

# Domestic Abuse Victimisation in the Police Auckland City District

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2014

## Introduction

The geographic area covered by the Auckland City Police District is a relatively small one compared to the other eleven Police Districts, but is the part of the wider Auckland metropolitan area which is most intensively populated, with about 440,000 people residing there. This population is also New Zealand's most ethnically diverse, being home to over 183 different ethnicities.

From 1996 to mid-2013, Shine had a protocol with the Auckland City Police District under which *all victims* of domestic abuse coming to the notice of Police were referred to Shine for follow up services. Over this time the data held on victims by Shine grew considerably and much of this information is easier to access on this sub-group of crime victims, than data stored by Police. This relatively comprehensive data provides an opportunity to research specific information about a sample of victims of domestic abuse, particularly repeat victims, in a way which has not previously been undertaken in New Zealand.

Based on Shine's experience of working in this complex field over so many years, we believe the full potential of this data is a gold mine for building a better understanding of victims of domestic abuse. The more knowledge that is known, the smarter collectively we will all be in thinking of ways to reduce victimisation, by tailoring services to the needs of specific categories of victims. Taking a 'one size fits all' approach to the provision of services does not work and is not an effective use of money. Shine safe@home is a good example of a service which was designed for a specific category of victim, but New Zealand needs a bigger range of responses or services for other people, designed to meet the needs of those repeatedly victimised.

Shine began a piece of research examining information held on all Police referrals occurring in the month of December 2009. During this time Shine received referrals for 513 individuals who had one or more victimisations during that month and resided within District geographical boundaries.<sup>1</sup> We believe that this 'snapshot' sample is of a sufficient size to be able to make some reasonable generalisations about all domestic abuse victims coming to the official notice of the Auckland City Police District.<sup>2</sup>

After identifying the 513 individuals, Shine checked our records back to December 2004 for any previous history for any of these individuals and then looked at our records since December 2009, until December 2012, for any further re-victimisation. This eight year time frame has provided considerable data, based on which Shine is confident that we have identified which victims have experienced only one intervention from the Police and which have receiving multiple ones.

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<sup>1</sup> The Auckland City Police District regularly responds to occurrences involving people who are visiting Auckland, for example tourists from overseas or other parts of New Zealand, or who are attending events or social activities in the city, but reside in other parts of metropolitan Auckland. Information relating to victims normally residing outside of the District has been excluded.

<sup>2</sup> We know that there are likely to have been many incidents of domestic abuse related victimisation which have not come to the notice of Police and so the ones that have may only be considered representative of a far greater problem.

The research undertaken on this sample group is based exclusively on an examination and analysis of the types of information that could be obtained from the data inputted into the Shine client case management system. In addition to demographic and initial referral details, this information includes a range of other material such as scanned copies of Police Family Violence Reports (formerly known as POL400s and now as POL1310s), various types of risk assessments, advocates' case notes, letters, FVIARS high risk meetings minutes for some victims who were assessed as high risk, and data recorded for clients referred to various Shine specialist services such as to safe@home or to KIDshine.

There have been no attempts made to directly contact former or current clients, or to discuss their details with Shine staff, or any external agencies. Shine may hold records which extend many years for some individuals, but the scope of research undertaken has been limited to the eight year period of December 2004 to December 2012.

Initially there were many research questions which Shine hoped to answer, such as: the time intervals between repeat victimisations; the types of risk factors recorded for each victim and how these correlate to repeat victimisation; the overlap between assessed risk and repeat victimisation; the nature of the community response provided to high repeat and high risk victims; and the spread of arrests across different rates of victimisation etc. However, it quickly became apparent that:

- The Shine database contains an overwhelming amount of data on this sample group.
- There was a lack of consistent source documents stored on every individual making some comparisons impossible. As just one example, over this period both Police and Shine have made changes to our respective risk assessment tools.
- Considerable data is in narrative form requiring hours of detailed reading, with inherent problems in easily categorising information.
- There was huge complexity involved when analysing records for victims who had been victimised many times over the study period. For instance, which of say fifteen risk assessments completed on one individual, who may have two or more offenders, should be used to assess risk? Another example was deciding on a consistent methodology for recording numbers of children in a victim's care and their ages.

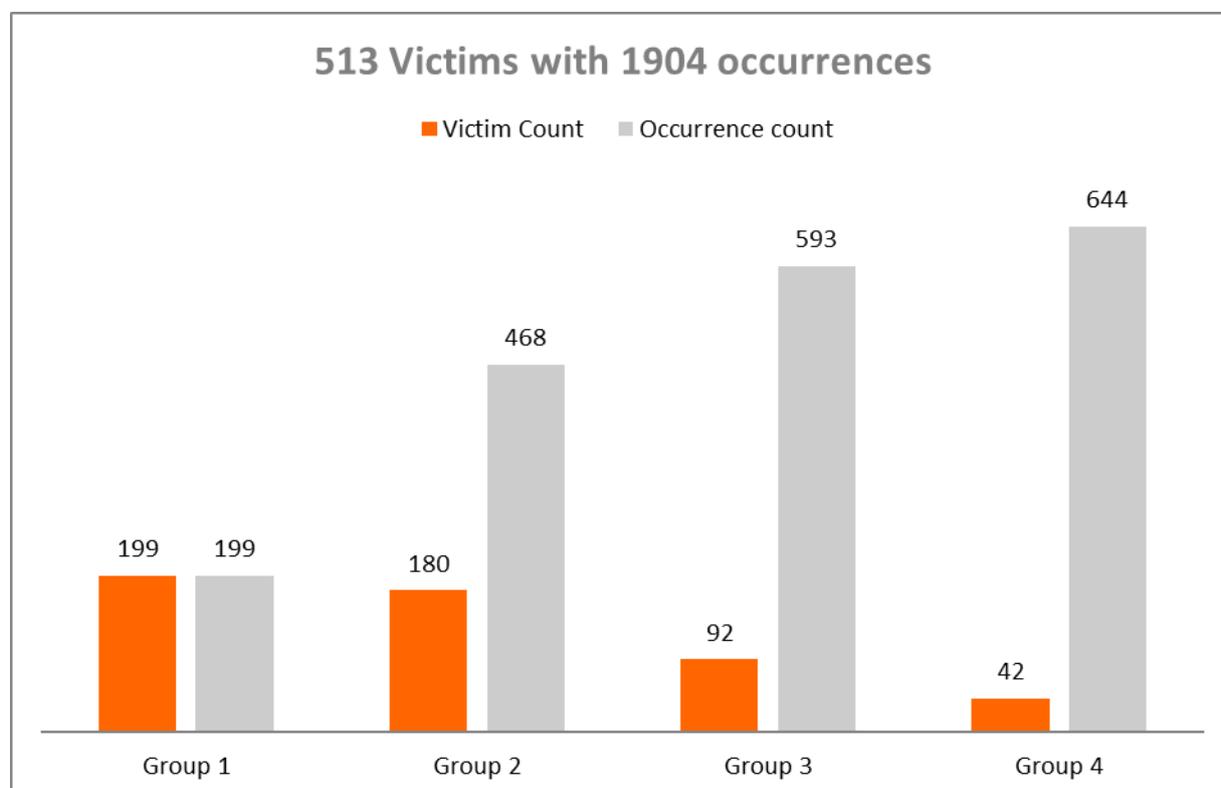
For these type of reasons, a decision was made to limit the research to what could be realistically achieved within the resource available and focus this on repeat victimisation, not on high risk, or the overlaps between the two. It was also decided that the best use of the financial resource available was primarily to pay for the time consuming data gathering by the research assistant and analysis of this data. This means that documenting the findings is confined to the brief summaries outlined in this report.

The 513 individuals studied were initially categorised by frequency of reported victimisation – each one of which was called an *occurrence*, which is a term Police have used to describe a case reported to them, which may or may not result in any further action, including arrest. Of the 513 people, 42% were previous or current clients and 58% were new. Of these 299 people who were new clients, 67% had no further incidents but 33% - a third – were victimised at least one more time.

Victims of domestic abuse have been clustered into four groups based on the *number of times* their victimisation has come to the notice of the Police, which for many, may be only a small percentage of what is actually occurring. These four groups have been categorised as a convenient shorthand to use in this report, when referring to data relating to them. These terms do not imply any trivialisation of the physical and emotional harm which may have been sustained, or impact that this may have had on the victim, or level of risk of future serious harm.

- **Group 1** are the 199 people who have only one reported occurrence (which happened in December 2009) during the entire eight years of the period studied. This is the largest group and amounts to 39% of the total 513 victims.
- **Group 2** are the 180 people who have experienced between two and four occurrences in this time frame, including one in December 2009. The second largest group with 35% of the total sample.
- **Group 3** are the 92 people who have experienced between five and nine occurrences in this time frame, including one in December 2009. 18% of the total sample are in Group 3.
- **Group 4** are the 42 people who have experienced between ten and twenty-five occurrences in this time frame, including one in December 2009. Only 8% of the total sample are in Group 4.

## Focus on Repeat Victimisation



There are 42 people in Group 4 who experienced ten or more occurrences

These people are only **8%** of the total sample of 513 victims

**8 people in every 100 victims experience 34% of all victimisations**

It is obvious to see that if we could reduce, or stop these people in Group 4 being re-victimised, this would have a huge impact on both the personal toll on these individuals, and also the resources of the Justice Sector and community organisations responding to them. When the additional 92 victims in Group 3 are added, the case becomes even more compelling for strategically focussing significant resource on high repeat victims. Between them these 92 victims in Group 3 had 31% of all 1904 occurrences experienced by the total 513 victims.

Together, Groups 3 and 4 are 134 individuals – 26 people in every 100. Based on this study (and re-victimisation rates may vary considerably around the country) around **one victim in every four is experiencing repeated victimisation at a serious level** of five or more occurrences in the Auckland City Police District.

For this reason, a decision was made to find out more about people who were repeatedly victimised (which is not the same as those most in danger). Therefore, much of the in-depth analysis in this research has been focussed on the 42 victims in Group 4 plus a sample of 42 randomly chosen victims, from the 92 people in Group 3. The 84 people whose records were studied in more detail experienced a total of 917 occurrences between them.

The preponderance of repeated victimisation found to be occurring to relatively few victims in this study reinforces Shine's day to day experience and the findings of the Justice Sector's report,

*Multiple Victimization in New Zealand: Findings from the 2009 New Zealand Crime and Safety Survey* (June 2011).

“The finding that crime is mostly concentrated among particular groups of people and places has been hailed as the most important policy contribution by victim surveys. Such findings have been used to justify **targeting crime prevention resources** on the basis of need and have been **empirically proven to both reduce levels of re-victimisation and overall crime levels.**”

These people are easy to identify, but as a generalisation, the more times they are victimised, the more complex and time consuming it is to assist them become safer. Another important point to emphasise is that a large proportion of high repeat victims are also likely to be at high risk of incurring serious injury, but not all. There are also many high risk victims who are not high repeat victims, but the personal costs for them personally and for the country are potentially just as significant.

Based on the findings of research undertaken by the United Kingdom’s Coordinated Action Against Domestic Abuse (CAADA), the development of specialist advocates to work with these victims is critical to successfully reducing victimisation and increasing safety (*A Place of Greater Safety*. CAADA, United Kingdom Nov 2012. E. Howarth, L. Stimpson, D. Barran, A. Robinson, *Safety in Numbers – Summary of Findings and Recommendations from a Multi-site Evaluation of Independent Domestic Violence Advisors*. United Kingdom, Nov 2009). CAADA is contracted by the Home Office to coordinate the training, monitoring and outcomes reporting of specialist Independent Victim Advocates across the United Kingdom, which work with local domestic abuse multi-agency forums. These forums have some similarities with New Zealand’s Family Violence Inter-Agency Response System (FVIARS).

### **Recommendation**

1. It would be cost effective to provide an intensive and well-resourced community response to high repeat and high risk victims.
2. A key component of this would be well trained and supported specialist advocates with small caseloads of victims who are at high risk of serious injury and those who are repeatedly victimised.

Occurrences	Number of Victims	Total Occurrences	Percentage out of 1904 Occurrences
5	30	150	7.88%
6	26	156	8.19%
7	12	84	4.41%
8	8	64	3.36%
9	16	144	7.55%
10	4	40	2.10%
11	6	66	3.47%
12	3	36	1.89%
13	5	65	3.41%
14	2	28	1.47%
15	5	75	3.94%
16	2	32	1.68%
17	2	34	1.79%
18	1	18	0.95%
19	4	76	3.99%
20	2	40	2.10%
21	2	42	2.21%
22	2	44	2.31%
24	2	48	2.52%

People	Percentage shared
68	20.48%

People	Percentage Shared
34	16.48%

People	Percentage Shared
15	10.71%

People	Percentage Shared
9	8.41%

People	Percentage Shared
8	9.14%

<b>Total Percent</b>	<b>65.22%</b>
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Assisting the relatively few victims who experience a disproportionate number of victimisations is a strategy for obtaining the greatest impact

Group 3 (92 people) 5 – 9 victimisations

Group 4 (42 people) 10 - 24 victimisations

Data on these people was analysed in greater detail to look at experiencing different levels of victimisation.

17 people have 16 or more occurrences. They are only 3% of the total sample of 513 people.

**3 in 100 people experience nearly 20% of all victimisations.**

42 people have 10 or more occurrences. They are only 8% of the total sample of 513 people.

**8 in 100 people experience nearly 34% of all victimisations.**

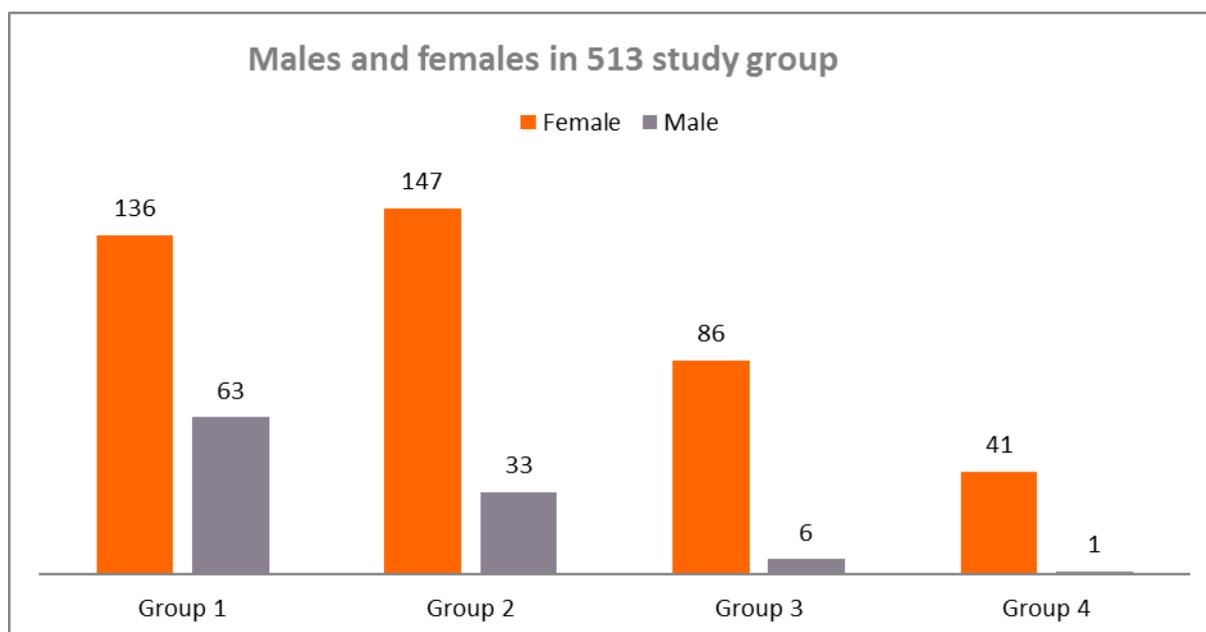
66 people have 8 or more occurrences. They are only 13% of the total sample of 513 people.

**13 in 100 people experience nearly 45% of all victimisations.**

A study of 513 victims of domestic abuse reported to the Auckland City Police District in December 2009 – evidence of re-victimisation ('occurrences') over an eight year period was analysed

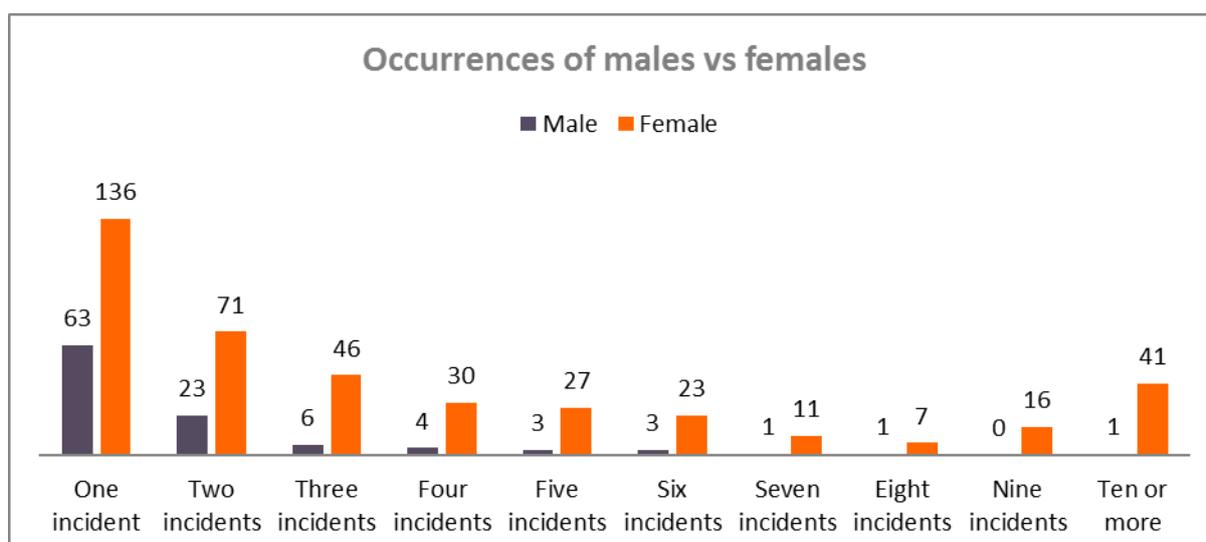
## Gender and Victimization

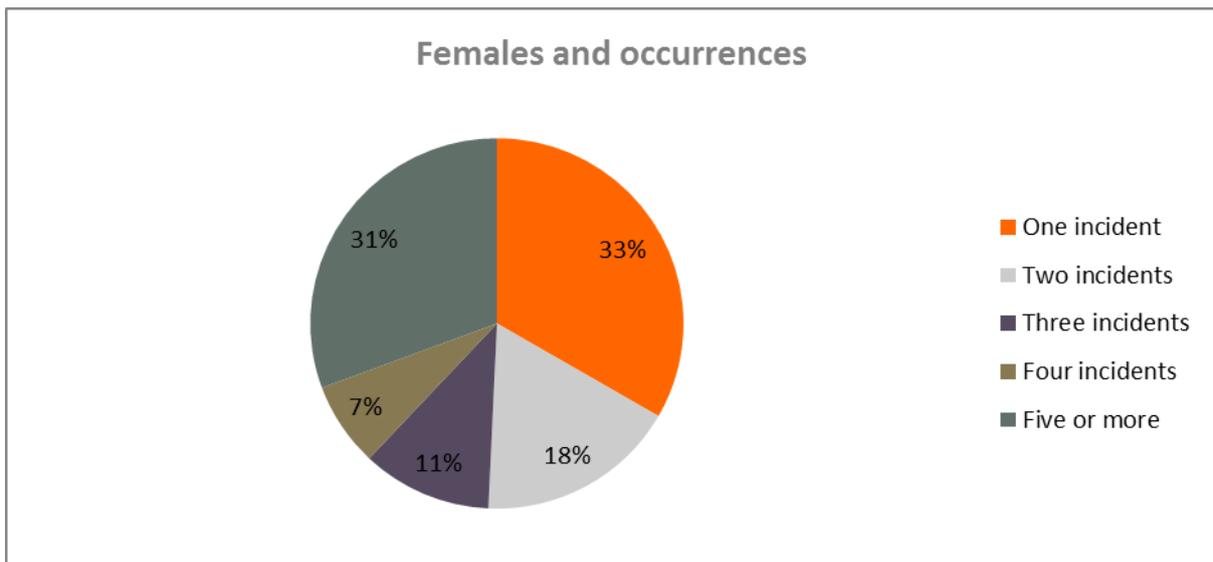
The relationship between gender and likelihood of victimisation and re-victimisation was one very strong trend which was easy to discover. One in five victims were male (105) and four were female (408). Of the 199 people who were victimised only once, 63 were men – 32% of the entire Group 1 victims. These 63 men are 60% of the total 105 male victims.



A further 32% of the 103 men were the victims of between two and four occurrences (18% of all victims in Group 2). But of these men in Group 2, the majority were victimised twice. Together, these 23 men and the 63 men in Group 1 represent 82% of all male victims.

Only 8% of men experienced five or more victimisations (one man was in Group 4).





N = 408

In contrast, a third of women experienced only one victimisation, but nearly another third experienced five or more victimisations. Based on this sample, a woman has a 66% chance of having a further victimisation coming to the notice of the Police and men have a 40% chance of this occurring. If there is one further victimisation, women have a 49% probability of a third or more occurring, but for men the probability is only 18%.

Of all the people who were victimised five or more times, 95% were women and women were 98% of those who were victimised ten or more times.

All victims of domestic abuse should have access to support services irrespective of gender. However, it is clear from this study that very few men would need intensive and ongoing support based on their risk of being repeatedly victimised.

**1 in 5 victims are male : 4 in 5 victims are women**

**3 in 5 men and 1 in 3 women are victimised once**

**82% of men and 51% of women were victimised twice or less**

**8% of men and 31% of women were victimised 5 or more times**

**Recommendation**

1. Very few men are repeatedly victimised and this should be considered a significant factor when considering the allocation of victim response resources.

## Ethnicity and Victimisation

A most striking factor in this sample of 513 people is the **strong relationship between ethnicity and victimisation**. Please refer to the diagram entitled *'Snapshot' of Reported victimisation*. This diagram only shows the relationship between victimisation and ethnicity for Pakeha, Pasifika and Maori, but this is indicated in context to their relative proportions to the total data for all 513 victims. For instance, of those victims with only one occurrence, the diagram indicates that Pakeha make up 31%, Pacific Islander 28% and Maori 15%, which equals 74% of this group. The other 26% of people of other ethnicities are not shown. The numbers of people of other ethnicities categorised by Police as Indian, Asian or 'Other' were too small and diverse to demonstrate trends in a similar manner as the larger represented ethnic groups, and so have not been included.

Of the total sample of 513 people, Pakeha, Pasifika people and Maori amount to 402 people, which is 78% of the sample. As a proportion of the 402 people, Pakeha are 35%, Pasifika are just over 34% and Maori are 31% - relatively close to a third each. However, the differences in victimisation rates are dramatic. In Groups 1 to 3, Pakeha and Pasifika are represented in almost the same proportions of just under a third, in each of the three groups. In Group 4 this changes, with Pakeha being only 9% of all 42 victims with 10 – 25 occurrences and a greater representation of Pasifika of 17%.

The situation is completely different for Maori. Of all those with only one occurrence of victimisation, Maori are only 15%. This increases to 22% for those victims in Group 2 with 2 – 4 occurrences, increases again to a third of all those victims with 5 - 9 occurrences in Group 3 and then jumps dramatically in Group 4, where Maori are 62% of all victims experiencing ten or more reported victimisations.

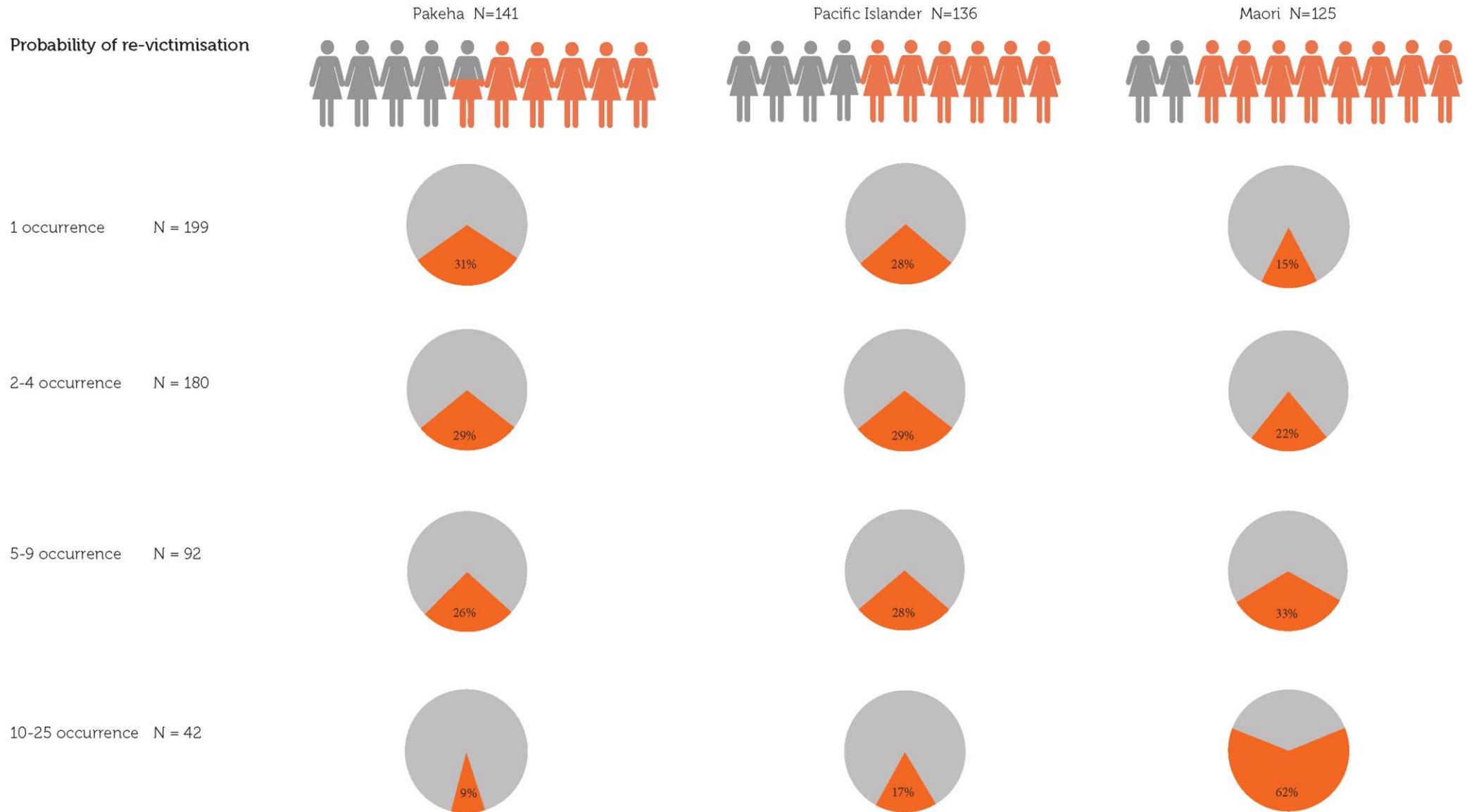
A defining characteristic of domestic abuse is that there is almost always a pattern of repeat victimisation. For all three ethnicities there is a strong and unacceptable probability that once a person has been victimised once (unless that victim is male) it will occur again, at least one more time. For Pakeha the probability is 57%, for Pasifika it is 60%, but for Maori it is 77%. This study has found that for victims who are Maori, then nearly eight out of ten will be re-victimised – repeatedly. Nearly half - 45% - of all Maori victims in this study were victimised five or more times, worse, 21% of all Maori victims were in Group 4, victimised ten or more times.

**Re-victimisation probability: Pakeha 57%, Pasifika 60%, Maori 77%**

**45% of Maori victims were victimised 5 or more time.**

**1 in 5 Maori victims are victimised 10 or more times. Maori represent nearly two thirds of all victims in this highest repeat victimisation category.**

## 'Snapshot' of Reported victimisation



- Auckland City Police District refer all victims of domestic abuse to Shine. In December 2009, 513 victims, residing in the District, were referred. Their names were checked in the Shine database for a period of December 2004 to December 2012, for records of other Police referrals. Victimization relating to Maori, Pacific Island and Pakeha victims is presented but data for other ethnicities is not shown.

NOTE: Police call each investigation an 'occurrence'.



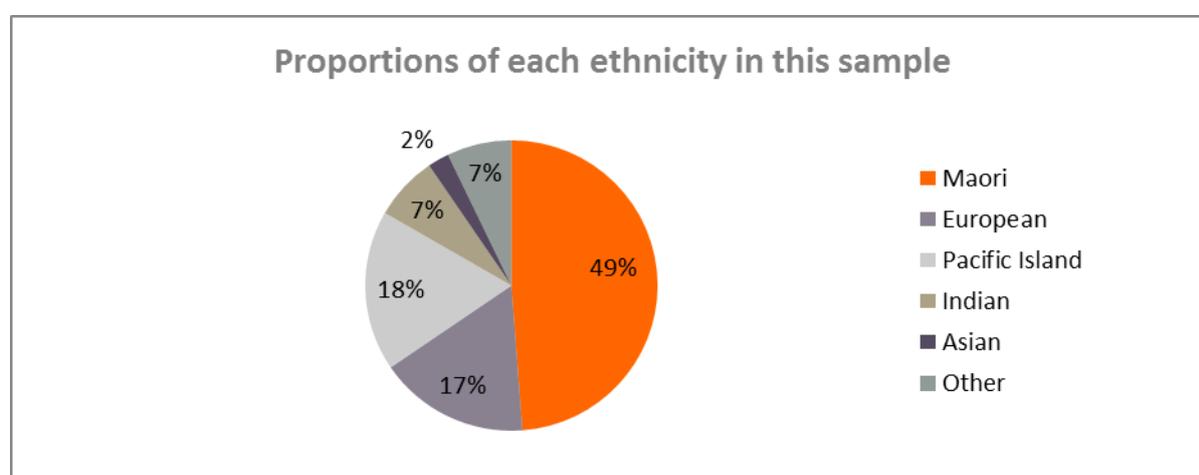
## Recommendations

1. There are too many victims of domestic abuse presenting to Police in each community for all to be offered and receive the same level of response from victims' support agencies, or attention by local Family Violence Inter-Agency Response System (FVIARS) forums.
2. This fact needs to be officially recognised with associated expectations of what can and can't be done, in order for a strategic approach to reducing the volume of repeat victimisation to be developed.
3. There is a strong justification for a large proportion of local community resources to be focussed on victims who are repeatedly victimised (and those who are assessed as high risk irrespective of how frequently victimised). It should be remembered that while this study has found around 60% of victims have further reported victimisations, 40% do not. If this finding is similar across the country, these 40% of victims equates to thousands of people each year and responding to them is a considerable drain on very limited resources.
4. However, at the first occurrence, all victims of domestic abuse should be offered the opportunity to obtain follow up support, which may be in the form of a helpline number to call.
5. When a victim is Maori, more attention and appropriate support is warranted, given the high likelihood that they will be re-victimised and this this will occur repeatedly.
6. Local FVIARS groups should incorporate an agreed systematic and stepped response to victims as part of their strategic approach to reducing repeat victimisation.
7. This response and the resources available at each step would vary depending on what is realistically available in each community. For instance, in some areas all those assessed as being at high risk of injury and with more than five occurrences over a specified period, may receive the local version of a *Gold Standard* response. In another area with fewer resources, it may be all those victims in greatest danger and those with eight occurrences over a specified period of time get this form of response.
8. Specialist advocacy services working with those victims of domestic abuse who are in greatest danger, or with high repeat victimisations must have excellent cultural competency with working with Maori.

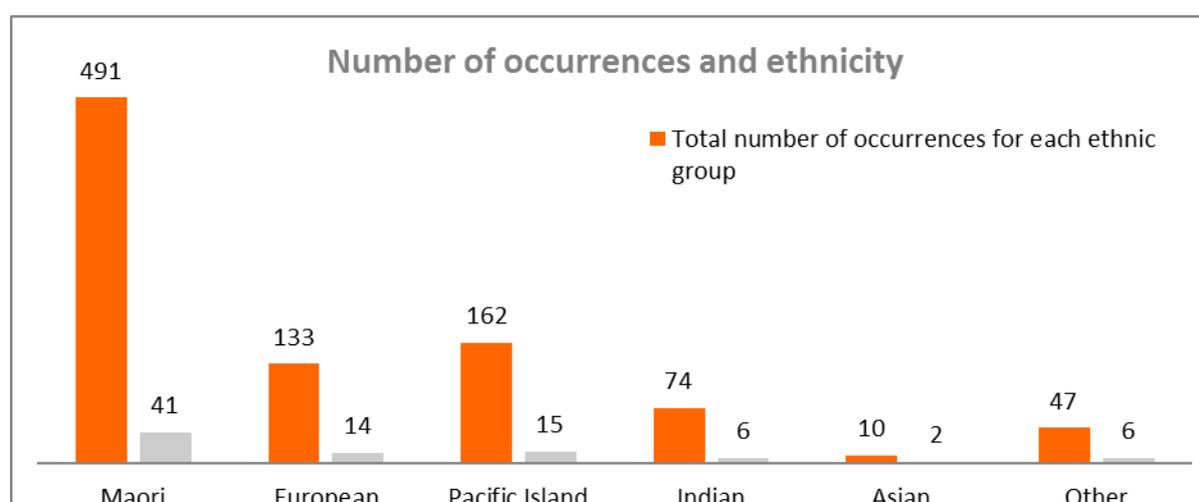
## Detailed Study of 84 High Repeat Victims

A more detailed study was made of a sample of those victims who experienced the greatest numbers of occurrences. This sample includes all of the 42 victims in Group 4 (10 – 25 occurrences) plus a matching number of 42 randomly chosen victims, drawn from the 92 people in Group 3 (5 – 9 occurrences). Of these 84 people, three were men and the remaining 81 were women.

**These 84 people are only 16% of the 513 victims in the wider study. However, the 917 occurrences they experienced are nearly half (48%) of the 1904 occurrences experienced by the entire sample of 513 victims.**



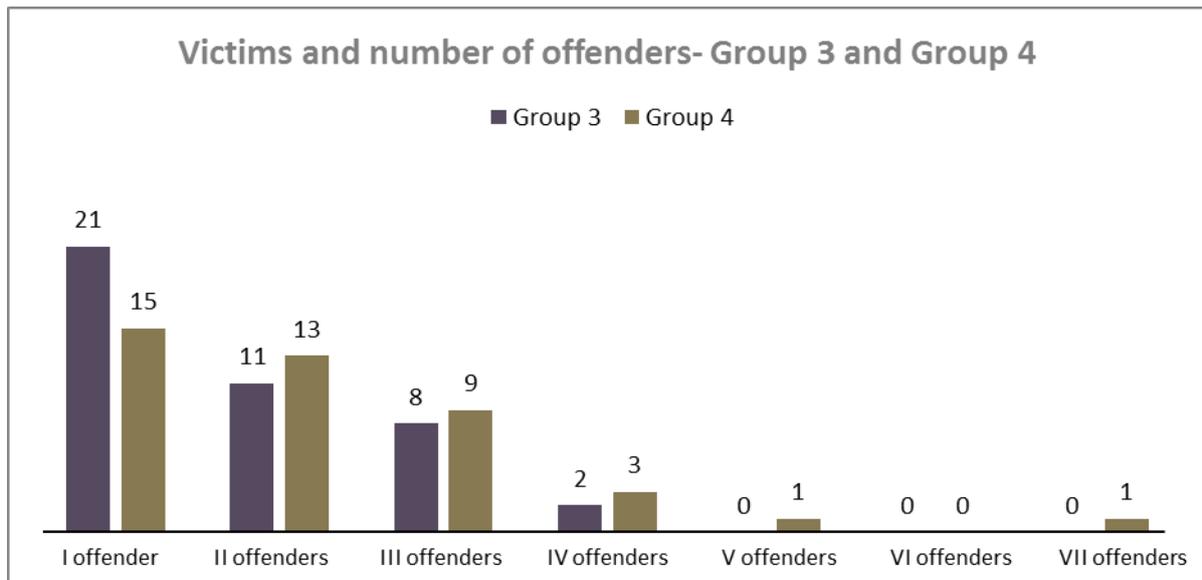
These 84 people consisted of 41 Maori, 14 Pakeha, 15 Pasifika, 6 Indian, 2 Asian, and 6 'other' people of other ethnicities (such as African and Spanish). For the purposes of this study, Asian, Indian and other ethnicities have often been combined to form a bigger group totalling 14 victims.



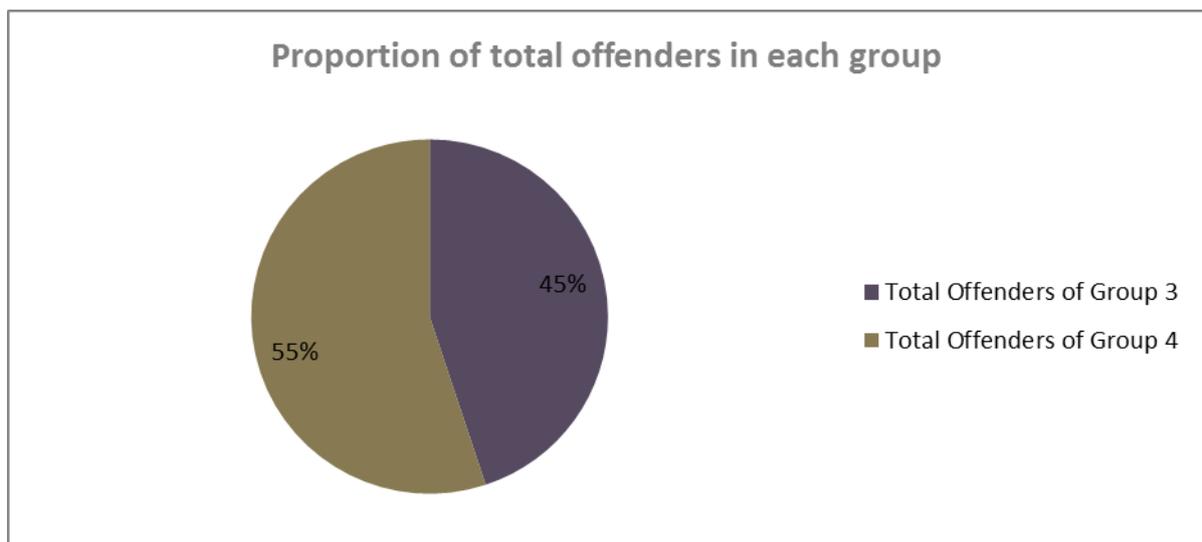
Again, the disproportionate impact of victimisation on Maori is demonstrated by this bar graph. Maori make up 49% of the total sample and experienced 54% of the 917 occurrences.

## Offenders

Shine has records for 167 people who have offended at least once against these 84 victims, throughout the research timeframe. On average, every victim had 1.99 offenders. In Group 3, the average number of offenders per victim was 1.79, whereas for Group 4 the average increased to 2.19 offenders per person.



N = 84 victims (Group 3 = 42 victims and Group 4 = 42 victims)



N = 167 total offenders in research

### Maori victims' relationship to offender



N = 92 offenders who victimised 41 victims

### Pakeha victims' relationship to offender



N = 30 offenders who victimised 14 victims

### Pacific Island victims' relationship to offender



N = 22 offenders who victimised 15 victims

### Asian/Indian/Other victims' relationship to offender



N = 23 offenders who victimised 14 victims

Overall, these high repeat victims' former, or current partners are the largest category of offenders. However, the proportion of offenders who are former, or current partners to victims, varies considerably by ethnic group. Around 60% of Pakeha and Pasifika offenders are (ex) partners, but for Maori this is much less at 49% and for Asian/Indian/Other victims it is much higher at 78%.

Across the entire 84 victims, only 43% had one offender, with the majority having multiple offenders. It would seem that once a person is victimised multiple times, there is greatly increased likelihood that she will be abused by multiple offenders. Sadly, this is most likely to be her teenage child, or another relative. This appears to be particularly true for Maori.

However, whilst many of these victims have multiple offenders, the majority, 69 people (82%), have only one 'primary' or 'main' offender. Of these, 36 victims have only one, or 'primary' offender. The victimisation of the other 33 has been done mainly by one offender, although other offenders have sometimes victimised them too. Of these primary or main offenders, 87% are the former, or current partner of the victim.

Some of these high repeat victims are not ever offended against by a current, or former partner and so Police will not conduct an ODARA risk assessment or complete an Intimate Partner Vulnerability Factors form. Both these forms are designed to identify risk factors specific to victims of intimate partner violence. Therefore, the level of danger experienced by these victims may be overlooked.

In addition, most high risk victims are victimised by multiple offenders, only some of whom are current or former partners. In order to obtain a full picture of the nature of these high repeat victims' risk, all offending perpetrated against them, by multiple offenders, needs to be put in context. Again, this could easily be overlooked.

**Most occurrences are perpetrated by former, or current partners.**

**However, high repeat victims of domestic abuse are likely to have multiple offenders, frequently their teenage children or other relatives. This is especially so for Maori victims.**

**There is significant potential for victimisation by offenders who are not current or former partners to be overlooked. The full context and danger these victims are in may not be understood and acted upon.**

## **Recommendations**

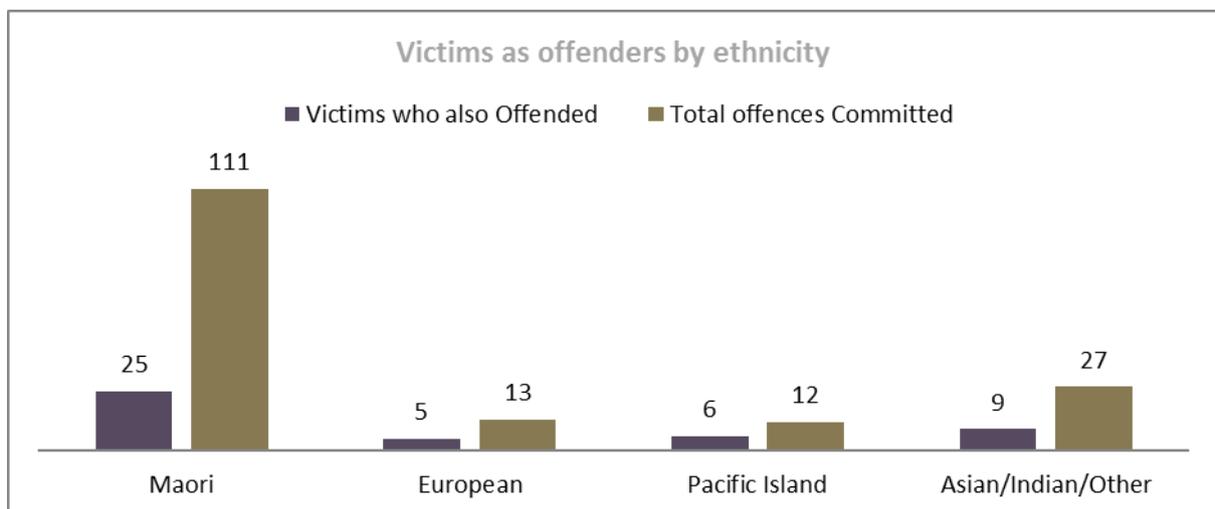
1. Police staff investigating domestic disputes need to be alert to offending by people who are not (ex) partners of the victim, when that victim has had multiple victimisations.
2. FVIARS forums need to be alert to the full context and danger experienced by high repeat victims when offenders are not their (ex) partner.
3. Police could consider some modification to their Family Violence reports, to ensure these issues are noted and acted upon.

## Victims as Offenders

Out of 84 high repeat victims, 45 (54%) victims had also offended in an occurrence (outside the scope of the occurrences in this study) once or more during the research timeframe. Between them, they were the offenders in 163 occurrences, of which 127 (78%) were directed towards their offender(s).

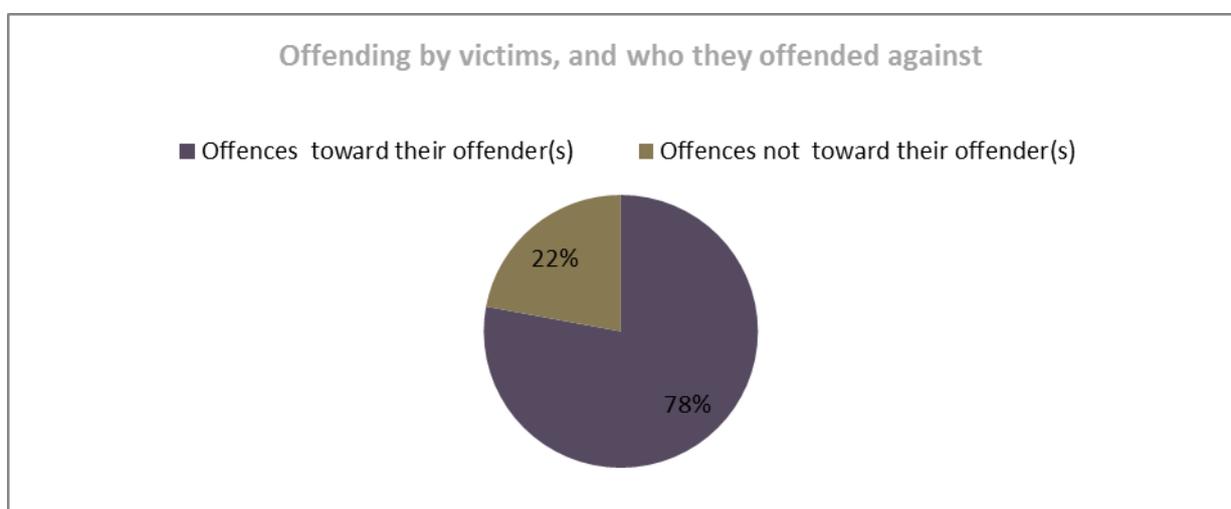
Of the 42 victims in Group 3 (5-9 occurrences), 20 victims had also offended. They shared 48 offences, of which 31 were directed towards their offender(s). This averages 2.4 offences committed by the victim.

Of the 42 victims in Group 4 (10-24 occurrences), 25 victims had also offended. They shared 115 offences, of which 96 were directed towards their offender(s). This averages 4.6 offences committed by the victim.



N (grey) = 45 victims who also offended at least once during the research timeframe.

N (khaki) = 163 occurrences perpetrated by victims as offenders



N = 163 occurrences perpetrated by victims as offenders

Shine had a record of at least one occurrence of domestic related offending, perpetrated by just over half of the highly victimised victims. Nearly 80% of the times that these victims were the offender in an occurrence, their offending was directed to their offender(s).

Some years ago, Shine conducted a study of all female offenders arrested for domestic related offences, over a six month period, who appeared in the Auckland District Court (Mackenzie, Deborah. *Arrested Female Offenders in Auckland City: April – September 2008*. Shine, April 2009).

This study found that the majority of female offenders against their male partners, were previously known as the victim of the men they offended against. They were assessed by Police as mainly either being of no apparent risk to low risk, two were considered to be 'moderate' risk. None were assessed as high risk. The majority of male victims did not report feeling scared of female offenders and the level of abuse perpetrated was at the lower end of the scale.

It is important when considering this offending to understand the intention that motivated the offending taking place. In Shine's years of experience working with domestic abuse victims, particularly those at higher risk, the 'fighting couple' who are equally combative, is fairly rare for us to encounter. Most female victims who offend against their male partner are doing this to retaliate, or as a form of self-defence. Their primary objective is to control the violence being perpetrated against them, rather than to terrify and control their partner.

In many states of the United States of America, predominant aggressor policies have been introduced. These provide guidance to frontline Police staff when dealing with offending perpetrated by people who had previously been the primary victim, or when both parties had assaulted each other. These policies recognise that the risk to victims is likely to increase when they are arrested for using reactive violence, or when there is a dual arrest.

**54% of high repeat victims of domestic abuse had also been the offender in one or more domestic related occurrence during the 8 year study period.**

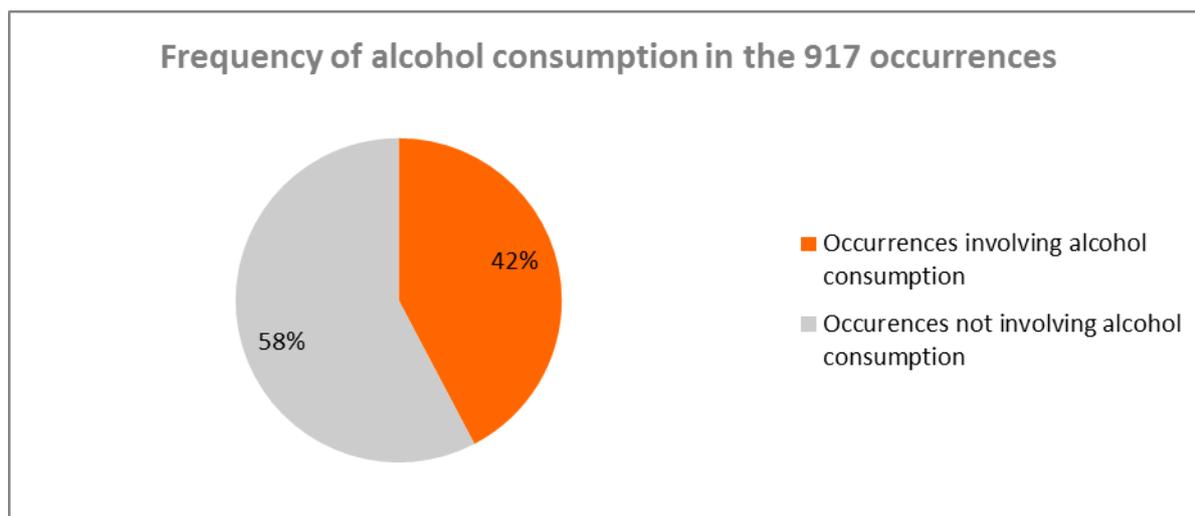
**Nearly 80% of this offending was directed to their offender(s)**

### **Recommendations**

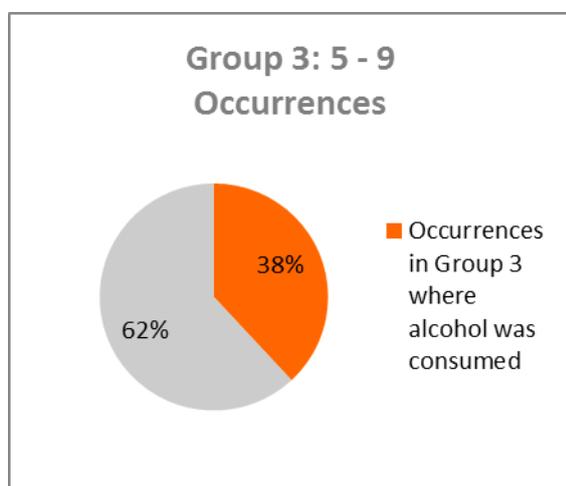
1. Police could consider researching and introducing a primary aggressor policy to guide frontline staff when investigating domestic abuse related occurrences involving the previous victim as offender, or when the situation is ambiguous as both parties have assaulted each other.

## Impact of Alcohol

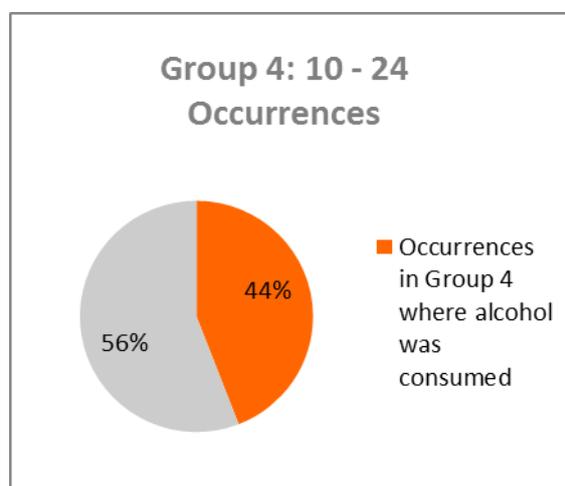
As part of their investigation of an occurrence, Police note whether or not the victim or offender appeared to be under the influence of alcohol. This data was examined to see whether or not alcohol consumption may be a trend in re-victimisation, by analysing as many different variables as possible. For instance, the proportion of occurrences where alcohol consumption is a factor, who was drinking, any differences between Group 3 and Group 4, and considering alcohol and its association with ethnicity etc.



Alcohol is a factor present in 388 (42%) out of 917 occurrences, meaning that close to half of all occurrences involve either the victim or offender consuming alcohol, or both parties. In the remaining 529 occurrences, alcohol was not considered to be a factor by the officer completing the Police report.

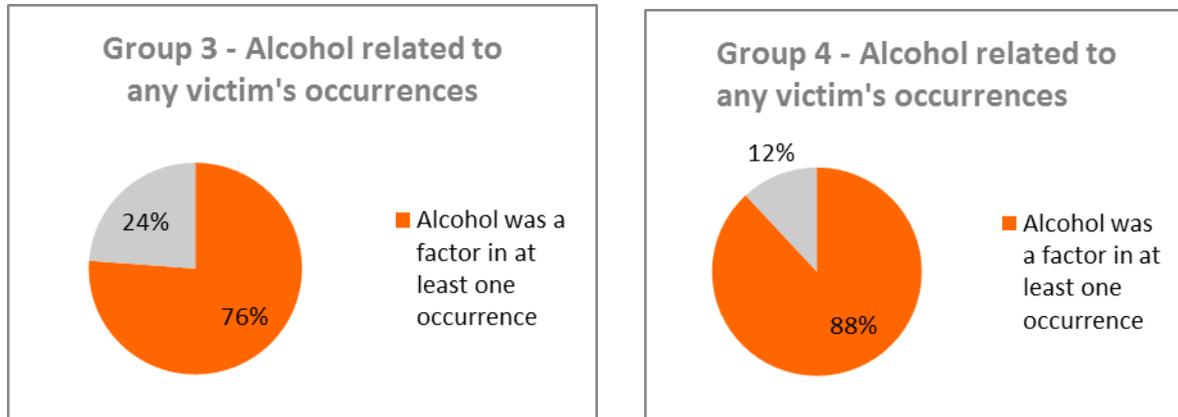


n = 273 (total occurrences in Group 3)



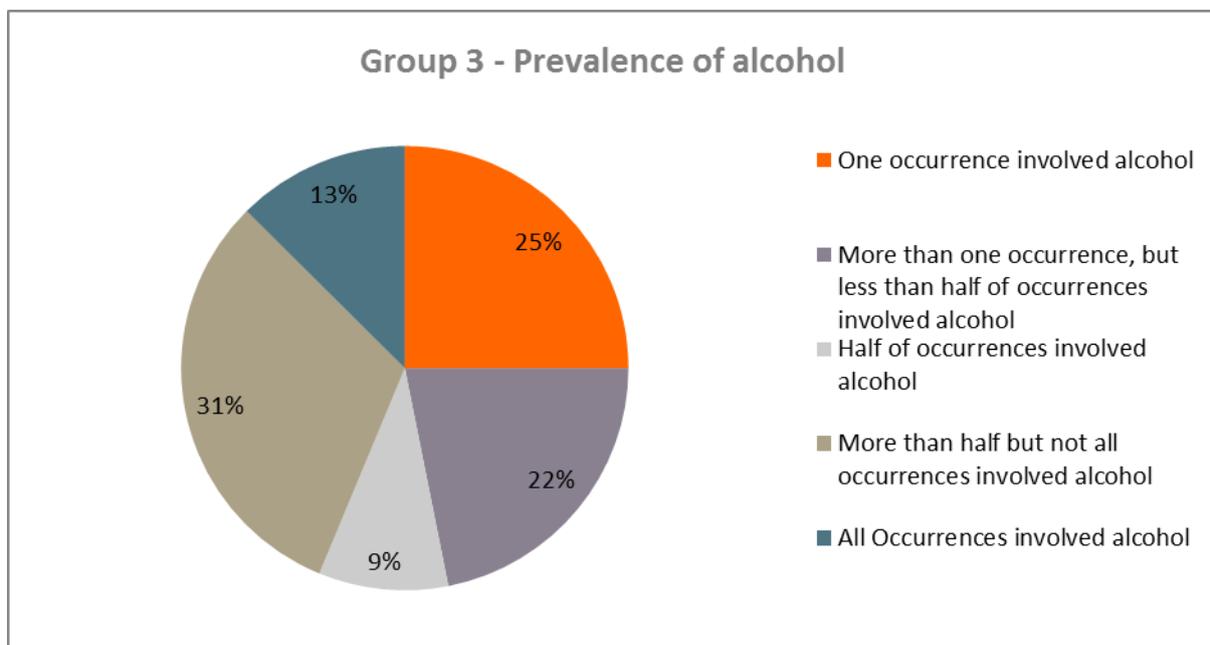
n = 644 (total occurrences in Group 4).

Victims with a higher number of victimisations were more likely to have occurrences involving alcohol than those experiencing less re-victimisation.



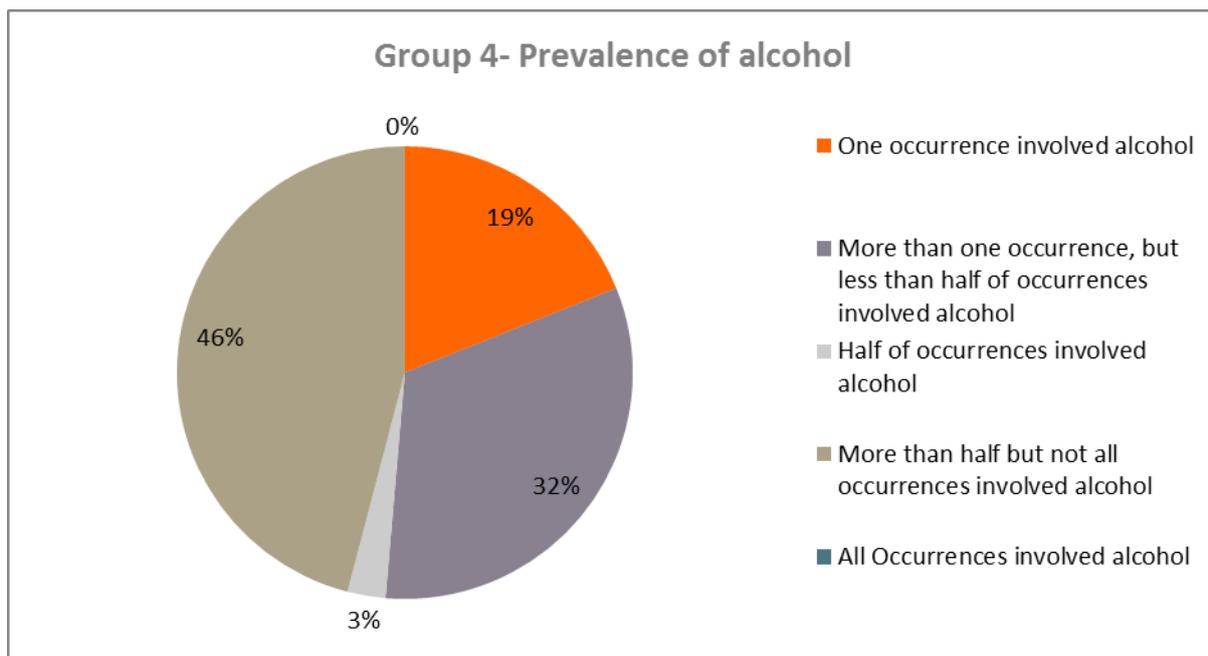
However, when an analysis was made of how these occurrences involving alcohol were spread within each group, the enormous impact of alcohol became even more apparent. Alcohol was consumed by either the victim or offender, or both, at least once for 76% of Group 3 victims. For Group 4 victims, the association is even stronger with 88% of them having at least one occurrence involving alcohol consumption.

This association is such an important one that deeper analysis was done to better understand the role alcohol has in re-victimisation.



N = 32 victims for whom alcohol was a factor in one or more occurrence

The above graph shows how often (the percentage of times) alcohol had been consumed in the occurrences of the 32 victims (out of 42) in Group 3 where alcohol was ever a factor.



N = 37 victims for whom alcohol was a factor in one or more occurrence

The above graph shows how often (the percentage of times) alcohol had been consumed in the occurrences of the 37 victims (out of 42) in Group 4 where alcohol was ever a factor.

Alcohol was consumed once in all of the occurrences of a quarter of the 32 Group 3 victims, but only 19% of the 37 Group 4 victims had just a single occurrence involving alcohol.

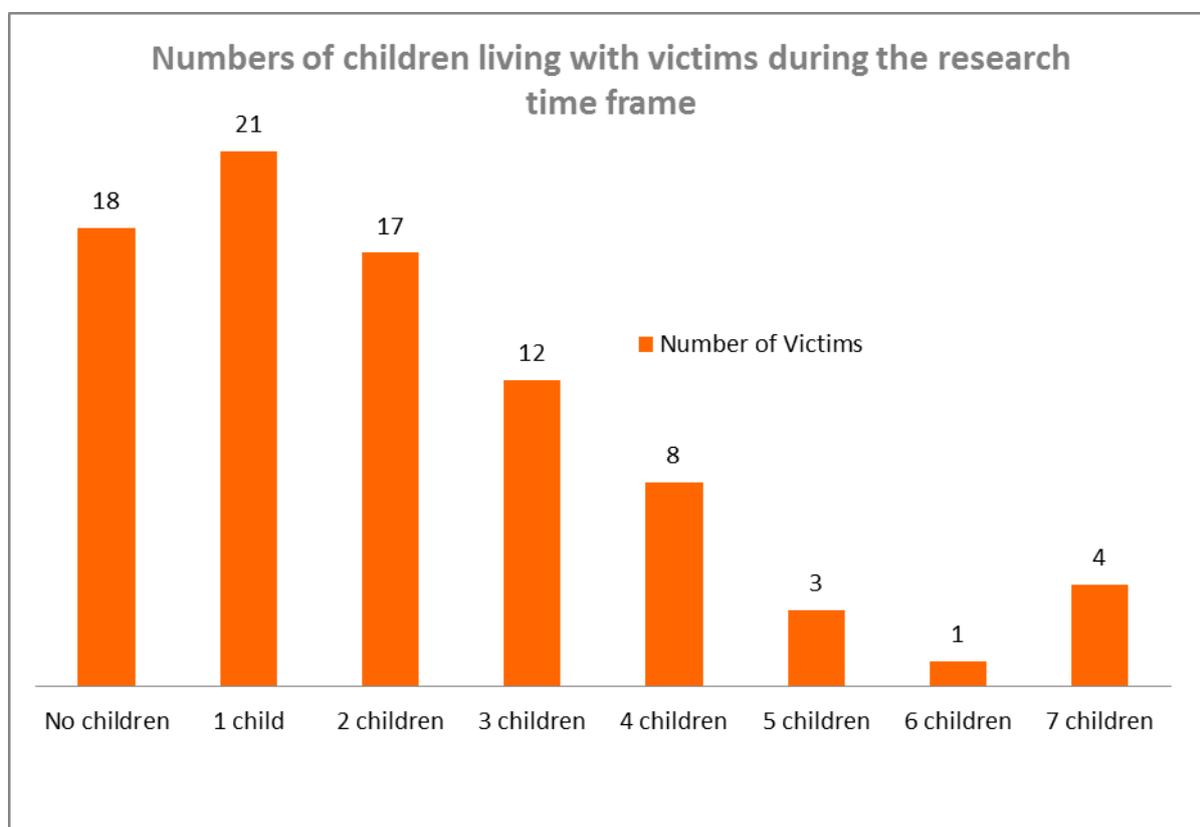
Alcohol is strongly associated with the victimisation of 53% of Group 3 victims, with 13% having alcohol consumption associated in every occurrence.

None of the Group 4 victims had alcohol associated with every single occurrence. Given the sheer number of victimisations experienced by victims in Group 4 this is not surprising. A much greater proportion of Group 4 victims than Group 3 victims had alcohol associated with 'more than half, but not all occurrences', which indicates that alcohol is strongly linked to offending.

The proportion of total occurrences does not show the *number* of occurrences when alcohol had been drunk for each victim, which has the effect of potentially masking how often alcohol was present. This is especially so for victims in Group 4. For instance, if a victim had 24 occurrences and alcohol was consumed in 10, the individual would be grouped into those victims with 'less than half of all occurrences involving alcohol'.

The most serious case studied was a victim where 23 out of 24 occurrences involved alcohol. In this case, the victim consumed alcohol 21 times, and the offender consumed alcohol 23 times.

## Children

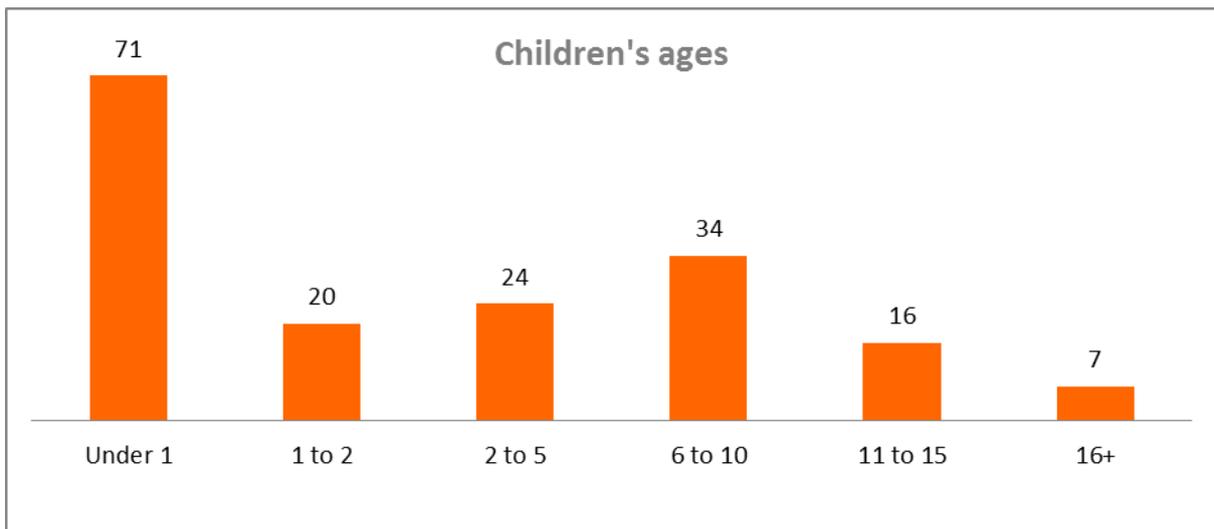


Nearly four out of five victims (79%) had children in their care at some point over the eight years of the research period. These 66 people had 172 children between them.

**Please Note** Some victims have been offended against by their own children. In cases when a victim's child is also the victim's offender, then that child's data is not included in the information on children, irrespective of their age. This was done so that the information about the offenders and children would remain separate and not become confusing. This means that in a few cases, victims may have more children in their care than is stated, because for instance, their offender is their 16 year old son who is still residing in the home.

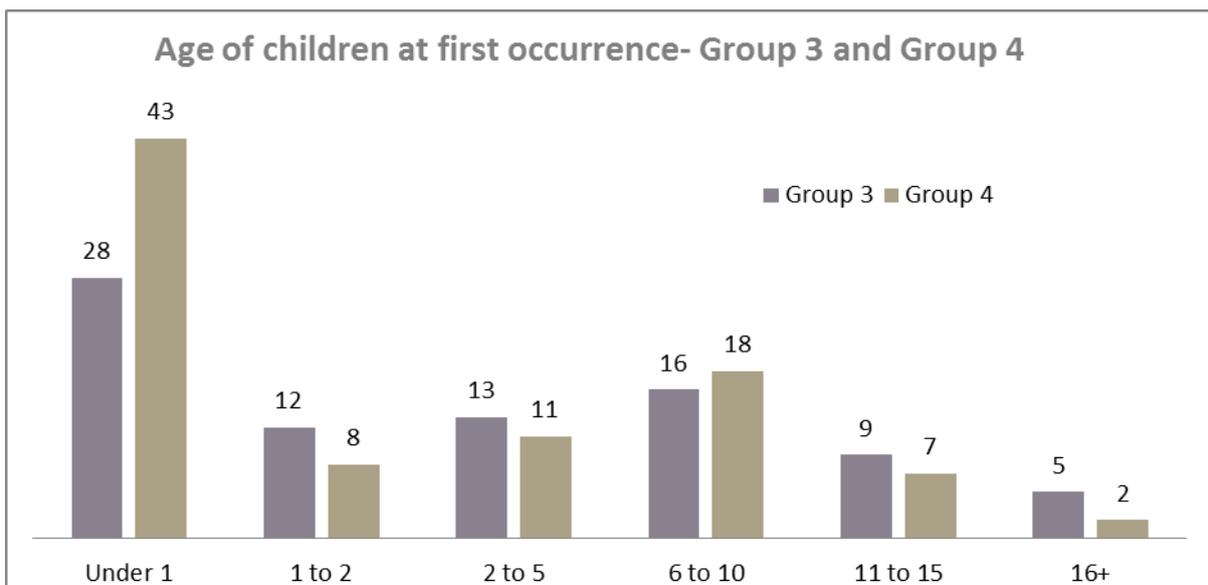
Of the 84 people in this study, 3 were men and two of these men had children. One man had two children in his care and the other had one child in his care.

Over the eight year study period, children were either present from the first recorded occurrence, or were born at some stage later on. Obviously, over this time they also aged and so the same child may have started off in Shine's records as a 2 year old and by the last occurrence may be 5 years old. To avoid confusion, a decision was made to record the child's age as being their age at the occurrence they were first mentioned.



n= 172 (the children of 66 victims)

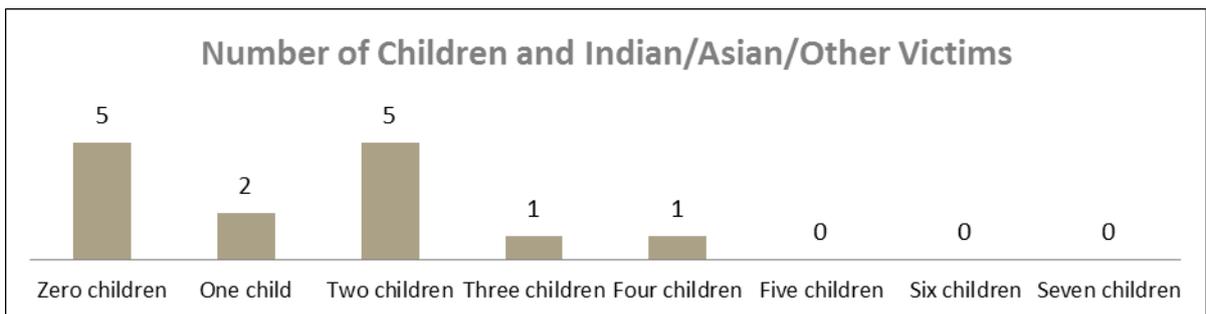
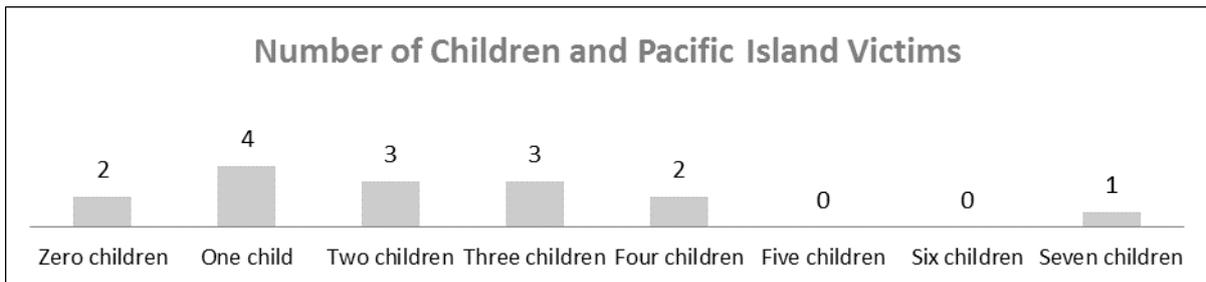
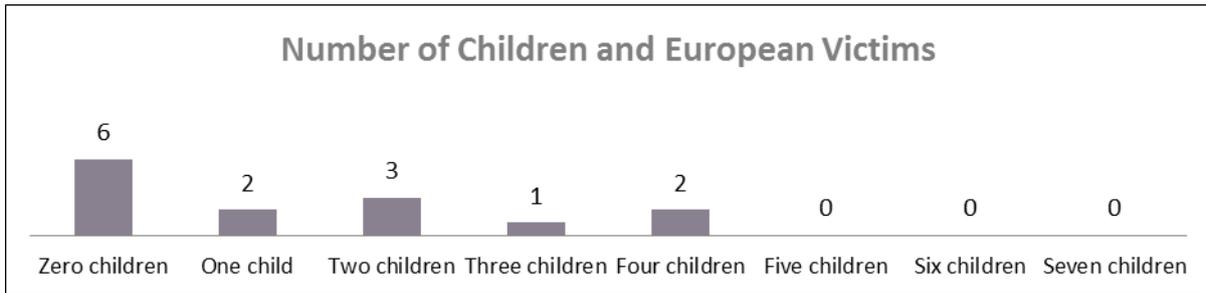
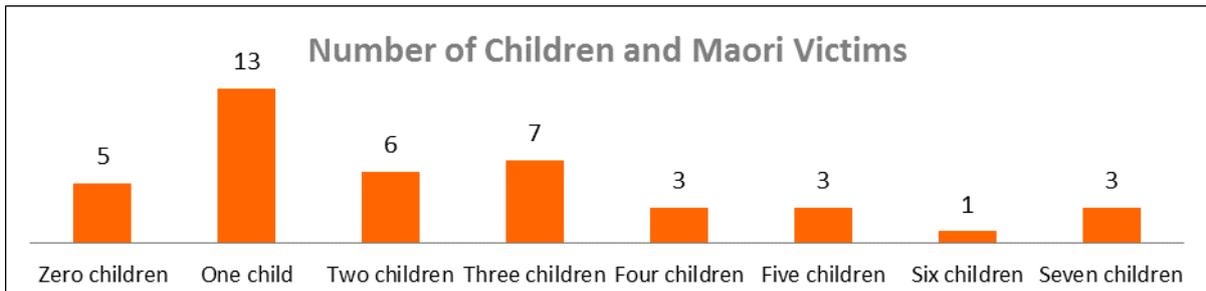
A large proportion of these children were pre-schoolers at the time of an occurrence, with 53% of them at the particularly vulnerable age of two years or younger.



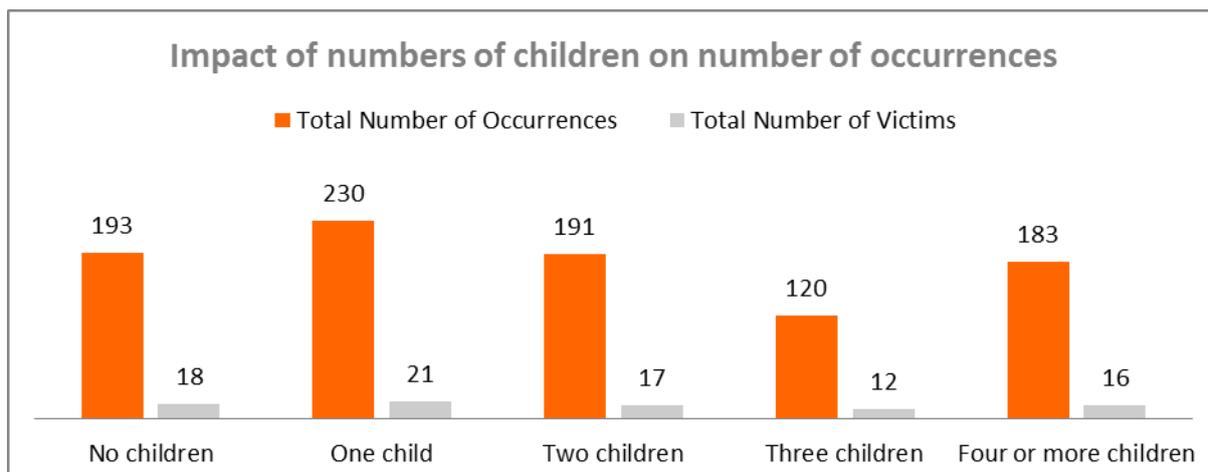
n= 172 children (total number of children in the research)

Group 3 victims (5 – 9 occurrences) have 83 children and Group 4 victims (10 – 24 occurrences) have a similar number of 89 children. However, the data suggests that that victims from the highest re-victimisation group are more likely to have very young children.

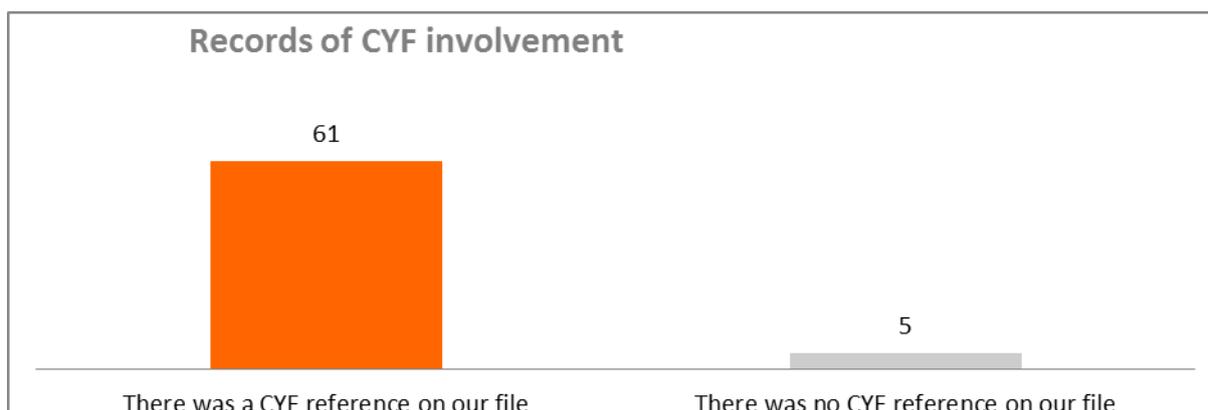
**57% of children in the care of victims with the highest rate of re-victimisation are aged under 2 years**



Of all ethnicities, Pakeha have the least children and are the least likely to have any children. Maori are the most likely to have children and more likely to have multiple children, with 28% of those with children having four or more. Having a child leads to women being more vulnerable, particularly when that child is young and dependent. Having multiple children means that women have far fewer options when considering any form of independence for themselves and their children – they can be effectively trapped.



This graph analyses the correlation between the number of children a victim has and the number of occurrences of victimisation they experience. The 84 victims in this study experienced 917 occurrences between them. The average number of occurrences for victims with no children was 10.7; with one child it was 11; two children 11.2; three children 10 and for those victims with four or more children it was 11.4 occurrences. It seems from this data that the number of children a victim has does not have significant impact on the number of occurrences experienced.



Of the 66 victims in this study who had children, the Shine case notes of 61 reveal that Child, Youth and Family was actively involved at some point with their children.

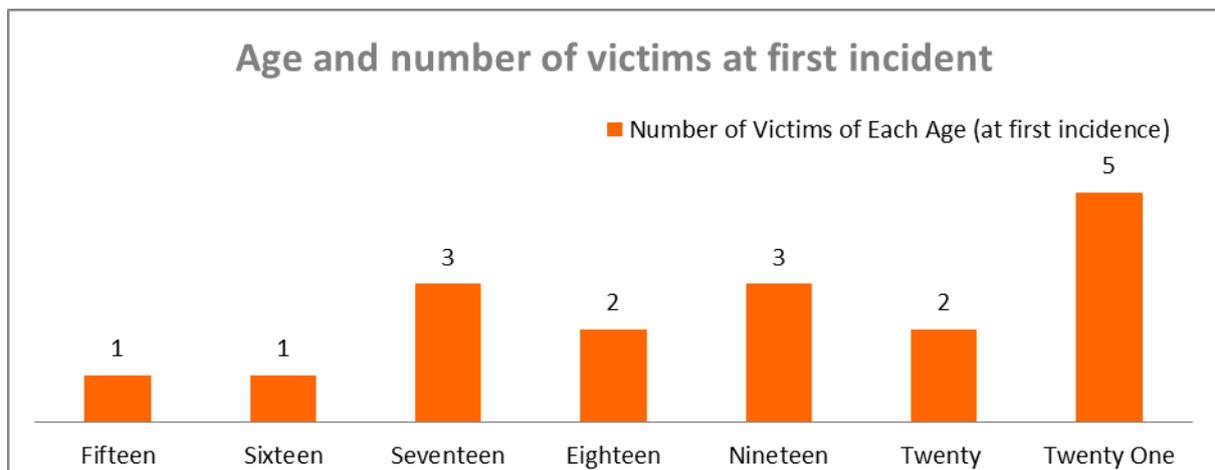
### Recommendations

1. Abused mothers are not able to protect and care for their children as well as they could when they are safe from further violence.
2. The co-relationship between partner abuse and child abuse is extremely high. NZ Police estimate this to be 70%. Prompt and pro-active attention should be taken by Police and Child, Youth and Family and local community services, to protect the children of high repeat victims from continued exposure to violence.
3. All parts of the justice sector need an awareness of just how vulnerable these children are to being the direct victims of violent abuse themselves and to their likely poor life outcomes. This awareness should guide their decision making.

## Young Victims

The average age of victim in this study of 84 highly victimised people was approximately 32 years old. Group 3 victims (5-9 victimisations) were aged just over 32, and Group 4 victims (10-24 victimisations) were nearly 32. The age of each person is based on their age when the first referral was made to Shine during the study period. The average age of Maori was 30.8 years, Pakeha 32.2, Pasifika victims was 35.1, and Indian/Asian/Other victims was 31.9 years of age.

In this study, which by its nature is uncovering disturbing trends, the numbers of very young victims who were repeatedly victimised was shockingly high. Of a total of 84 people in the high repeat sample, 19 were aged under 21 years old when the first occurrence took place - the youngest was 15 years old. Nine victims were Maori, three were Pakeha, three were Pasifika and four were Indian/Asian/Other in ethnicity. All were female and at 23% of the sample, this group of young women was nearly one in every four of the high repeat victims.



Between them these young women experienced a total of 192 occurrences, which is an average of 10 occurrences per person. There were 65 victims over 21 years old with 725 occurrences between them, which is an average of 11 per person. Considering that the average age of all 84 victims is around 32 years, many of the victims over the age of 21 years, must have been considerably older. In the circumstances, it would be expected that they would have 'had more time' to be victimised and would therefore, have had a significantly higher average number of victimisations than the younger victims.

However, there was a big difference in the number of occurrences individual victims 21 years old and under experienced. Four of the 19 young victims each had five occurrences – these women were two Maori, one Pacific Island and one Asian. In contrast, the victim with the most occurrences was a Maori woman with 24 occurrences – she had the most occurrences of the entire 513 victims in this study.

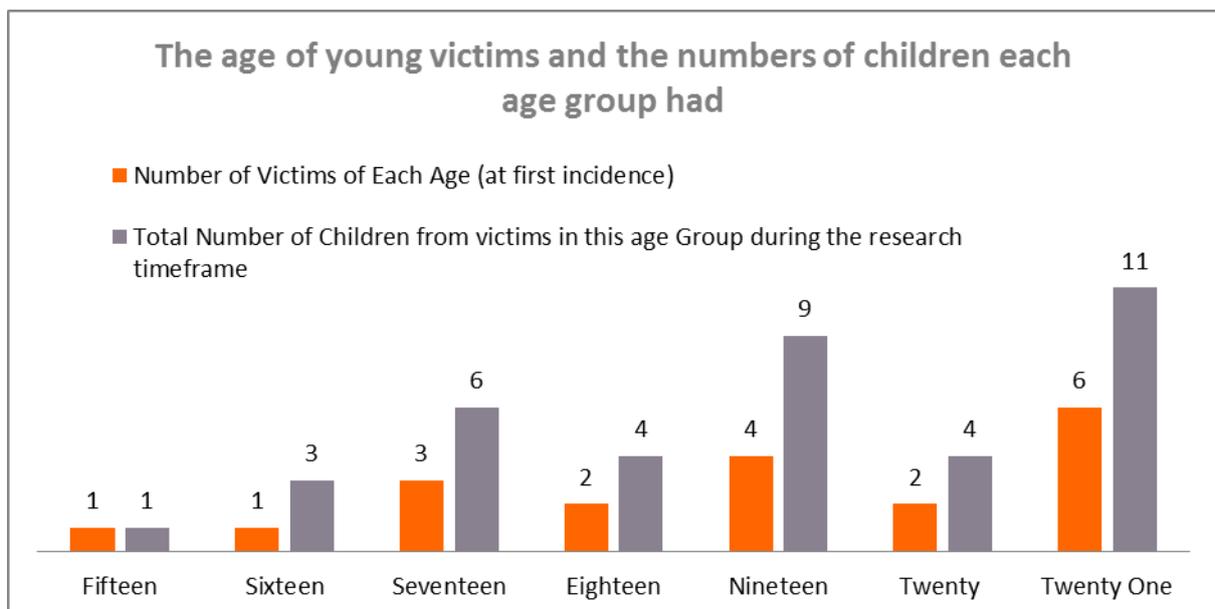
During the study period, these 19 young victims had a total of 34 offenders shared between them, averaging 1.79 offenders each. Most of these offenders (24) were (ex) partners and five offenders

were the relatives of the young victim. There was insufficient information on file to establish the relationship of the offender to the victim with the remaining five individuals.

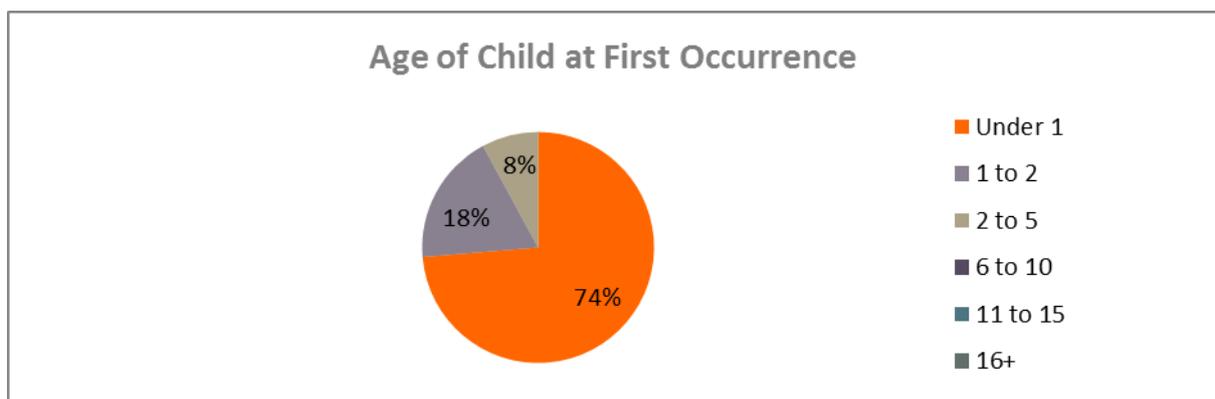


N = 38 children that victims had during the eight year research timeframe

17 of the young women had 38 children between them by the conclusion of the study period.



N (orange) = 19 victims (total young victims)    N (grey) = 38 children of young victims



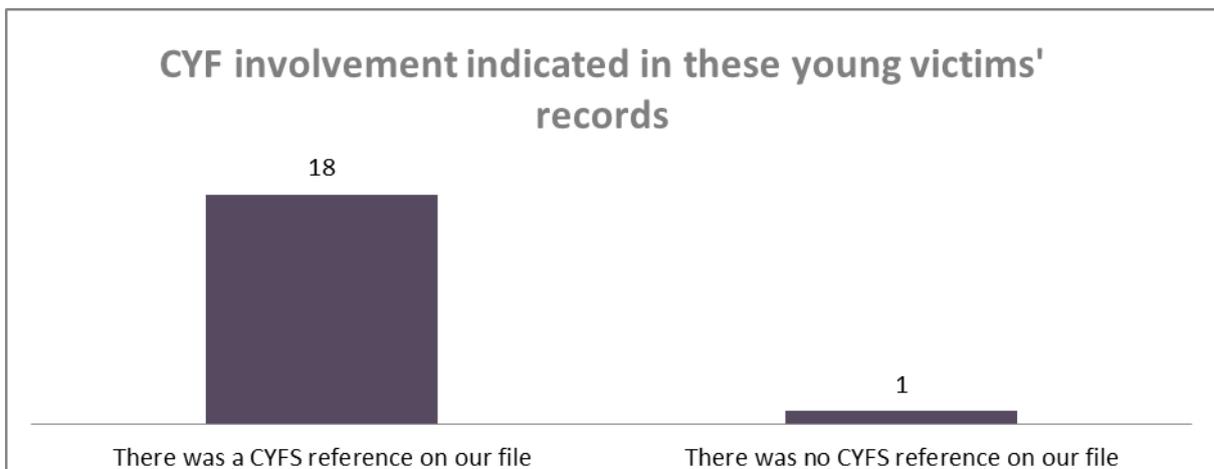
N= 38 total number of children

Unsurprisingly, these young mothers all had very young children in their care and some of the young women could be described as children themselves. In common with older mothers, all the young mothers would have struggled with the responsibilities of caring for small children, whilst living with frequent abuse from their partner. However, young women have less experience and maturity to draw on to cope with the hard work, necessity to learn new skills, tiredness and patience entailed in caring for infants. They needed considerable support, not terrorising.



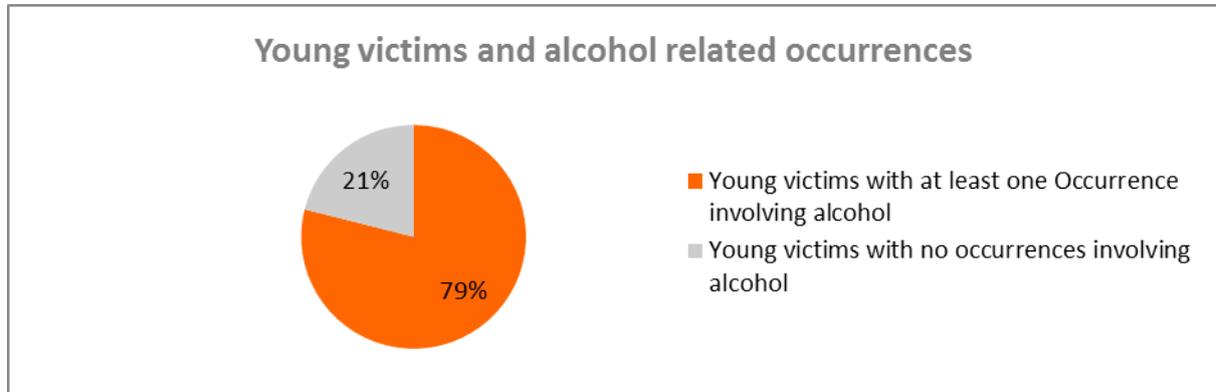
N= 19 total young victims

The young woman's offender was the father of almost two thirds of the children. However, 37% of the children were fathered by someone else, which places these children at greater risk of being the subject of physical abuse themselves.



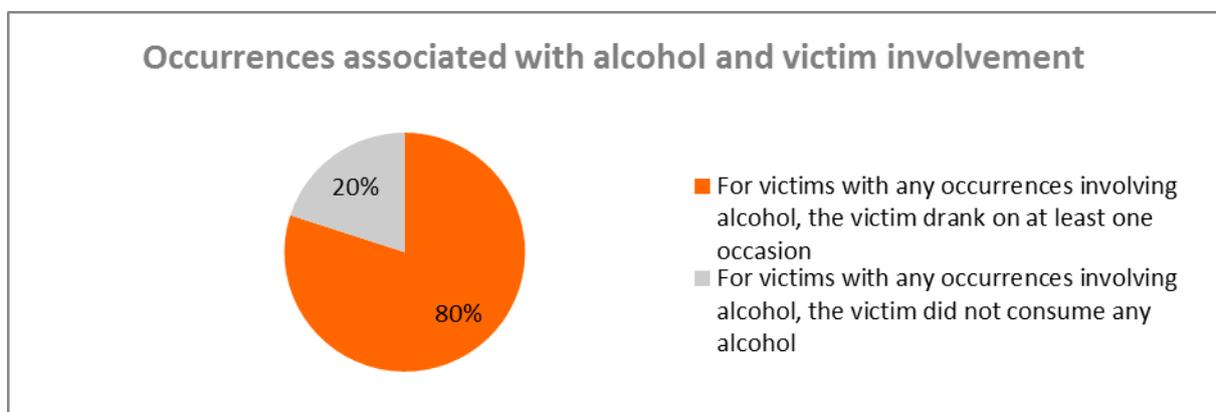
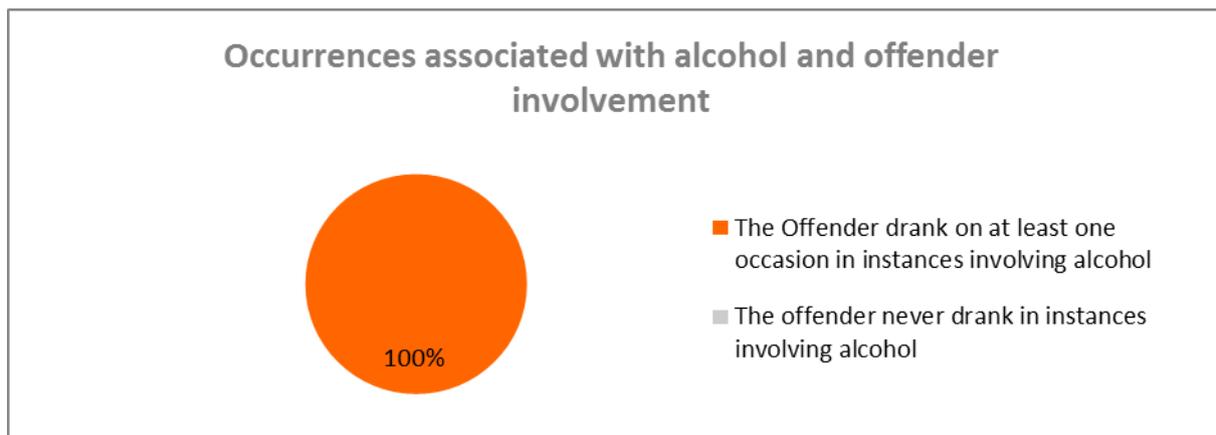
CYF has some level of involvement with all the young women who were mothers and one of the two women who was not. Some had been referred to CYF because they were so young themselves,

irrespective of whether or not they had children at the time. The one woman who had not been referred to CYF was a 21 year old Asian with no children.



N= 19 victims aged 21 or younger

Alcohol consumption is strongly associated with offending against young victims. Nearly 4 out of 5 of these young women have one or more victimisation when either the offender, the victim, or both parties had been drinking.



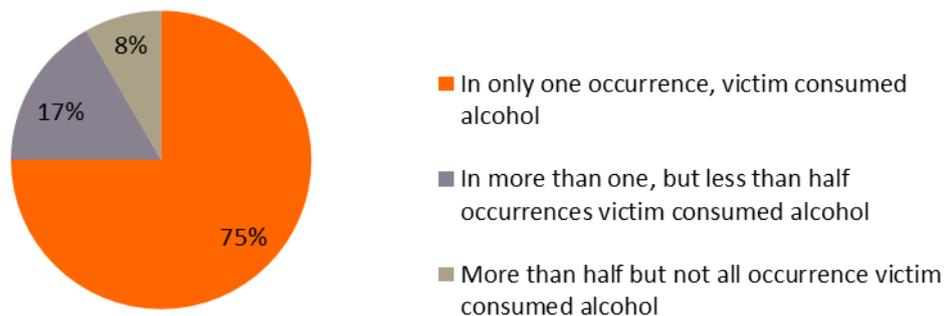
N= 15 victims aged 21 or under with at least one occurrence involving alcohol drunk by either party

### Occurrence and prevalence and offender consumption



N= 15 offender(s) of young victims who consumed alcohol at least once

### Occurrence and prevalence and victim consumption



N= 12 victims aged under 21 who consumed alcohol themselves at least once

When alcohol is associated with their victimisation, 80% of young victims have drunk alcohol themselves at least once. However, 75% of those only did this once.

**Nearly 1 in 4 of victims repeatedly victimised is under 21 years**  
**They were victimised nearly as much as older victims and many had several offenders**

**80% have infants, with most having multiple children**

**37% of children were not fathered by the primary offender**

**Alcohol is strongly associated with victimisation**

## Calls for assistance by those most victimised

Victims who are repeatedly victimised frequently feel completely demoralised, hopeless and fearful in the face of the continuous threat of further victimisation. Women in this situation frequently say that they feel as if nothing they, or anyone else can do will make any difference. Some reach a point where they consider that the situation will never change until either they or the offender dies.

In these circumstances, do victims of domestic abuse give up, or do they still call for help from the Police? This was considered a critical question to answer in this study and the records of the most victimised Group 4 victims were analysed.

When Police are called to respond to a reported domestic dispute they record data about the occurrence on a Family Violence report form, which was previously referred to as a POL 400 and is now one of a series of documents beginning with a POL 1310. Shine has received a copy of these forms since 1996 and for many years, has scanned them and electronically attached them to each victim's file.

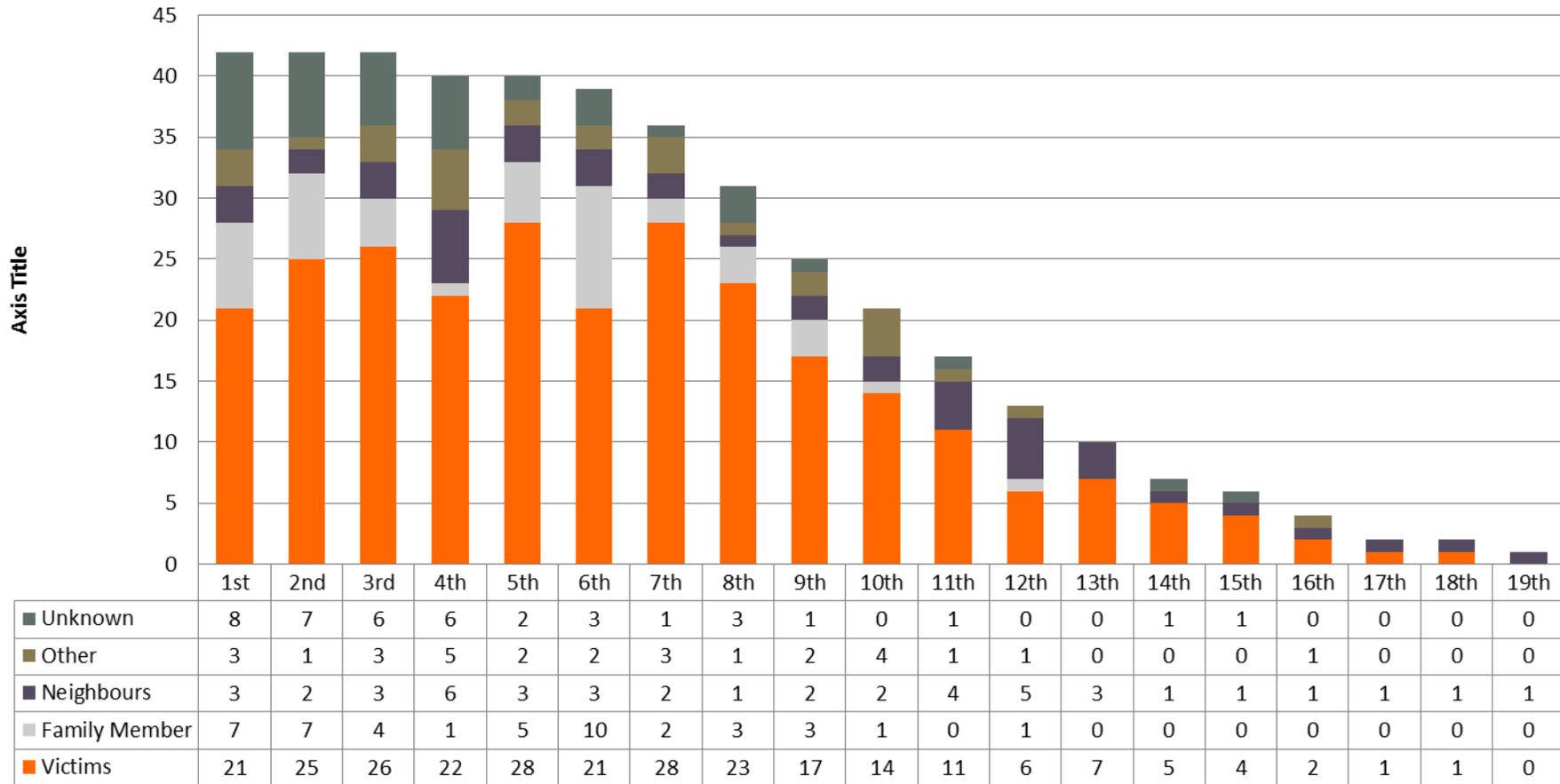
Victims who have been repeatedly victimised have files which contain a considerable amount and variety of information, which has provided the source data for this report. In many cases, information on a particular aspect is available from several different documents in the file. However, it is only the Police forms which contain information about who made the initial call alerting them to the domestic dispute occurring.

The 42 victims in Group 4 have a total of 644 occurrences between them, but only 420 POLs were found. This is unfortunate but 420 are 65% of the total and represent sufficient data to indicate trends relating to the source of calls seeking assistance from Police.

A major reason that explains why many are not available is that prior to mid-2008 the POLs were not scanned and attached to electronic records by Shine. Instead they were saved on hard copy files, which since then have been archived in a storage facility. Other explanations include the possibility that the POL was scanned incorrectly, or incorrectly attached to the client file, or never forwarded by Police.

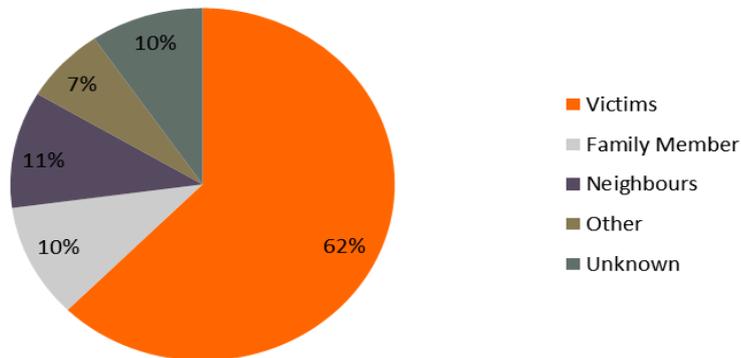
In 10% of cases the POL is available but there is no information recorded on the form about who contacted the Police. In this situation, the contact person has been coded as 'unknown' in this study.

## Who contacted the police in Group 4 occurrences?



N= 420 total POLS that are available for Group 4 Victims. Although these people have more occurrences than this, in many cases POLS are not available and so these occurrences have not been included in this graph. The occurrences are placed in chronological order for each victim, so '3<sup>rd</sup>' relates to the third chronological POL that is available for this victim. It is important to note that even though it is classed as '3<sup>rd</sup>', the victim may have had more than 3 occurrences at this point.

### Who contacted the police in Group 4 occurrences?

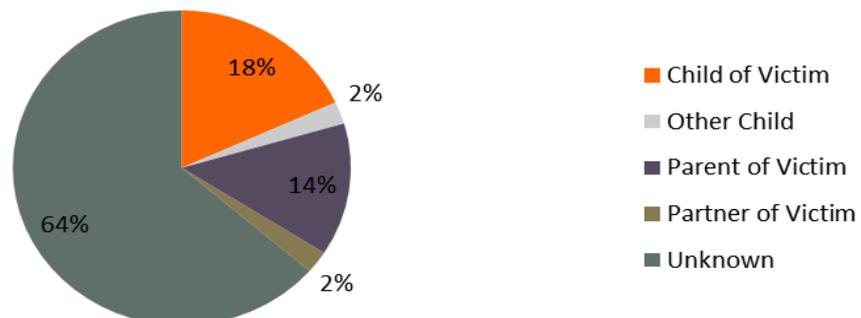


N = 420 occurrences with POL available

It is obvious from the data available that repeatedly victimised people are still actively seeking help from Police irrespective of how many times they have been victimised. Their calls are the single biggest source of reported occurrences. This is both good and worrying. It is good that they still trust that Police will help them make the violence stop at that time, despite the fact that the violence will seemingly inevitably occur again.

It is very worrying though, because it means that the victim has so much sole responsibility for help seeking - if she doesn't call, then likely no one else will. Even more perturbing about this is that victims of domestic abuse are very frequently prevented from making calls on a telephone by the offender, if they have a telephone at all, many don't. Unfortunately, as the situation is that it is mainly the victim herself calling, rather than other concerned and supportive people, then this is probably an indicator of how little victimisation is actually reported to Police.

### When it is a family member contacting the police, how are they related to the victim?



N= 44 occurrences where a family member has contacted the police

Family members called Police for assistance 44 times, or 10% of the occurrences. However, there is no consistent data recorded on the POL which would enable an adequate analysis of the relationship between the family member and the victim. Many cases when it has been noted that a family member called, there has not been any other descriptive detail about the family relationship, which is why the largest category of family members in this research is 'unknown'. Please note that when the category of 'partner' reporting the occurrence has been used, this partner was not the offender of the victim. Offenders have been included in the 'Other' category.

With nearly two thirds of this data about 44 occurrences impossible to analyse more deeply, there is little that can be learnt about family member callers.

The same problems preventing adequate data analysis are present with the 'Other' category with nearly half – 48% - having insufficient information describing who the caller was and their relationship to the victim. This category includes callers who were the offender, member of the public and a friend. The largest known group within this category are calls made by the offender.

A reasonable amount of the data for this area of research is missing or has insufficient detail. But an analysis of the 65% of the potential POLs that were available, there are two clear trends to be found.

**The most severely victimised victims of domestic abuse are the people most likely to call for assistance from Police:**

- **for help to come, they have to mainly rely on themselves**
- **they haven't given up hope that Police will help them, at least to stop the immediate violence**

**Nearly 3 in 4 calls to Police, are mainly from the victim, or other occupants in the house – neighbours and strangers provide little assistance**

### **Recommendations**

1. Silent, personal monitored alarms should be provided to as many high repeat victims of domestic abuse as their circumstances make appropriate, to enable them to seek help promptly and safely.
2. Police need to ensure that the homes of all high repeat victims are routinely flagged in their systems so that Police Communications staff are able to promptly respond to calls for help.
3. Police could consider ways they could abbreviate Communications screening questions so that high repeat victims need only talk very briefly in order to summon assistance.
4. Where appropriate, the United Kingdom 'Cocoon Watch' neighbourhood support model should be introduced to provide practical assistance to high repeat victims of domestic abuse.

## **What are the similarities and differences between male and female victims with one occurrence? What are similarities and differences between victims with one occurrence and those with five or more?**

This report has focussed on victims of domestic abuse who have been victimised on multiple occasions, of five or more times. Four out of ten people were only victimised once. It seems very important to find out if there were any significant differences between the two groups of victims. Obviously for most of the victims with one victimisation, Shine has limited records. But there may be some trend which could prove to be helpful as an indication of which people are least likely to need intensive support to stop further victimisation.

It should be noted however, that Shine's experience of working with victims for over twenty years is that a first and only occurrence coming to the notice of the police may be extremely serious and the victim in grave danger. It is also probable that for the great majority of victims in this study, that only a proportion of the number of times they have been victimised, has ever come to the notice of the Police.

Therefore, Shine approaches this analysis of any differences between the two groups of victims with considerable caution.

### **Ethnicity**

Of the total sample of 513 people in this study, 78% is composed of Pakeha, Pasifika and Maori - roughly a third each in number. People of other ethnicities are all represented in smaller numbers and together make up the remaining 26%.

Nearly four out of five Maori victims of domestic abuse will be re-victimised, so Maori are less likely to have only one occurrence. As a proportion, they are only 15% of all those victims experiencing just one occurrence. Nearly 45% of all Maori in the study were victimised five or more times. One in five Maori experience extreme levels of victimisation of ten or more times. As a proportion, Maori are 62% of all victims in this group.

One in five Pakeha are victimised 5 or more times and 44% of Pakeha victims experience only one occurrence. Only 3% of Pakeha experience the most extreme levels of victimisation of 10 or more occurrences.

One in four Pasifika are victimised five or more times and 41% of Pasifika victims experience only one occurrence. Only 5% of Pasifika experience the most extreme levels of victimisation of ten or more occurrences.

**2 in 5 Pakeha and Pasifika victims are victimised once**

**1 in 5 Pakeha and 1 in 4 Pasifika victims are victimised 5 or more times**

**Maori are least likely to be victimised once**

**4 in 5 Maori victims of domestic abuse will be re-victimised**

**45% of Maori will be victimised 5 or more times**

### Alcohol

Alcohol was consumed by 22% of victims with one occurrence. However, this percentage masks a significant difference between female and male victims - 16% of female victims had consumed alcohol, whereas 33% of male victims had.

It is complicated to make meaningful direct comparisons with the alcohol consumption of victims with one occurrence and those with five or more occurrences. This is primarily because of the sheer numbers of occurrences experienced by these repeatedly victimised people. For instance, what is the comparative significance between a victim whose alcohol consumption is associated with their only occurrence and a victim with twelve occurrences, who had drunk alcohol one time?

An in depth examination was made of the records of all 42 victims experiencing ten or more occurrences and a matching number of 42 victims (of the 92 in Group 3) who experienced between five and nine occurrences. Of the 917 occurrences experienced by these 84 people, 245 occurrences involved alcohol consumption by a victim. These 245 occurrences were shared by the 55 victims who consumed alcohol one or more times. These victims were almost all women. Alcohol consumed by the victim, was associated with 27% of the occurrences of victims experiencing five or more victimisations.

In total, 58.5% of victims experiencing five or more victimisations, drank alcohol on at least one occasion when they were victimised. But, as mentioned above, it is difficult to make direct comparisons between this percentage and the percentage of victims with one occurrence who drank alcohol – 22%.

Perhaps the only potentially useful comparison is that in:

- 22% of all Group 1 single occurrences, the victim drank alcohol.
- 27% of all Group 3 and 4 multiple occurrences, the victim drank alcohol.

Alcohol had been consumed by 35% of offenders against victims with one occurrence. There was a difference between the offenders against female and male victims, with nearly a third of female victims' offenders drinking, but 41% of male victims' offenders drank.

The sample of 84 victims with five or more occurrences, experienced a total of 917 occurrences between them. Of these, there were 353 occurrences where alcohol had been drunk by the offender.

Alcohol consumed by the offender, was associated with 38% of the occurrences of victims experiencing five or more victimisations.

**There is a strong association between reported domestic abuse and alcohol consumption by both victims and offenders.**

**Alcohol is more likely to be consumed by female victims who are repeatedly victimised – in 1 in 4 occurrences, the victim had drunk alcohol.**

**In total, 1 in 5 victims with one occurrence, drank. But there was a significant gender difference between male (33%) and female (16%) victims.**

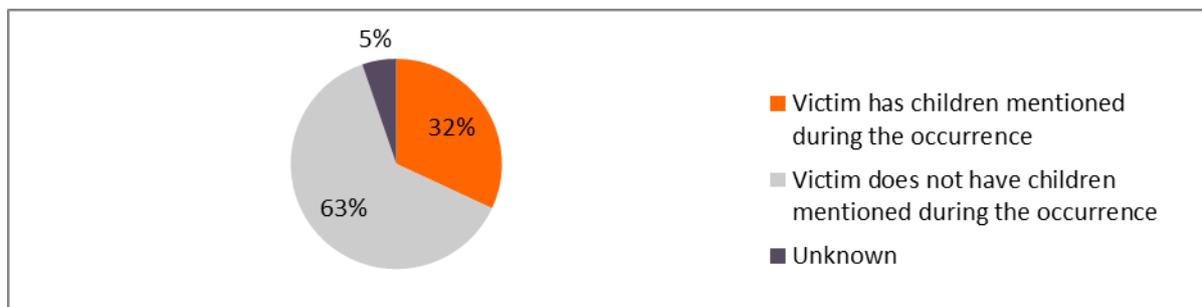
**35% of offenders of victims with one occurrence drank**

**The offender had drunk in 38% of the total occurrences against victims with five or more occurrences**

## Children

The presence or absence of children is a factor marking a very significant difference between victims experiencing one occurrence and those repeatedly victimised.

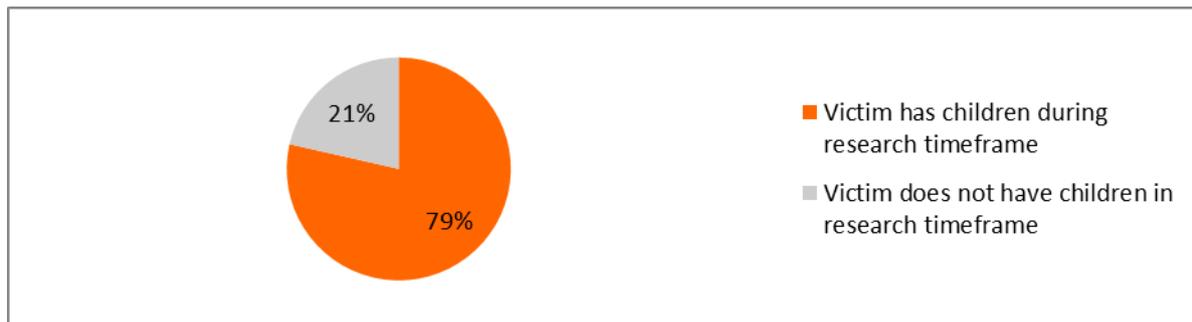
### Victims experiencing one occurrence



Percentage of victims experiencing one occurrence, who had children

Nearly one in every three victims, experiencing one occurrence, have children. Of the 199 victims in this group, 61 had a total of 112 children between them, which is an average of 1.8 children each. 22% of these children were aged under two years, with a total of 45% aged five years or under. Nearly one in three of the children (32%) were aged over eleven.

#### **Victims experiencing five or more occurrences**



Percentage of victims (in the sample of 84) experiencing five or more occurrences, who had children

Four in every five victims, experiencing five or more occurrences, have children. Of the 84 victims in this sample, 66 had 172 children between them which is an average of 2.6 children each. More than half (53%) of the children of highly victimised people, are aged under two years, with 67% aged five years and under. Only 13% are aged over eleven. It is also apparent that the more a person is victimised, the more likely they are to have very young children, with 57% of the children of those victims experiencing ten or more occurrences, aged under two years.

**33% of victims with one occurrence have children and 1 in 5 of these is under the age of 2 years.**

**Nearly 1 in 3 of their children is aged over 11.**

**The more a person is victimised, the more likely they are to have a child, to have multiple children and for those children to be very young and dependent.**

**80% of victims with five or more occurrences have children. Only 13% of the children are older than 11, but 53% are aged under 2 years.**

**This increases to nearly 3 in 5 (57%), of the children of the most victimised (10 or more victimisations), aged under two.**

## Gender and ethnicity

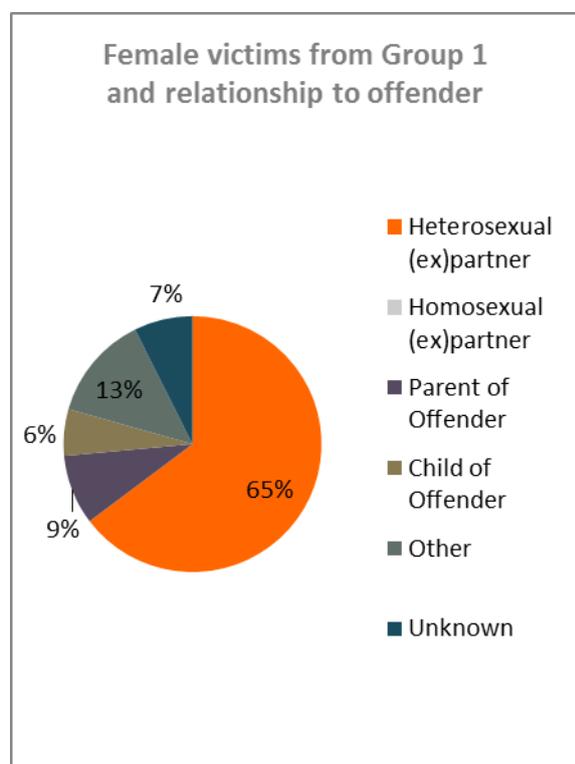
33% of victims experiencing one occurrence is male. 60% of all male victims experienced only one occurrence. In contrast, only 33% of women were victimised once.

95% of victims experiencing five or more occurrences is female. 31% of all female victims experienced five or more victimisations. In contrast, only 7% of male victims were victimised five or more times.

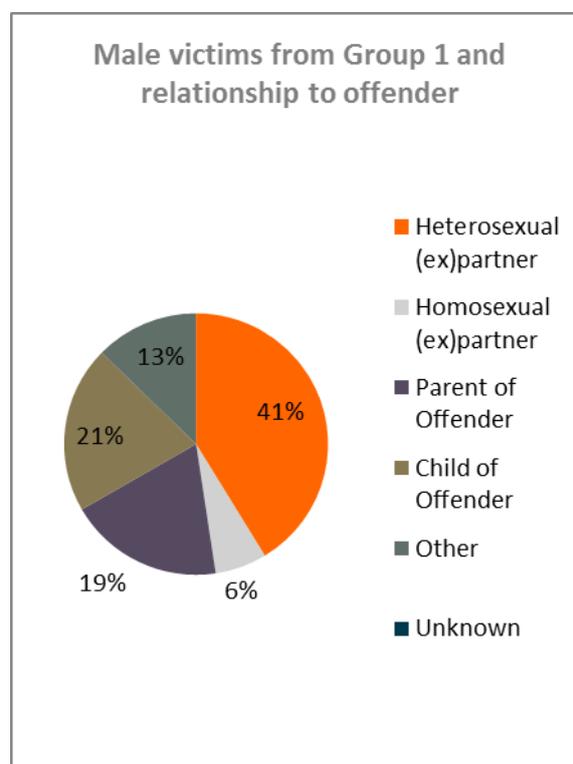
Nearly 40% of male victims in Group 1 are Pakeha, compared to nearly 30% of Pakeha female victims. 19% of male victims in Group 1 are Maori, compared to 13% of female victims. 24% of male victims in Group 1 are Pasifika, compared to 29% of female victims.

No useful information is gained from a comparison of association of gender and ethnicity between victims in Group 1 and those in Groups 3 and 4.

## Gender and offending



N = 136 females in Group 1



N = 63 males in Group 1

Within Group 1 there are significant differences between male and female victims in the nature of their relationships to their offenders.

The offender is female victims' heterosexual (ex) partner in 65% of cases – almost 2 in 3 victims is offended against by her current or former partner. No homosexual relationships were discovered in the records. The offender is the male victim's heterosexual (ex) partner in 41% of cases and when added to the 6% of victims who were offended against by their homosexual partner, this is 47% who were offended against by a current, or former partner.

Group 1 male victims had more likelihood of being offended against by a close family member (40%) or another person (13%) – making a total of 53% - as they were by a current, or former partner (47%). Group 1 female victims were most likely to be offended against by their current, or former partner, but 1 in 3 was offended against by a close family member or other person.

Making comparisons between victims in Group 1 who had one occurrence with one offender involved, and victims in Groups 3 and 4, who were victimised on multiple occasions is complex.

Across the entire 84 people in the sample of Group 3 and 4 victims, only 43% had one offender. The majority had multiple offenders. However, whilst many of these victims had multiple offenders, the majority, 69 people (82%), had only one 'primary' or 'main' offender. Of these, 36 victims had only one, or 'primary' offender. The victimisation of the other 33 has been done mainly by one offender, although other offenders have sometimes victimised them too. Of these primary or main offenders, 87% are the former, or current partner of the victim.

All three male victims, who were victimised multiple times, were offended against by their female (ex) partner.

**Male victims with one occurrence are slightly more likely to be offended against by a person other than their (ex) partner.**

**2 in 3 female victims with one occurrence, are offended against by their (ex) partner.**