



Ending domestic abuse

All Welcome

February 2016





Introduction

We all know there is no 'typical' victim; no 'one size fits all' solution. But how can we work together to create pathways as tailored as humans are complicated? How can we ensure everyone is welcome?

Every case is different.

At SafeLives, we have listened to you, and become increasingly aware of the scale of unmet need for particular groups, and indeed how some of these groups overlap. This comes via Insights, the training room and from talking to victims, survivors and their families.

Some of the figures are really stark. I was shocked to find that 80% of older victims are not known to services and a quarter of those who are live with abuse for over twenty years. There are real people behind these numbers.

Times are tough. Resources continue to shrink and the provision of dedicated services for B&ME, LGBT and older victims are under particular pressure. We need to work together, support one another and remember – our goal is the same: people living safely, free from abuse.

We have been working with you to identify ways to support every victim – and ensure that support is early, effective and sensitive to individual needs. We certainly do not

have all the answers, but we are committed to supporting you in your work in any way we can.

Our strategy is progressing and continues to feel like the right response to what is happening on the ground. Last year, we summarised our focus under these headings:

- Developing new interventions and ways of working to fill the gaps
- Building on the risk-led approach
- Giving a platform to victims, and their families and friends, to demand change
- Using evidence to convince stakeholders, get the right public policy and win sustainable funding for services

Our report builds on this, shining a spotlight on the gaps in provision for some of the most 'hidden' groups.

Whether you're an Idva, a policymaker, or in the police, a specialist service or a general practitioner, a charity or a local authority – SafeLives is committed to working with you to keep victims safe. Every person has an equal right to live a life free from fear.

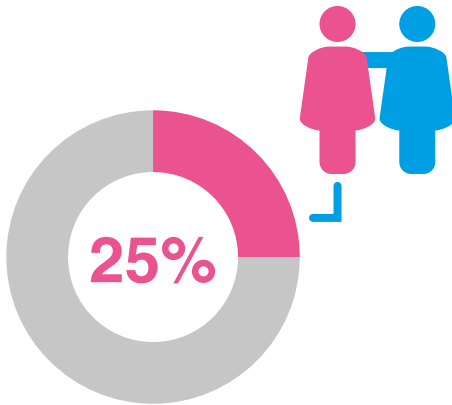
Diana Barran
CEO, SafeLives

Unmet need: what the data show

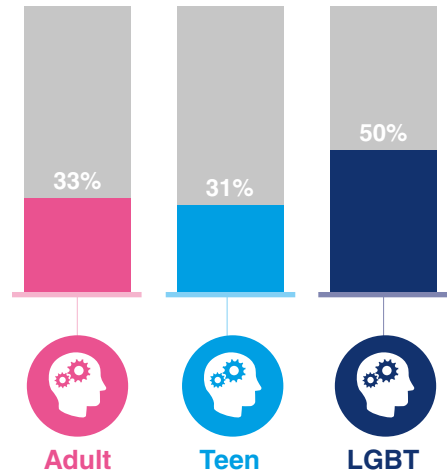
We all work together to create the coordinated response that helps to build a safety net for victims. But some fall through the gaps.

LGBT

Only 25% experiencing domestic abuse receive support from a specialist service



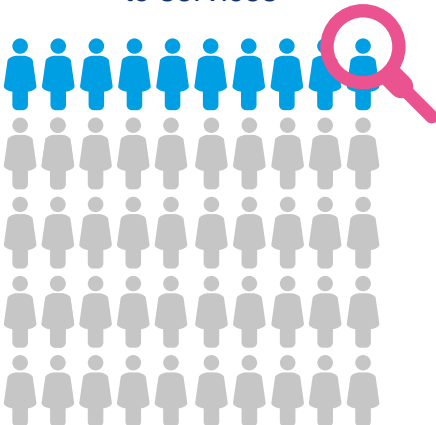
Mental health



1 in 3 domestic abuse victims disclose difficulties with their mental health. The figure for LGBT victims is considerably higher.

Older people

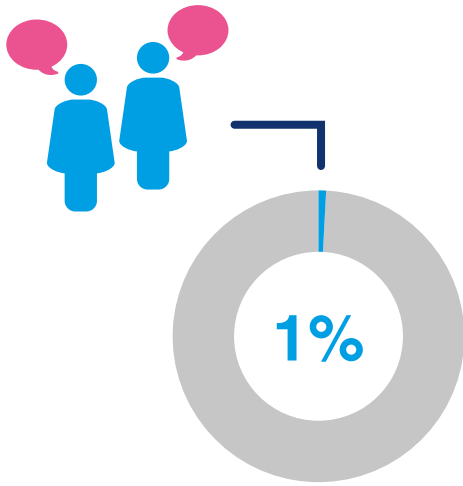
80% are not visible to services



Of those who are, a quarter live with abuse for



Perpetrators



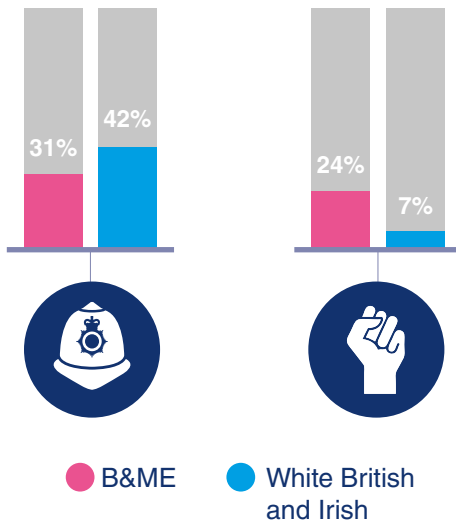
Less than 1% get any specialist intervention to change their behaviour

Children



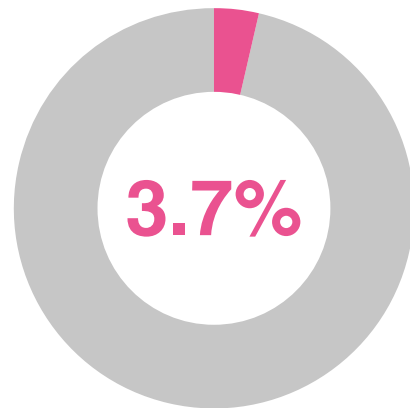
More than half are not known to children's services

B&ME



B&ME victims are almost a third less likely to report abuse to police. Nearly a quarter experience abuse from multiple perpetrators.

Disabled



Just 3.7% of victims discussed at multi-agency risk assessment conferences (Maracs) are recorded as having a disability

What can I do?

Build links and pool expertise

Do you know what specialist services exist locally? Work together to create quick and easy pathways to refer clients, train one another and swap expertise.

You can also look within your own service to appoint champions or leads for particular client groups.

This extra support and expertise really pays off. For example, SafeLives' data shows that disclosure of mental ill-health is significantly higher among clients accessing support in hospital settings – not because they're more likely to experience it than other victims, but because the links to mental health support services already exist and the practitioner working with them can quickly and easily make a referral.

Don't make assumptions

People don't fit into neat boxes. Never assume someone wants a particular service based on their age, culture, background, gender or sexual identity. Ask your client what they need. They are the expert in their experiences.

“Services often say ‘We don’t have many LGBTQI clients.’ By recording and monitoring diversity, sexuality and gender identity of clients, you’ll learn more about who is actually accessing your services and what you can offer them to ensure they’re safe. Don’t be afraid to ask how someone identifies – they are likely to be relieved that you have done so.”

Andy Meekings, LGBT Idva

“Clients with complex needs may have experiences of repeat victimisation across their lifetime and find it difficult to build trust. They may also lack a sense of self-worth. Persevere in your engagement with them and focus on building a rapport. See the whole person, not just the label that may have been attached to them.”

Collette Winters, trainer and consultant

Show you're inclusive

Whether you realise it or not, your website and promotional materials say a lot about your service. Use images and language which all clients can relate to.

Don't work in isolation

Where a client is already accessing another service, liaise closely with the professionals involved. It's important to understand how they're working together, and identify any gaps which might inadvertently put your client in danger.

For example, their substance use worker might suggest avoiding going to the pub – but this could mean the client is at home more often and at risk of abuse. By working together you can create a plan which maximises the client's safety.

Finally – always consider safety

Ask yourself – what steps do I need to take to make this person safe?

“When someone discloses ‘honour’-based violence or says they are at risk of forced marriage, the ‘one chance rule’ is crucial. It’s essential that you take every disclosure seriously and record as much detail as possible. There might not be another chance to do so safely.”

Shigufta Khan, CEO of
a domestic abuse service

How SafeLives can help

SafeLives offers a range of services to help you and your team support clients of all backgrounds and identities more effectively.

Build confidence and expertise with our range of accredited training. Understand more about the profile of clients accessing your service with Insights outcome measurement. And show commissioners your commitment to maintaining effective referral pathways at a practical and strategic level with SafeLives Leading Lights accreditation.

Find out more at safelives.org.uk

We are SafeLives, a national charity
dedicated to ending domestic abuse.
We're here for one simple reason:
to make sure all families are safe.

Our experts find out what works to stop
domestic abuse. Then we do everything
we can to make sure families everywhere
benefit. It works: after getting the right
help more than 60% of victims tell us
that the abuse stops.

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