



ONE IN THREE VICTIMS OF FAMILY VIOLENCE IS MALE

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Scotland: domestic violence against men is frequent and often unreported

The results of a major piece of government research on partner abuse in Scotland slipped out relatively unreported before Christmas. The new Scottish findings mirror much Australian and international domestic violence research showing family violence against men is frequent and often goes unreported.

The [Scottish Crime and Justice Survey 2008-09: Partner Abuse](#) was published by Scotland's Chief Statistician on December 15th 2009. The research was conducted with 16,000 interviewees and represents the most comprehensive investigation to date into the extent of partner abuse in Scotland.

Interviewees were asked about their experience of physical or psychological partner abuse both since the age of 16 and within the preceding 12 months. The findings included:

- 18% of adults who had had at least one partner since the age of 16 reported having experienced at least one form of partner abuse. The figure for women was 20.9% and for men 15.3%.
- However, in the most recent 12 months the figure for both men and women was 5%.
- The data for the last 12 months showed that young men aged 16-24 experienced physical and/or psychological abuse more often than young women and more often than any other demographic group.
- For persons experiencing partner abuse in the last 12 months, 48% of the perpetrators were male and 45% were female.
- Police came to know about 35% of incidents of partner abuse reported by women in the preceding 12 months but only 8% of incidents in which a man was on the receiving end. 40% of men told no-one compared to 21% of women.

One in Three Campaign spokesperson Greg Andresen said "Much Australian, [US, UK, NZ and Canadian family violence data](#) also shows that at least one in three, and perhaps as many as one in two victims are male. It reveals that men are much less likely to report family violence against them than are women.

"The Australian [National Crime Prevention Survey](#) found young people aged 12 to 20 were just as likely to report seeing mum hit dad, as they are to see dad hit mum. These young males and females were also equally likely to report experiencing domestic violence themselves. The [Interpersonal Violence and Abuse Survey](#) found that females were three times as likely as males to report being abused to the police."

Scottish journalist John Forsyth said, "To date most Government pronouncements and campaigns have insisted that male experience of partner abuse is minimal and insignificant. This data completely contradicts these assertions. It is hoped that the Government will now review their meagre support for male victims of domestic abuse and their children.

"The research has to be commended for its rigour. When asked whether they had been subject to domestic abuse since the age of 16, only 3% of men and 14% of women said yes. However, when asked to report specific conduct by a partner that falls within the definition of partner abuse, the number for men rose 5 times to 15% and for women by half to 20.9%. This is hardly surprising given the tens of millions that has been spent by successive Scottish administrations on campaigns, support services and organisations targeted at women, encouraging them to recognise and report domestic abuse. In the same period precisely nothing has been spent on efforts to encourage men to recognise and report domestic abuse."

The One in Three Campaign is calling on the Australian Government to take heed of the new Scottish data when it continues its review of domestic violence policy in 2010, urging that any new policies, services and campaigns support victims of both sexes in order to comply with Australia's human rights obligations.

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