey year ending March 2013 and survey year ending March 2015 (with the nature of serious sexual assault asked in the survey year ending March 2014), therefore the 3 year dataset includes 2 years of data for nature of partner abuse
- Medical attention includes; Doctor/ GP surgery, Hospital A&E, specialist mental health or psychiatric services, other specialist clinic or other health services.

14 . Nature of partner abuse - influence of alcohol and illicit drugs

Victims of partner abuse in the last year were also asked whether they thought the offender (or offenders) was under the influence of alcohol or illicit drugs at the time of the incident. In addition, they were asked whether they (the victim) were under the influence of alcohol or illicit drugs at the time of the incident. For those who had experienced more than one incident, only the most recent incident was asked about.

Victims were more likely to report that they believed the offender was under the influence of alcohol (17%) rather than illicit drugs (10%) ([Appendix Table 4.20 \(1.59 Mb Excel sheet\)](#)). Female victims were more likely than male victims to perceive that the offender was under the influence of drugs (12% compared with 3%). There were no statistically significant differences between the proportions of female and male victims perceiving the offender to be under the influence of alcohol (18% of female victims compared with 15% of male victims).

Victims were more likely to report that the offender was under the influence of alcohol or illicit drugs than they themselves. However, 7% of victims reported that they were under the influence of alcohol and 1% reported that they were under the influence of illicit drugs the last time they suffered abuse. There was no statistically significant difference between the male and female victims with regards to reporting whether they were under the influence of alcohol or under the influence of illicit drugs.

Caution should be taken interpreting these figures due to the relatively large proportion of 'don't know' or 'don't want to answer' responses for some of these questions. This was particularly the case for the question on whether the offender or the respondent were under the influence of alcohol (21% and 17% respectively).

15 . General alcohol and drug consumption

Also included in the self-completion module is a section on drugs misuse and alcohol consumption that includes questions on the level of the respondents' general alcohol consumption, frequency of drunkenness and illicit drug-taking. This section focuses on alcohol consumption and drug-taking in general and any association with partner abuse.

These results should be interpreted with caution as many other influencing characteristics (such as age) may be closely associated with alcohol consumption and taking illicit drugs. Multivariate analysis performed on the year ending March 2010 CSEW data found that, among other factors, illicit drug use in the last year was associated with a higher risk of domestic abuse and a higher risk of sexual assault. However, frequency of alcohol consumption was found not to be a statistically significant characteristic with regards to sexual assault victimisation and was not included in the logistic regression for domestic abuse ([Homicides, Firearm Offences and Intimate Violence 2009 to 10: Supplementary Volume 2 to Crime in England and Wales 2009 to 10](#)).

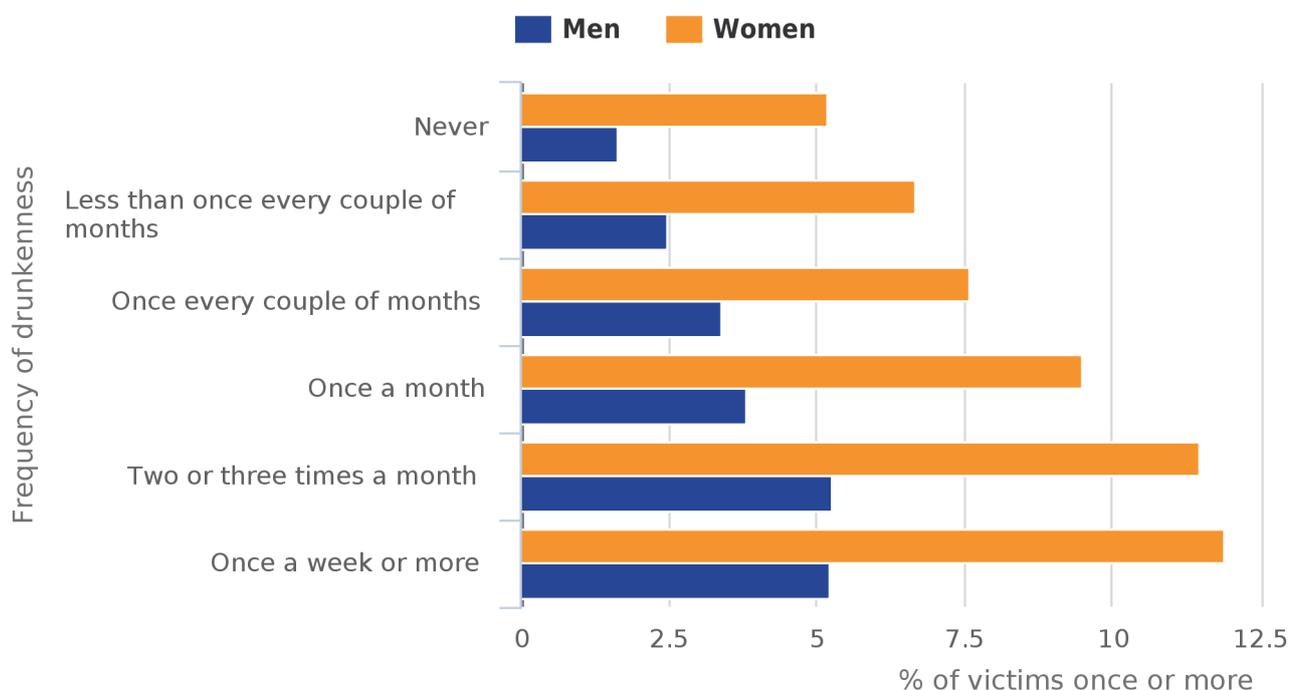
Any connections presented here between alcohol consumption, drunkenness, illicit drug-taking and partner abuse may be explained, in part, by the age of the adults. Secondly it should be noted that it is not possible to tell a direction of causality. Young adults (aged between 16 and 24) consumed alcohol more frequently, were drunk more frequently and were more likely to take illicit drugs ('[Drugs Misuse: Findings from the 2014 to 15 Crime Survey for England and Wales](#)'). Young adults were also more likely than older adults to be a victim of partner abuse when viewed in isolation of other effects ([Homicides, Firearm Offences and Intimate Violence 2009 to 10: Supplementary Volume 2 to Crime in England and Wales 2009 to 10](#)). These 2 points may offer some explanation as to why there was an apparent association between alcohol, illicit drugs and partner abuse victimisation. However, when focusing on those aged between 16 and 24, similar patterns with regards to alcohol consumption, illicit drug use and partner abuse emerge as for those aged between 25 and 59 ([Appendix Tables 4.22 to 4.23 \(1.59 Mb Excel sheet\)](#)).

Caution should be taken when making inferences about the relationship between alcohol consumption, illicit drug-taking and partner abuse victimisation. The victims' alcohol consumption and illicit drug use may affect or be affected by their experience of partner abuse.

Adults aged between 16 and 59 were more likely to have experienced partner abuse if they reported having been drunk once a week or more (7%) than if they had reported having been drunk less than once every couple of months (5%). Around 3 times as many adults aged between 16 and 59 who had taken illicit drugs in the last year reported being a victim of partner abuse compared with those who hadn't taken drugs in the last year (11% compared with 4%) ([Appendix Table 4.21 \(1.59 Mb Excel sheet\)](#)).

For all frequencies of drunkenness in the last 12 months, women were more likely than men to be a victim of partner abuse. This is a different finding to the year ending March 2013, where women who reported getting drunk once every couple of months or less than once every couple of months were more likely to be a victim of partner abuse. For all other categories the difference between male and female prevalence was not significantly different. Examining the prevalence by age shows no significant differences between the 16 to 24 and 25 to 59 age groups (Figure 4.13).

Figure 4.13: Prevalence of partner abuse victimisation in the last year, by sex and the frequency of drunkenness, year ending March 2015 Crime Survey for England and Wales



Source: Crime Survey for England and Wales, Office for National Statistics

16 . Partner abuse - leaving shared accommodation

As part of the suite of follow-up questions on the nature of partner abuse, adults aged 16 to 59 who have experienced partner abuse in the last year were asked if they shared accommodation with their abusive partner, if so whether they left that shared accommodation and other information about the shared accommodation. If the victim has had more than one abusive partner, these questions were asked of the most recent abusive partner ([Appendix Tables 4.24 to 4.27 \(1.59 Mb Excel sheet\)](#)).

Around a fifth (19%) of partner abuse victims that reported abuse in the last year stated that they currently shared, or had previously shared, accommodation with their abusive partner. Of these victims, 42% reported leaving the accommodation because of the abuse, even if it was for only one night. The proportion of those that left the accommodation because of the abuse were similar for male and female victims. Of those who left the shared accommodation, 65% spent their first night with relatives, while staying with friends or neighbours was the next most likely destination (18%).

Reasons mentioned most frequently for not leaving the shared accommodation were 'presence of children' (54%), 'love or feelings for partner' (36%) and 'never considered leaving' (32%) (Appendix Table 4.25). These findings are generally similar for previous years.

17 . Sources of support for partner abuse victims

In the CSEW, victims of partner abuse were also asked who they had spoken to about the abuse they had experienced ([Appendix Table 4.28 \(1.59 Mb Excel sheet\)](#)). For the purpose of analysis, these have been split into 3 types of support: someone known personally to them (for example, a friend or relative), someone in a professional organisation (for example, police, health professionals or a local council department) or someone in another support organisation (for example, Victim Support or a helpline).

The majority (81%) of victims told someone about the partner abuse that they suffered, with women (88%) being more likely to tell someone than men (61%). Both female and male victims were most likely to tell someone they knew personally about the abuse (80% and 55%) with victims most commonly telling a family member or relative (59% of women and 44% of men), followed by telling a friend or a neighbour (43% women and 28% men).

Just over a third (37%) of all victims of partner abuse told someone in an official position about the abuse. Women were nearly twice as likely as men to tell such an individual (43% and 23% respectively), and were more than twice as likely as men to tell the police (26% and 10% respectively).

Women were more likely to tell other support professionals or organisations than men (32% and 14% respectively). This included female victims being more likely to tell victim support (7% compared with 3%) or a helpline (4% compared with 2%) than male victims. These findings are broadly similar to those in the year ending March 2013 CSEW¹.

Notes for sources of support for partner abuse victims

1. See [Focus on Violent Crime and Sexual Offences, 2012 to 13](#).

18 . Police and the criminal justice system

Respondents who answered that they had been a victim of partner abuse were asked questions surrounding issues on reporting the abuse to the police and the courts (Figure 4.14; [Appendix Tables 4.30 to 4.32 \(1.59 Mb Excel\)](#)).

For victims of partner abuse, 21% had reported the abuse to the police. For those that did not report the abuse, the most common reasons given were the abuse was too trivial or not worth reporting (43%), it was a private, family matter and not the business of the police (37%), and the victim didn't think the police could help (25%). The proportion of victims who told the police about the partner abuse they experienced has stayed the same over time, with 23% of victims reporting the partner abuse in the year ending March 2011 and 21% of victims reporting to the police in year ending March 2015 (Table 4.1).

Table 4.1: Proportion of victims who told the police about the partner abuse experienced in the last 12 months, by sex, year ending March 2011 to year ending March 2015 Crime Survey for England and Wales

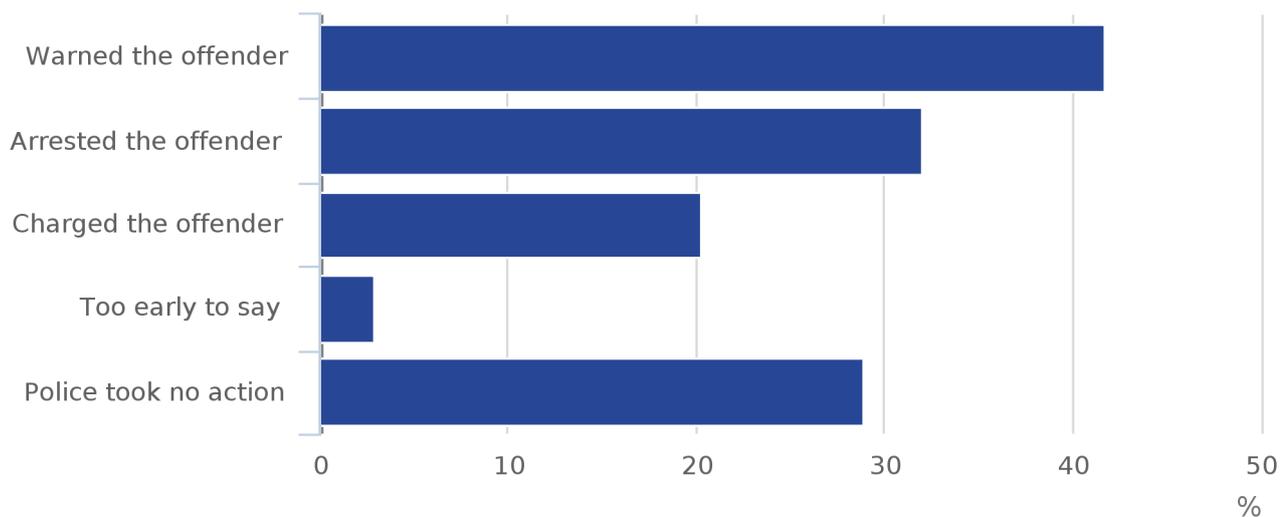
England and Wales

| | % | | |
|------------------------------------|-------------------|------|------|
| | Year ending March | | |
| | 2011 | 2013 | 2015 |
| Men | 10 | 10 | 10 |
| Women | 29 | 27 | 26 |
| All | 23 | 22 | 21 |
| Unweighted base - number of adults | 850 | 682 | 660 |

Source Crime Survey for England and Wales, Office for National Statistics

In incidents where the police came to know about the abuse, respondents were asked what actions were taken by the police. The police took some sort of action in 71% of cases. The most common action taken by the police was to warn the offender (42%) or arrest the offender (32%). In 20% of cases the offender was charged. These results are similar to findings from the year ending March 2013 CSEW.

Figure 4.14: What action was taken by the police when told about the partner abuse, year ending March 2015 Crime Survey for England and Wales



Source: Crime Survey for England and Wales, Office for National Statistics

In those cases where the police had taken some action against the offender, the respondent reported that around a third (31%) of these cases came to court. For the cases that did not go to court, 39% said that the police or Crown Prosecution Service (CPS) decided not to take further action, 33% of the respondents said that they, the victim, decided not to take further action, and 28% said that there was some other reason for the case not coming to court.

Victims who told the police about the partner abuse they experienced were asked how satisfied they were with the outcome, whether they felt safer as a result of the outcome and how helpful they found the police ([Appendix Table 4.33 \(1.59 Mb Excel sheet\)](#)). Around two-thirds (68%) were either very satisfied (28%) or fairly satisfied (40%) with their experience with the police and CPS. Just under half (47%) felt safer as a result of the action, while nearly a quarter felt less safe (23%).

Around two-thirds (69%) found the police either very helpful (34%) or fairly helpful (35%). While the rest of respondents found them either slightly helpful (17%) or not at all helpful (14%).

19 . Presence of children in partner abuse victimisations

Households with at least one child under the age of 16, respondents are asked if any children in the household saw or heard what happened during the most recent partner abuse victimisation. In 46% of cases of partner abuse there was at least 1 child under the age of 16 living in the household. Of those cases where children were present in the household, in 20% of cases the children saw or heard what happened, in 62% of cases the respondent stated that the children did not see or hear what happened, and in 18% of cases the respondent didn't know whether the children saw or heard what happened or didn't wish to answer ([Appendix Table 4.27 \(1.59 Mb Excel sheet\)](#)).

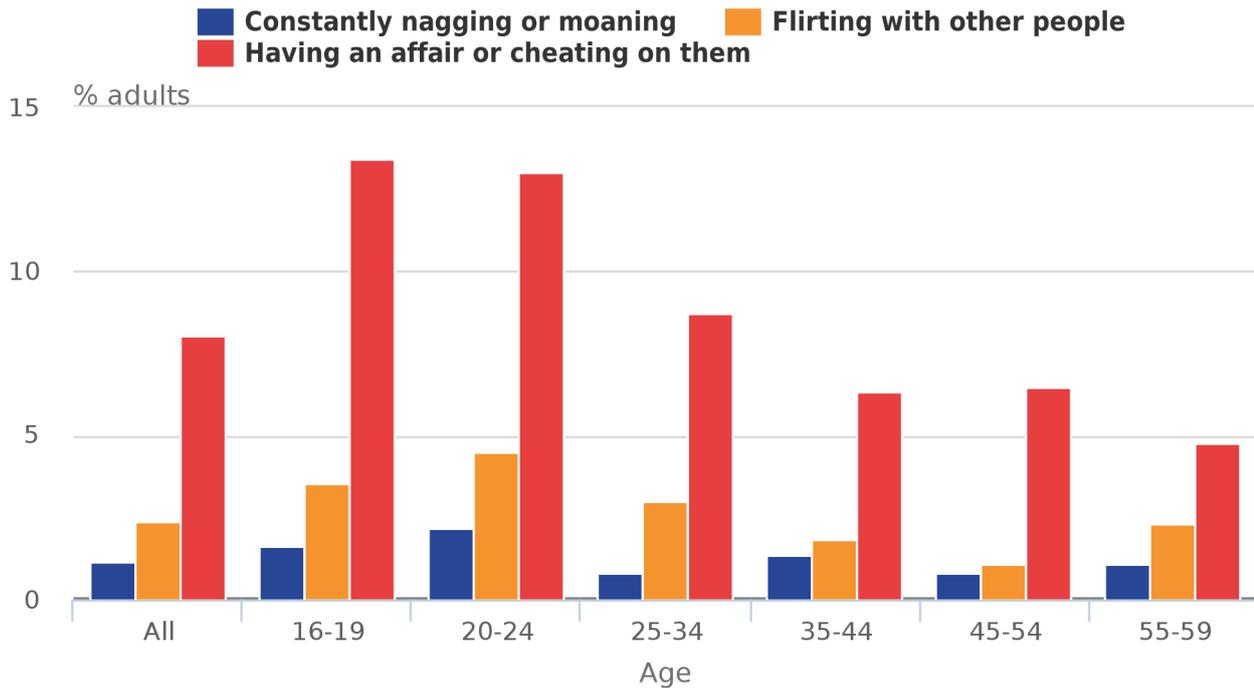
20 . Attitudes to partner abuse

In addition to questions about experience of partner abuse, questions were included in the survey to gauge public attitudes towards such violence. All adults aged 16 to 59 were asked in the self-completion section of the interview about their attitudes towards partner violence, including whether they thought it was acceptable to hit or slap their partner in response to various behaviours ([Appendix table 4.36 and 4.37 \(1.59 Mb Excel sheet\)](#)).

In response, 77% of respondents felt that it was always unacceptable to hit or slap their partner in response to their partner having an affair, whereas less than 1 in 10 of respondents felt that it is mostly or sometimes acceptable (8%). Respondents in the younger age groups were more likely to think that it was acceptable at least some of the time than older age groups. Those aged between 16 and 19 (13%) and those aged between 20 to 24 (13%) were most likely to think that it was acceptable and those aged between 55 and 59 were least likely to think that it was acceptable (5%) (Figure 4.15).

For each of the 3 behaviour categories, there was no statistically significant difference between the total percentage of men and women who felt that to hit or slap their partner was acceptable at least sometimes.

Figure 4.15: Percentage who say it is always, mostly or sometimes acceptable for someone to hit or slap their partner in response to different behaviours, year ending March 2015 Crime Survey for England and Wales



Source: Crime Survey for England and Wales, Office for National Statistics

21. Background notes

1. Details of the policy governing the release of new data are available by visiting www.statisticsauthority.gov.uk/assessment/code-of-practice/index.html or from the Media Relations Office email: media.relations@ons.gsi.gov.uk

The United Kingdom Statistics Authority has designated these statistics as National Statistics, in accordance with the Statistics and Registration Service Act 2007 and signifying compliance with the Code of Practice for Official Statistics.

Designation can be broadly interpreted to mean that the statistics:

- meet identified user needs
- are well explained and readily accessible
- are produced according to sound methods
- are managed impartially and objectively in the public interest

Once statistics have been designated as National Statistics it is a statutory requirement that the Code of Practice shall continue to be observed.