

SafeLives Insights factsheet

Teenage victims of domestic abuse

Summary

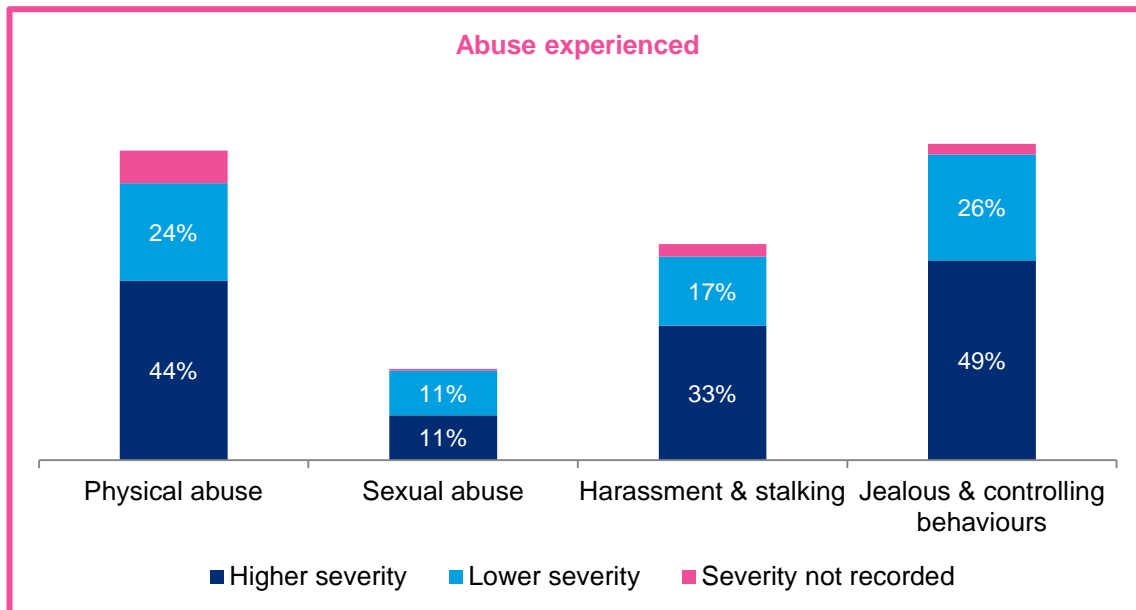
Teenage victims of domestic abuse experience at least the same level of violence as adult victims, and the majority are at risk of serious harm or death. Many experience additional problems which increase their vulnerability, including mental health issues and self-harm. One in five victims is pregnant.

This data

The data in this report relates to 183 victims aged under 18 years old who were supported by specialist domestic violence services during a two year period (1st July 2010 to 30th June 2012). The data was collected by caseworkers from 20 specialist services across England and Wales using the SafeLives Insights outcomes measurement tool.¹

Risk and abuse profile

Of the 183 teenage victims of domestic abuse included in this sample, two-thirds were classified as high risk.²



- 78% of the victims were experiencing controlling behaviour such as threats to kill, threats to expose sexual activity, isolation from family and friends, and being put down in public.
- 76% were experiencing physical abuse such as broken bones, internal injury, slapping and pushing.
- 53% were experiencing harassment and stalking such as obsessive texts, constant phone calls and threats.
- 22% were experiencing sexual abuse such as rape, sexual abuse, unwanted touching or sexual insults.

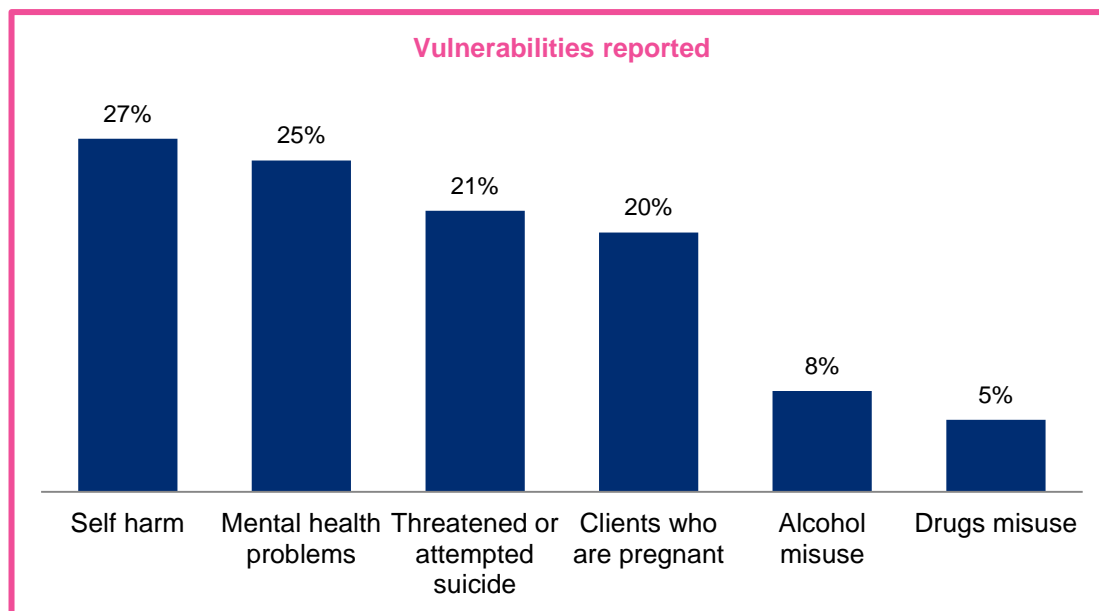
¹ SafeLives Insights is an outcomes measurement tool for specialist domestic violence services. For more information please contact David Dutchman 0117 317 8750 / david.dutchman@safelives.org.uk or visit www.safelives.org.uk

² Caseworkers use the SafeLives Dash (domestic abuse, stalking and 'honour'-based violence) risk checklist to identify high risk victims – that is, those deemed to be at risk of serious harm or death.

Most teenage victims were experiencing abuse perpetrated by a current or ex-intimate partner, and were not living with the perpetrator. Teenage victims were more likely (than adult victims) to be abused by more than one perpetrator. Some victims were at risk of forced marriage or ‘honour’-based violence.

Additional vulnerabilities

Teenage victims of domestic abuse had a number of additional health-related and economic vulnerabilities



- 27% of victims had previously self-harmed
- 25% of victims had experienced mental health issues
- 21% had previously threatened or attempted suicide
- 20% of victims were pregnant
- 18% of victims had financial problems
- 8% misused alcohol and 5% misused drug

Previous help-seeking behaviour

Teenage victims of domestic abuse had been in contact with other agencies in the year prior to accessing specialist domestic violence services.

- 70% of victims had reported the abuse to the police, and these victims had made an average of 2 reports each.
- 27% of victims had attended Accident & Emergency as a result of the abuse, attending twice on average.
- 42% of victims had visited their GP, and had made an average of 5 visits.
- There was current CYPS³ involvement in 32% of victims’ families.

Referral route	
Police	34%
Children & young people’s services	19%
Health agencies	14%
MARAC	7%
Housing	4%

³ CYPS refers to statutory children’s social services

Other DV and SV services	3%
Other routes	3%
Self-referral	1%
Specialist services	1%

Some of these agencies referred the victims to specialist domestic violence services. Teenage victims were more commonly referred by children and young people's services and health agencies, and less commonly referred by the police than adult victims.