

NDARC

National Drug &
Alcohol Research Centre

The Difference is Research

Violence sex and drugs

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UNSW
SYDNEY

Australia's
Global
University

OVERVIEW

Violence is defined as "the intentional use of physical force or power, threatened or actual, against oneself, another person, or against a group or community, which either results in or has a high likelihood of resulting in injury, death, psychological harm, maldevelopment, or deprivation."

World Health Organisation

- What is the relationship between sex (gender) and violence
- What lies behind this pattern with respect to domestic violence
- Way forward

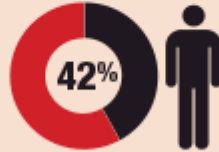
Violence Prevalence

Source: ABS

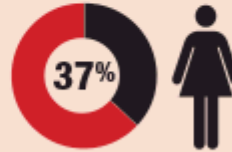


2 in 5 people (39% or 7.2 million) aged 18 years and over had experienced **violence**¹ since the age of 15.

This included **42%** of men (3.8 million)



and **37%** of women (3.4 million).



¹ Includes physical and/or sexual violence.

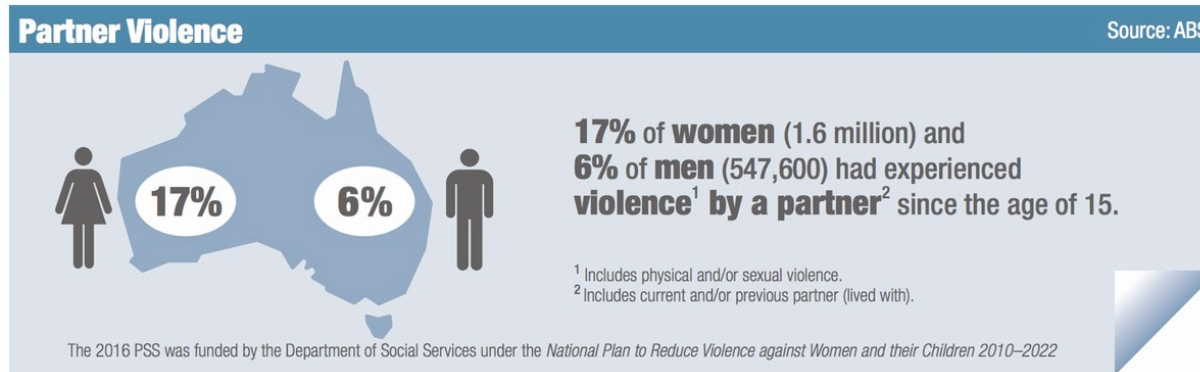
The 2016 PSS was funded by the Department of Social Services under the *National Plan to Reduce Violence against Women and their Children 2010–2022*

- Personal Safety Survey ABS, 30,000 households face to face 2016
- Four in ten men (41% or 3.7 million) and three in ten women (31% or 2.9 million) experienced physical violence.
- One in five women (18% or 1.7 million) and one in twenty men (4.7% or 428,800) experienced sexual violence.

PARTNER VIOLENCE

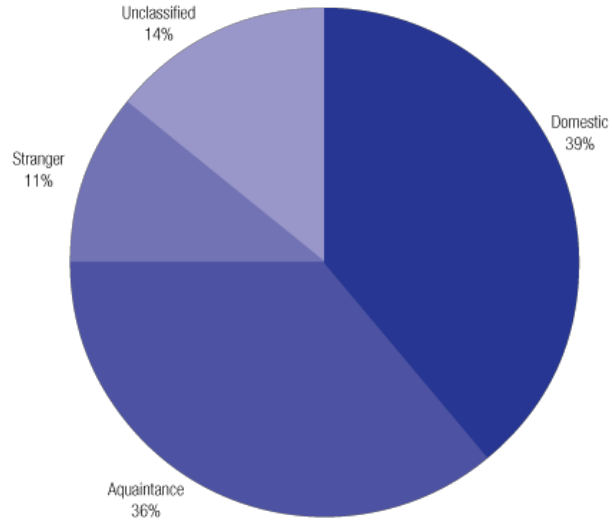
Overall, the proportion of Australians who report that they experienced violence in the past year has declined over time.

However partner violence towards women remains high.

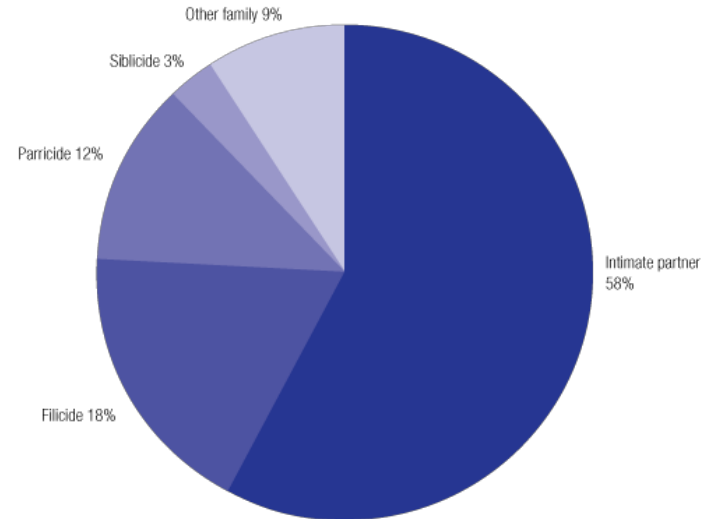


HOMICIDES

Homicide incidents by classification, 2010–12 (%)
n=236



Domestic homicide incidents by sub-classification, 2010–12 (%) n=243



Type of homicide by sex of victims, 2010–2012

	Male victim (n=328)		Female victim (n=182)	
	n	%	n	%
Domestic				
Intimate partner	26	24	83	76
Child	21	50	21	50
Father	11	48	12	52
Sibling	5	83	1	17
Other family homicide	12	75	4	25
Subtotal Domestic	75	38	121	62
Acquaintance homicide	154	81	37	19
Stranger homicide	44	85	8	15
Unclassified	55	77	16	23
Total	328	64	182	36

Substance use in homicide incidents, 2010–2012

	n	%
<i>Alcohol</i>		
Victim drinking	144	30
Offender drinking	115	26
Any alcohol use	179	37
Victim drinking unknown	138	29
Offender drinking unknown	249	56
<i>Drugs</i>		
Victim used drugs	92	19
Offender used drugs	54	12
Any drug use	101	21
Victim drug use unknown	174	39
Offender drug use unknown	285	40

NB substance use by the victim is more easily identified through post-mortem toxicological tests, whereas for the offender, identification of drug use may be based on the subjective assessment of the investigating officers for which there is not usually any toxicological confirmation.



- Internationally violence against women and girls is one of the “*most prevalent human rights violations in the world.*”
- *No social, economic or national boundaries. Worldwide, an estimated one in three women will experience physical or sexual abuse in her lifetime’.*
- Central element is an ongoing pattern of behaviour aimed at controlling a partner through fear, for example by using behaviour which is violent and threatening.
- In most cases, the violent behaviour is part of a range of tactics to exercise power and control over women and their children, and includes physical, sexual, emotional and psychological abuse.



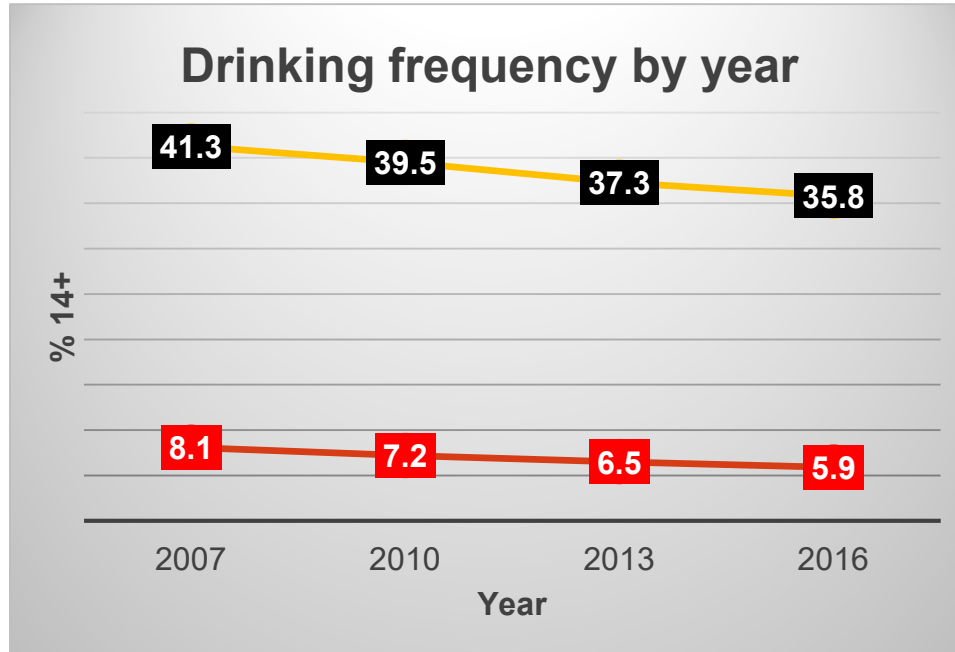
CONTEMPORARY AUSTRALIA

- One woman killed by a current or recent partner on a weekly basis.
- Two in five assaults report to police are family or domestic violence related.
- Women more than three times more likely than men to experience violence from an intimate partner and five times more likely than men to require medical attention or hospitalisation
- Domestic violence remains one of the leading causes of homelessness,
 - one third of all clients receiving assistance from specialist homelessness services. These women don't leave homelessness but cycle in and out.



ALCOHOL CONSUMPTION

SOURCE: 2016 NDSHS

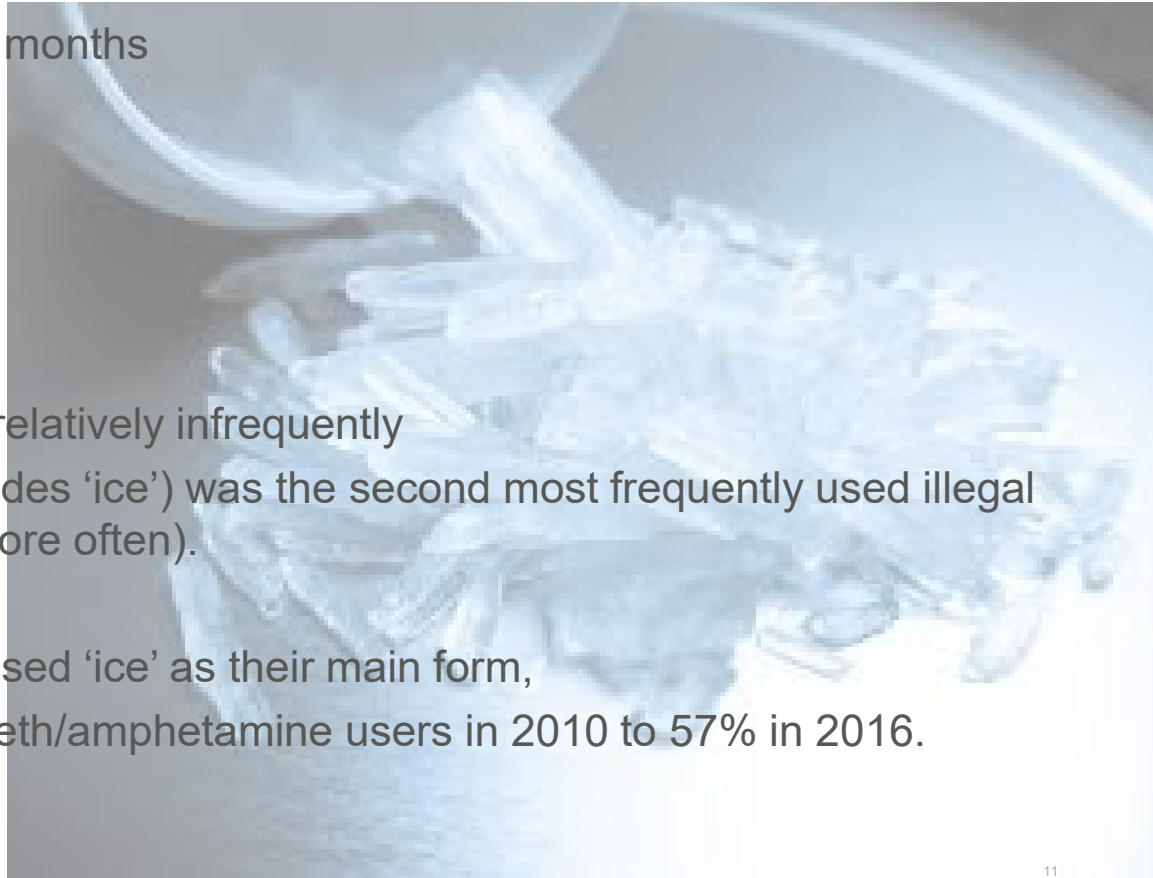


Yellow=weekly, **red**=daily

ILLICIT DRUG USE 2016 NATIONAL DRUG STRATEGY HOUSEHOLD SURVEY

Most commonly used in the past 12 months

- cannabis (10.4%),
 - cocaine (2.5%),
 - ecstasy (2.2%) and
 - meth/amphetamines (1.4%).
-
- Ecstasy and cocaine were used relatively infrequently
 - Meth/amphetamines (which includes 'ice') was the second most frequently used illegal drug after cannabis (weekly or more often).
-
- Most meth/amphetamine users used 'ice' as their main form,
 - increasing from 22% of recent meth/amphetamine users in 2010 to 57% in 2016.



ALCOHOL INCREASES AGGRESSION

Alcohol has the strongest evidence base and is known to increase aggression

Not all people who drink become aggressive

In comparison with violence where no alcohol is involved, alcohol-related violence is associated with more severe injuries and with more chronic cases of violence.

- *'Abusive males with alcohol or drug problems inflict violence against their partners more frequently, are more apt to inflict serious injuries, are more likely to be sexually assaultive and are more likely to be violent outside the home than abusers without a history of substance abuse'.*

HOW DOES IT WORK?

Initially alcohol may cause direct impairment in cognition and reduction in impulse control

- most commonly when a person does not have non-violent communication skills to reduce confrontation and/or poor mental health.

As drinking becomes chronic and severe this propensity to violence increases.

Alcohol can also worsen financial hardships and exacerbate tension

Drinking may serve as a “coping method” for victims living in a violent relationship.

Each of these situations interact and may become chronic and cyclical.

DRUGS NOTED IN HOSPITAL ADMISSIONS FOR ASSAULT – 2010-2018 BY SEX

	Alcohol		Cannabis		Opioids		Stimulants		Sedatives	
	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%
Male	11225	42.15	1143	4.29	1284	4.82	665	2.50	196	0.74
Female	3003	30.92	478	4.92	600	6.18	288	2.97	255	2.63
OR(95% CI)	0.61(0.58;0.64)		1.15	(1.03;1.29)	1.30	(1.18;1.44)	1.19	(1.04;1.37)	3.64	(3.01;4.89)

Females less likely to have and alcohol diagnosis but 3* more likely to have sedatives; ?? Date rape/ sexual assault

POLICY TENSION

Policy tension noted by the World Health Organisation *Preventing intimate partner and sexual violence against women: taking action and generating evidence*

Policies from different approaches.

The **criminal justice approach** main task to enforce the law and ensuring that “justice is done”.

- relies primarily on deterrence, incarceration and the punishment and rehabilitation of perpetrators.

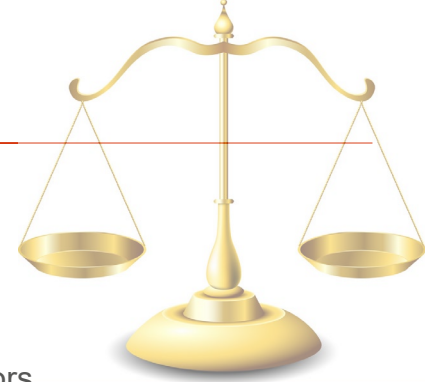
This involves properly identifying perpetrators of intimate partner and sexual violence, ascertaining their guilt and ensuring that they are appropriately sentenced.

In contrast **prevention** involves public education and early intervention with men at risk of becoming perpetrators as well as perpetrator treatment programs.

Likelihood of recidivism may be reduced by addressing the underlining causes of offending behaviour. Perpetrator interventions are now recognised as an essential part of an effective plan to reduce violence against women and their children.

There is a place here for substance abuse treatment programs

POLICY TENSION



- ❖ Policies from different approaches.
- ❖ The **criminal justice approach** main task to enforce the law and ensuring that “justice is done”.
 - ❖ relies primarily on deterrence, incarceration and the punishment and rehabilitation of perpetrators.
- ❖ This involves first and foremost properly identifying perpetrators of intimate partner and sexual violence, ascertaining their guilt and ensuring that they are appropriately sentenced.
- ❖ **Prevention** involves public education and early intervention with men at risk of becoming perpetrators as well as perpetrator treatment programs.
- ❖ Likelihood of recidivism may be reduced by addressing the underlining causes of offending behaviour. Perpetrator interventions are now recognised as an essential part of an effective plan to reduce violence against women and their children.
- ❖ There is a place here for substance abuse treatment programs and effective treatments are available

CONCLUSION

- ❖ Substance use is a strong risk factor for violence and homicide
- ❖ Current policy approach to reduce substance use, is limited in situations when the crimes are serious and involve arrest and incarceration, often the case for domestic violence.
- ❖ In the domestic violence area, zero tolerance is the overriding principle, with appropriate associated criminal sanctions for perpetrators
- ❖ Key public health approach notes that there are a range of factors involved in domestic violence, and that these should be translated into treatment of perpetrators; a tension again exists between treatment and criminal sanctions.
- ❖ Combining alcohol and IPV intervention/policy approaches at the population, community, relationship and individual-level may provide the best opportunity for effective intervention.

We can prevent domestic violence when
substance use is involved

BUT

How do we get prevention and treatment efforts
into place?