



## Fact Sheet: Statistics about sexual assault

- **1 in 5 women** and **1 in 20 men** have experienced sexual violence since the age of 15 years (Australian Bureau of Statistics Personal Safety Survey, 2006)
- **1 in 3 women** and **1 in 6 men** will be sexually abused before the age of 16 (Fergusson & Mullen, 1999)
- **93 per cent of offenders are male** (National Statistics - Crime & Safety Survey, 2002)
- **Intimate partner violence** is the leading contributor of preventable death, disability and illness in Victorian women aged 15-44. It is responsible for more of the disease burden than high blood pressure, smoking or obesity (Vic Health, 2004)
- **1 in 6 reports** to Police of rape and **less than 1 in 7** reports of incest or sexual penetration of a child result in prosecution (Sexual Offences: Law & Procedure Final Report, Victorian Law Reform Commission, 2004)
- **Family violence affects 1 in 5 women** in Victoria (Victorian Government, Office of the Premier, A New Approach to Reduce Family Violence, Media Release, 27 April, 2007)
- **Family Violence costs Australia** about \$8 billion per year, a substantial proportion of which is borne by the victims themselves (Vic Health, 2004)
- An estimated **27 per cent of children** who are in homes where violence was being experienced by a current partner had witnessed the violence (Australian Bureau of Statistics Personal Safety Survey, 2006)
- **14 per cent** (1 in 7) of women sexually assaulted by a current partner and 16 per cent (just over 1 in 6) by any other male **reported to the Police** (Australian component of International Violence Against Women Survey, 2004)
- In 2005 an estimated **44,100 persons aged 18 years and over were victims** of at least one sexual assault. This is a victimisation prevalence rate of 0.3 per cent. Approximately 72,000 incidents of sexual assault were experienced by these victims (National Crime & Safety Surveys, 2005)
- **80 per cent of offenders** sentenced in the past 6 years received a custodial sentence. The average was 4 years 6 months - 5 years 6 months. Median was 5 years. The sentences handed down to offenders ranged from as low as 12 months to highest 20 years (Sentencing Advisory Council web site, [www.sentencingcouncil.vic.gov.au](http://www.sentencingcouncil.vic.gov.au) 2008)

## Age and Gender

- **Girls between the ages of 10 and 14** were the greatest proportion of victim/survivors (A/C based on Police Data).
- **Young women between 15 and 24 years** were the second largest category (A/C based on Police Data).
- **Older women** experience violence and abuse at higher rates compared to older men (Quadara 2007).

## Women with a disability

- Statistics indicate that 90% of women with intellectual disabilities have been sexually abused and 68% of women with an intellectual disability will be subjected to sexual abuse before they reach 18 (Frohman, 2002).
- Victorian Police data shows **just over a quarter of all victims** were identified as having a disability.
- Of the above group **15.6% had a psychiatric disability** or mental health issue and **5.9% had an intellectual disability**. (Heenan & Murray, 2007).

## Women in custodial settings

- In Australia **90% of Aboriginal women** and **82% of non-Aboriginal women** in prison have been sexually abused at some point in their lives. (Kilroy 2000).

## Indigenous women

- Indigenous women are **over represented** as victims of interpersonal violence.

## People living in rural and remote Australia



- People living **outside of capital cities and major cities** are often excluded from large scale surveys.
- However Police figures show that **interpersonal violence** per head of population **increases** the further one lives from a capital city. This is true of all states, but is less marked in Victoria (Hogg & Carrington, 2006).

### References

- Australian Bureau of Statistics. 2002 & 2005, 'Crime and Safety, Australia', Canberra, Cat. # 4509.0.
- Australian Bureau of Statistics. 2006, 'Personal Safety, Australia', Canberra, Cat # 4906.0
- Fergusson, D.M. and Mullen, P.E. 1999, 'Childhood sexual abuse: An evidence based perspective', Sage, London.
- Frohman, C. 2002, 'There is no justice - THERE'S JUST US, The Status of Women with disabilities in Australia, Women With Disabilities Australia'. (WWDA), Canberra
- Heenan, M., & Murray, S. 2007, 'Study of reported rapes in Victoria 2000-2003'. Summary research report. Melbourne: Statewide Steering Committee to Reduce Sexual Assault.
- Hogg, R., & Carrington, K. (2006). Policing the Rural Crisis. Federation Press.
- Kilroy, D. 2000, 'When Will You See The Real Us? Women In Prison'. Sisters Inside Inc. Queensland.
- Mouzos, J and Makkai, T. 2004, 'Women's Experiences of Male Violence: Findings from the Australian Component of the International Violence Against Women Survey (2004)'. ARROW Discovery Service, Australia.
- Quadara, A. 2007. 'Considering "elder abuse" and sexual assault'. ACSSA Aware, 15. Melbourne: Australian Institute of Family Studies.
- VicHealth 2004, The Health Costs of Violence: Measuring the Burden of Disease Caused by Intimate Partner Violence, A summary of findings, Victorian Health Promotion Foundation, Melbourne.
- Sentencing Advisory Council, 2007. 'Sentencing snapshot No. 26: Sentencing trends for rape in the higher courts of Victoria, 2001-02 to 2005-06 ', State of Victoria, Australia
- Victorian Government, Office of the Premier, 2007. 'A New Approach to Reduce Family Violence' Media Release, 27th April 2007
- Victorian Law Reform Commission, 2004. 'Sexual Offences: Law and Procedure Final Report'. Victorian Law Reform Commission, Victoria