

VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN: INFORMATION AND FACTS 2015-2016

According to the Victorian *Family Violence Protection Act 2008*, family violence is behaviour by a person towards a family member that is physically or sexually abusive; emotionally or psychologically abusive; economically abusive; threatening; coercive; or in any other way controls or dominates the family member, causing them to fear for their safety or wellbeing or that of another family member; or behaviour by a person that causes a child to hear or witness, or otherwise be exposed to the effects of behaviour referred to above.

The City of Yarra has a population of 89,151, of which 45,645 are women (34,995 are women aged 25 and over) and 20,413 are children and young people aged 24 years and under (10,650 female).¹

In Yarra, family violence incidents increased from 781² in 2014–15 to 972 in 2015–16 (an increase of 24.5%) and the rate increased from 876.0 per 100,000 to 1053.9 per 100,000.³ In comparison, in Victoria, family violence incidents increased by 10% from 70,902⁴ in 2014–15 to 78,012 in 2015–16, and the rate increased from 1,194.15⁵ per 100,000 to 1,288.7 per 100,000.

OFFENCES FROM FAMILY VIOLENCE

In the 12-month period of 2015–16, in Yarra, 37.9% of all recorded assaults arose from family violence. Family violence was the context for 19.6% of all sexual offences.

OFFENCES ARISING FROM FAMILY VIOLENCE REPORTED INCIDENTS IN YARRA, 2015–16

	Number of offences from family violence	Proportion of all corresponding Yarra offences
Assault and related offences	290	37.9%
Rape and Indecent Assault offences	31	20.7%

Source: LEAP Database provided by the Crime Statistics Agency (where numbers are shown as ≤3, 2 was used for calculation purposes).

FAMILY VIOLENCE

This section presents family violence statistics for Yarra obtained from Victoria Police records of reported incidents during 2015–16.⁶

Many women experiencing family violence do not report this to the police; therefore, the Local Government Area (LGA) figures from Victoria Police are likely to underestimate the extent of the problem.

Yarra Family Violence Reported Incidents for 2015–16

- On average, 19 incidents of family violence were reported to police every week.
- The total number of incidents reported in Yarra was 972. The total number of reported incidents in the Northern Metropolitan Region (NMR)⁷ was 12,149 and 78,012 in Victoria.
- This is a rate of 1053.9 per 100,000 population, compared to 1,206.8 per 100,000 for the NMR and 1,288.7 per 100,000 for Victoria.⁸
- Females (73.7%) made up the majority of victims.
- Males (77%) were the majority of perpetrators.
- Where Yarra family violence victims reported that they were fearful or very fearful, 84.5% (317) were female.
- 70.6% of victimised women were aged between 15 and 44 years.
- Children were present at 262 reported incidents (27%) – a rate of 284.1 per 100,000, compared to 454.4 for the NMR and 425.5 in Victoria.⁹
- Charges were laid in 400 cases, giving a rate of 433.7 per 100,000 (compared to 482.5 in the NMR and 511.5 in Victoria). A combined total of 266 Family Violence Intervention Orders (IVOs) and Family Violence Safety Notices (FVSNs) were issued, giving a rate of 288.4 per 100,000 (compared to 374.2 in the NMR and 378.1 in Victoria).¹⁰

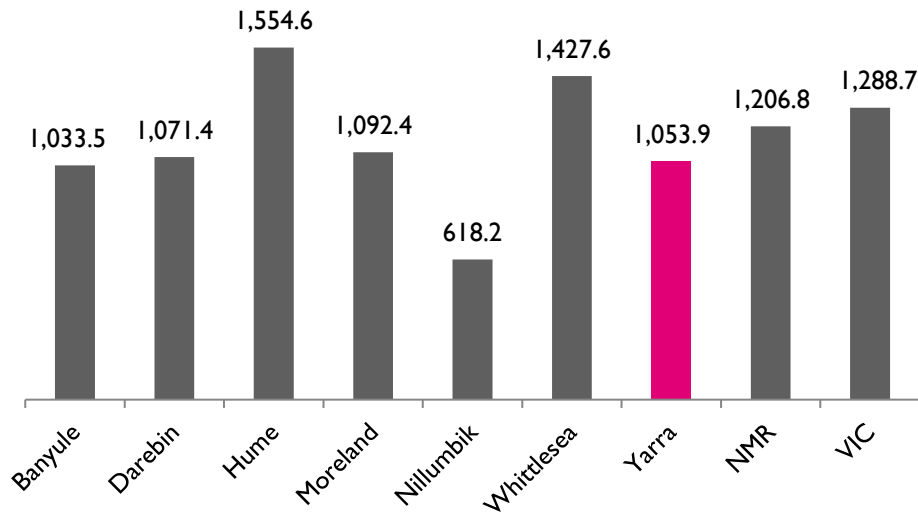
INTIMATE PARTNER VIOLENCE

Although the proportions of male victims and female perpetrators of family violence seem to correspond, it is incorrect to assume that this represents males victimised by their female partners as:¹¹

- the definition of family violence is broader than 'intimate partner violence' (IPV) and includes a range of relationships such as elder, father-to-son, and mother-in-law to daughter-in-law abuse, and
- where women do perpetrate violence against their intimate partner, the violence is not an equal violence.¹²

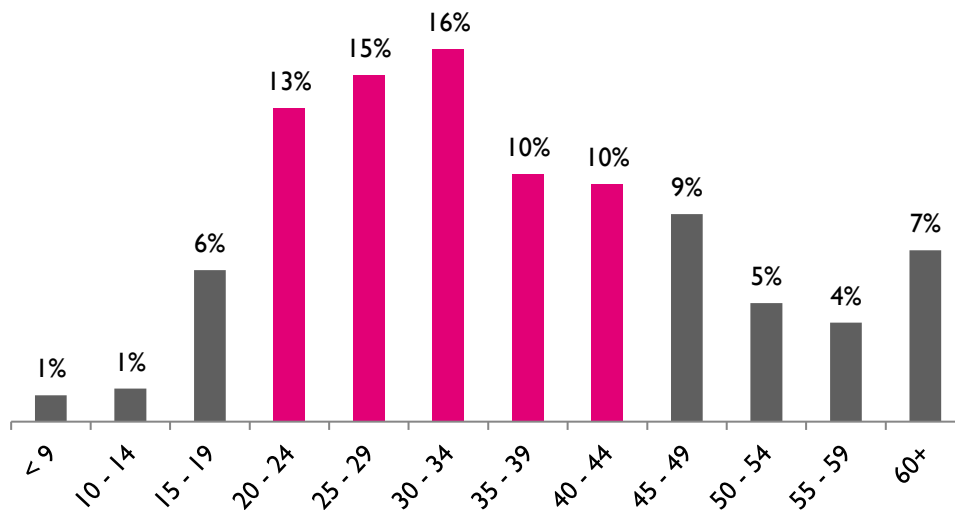
When Victoria Police family violence statistics are limited to IPV¹³ in four out of every five incidents, the victim is female. In 2015–16, in the NMR, 14,920 persons were involved in IPV. Half, or 7,435, were noted as the Affected Family Member (AFM), of whom 82.3% were female. The other half were noted as the 'other party' (or perpetrator) and 82.1% of these were male. Totals include 23 AFMs and 53 other parties whose sex is not specified. In Yarra, 497 males were perpetrators (81.7%) and 487 females were victims (80.1%). 83.6% of victimised women who suffered IPV were aged between 15 and 44 years.

CHART 1: FAMILY VIOLENCE REPORTED INCIDENTS RATE PER 100,000, 2015–16



Source: Crime Statistics Agency (2016). Data tables – Family Incidents.

CHART 2: AGE DISTRIBUTION OF FEMALE VICTIMS IN YARRA, 2015–16



Source: LEAP Database provided by the Crime Statistics Agency.

¹Sex-disaggregated population data accessed 03/10/2016 from: (Cat. 3235) Population by Age and Sex, Regions of Australia, 2015. <http://www.abs.gov.au/AUSSTATS/abs@nsf/DetailsPage/3235.02015?OpenDocument>.

²Crime Statistics Agency LEAP data is subject to variation from year to year due to QA measures and outcomes from the justice system.

³In order to be consistent with the population data used by the Crime Statistics Agency, all rates are calculated using figures from the Victoria In Futures program, August 2015. The population figure for Banyule in this data is 127,430.

⁴As Crime Statistics Agency LEAP data is subject to variation, the figure for 2015/16 provided in the current statistics is different to the 2014/15 figure in the police data provided in 2014/2015.

⁵As above.

⁶Purchased data extracted from Crime Statistics Agency LEAP on 18th July 2016 and subject to variation. Produced by Crime Statistics Agency, Victoria Police, July 2016.

⁷The NMR covers seven LGAs: Banyule, Darebin, Hume, Moreland, Nilfumbik, Whittlesea and Yarra.

⁸Crime Statistics Agency (2016); Data tables – Family Incidents. Retrieved from <https://www.crimestatistics.vic.gov.au/crime-statistics/latest-crime-data/family-incidents-0> (accessed 18/10/2016).

⁹Purchased data extracted from Crime Statistics Agency LEAP on 18th July 2016 and subject to variation. Produced by Crime Statistics Agency, Victoria Police, July 2016.

¹⁰Purchased data extracted from Crime Statistics Agency LEAP on 18th July 2016 and subject to variation. Produced by Crime Statistics Agency, Victoria Police, July 2016.

¹¹VicHealth (2011). *Preventing Violence against Women in Australia: Research Summary*. Carlton South: VicHealth, p. 3.

¹²There are very few indications that women subject their male partners to the same level of severe, continuing and escalating violence as that which men perpetrate against their female partners. World Health Organization (2002) *World Health Report on Violence and Health*. Geneva: WHO, p. 94.

¹³The term 'intimate partner' is defined by the Crime Statistics Agency in the data purchased in August 2015 as including 'Boyfriend/Girlfriend, Defacto, Divorced, Married and Separated'.

¹⁴The Crime Statistics Agency (CSA's) definition of sexual offences is broad, including offences relating to sexting, pornography and child pornography.

¹⁵The use of the terms 'victim reports', 'sexual offence victim reports' and 'alleged offender incidents' is recommended by the Crime Statistics Agency. These are the most accurate terms as, for example, one alleged offender may have multiple incidents, and one victim may have multiple victim reports within the same reference period.

SEXUAL OFFENCES

Police records of sexual offences¹⁴ (including offences relating to sexting, pornography and child pornography) are another measure of the extent of violence against women. As with family violence, recorded offences are likely to underestimate the extent of the problem. For the 2015–16 period in Yarra:

- On average, 3 sexual assault offences were recorded by police every week.
- Females (83.2%) made up the majority of victim reports.¹⁵
- 35.2% of female victims were aged less than 25 years.
- Males comprised 95.3% alleged offender incidents.

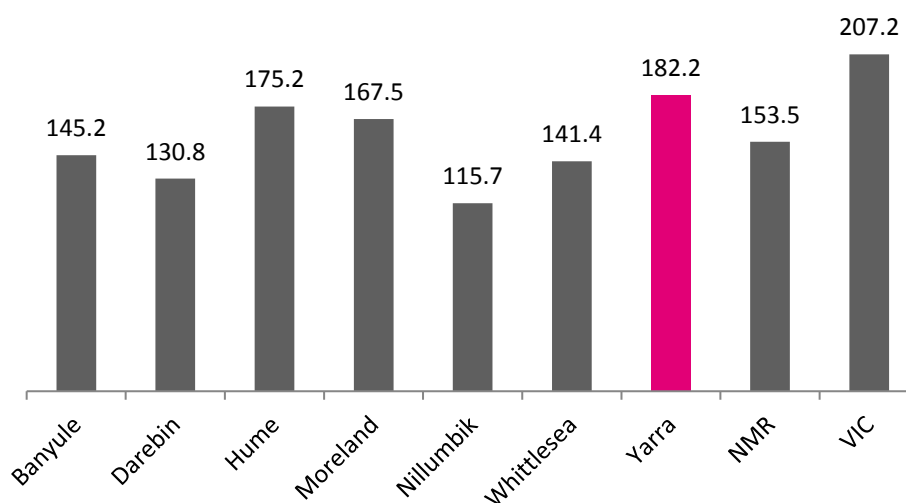
Yarra Recorded Sexual Offences 2015–16

- There were 168 sexual offences recorded – this is a rate of 182.2 per 100,000 population, compared to 153.5 per 100,000 for the NMR and 207.2 per 100,000 for Victoria.
- The total number of recorded sexual offences in the NMR was 1,545 and 12,545 in Victoria.

Yarra Rape and Indecent Assault 2015–16

- On average, 3 rape and indecent assault offences were recorded by police every week.
- Females (83%) made up the majority of victim reports.
- 29.8% of female victims were aged less than 25 years.
- Males comprised 94.6% alleged offender incidents.

CHART 3: SEXUAL OFFENCES RATE PER 100,000, 2015–16



Source: LEAP Database provided by the Crime Statistics Agency.