

Data Summary: Child Sexual Abuse

This data summary is one of six produced by the NZFVC in 2017. The other five data summaries are concerned with Family Violence Deaths, Violence Against Women, Children and Youth Affected by Family Violence, Adult Sexual Violence, and Child Sexual Abuse and Adult Sexual Violence – Perpetration by Gender. This data summary is a collation of publicly available information about sexual abuse and has been sourced from self-report surveys and administrative data sources.

Information sources:

- Child, Youth and Family (both on-line and historical data)^{1,2,3,4,5,6}
- The National Secondary School Youth Health and Wellbeing Survey – data collected in the 2001,⁷ 2007⁸ and 2012⁹ surveys
- New Zealand Violence Against Women Study^{10,11}
- Dunedin Multidisciplinary Health and Development Research Study¹²
- Christchurch Health and Development Study¹³
- Ministry of Women’s Affairs Sexual Re-victimisation Report¹⁴
- New Zealand Police^{15,16, 17,18}
- District Court data detailing the number of prosecutions, convictions and sentences for sexual violence on a child¹⁹

Because they are sourced from different studies, using different groups of individuals and different methods to collect the data, we advise against comparing between tables. In general, we have allowed the tables to speak for themselves, providing minimal commentary. All numbers in the tables are rounded to the nearest whole number unless otherwise stated.

A link to the definitions for all of the terms used, and caveats for all of the data can be accessed by clicking on the title of each table.

An important note on interpreting the administrative data

Some of the data in the summaries has been drawn from administrative and service data (police, courts, and CYF data). As such, they are dependent on reporting and recording practices and cannot be used as indicators of the incidence of sexual violence in the population. In addition, they cannot be used to comment on trends in the occurrence of sexual violence over time. Sexual violence is often not reported to authorities and so can be very hard to measure from administrative data. Further, the data provided is often provisional (subject to change if new information is gathered) and drawn from dynamic operational databases. For a detailed discussion of the process for collecting data, changes over time and the uses of government agency data for understanding community experiences of family violence, see *Family Violence Indicators* (2013).²⁰

Some of the figures in this data summary vary from those provided in the 2015 Child Sexual Abuse data summary. Small changes are the result of the data being drawn from a dynamic data base. Where the figures deviate substantially from those provided in the 2015 data summary, please use the link on the title of each table for further explanation.



Child Sexual Abuse

The Health and Wellbeing of Secondary School Students in New Zealand reports: Youth 2000, Youth' 07 and Youth' 12

Note: The total number of respondents for these questions was not reported in 2001. As such, frequency counts have not been presented in either of the following tables.

Exposure to sexual violence in previous 12 months^{8,9}

		Ever been touched in a sexual way or made to do unwanted sexual things			Last time sexual abuse happened it was pretty bad, really bad or terrible/very bad			Haven't told anyone about the sexual abuse		
		2001	2007	2012	2001	2007	2012	2001	2007	2012
Total		20%	12%	15%	28%	34%	37%	53%	60%	57%
Gender	Males	12%	5%	9%	18%	33%	25%	64%	71%	71%
	Females	24%	20%	20%	38%	34%	40%	55%	57%	53%

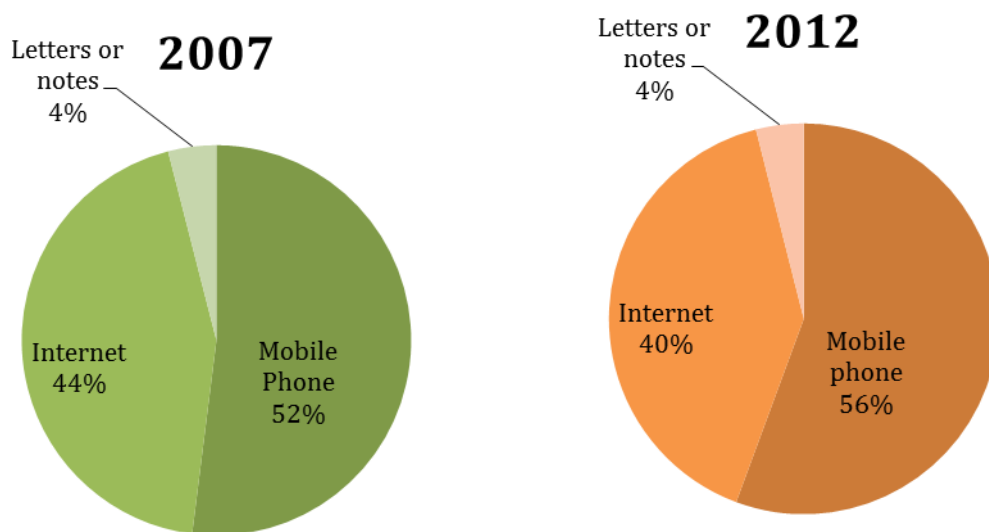
Age of those touched in a sexual way or made to do unwanted sexual things

	13 years and under	14 years	15 years	16 years	17 years or over
2001	15%	16%	16%	16%	19%
2007	10%	11%	14%	13%	13%
2012	12%	14%	17%	16%	17%



In 2007, 13% (n=1144) of students reported that in the previous 12 months they had received unwanted sexual messages. In 2012, 14% (n=1176) of students reported that in the previous 12 months they had received unwanted sexual messages. The following pie charts provide an illustration of the source of the messages.⁸

Unwanted Sexual Messages



New Zealand Violence Against Women Study

[Child Sexual Abuse](#)¹⁰

As part of the WHO Multi-Country Study on Violence Against Women, a survey of a representative sample of 2,855 New Zealand women was carried out in 2003. Study participants were asked whether they had been touched sexually or been made to do something sexual that they didn't want to do before the age of 15.¹¹ In total, 573 (20%) women reported having experienced child sexual abuse.



Frequency of child sexual abuse (CSA), nature and characteristics of relationship between perpetrator and victim

Description		
TOTAL WOMEN WHO EXPERIENCED CSA BY LOCATION	TOTAL (n)	573
	<i>% of women who experienced CSA in Auckland</i>	24%
	<i>% of women who experienced CSA in North Waikato</i>	28%
Number of times abuse occurred (%)	Once or twice	50%
	A few times	27%
	Many times	23%
Median age of victim and perpetrator in years (range)	Victim median age (age range)	9 years (2-15 years)
	Perpetrator median age (age range)	30 years (7-80 years)
Gender of perpetrator	TOTAL PERPETRATORS	622
	Female	13
	<i>% of total perpetrators</i>	2%
	Male	444
	<i>% of total perpetrators</i>	71%
	Gender not specified	165
	<i>% of total perpetrators</i>	27%
Relationship of perpetrator to victim (%)	Parent	59
	<i>% of total perpetrators</i>	9%
	Step-Parent	40
	<i>% of total perpetrators</i>	6%
	Aunt/Uncle	107
	<i>% of total perpetrators</i>	17%
	Sibling/Step-Sibling	64
	<i>% of total perpetrators</i>	10%
	Cousin	60
<i>% of total perpetrators</i>	10%	
Grandparent	40	
<i>% of total perpetrators</i>	6%	
Additional Family Member	29	
<i>% of total perpetrators</i>	5%	
Other	221	
<i>% of total perpetrators</i>	35%	



Dunedin Multidisciplinary Health and Development Research Study (DMHDS)²¹

The ongoing DMHDS (also known as the Dunedin Study) is a longitudinal study of a birth cohort 1,037 children born in Dunedin in 1972/1973 that has been going for 40 years.²¹ Information on Child Sex Abuse (CSA) was sought when the cohort was age 26. Participants were asked to report if they had experienced any kind of unwanted sexual activities that involved physical contact before the age of 16.

Reports of CSA before aged 16 years

	Females	Males
TOTAL NO. OF PARTICIPANTS	465	471
Experienced some form of CSA	141	43
<i>% of total participants</i>	30%	9%
Own genitals touched	100	36
<i>% of total participants</i>	22%	8%
Forced to touch abuser's genitals	69	19
<i>% of total participants</i>	15%	4%
Attempted intercourse	51	12
<i>% of total participants</i>	11%	3%
Completed intercourse	52	12
<i>% of total participants</i>	11%	3%
Some form of other abuse	14	4
<i>% of total participants</i>	3%	<1%



Christchurch Health and Development Study²²

Similar to the Dunedin Study, the Christchurch Health and Development Study (CHDS) is an ongoing longitudinal study that has followed the health, education and life progress of a group of 1,265 children born in the Christchurch urban region during mid-1977.²² At the assessments at age 18 and 21, participants were asked whether, before the age of 16, anyone had ever attempted to involve them in any of a series of 15 sexual activities when they did not want this to happen. Participants were classified into one of four exposure groups reflecting the severity of the CSA they reported. These groups were:

- (a) 'No CSA'. No sexual abuse reported.
- (b) 'Non-contact CSA'. This includes indecent exposure, public masturbation or unwanted sexual propositions.
- (c) 'Contact CSA'. This includes sexual contact in the form of sexual fondling, genital contact or attempts to undress the respondent but not attempted or completed sexual penetration.
- (d) 'Severe CSA'. This includes attempted or completed vaginal, oral or anal intercourse.

The table below describes exposure to CSA (at each level of severity) as reported at age 18-21.²³

Exposure to child sexual abuse before aged 16 years

	No CSA	Non-Contact CSA	Contact CSA	Severe CSA
TOTAL NUMBER THAT EXPERIENCED CSA	840	28	52	64
<i>% of the total no. of participants</i>	<i>86%</i>	<i>3%</i>	<i>5%</i>	<i>6%</i>



Ministry of Women's Affairs¹⁴

The sexual re-victimisation study was a review of the available literature to provide a platform for considering the policy and practice implications of sexual re-victimisation and other forms of gender-based violence.¹⁴ The table below considers links between sexual abuse and sexual victimisation in childhood or adolescence.

Experiences of child sexual abuse and sexual re-victimisation of girls

Study	Life time prevalence	Life time prevalence of re-victimisation
<i>Carroll-Lindt et al (2011)²⁴ (national survey of children aged 9-13): Having unwanted sexual touching or being asked to do unwanted sexual things</i>	11% <i>Had directly experienced sexual violence</i>	2% <i>'Happened lots'</i>
<i>Fanslow et al (2007)¹¹ (NZ Violence Against Women study): Before 15 ever touched sexually or made to do something sexual they didn't want to do</i>	24% (Auckland) 28% (Waikato) <i>Had experienced sexual abuse before age 15</i>	12% (Auckland) 14% (Waikato) <i>Abuse had happened a few or many times</i>
<i>Flett et al (2012)²⁵ (survey of women aged 18 and older): During your childhood, did anyone ever make you have sex by using force or threatening to harm you? This involves all unwanted sexual activity</i>	13% <i>Reported sexual abuse during childhood</i>	10% <i>Experienced multiple types of child sexual abuse</i>
<i>Van Rhode et al (2009)¹²: Dunedin multi-disciplinary study, questions highlighted above</i>	30% <i>Reported contact sexual abuse before age 16</i>	21% <i>Experienced multiple types of child sexual abuse</i>



Child, Youth and Family^{1,2,3,4,5,6}**Care and protection notifications [requiring further action](#)**^a

	06/07	07/08	08/09	09/10	10/11	11/12	12/13	13/14	14/15	15/16
TOTAL NOTIFICATIONS REQUIRING FURTHER ACTION	43,845	40,739	49,224	55,494	57,783	60,330	61,877	54,065	45,463	44,689
Total substantiated abuse findings	16,210	16,290	19,596	21,025	22,291	21,172	22,984	19,623	16,472	16,394
Emotional abuse	8,256	8,664	10,938	12,535	12,711	12,454	12,777	10,406	8,318	8,490
% of Total notifications requiring further action	51%	53%	56%	60%	57%	59%	56%	53%	50%	52%
Physical abuse	2,274	2,321	2,855	2,886	3,253	3,330	3,343	3,305	3,235	3,073
% of Total notifications requiring further action	14%	14%	15%	14%	15%	16%	15%	17%	20%	19%
Sexual abuse	1,194	1,003	1,126	1,201	1,514	1,418	1,459	1,329	1,275	1,167
% of Total notifications requiring further action	7%	6%	6%	6%	7%	7%	6%	7%	8%	7%
Neglect	4,486	4,302	4,677	4,403	4,813	4,970	5,405	4,583	3,644	3,664
% of Total notifications requiring further action	28%	26%	24%	21%	22%	23%	24%	23%	22%	22%

^a Some children and young people may have more than one notification in the period shown.

New Zealand Police^{16,17,18}**Reported and resolved sexual assault [offences](#) on a child (aged 16 years and under)**

	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014
Reported	1,507	1,510	1,422	1,443	1,535	1,930	1,895	2,071	2,064
Resolved	928	973	899	927	857	1,112	1,032	1,164	1,076
% Resolved	62%	64%	63%	64%	56%	58%	54%	56%	52%



Outcomes of investigations at 180 days: Sexual assault on a child (aged under 16 years) offence

	Jul-Dec 2014	Jan-Jun 2015	Jul-Dec 2015	Jan-Jun 2016
TOTAL RECORDED VICTIMISATIONS	1,321	1,126	1,162	1,211
Investigation finalised – No offender proceeded against	44	34	31	33
Investigation finalised – Offender proceeded against	349	328	305	298
Investigation not finalised	927	764	824	878
No outcome at this time	1	0	2	2

Please note that the recorded number of victimisations (above) and offences (immediately preceding the above table) are not directly comparable. For further information, please see the [Special Note Regarding Police Data](#) at the end of each of the 2017 Data Summaries.

Apprehensions for sexual assault on a child (aged 16 years and under)

	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014
Total apprehensions sexual assault	949	971	888	902	815	1,081	999	1,111	1,029
Assaults on child under 12 years	390	377	318	330	343	470	406	457	475
<i>Assaults on girls under 12</i>	326	295	254	223	251	390	284	368	386
<i>Female perpetrator</i>	4	3	2	5	4	8	4	8	10
<i>Male perpetrator</i>	322	292	252	218	247	382	280	360	376
<i>Assaults on boys under 12</i>	48	65	56	100	78	69	109	82	77
<i>Female perpetrator</i>	0	4	6	0	0	3	6	2	3
<i>Male perpetrator</i>	48	61	50	100	78	66	103	80	74
<i>Gender not defined</i>	16	17	8	7	14	11	13	7	12
<i>Female perpetrator</i>	1	0	0	0	0	0	5	0	1
<i>Male perpetrator</i>	15	17	8	7	14	11	8	7	11
Assaults on child 12-16 years	559	594	570	572	472	611	593	654	554
<i>Assaults on girls 12-16 years</i>	402	431	394	378	322	409	353	402	331
<i>Female perpetrator</i>	21	7	6	2	4	2	3	7	2
<i>Male perpetrator</i>	381	424	388	376	317	407	349	394	329
<i>Assaults on boys 12-16 years</i>	28	42	63	45	35	56	84	91	67
<i>Female perpetrator</i>	2	6	2	2	2	3	4	2	0
<i>Male perpetrator</i>	26	36	61	43	33	53	80	89	67
<i>Gender not defined</i>	129	121	113	149	115	146	156	161	156
<i>Female perpetrator</i>	4	8	7	6	6	7	19	13	15
<i>Male perpetrator</i>	125	113	106	143	109	139	137	148	141



Proceedings against offenders for sexual assault on a child (aged 16 years and under)

	2014	2015	2016
TOTAL SEXUAL ASSAULT PROCEEDINGS	1,043	1,017	1,063
Assaults on child under 12 years	406	368	407
<i>Assaults on girls under 12</i>	315	295	322
<i>Female perpetrator</i>	8	11	3
<i>Male perpetrator</i>	307	284	319
<i>Gender unknown</i>	2	0	0
<i>Assaults on boys under 12</i>	90	71	85
<i>Female perpetrator</i>	4	5	3
<i>Male perpetrator</i>	86	66	82
<i>Gender not defined</i>	1	2	0
<i>Female perpetrator</i>	0	0	0
<i>Male perpetrator</i>	1	2	0
Assaults on child 12-16 years	637	649	656
<i>Assaults on girls 12-16 years</i>	555	560	585
<i>Female perpetrator</i>	12	12	10
<i>Male perpetrator</i>	543	546	574
<i>Gender unknown</i>	0	2	1
<i>Assaults on boys 12-16 years</i>	82	88	71
<i>Female perpetrator</i>	17	8	15
<i>Male perpetrator</i>	65	80	55
<i>Gender unknown</i>	0	0	1
<i>Gender not defined</i>	0	1	0
<i>Female perpetrator</i>	0	0	0
<i>Male perpetrator</i>	0	1	0

Please note: There counts of “proceedings”, as presented above, and “apprehensions” are not directly comparable. For further information on these differences, please refer to the [Special Note Regarding Police Data](#) at the end of each of the 2017 Data Summaries.



District Court¹⁹**Number of charges for sexual offences (children aged under 16 years), by charge outcome**

	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016
TOTAL NUMBER OF CHARGES PROSECUTED	3,177	3,276	3,119	3,870	3,673	3,991	4,146	3,400	3,393	3,405
Number of convicted charges	1,318	1,413	1,285	1,681	1,578	1,598	1,934	1,793	1,577	1,566
% of charges	41%	43%	41%	43%	43%	40%	47%	53%	46%	46%
Number of Other proved	58	45	69	58	62	81	80	80	56	87
% of charges	2%	1%	2%	1%	2%	2%	2%	2%	2%	3%
Number of Not proved	1,743	1,731	1,702	2,015	1,983	2,259	2,039	1,474	1,641	1,667
% of charges	55%	53%	55%	52%	54%	57%	49%	43%	48%	49%
Number of charges with other outcomes	58	87	63	116	50	53	93	53	119	95
% of charges	2%	3%	2%	3%	1%	1%	2%	2%	4%	3%



Number of convicted charges for sexual offences (children aged under 16 years), by most serious sentence

	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016
TOTAL CONVICTED CHARGES	1,318	1,413	1,285	1,681	1,578	1,598	1,934	1,793	1,577	1,566
Number of convicted charges with custodial sentences - <i>Imprisonment</i>	1,158	1,091	1,051	1,396	1,308	1,275	1,635	1,484	1,272	1,293
% of convicted charges	88%	77%	82%	83%	83%	80%	85%	83%	81%	83%
Number of convicted charges with community sentences	84	299	221	279	253	319	276	302	277	245
% of convicted charges	6%	21%	17%	17%	16%	20%	14%	17%	18%	16%
<i>Home Detention</i>	4	203	119	163	145	187	156	232	201	177
% of convicted charges	<1%	14%	9%	10%	9%	12%	8%	13%	13%	11%
<i>Community Detention</i>	7	22	38	47	27	40	34	41	46	34
% of convicted charges	1%	2%	3%	3%	2%	3%	2%	2%	3%	2%
<i>Intensive Supervision</i>	8	43	36	45	45	60	50	20	12	27
% of convicted charges	1%	3%	3%	3%	3%	4%	3%	1%	1%	2%
<i>Community Work</i>	56	26	26	22	22	27	30	7	14	5
% of convicted charges	4%	2%	2%	1%	1%	2%	2%	<1%	1%	<1%
<i>Supervision</i>	9	5	2	2	14	5	6	2	4	2
% of convicted charges	1%	<1%	<1%	<1%	1%	<1%	<1%	<1%	<1%	<1%
Number of convicted charges with other sentences	59	13	9	1	7	2	11	6	1	6
% of convicted charges	4%	1%	1%	<1%	<1%	<1%	1%	<1%	<1%	<1%
<i>Monetary</i>	4	6	5	0	4	0	2	2	1	2
% of convicted charges	<1%	<1%	<1%	0%	<1%	0%	<1%	<1%	<1%	<1%
<i>Deferment</i>	5	3	2	1	0	2	1	0	0	3
% of convicted charges	<1%	<1%	<1%	<1%	0%	<1%	<1%	0%	0%	<1%
<i>Other</i>	50	4	2	0	3	0	8	4	0	1
% of convicted charges	3%	<1%	<1%	0%	<1%	0%	<1%	<1%	0%	<1%
<i>No sentence recorded</i>	17	10	4	5	10	2	12	1	27	12
% of convicted charges	1%	1%	<1%	<1%	1%	<1%	1%	<1%	2%	1%



Special Note Regarding Police Data

Background

In November 2014 and May 2015 respectively, the New Zealand Police launched the Recorded Crime Victims and Offenders Statistics. The release of this information represents a fundamental shift in counting methods used to produce crime statistics. Whilst in the past information regarding the impact of crime in our society has been largely measured by the number of offences recorded and apprehensions made, this information provided little information about the people affected, or the relationship between the victim and the offender.

Changes over time in Police systems and recording practices have enabled alterations to counting practices employed by the police (for complete details, please refer to "[The transformation of NZ Police crime statistics: New measures and trends](#)"). For example, where "assault against a child" was previously defined using the assault offence code, it is now possible to define such offences by the age of the victim as recorded in the victimisations statistics. As such, a wider range of the types of assault on children can be identified. Where we are interested in assaults against a woman (for example, page 4 of Data Summary 2), we can establish the percent for which an offender was identified (40% in 2016); the percent of assaults perpetrated by family members (77% where the offender was identified in 2016); and the percent perpetrated by either non-family members (15%) or strangers (8%). **Please note that the significant percentage of cases in which no identified offender was recorded in the datasets leads to the possibility that the actual distribution of relationships between victims and perpetrators differs from those presented in the tables.**

There have also been changes in the way apprehensions and resolutions are recorded. The police now provide information on the number of offenders proceeded against (similar to apprehensions). The "method of proceeding" describes the first type of legal action (court or non-court) initiated by the police against a person as a result of an investigation into an offence.



What does this mean for the data presented in the Data Summaries?

The changed counting rules have resulted in a break in the time series of information available from the Police. As a result, tables that detail recorded and resolved offences finish at 2014. New tables describing victimisations begin in July 2014, and tables describing proceedings against offenders begin in January 2014.

In the 2017 Data Summaries we have chosen to provide both tables where this information is available to allow the reader to understand the level of overlap between the measures and how they differ. Because of the significant differences in counting techniques employed by the police, readers should be careful not to make direct comparisons between data in the old and new tables.

Please refer to the Police Definitions for additional information concerning the definitions of the new terms used. Further information concerning the Recorded Victims and Offender Statistics, as well as the Transformation of NZ Police Crime Statistics can be used following the relevant links (see below).

[Recorded Crime Victims Statistics](#)

[Recorded Crime Offender Statistics](#)

[Transformation of the NZ Police Crime Statistics](#)



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