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Executive summary

This report presents further results from the 2006 New Zealand Crime and Safety Survey (NZCASS) to look at the experiences of sole-parent households as victims of crime. It is the Ministry of Justice's contribution to a cross-departmental research programme into sole parenthood in New Zealand, which the Ministry of Social Development has been funded to lead. The main focus of the report is on aspects of victimisation risk among sole-parent households compared with other households with children (the nearest comparator group). It also draws together other results from NZCASS to look at how the two family groups compared as regards to:

- their concern about crime
- the coverage of and membership in Neighbourhood Support
- awareness of agencies that can support victims.

Those who took part in NZCASS were interviewed in the first half of 2006. They comprised a nationally representative random sample of 4229 people aged 15 and over in private households in New Zealand. An additional Māori booster sample of 1187 was included to improve the reliability of findings for Māori. One person per household was interviewed.

NZCASS identified 517 respondents in sole-parent households. Of these, we estimated that 426 were sole parents, and 91 were the children of sole parents. Sole-parent households are compared with other households with children, which comprise couples with children and extended families/whānau. We differentiated between those likely to be parents and children in other households with children, although it was difficult to judge this precisely.

The overall programme of research into sole-parent households is focusing on protective and resilience factors to help understand what can enable sole-parent households to achieve positive outcomes. In the NZCASS context, protective factors were taken as being those associated with sole-parent households not experiencing any victimisation. Resilience factors were taken as those that may assist sole-parent households that have been victimised to avoid being victimised again. We found it difficult to investigate protective and resilience factors with regard to victimisation in a thorough way because of survey constraints.

■ Features of sole-parent households in NZCASS

NZCASS results are much in line with other sources in showing sole-parent households to be more disadvantaged compared to other households with children.

NZCASS showed that sole-parent households were:

- more likely to have a female head
- younger in age profile
- more often Māori
- more likely to live in rented accommodation

- more likely to live in the two most deprived quintiles (fifths) of the country (as measured by the NZ Deprivation Index [NZDep])
- more often unemployed and/or on benefits, of lower socio-economic status as measured by the NZ Socio-economic Index (NZSEI), and more likely to be having difficulty managing on their income.

■ Victimisation risks in sole-parent households

Sole-parent households were disproportionately at risk of most types of victimisation in 2005, as has been reported before (Mayhew and Reilly, 2007a). Some of the earlier analyses were modified for this report, notably to look more specifically at those who were parents in sole-parent households. This made relatively little difference to previous patterns of risk, however.

In looking at risks, we focused mainly on all victimisations, all household offences, and all personal offences. Household offences comprise burglary, thefts of household property, vandalism to household property, and vehicle crime. Personal offences cover confrontational crime (mainly assaults and threats) and thefts of and damage to personal property.

Differences in risks for sole-parent households and other households with children were assessed on the basis of prevalence risks and incidence risks. Prevalence risks show the percentage of households or adults victimised once or more. Incidence risks measure the number of victimisations per 100 people, taking into account that some people are victimised more than once.

- The proportion of those in sole-parent households who had experienced victimisation once or more in 2005 was 60%, as against 41% in other households with children. (These are prevalence risks.)
- On incidence risks, the gap between sole-parent households and other households with children was accentuated. This signifies that, when victimised, those in sole-parent households were victimised more often on average. The average number of victimisations among those victimised in sole-parent households was 4.1, as against 2.8 among victims in other households with children.
- On both prevalence and incidence risks, the gap between sole-parent households and other households with children was slightly wider for personal offences than it was for household offences.

The unevenness of victimisation

The unevenness of victimisation risk for New Zealanders is illustrated, for one, by the fact that some groups – sole-parent households being an example – are more often victimised. Another illustration is that the probability of being victimised more than once is not equally spread. The consequence of this is that a small number of victims experience the majority of victimisations.

We compared the distribution of victimisation among sole-parent households and other households with children.

- In 2005, 29% of sole-parent households were victimised three times or more, as against 13% of other households with children. (This is consistent with the difference in the number of victimisations per victim in the two family groups.)
- Offences against the 29% of more highly-victimised respondents in sole-parent households accounted for 83% of all the offences against sole-parent households measured in the survey.

Explaining why sole-parent households are at greater risk

Many sole-parent households fall into social groups that are at higher risk of victimisation – for instance, non-Europeans, those with a younger household structure, those who live in more deprived areas, and those in rented accommodation. A key question, then, is to what extent sole parentage *per se* influences risk, rather than the fact that sole-parent households more often fall into high-risk groups.

This report did not investigate this question (for which multivariate analysis is needed) since Reilly and Mayhew (2009) have already done so. That report indicated that sole-parent status *per se* was generally unimportant in explaining the higher risks among sole-parent households. Rather, these were explained by the coincidence of sole-parent status and a nexus of risk-related factors. A similar conclusion is also drawn from a large number of analyses based on victimisation surveys carried out in other Westernised countries.

■ **The types of sole-parent households most at risk**

Sole-parent households that were victims and those who were not

Of all those in sole-parent households, 60% were victims and 40% were non-victims. We compared the personal and social characteristics of the two groups. The differences between them are generally consistent with the differences between victims and non-victims across the NZCASS sample as a whole. Findings were that:

- proportionately more of the victims were in the bottom half of the NZSEI scale than non-victims
- those victimised were more likely to live in rented accommodation supplied by a local authority or Housing New Zealand Corporation (referred to here as social renters)
- fewer victims were 'managing quite well' on their income than non-victims
- proportionately fewer victims than non-victims lived in the smallest (minor urban and rural) areas, but more victims than non-victims lived in the South Island.

Victims in sole-parent households and victims in other households with children

We next compared victims in sole-parent households with victims in other households with children. Higher overall victimisation risks held for most subgroups of sole-parent households compared to their counterparts in other households with children. Bearing this in mind, though, we examined whether some subgroups of sole-parent households were particularly more often victimised. We calculated how far the difference in prevalence risks between particular subgroups of sole-parent households and other households with children varied from the overall difference in risks between the two family groups as a whole. Subgroups of note were taken as those where the risk differential between sole-parent households and other households with children was 15% or more greater than the average overall prevalence victimisation risk differential for the two family groups as a whole. We did a similar analysis looking at risks of personal offences for parents

only in sole-parent households compared with parents in other households with children. (These are called *sole parents* and *other parents* hereon.).

In a similar vein, we looked at subgroups for which risk differentials between sole-parent households (and sole parents) and other households with children (and other parents) were 15% or more lower than the average overall prevalence victimisation risk differential for the two family groups as a whole.

Table A Subgroups of sole-parent households (SPH) with more and less elevated risks compared to other households with children (OHWC)

	A	B
	All family members – all offences	Parents only – personal offences
SPH at more elevated risks relative to OHWC		
Pacific peoples	✓	–
In a de facto relationship	✓	–
Engaged in home duties	✓	–
Social renters	✓	[✓]
Those in metropolitan cities other than Auckland	✓	✓
Those in the South Island	✓	✓
SPH at less elevated risks relative to OHWC		
Aged 15–24	✓	✓
Māori	[✓]	✓
Single/never married	✓	✓
Paid employment or self-employed	[✓]	✓
Unemployed/on benefits	[✓]	✓
Private renters	[✓]	✓
Home owners	[✓]	✓
The most deprived quintile (NZDep)	[✓]	✓
Those in Auckland	✓	–
Other major urban areas	[✓]	✓

Notes:

Groups marked with a ✓ in Column A are those for which the percentage risk differential is 15% or more higher or lower than the average differential – which is 1.4 – between overall risks for sole-parent households and other households with children. Only those groups are shown where the differences in risks for the subgroups within the two family types are statistically significant.

Groups marked with a ✓ in Column B are those for which the percentage risk differential is 15% or more higher, or lower than the average differential – which is 2.1 – between risks of personal offences for sole parents and other parents in households with children.

Subcategories that are marked [✓] were in the same direction of risk, but estimates did not meet the ±15% threshold or provided statistically unstable results because of high relative standard errors on one or both of the estimates.

Subcategories that are marked – were statistically unstable because of very high relative standard errors.

Table A summarises the results. A ✓ indicates the subgroups that met the ±15% threshold. Subgroups in Columns A and B that are marked [✓] were the same direction of risk, but either did not meet the ±15% threshold, or provided statistically unstable results because of high relative standard errors on one or both of the estimates.

Types of sole-parent households and sole parents at particularly elevated risk

The types of sole-parent households that had particularly elevated risks relative to their counterparts in other households with children included, for instance, Pacific sole-parent households and those in the South Island. The fact that sole-parent households that were social renters had more elevated risks may be because the social rented properties in which they live are different from the social rented properties in which other households with children live, in terms of area for instance – though we cannot be sure. The result for those engaged in home duties may be related to very low income, but it may also be due to the particular circumstances of the very small number of respondents in sole-parent households who fell into this category.

Types of sole-parent households and sole parents at less elevated risk

The subgroups of sole-parent households in Table A at less elevated risk were those for whom, while risks were still higher, the risk difference compared to other households with children was narrower than the difference between the two family groups as a whole. What is difficult to say is whether this means that some groups of sole-parent households are better placed in victimisation risk terms than others, or that some groups of other households with children are worse placed.

In any event, the narrower gap in risk between sole-parent households and other households with children suggests, for instance, that:

- for those in the most deprived quintile of New Zealand, the burden of victimisation also hits hard for other households with children – a finding consistent with international research, which has shown that risks come with the territory in the most socially deprived areas
- all parents who are unemployed and/or on benefits face higher risks of victimisation from personal offences, whatever the family formation
- sole-parent households living in Auckland may be more economically heterogeneous and thus less susceptible on average to the higher risks of victimisation characteristic of the more socially deprived
- both Māori sole parents and Māori parents in other family types are at more pronounced risk of all personal offences.

Lower- and higher-frequency victims

In looking at victims in sole-parent households and other households with children, we also made a distinction between *lower-frequency victims* (i.e. those who had been victimised once or twice) and *higher-frequency victims* (i.e. those who had been victimised more often than this). This was to see whether there was anything that indicated resilience to higher-frequency victimisation.

Among sole-parent households overall, 29% experienced higher-frequency victimisation. The subgroups who experienced this less often than was the case overall were:

- those aged 40–59
- those who were in paid employment or self-employed
- those in the smallest minor urban and rural areas.

The picture was roughly similar for other households with children, indicating that resilience factors work across the board.

■ Concern about crime

NZCASS collected information on the level and nature of people's concern about crime. We looked at what sole-parent households said.

- ■ On a range of measures, sole-parent households tended to be more concerned about crime. However, the differences were often not marked in comparison to other households with children, and sometimes disappeared when age and gender were controlled for. Moreover, where differences emerged, they are likely to be explained by the fact that sole-parent households are overrepresented in the groups who are most concerned about crime in general (e.g. younger people, those living in areas of high social disorder.).
- Victims in sole-parent households tended to be more concerned about crime than non-victims – although this echoes the general tendency for victims to be more concerned. If anything, victims in other households with children were more concerned than victims in sole-parent households. It may be that crime as a source of concern to victims in sole-parent households competes more with other pressures on their daily lives, though NZCASS cannot confirm this.
- We could draw no conclusions from the results as to how concern about crime might provide protection against victimisation, or resilience to heavy victimisation.

■ Neighbourhood Support

There were three main findings with respect to Neighbourhood Support (NS).

- ■ Fewer sole-parent households lived in an area covered by NS (16%) than did other households with children (22%), but this is likely to be explained by the fact that sole-parent households were more often in housing situations typified by lower NS coverage.
- Fewer sole-parent households that had been victimised said there was a NS scheme operating in their area than non-victims. This is likely to reflect the fact that NS schemes take less firm hold in neighbourhoods characterised by higher levels of victimisation.
- Of those who knew they lived in an area covered by NS, 36% of those in sole-parent households said they were members, as against 50% of other households with children. Again, though, this will reflect the fact that sole-parent households were overrepresented in groups for which membership rates were low, even when there was scheme coverage.

■ Awareness of victim support agencies

All respondents in NZCASS were asked which community agencies (other than the Police) they were aware of that can help victims of crime.

- ■ More of those in sole-parent households (66%) were able to mention one or more community agencies available to help victims than in other households with children (62%). However, when analysis was restricted to women aged 29–59 only (who were the best informed in general), the difference disappeared.
- More of those in sole-parent households mentioned Women's Refuge as a source of help for victims than those in other households with children.

■ Reactions to victimisation

We assessed various aspects of victims' responses to what happened to them. However, for technical reasons, it is difficult to say whether these reactions provide protection against further victimisation, or increase resilience to it. All offences were analysed together as the mix of offences described by victims in sole-parent households and other households with children was largely similar. Separate analysis, though, was done for interpersonal offences described in the three Self-Completion components of the questionnaire (i.e. partner violence, violence by people well known to the victim, and sexual victimisation).

- Victims in sole-parent households were more likely to rate what happened to them as serious: 42% gave a seriousness score which we judged to indicate high seriousness, compared to 32% of victims in other households with children. The same pattern emerged for interpersonal offences.
- There was little difference between victims in sole-parent households and those in other households with children in the proportion of offences that were thought to be 'a crime', but slightly fewer victims in sole-parent households felt the offence was 'just something that happens'.
- Consistent with the fact that victims in sole-parent households more often judged what happened to them to be 'most serious', more of them (63%) said they were affected 'very much' or 'quite a lot' than did victims in other households with children (49%). The same picture emerged when analysis was restricted to women only. The main reaction among victims in both family groups was anger/annoyance.
- The proportion of offences reported to the Police by victims in sole-parent households (36%) was not statistically different from that reported by victims in other households with children (29%). But more interpersonal offences were reported by those in sole-parent households, and this may well be because they were judged more seriously.
- More victims in sole-parent households (82%) mentioned to someone what had happened than victims in other households with children (79%). The same pattern was evident for interpersonal offences.
- Only a minority of victims said there was assistance or advice that they would have liked but did not receive; the figures were statistically indistinguishable between victims in sole-parent households (15%) and those in other households with children (13%). There was little difference in the type of help wanted. The proportion of all victims in sole-parent households who would have appreciated financial assistance was 4%.

■ Some implications of the results

Policy implications

In considering the policy implications of the results, we argue that although sole parentage *per se* is not the main driver of high victimisation risks, this should not obscure the fact that many sole-parent households have inherent disadvantages associated with high risk. Their collective experience, then, is worse. While they merit attention because of this, we nonetheless argue that over-attention to sole-parent households would not make the best use of criminal justice resources. Crime prevention and victim service initiatives targeted at more socially and

economically deprived areas as a whole are likely to be more worthwhile. Such initiatives will encompass the high-risk groups most likely to be represented there, including sole-parent households.

Protective and resilience factors

We address what was learned about protective and resilience factors in relation to victimisation risks, but draw attention to the limitations imposed by the survey. They essentially arise from the cross-sectional nature of NZCASS, which means that it is not possible to look at experiences outside the limited recall window that the survey takes. There are also difficulties in identifying the sequencing of different episodes of victimisation, which makes it hard to say whether any one type of reaction to victimisation (which may be pertinent to resilience) came before or after another one.

The results on victimisation risks for sole-parent households and other households with children indicate which personal and social factors are associated with being victimised over a one-year period (2005). By the same token, the results show the factors that are associated with *not* being victimised. In the broadest sense, these might be seen as protective factors.

The general thrust of the results was that what protects sole-parent households from victimisation is largely the same as what protects other households with children. For instance: fewer of those aged over 49 years in both sole-parent households and other households with children were victims than respondents younger than this; fewer Europeans in both family groups were victims; fewer of those in employment were victims. The same applies to those of higher NZSEI status and those who owned their properties.

Chapter 4 identified some subgroups in sole-parent households for whom the gap in risks compared to their counterparts in other households with children was less pronounced. What is difficult to say is whether this means that some groups of sole-parent households are better placed in victimisation risk terms than others, or that some groups of other households with children are worse placed. This said, there were some significant findings.

- For those in the most deprived quintile of New Zealand, the burden of victimisation hits hard for other households with children as well as sole-parent households.
- In a similar vein, parents who are unemployed and/or on benefits face higher risks of victimisation from personal offences, whatever the family formation.
- The gap in risks between sole-parent households and other households with children was rather narrower in Auckland than elsewhere. This may signify that sole-parent households in Auckland are more economically heterogeneous, rather than that Auckland 'protects' sole-parent households.
- In terms of being *less* protected, sole-parent households in the South Island stand out insofar as the gap between them and other households with children was widest. As overall risks for the NZCASS sample as a whole did not differ widely by region, the high risks for sole-parent households seem unlikely to be explained by disparities in terms of general policing or social welfare provision, for instance. Rather, they may be due to possible distinctive features of disadvantage among sole-parent households in the South Island, or perhaps to the fact that other households with children in the South Island are comparatively more advantaged.

Factors related to resilience to victimisation could only be inferred from differences between those victimised more and less frequently. Not a great deal was revealed. The subgroups who experienced higher-frequency victimisation less often were:

- those aged 40–59
- those who were in paid employment or self-employed
- those living in the smallest minor urban and rural areas.

These were factors that also provided protection from victimisation. Resilience from further victimisation, then, seems to mirror protection from initial victimisation in these results.

Future research on sole parentage and victimisation

It is now well established that sole-parent households are at higher risk of victimisation. Future sweeps of NZCASS will be able to continue to document the risks that sole-parent households face. However, they will strain to track whether victimisation risks are increasing or decreasing. Statistical constraints will be an issue; possible changes in the social and demographic composition of sole-parent households affecting risk levels will be another.

We see it as unlikely that NZCASS could do a great deal more in elucidating protective and resilience factors. As said, any protective factors identified are likely to be those which are associated with lower victimisation risks across the board. Unravelling resilience to victimisation is constrained by the cross-sectional nature of NZCASS, and the fact that the recall period is limited makes it impossible to assess how longer-term experiences may (or may not) affect behaviour.

In principle, sole-parent households could be oversampled in a future sweep of NZCASS to allow finer-grained analysis. However, other groups of victims are likely to demand attention too – so sole-parent households will be just one group in the queue. Given the findings to date that their experiences reflect a nexus of factors to do with social disadvantage rather than sole-parent status *per se*, there would seem no clear case for singling them out, in our view.

Other research approaches could be considered. In terms of resilience, qualitative case studies might help, although there are some limitations. One is that small sample case studies lack generalisability. Another is that victimisation is multifaceted, and possible resilience will depend on a number of factors – critically the nature of what happened. A third limitation is that, to understand resilience, victims would need to be tracked over time.

With these difficulties in mind, however, qualitative case studies of victimised sole-parent households might be helpful in seeing, for instance, whether they took action after victimisation, what action this was, and whether or not it was successful. To maximise value here, it would be useful to see whether the reactions of sole-parent households differed from those of other households with children.

1 Introduction

The 2006 New Zealand Crime and Safety Survey (NZCASS) measured the volume of crime against New Zealand residents in 2005 by asking them directly about their victimisation experiences. In addition to measuring the extent of victimisation and how this differed across different social groups, the survey also provided information about the nature of victims' experiences, and about a number of other crime-related matters, such as the degree of concern people felt about crime. A large body of results from NZCASS has already been published, starting with the main results, which were in the *Key Findings* report (Mayhew and Reilly, 2007a).¹ Other reports have dealt with community safety (Mayhew and Reilly, 2007b), e-crime (Mayhew and Reilly, 2007c), victims' needs (Mayhew and Reilly, 2008), interpersonal violence, including family violence (Mayhew and Reilly, forthcoming), and the Māori experience (Cunningham et al., forthcoming). One other report, which is particularly pertinent to the present one, looked at what best explains why some groups face higher victimisation risks than others across the NZCASS sample as a whole (Reilly and Mayhew, 2009).

This report presents further results from NZCASS to look at the experiences of sole-parent households as victims of crime. It is the Ministry of Justice's contribution to a cross-departmental research programme on sole parenthood in New Zealand, which the Ministry of Social Development has been funded to lead.² The three objectives of the research programme, which aims to improve the knowledge base for public policy, are to:

- (1) increase our understanding of the vulnerability to disadvantage among some sole-parent families
- (2) identify sources of resilience which can enable vulnerable sole-parent families to achieve good social and economic outcomes
- (3) identify policies and interventions that are effective in reducing vulnerability and building resilience.

This report focuses on the second of the objectives in large part, although along with Reilly and Mayhew's (2009) report on the main determinants of victimisation risk among New Zealanders, it also contributes in helping us meet the first objective and pointing us away from an undue focus on sole parenthood itself in addressing the third.

Just over 5400 New Zealanders took part in NZCASS. They comprised a nationally representative random sample of 4229 people aged 15 and over living in private households in New Zealand, together with an additional Māori booster sample of 1187 to improve the reliability of findings for Māori. Respondents were questioned at home by interviewers from ACNielsen (subsequently changed to 'Nielsen') between February and June 2006. One person per household was interviewed. The overall response rate was 59% in the main sample and 56% in the Māori booster sample. Refusing an interview was the main reason for non-response.

¹ Mayhew and Reilly (2007a) and other reports on NZCASS 2006 can be found at <http://www.justice.govt.nz/pubs/pcrime.html>. Details of how NZCASS was conducted are in the Technical Report (Reilly & Sullivan, 2007), which can be found at <http://www.justice.govt.nz/pubs/reports/2006/crime-safety-survey-2006/technical-report/index.html>.

² Agencies contributing to the programme include: Justice, Health, Social Development, Education, Pacific Island Affairs, Women's Affairs, Inland Revenue, Families Commission, Statistics New Zealand, Te Puni Kōkiri, and the Family Centre Social Policy Research Unit.

The volume of crime experienced by householders in New Zealand was measured by asking people directly about personal and household offences that had happened to them. Because NZCASS asked about offences that may not have been reported to the Police, it gives a fuller count of victimisation experience than Police records. Overall, nearly four in ten New Zealanders experienced one or more incidents of victimisation in 2005, with the figure much higher – at six in ten – for sole-parent households.

Two previous victimisation surveys similar to NZCASS went under the title of the New Zealand National Survey of Crime Victims (NZNSCV). The first was in 1996 (Young et al. 1997), the second in 2001 (Morris and Reilly, 2003).

■ 1.1 This report

The structure of this report is as follows.

- The rest of this chapter deals with:
 - the identification of sole-parent households (Section 1.2)
 - how victimisation was measured in NZCASS (Section 1.3)
 - protective and resilience factors – a major feature of the overall research programme – and why there are limits to what NZCASS can say about these (Section 1.4).
- Chapter 2 looks at *features of sole-parent households* as shown by NZCASS results, with comparisons made to other households with children and New Zealand households as a whole.
- Chapter 3 shows how sole-parent households fare in terms of *victimisation risks*. It draws on previously available results, but adds to them. Section 3.1 looks at prevalence rates (the proportion of sole-parent households that were victimised once or more) and incidence rates (which take into account the number of times people are victimised). Section 3.2 looks at the unevenness of victimisation across sole-parent households, contrasting it with the picture for other households with children. Section 3.3 reports the results of analysis in Reilly and Mayhew (2009), which examined whether sole-parent status per se explains the higher risks that sole-parent households face.
- Chapter 4 looks at *victimisation risks for different subgroups*. Section 4.1 looks at the differences between sole-parent households that are victimised and those that are not, to see where differences lie. Section 4.2 compares victims in sole-parent households to victims in other households with children to assess whether there are some subgroups of sole-parent households that are particularly vulnerable. Finally, a comparison is made in Section 4.3 between those in sole-parent households that have been victimised at lower and higher frequency rates. The purpose here is to see whether there is anything distinctive about those in sole-parent households that are victimised the most often. It draws comparisons with the most heavily victimised in other households with children.
- Chapter 5 presents results on *concern about crime*. Section 5.1 starts by seeing how sole-parent households compare to other households with children. Section 5.2 then looks at how victims in sole-parent households differ from non-victims with regard to concern about crime. Section 5.3 assesses whether victims in sole-parent households are distinctive

compared to victims in other households with children. Finally, Section 5.4 compares the victims in sole-parent households and other households with children who have been victimised at lower and higher frequency rates. The purpose here is to test the assumption that more frequently victimised people are more concerned about crime, and whether this applies across both family groups.

- Chapter 6 looks at differences as regards coverage and membership of *Neighbourhood (Rural) Support (NS)*. Section 6.1 assesses whether there are differences between sole-parent households and other households with children, while Section 6.2 looks at whether there are differences between victims and non-victims in sole-parent households. Section 6.3 considers NS coverage and membership for victims in sole-parent households and other households with children – to see whether there is anything distinctive about the sole-parent household victim group. Section 6.4 compares NS coverage and membership for victims in sole-parent households and in other households with children that have been victimised at lower and higher frequency rates.
- Chapter 7 takes up results about *awareness of victim support agencies*. Section 7.1 compares awareness among sole-parent households as a whole, compared to other households with children. Section 7.2 then looks at whether victims in sole-parent households are more or less aware of victim support agencies than non-victims, and Section 7.3 at how victims in sole-parent households compare with victims in other households with children as regards knowledge of support agencies. Finally, we compare knowledge of victim support agencies among victims in sole-parent households and other households with children who have been victimised at lower and higher frequency rates (Section 7.4).
- Chapter 8 describes *reactions to victimisation incidents* on the part of victims in sole-parent households and victims in other households with children (Section 8.1). It also differentiates between those victimised at lower and higher frequency rates (Section 8.2).
- Chapter 9 provides an overview and discussion of results.

■ 1.2 Sole-parent households versus sole parents

The overall research programme concerns both *sole parents* and *sole-parent households* (including the children). The distinction between the two poses something of a problem for NZCASS. This is because the sample comprised respondents aged 15 years or more who were asked to say what type of household best described them (sole-parent household being one option). The respondent, however, was not asked whether s/he was a sole parent, or the son or daughter of a sole parent. For some respondents, then, it is difficult to ascertain whether they were a very young sole parent, or an older child of a sole parent.

This said, it is useful for some purposes to focus on sole parents only (i.e. not children of sole parents) in sole-parent households (called sole parents hereon). One reason for this is that many features of victimisation (and concern about crime) are strongly age-related. In a case where the respondent's role in the family is now known, we do not know whether NZCASS results are being driven by the social circumstances and lifestyles of young people who happen to be still living at home, or by the social circumstances and lifestyles of young single parents themselves. If the focus is on sole parents themselves, then one clearly wants to be able to present results that are pertinent to them, rather than to their child.

There were 517 respondents who identified themselves as living in a sole-parent household. Of these, 321 respondents were clearly sole parents since they were the only person in the household over 15 years old. Of the remaining 196 respondents, there were two or more people in the household who were over 15 years. For analysis purposes, the assumption has been made that in a household with two or more people over 15 years of age, any respondent who is 29 years or younger is the child of a sole parent. This identified 91 respondents (out of 196) who were deemed to be the children of sole parents, and 105 sole parents. In sum, then, the sample of 517 respondents in sole-parent households is taken as comprising 426 parents (82% of the total) and 91 children (18% of the total).

Comparator groups

In the analyses in this report, sole-parent households are compared with either one or two other groups, although mainly the first.

- The first is *other households with children*. These comprise couples with children and extended families/whānau. This group is obviously most comparable to sole-parent households in terms of age and the presence (or likely presence) of children in the household.³
- The second comparator group is *all New Zealand households*. Although this includes sole-parent households and other households with children, it nonetheless provides an understandable point of reference.

Parents versus children in the other households with children group

The NZCASS questions on household structure and the relationship between household members again make it difficult to know for certain whether, in the other households with children, a young respondent was a parent him/herself, or the offspring of two older parents. We have assumed that if there were more than two adults in the household (i.e. over the age of 15), those aged 15–19 years were children. This is a slightly different approach to that taken with younger respondents in sole-parent households (i.e. those aged 15–29) since it is conceivable that a respondent aged 20–29 in a household with two or more adults might be one of the two parents. Of the 1902 other households with children in the sample, 1694 respondents were judged to be parents (89% of the total) and 208 were judged to be children (11% of the total). We recognise that for those in their twenties we may be ascribing a parent status to some respondents who were actually children. For the limited number of analyses meant to be based on parents only, then, it should be noted that results may be biased if the experience of children differs from parents. Various tests to identify bias, however, did not reveal anything of undue note.

■ 1.3 Measuring victimisation

Respondents in NZCASS were asked whether they had been a victim of offences covered by the survey since 1 January 2005. They were asked about victimisation in two different ways. The first was through screener questions in the first (and main) part of the NZCASS questionnaire. The second was through three Self-Completion components.

³ NZCASS asks about the number of people in the household, and the number of children under the age of 15. Among those who described themselves as being in a sole-parent household, 83% said there were children under the age of 15 in the household. Among couples with children, 79% said the same. In extended families (which are combined with couples with children), 71% said there were children under the age of 15.

Main screener questions

Early on in the survey, interviewers asked respondents a series of main screener questions to ascertain whether, since 1 January 2005, they had been a victim of many of the offences that fall within the scope of the survey. Many of these screener questions related to household property offences. These were offences where all household members can be regarded as victims – for instance, burglary and theft of vehicles. Some personal offences were also asked about at this stage – for instance, assaults, threats, and damage to personal property. These were offences that happened to the respondent him or herself, not to other members of the household. With respect to these personal offences in the main screener questions, respondents were asked to not mention at this stage in the interview offences that involved partners, other people they knew well, or a sexual element.

The distinction between household and personal offences is worth emphasising for this report. This is because household offences can be seen as affecting the household as a whole – i.e. both parents and children – so the choice of which respondent reports them is not important. For personal offences, however, which relate only to personal experience, we cannot be sure whether they were committed against a *parent* or against the *child* of a parent who stood as the household respondent. As said, though, in looking at personal offences, some assumptions have been made about which respondents were likely to be parents and which were likely to be children.

Self-Completion components

Questions on sexual offences and on personal offences (essentially assaults and threats) committed by partners or other people known well came in the final part of the interview. These questions were not administered by interviewers, but were posed in three Self-Completion components to maximise confidentiality. Respondents were given the laptop that the interviewer had been using, to enter responses themselves – a procedure called Computer-Assisted Self-Interviewing (CASI).⁴

Victim Forms

Information about the nature of what happened was collected in Victim Forms.⁵ Those who answered affirmatively to any of the main screener questions could complete up to three main Victim Forms – a limit set because it would be burdensome to ask for details of more offences than this.⁶ Those who answered affirmatively to any of the Self-Completion screener questions answered further questions about the last incident that happened, using a Self-Completion Victim Form.⁷

⁴ Of those who completed the interviewer-administered part of the survey, 6% refused to complete the Self-Completion components. Refusals were disproportionately from older respondents. More Asians and Pacific peoples also refused. It is difficult to say whether this was because of language difficulties, unfamiliarity with computers, or reluctance to answer the questions.

⁵ Information in the Victim Forms provides the basis for assessing whether an incident was properly *in scope* of the survey (for instance, whether there was sufficient evidence of genuine criminal behaviour). It is also used to classify incidents into offence types

⁶ Where a respondent reported more than three incidents, a Victim Form was completed for three semi-randomly selected incidents. The data collection software chose incidents with different probabilities, depending on three priority levels assigned to the offence type. These priorities ensured that less frequent offences were asked about more often to improve the accuracy of results. The differential probability of selection was taken into account in the weighting. Reilly and Sullivan, 2007 has further details.

⁷ This is a quasi-random selection method often used in crime surveys. It is efficient in reducing respondent burden, although there is no way of being sure that respondents do not choose a 'last' incident which is most salient to them, or about which they have more to say.

The main count of the volume of crime in New Zealand relates to offences that occurred in 2005, because annual risk estimates are most useful. The analysis of the nature of offences and reactions to them described in Chapter 8, *Reactions to victimisation*, draws on Victim Form information that covers offences that occurred in 2005 as well as any time in 2006 leading up to the time of the interview. (See Section 8.1, *Technical note*, for more details of the analysis of the Victim Forms.)

Sample size and sampling error

There are a number of methodological limitations that affect victimisation survey results, and these are discussed in Mayhew and Reilly (2007a). One of the most pertinent to this report relates to the fact that as NZCASS takes only a sample of the population, its findings are subject to random sampling variation. Respondents in sole-parent households comprised 10% of the unweighted sample of those aged 15 years or older, and 6% of the sample after it had been weighted to restore national representativeness (see Box 1.1, *Weighted data*). The number of respondents in subgroups of sole-parent households (Pacific peoples for instance) is clearly small then. This often makes it difficult to draw statistically reliable conclusions about subgroups. Furthermore, some types of offences described by victims are small in number (sexual offences for instance), so there are additional limits to the amount of analysis that can be sustained.

■ 1.4 Protective and resilience factors

The overall research programme into sole parentage is focusing on protective and resilience factors to help understand what can enable sole-parent households to achieve positive outcomes. The present report was also intended to have that focus, although there were considerable limits to doing so.

In the present context, we have taken *protective factors* as being characteristics that are associated with sole-parent households not experiencing any victimisations. Protective factors are thus examined in terms of what it is that differentiates sole-parent households that are victims from sole-parent households that are not victims – at least in terms of the information that NZCASS collected. It is important to bear in mind, though, that NZCASS had a limited recall window, which effectively defines sole-parent households as victims or non-victims on the basis of their experiences over a period of one year (2005). Non-victims may have been victimised prior to or after the recall period. Moreover, the characteristics of victims and non-victims in sole-parent households prove to be largely similar to those which differentiate between victims and non-victims in other household formations. In this respect, then, the results indicate personal and social factors that are *generally associated* with being victimised over a given one-year period. The protective factors for sole-parent households, then, will also apply to other family groups.

We have taken *resilience factors* as those that may assist sole-parent households who have been victimised to avoid being victimised again. We have thus examined resilience factors in terms of what differentiates sole-parent households that have been victimised once or twice from those that have been victimised more often than this. (This dichotomy was decided on the basis of statistical considerations.)

However, resilience to victimisation is difficult to investigate in a cross-sectional survey such as NZCASS in which a sample of people are asked about their experiences over a fairly limited period of time, and are not interviewed again – as they would be in a panel survey. Thus, NZCASS was not designed to investigate the transition from single victim to multiple victim. The limited recall period is one factor. Those defined as single victims, for instance, may not in fact have been such if the recall window had been wider. Secondly, while NZCASS collects information on reactions to

victimisation incidents, it is not possible to investigate fully the temporal sequence of reactions to victimisation for people who have been victimised more than once. This point is discussed further in Section 8.1, Technical note. Rather, factors related to resilience to victimisation can only be inferred from key differences between those victimised more and less frequently.

Box 1.1 Weighted data

Tables in this report are weighted to restore imbalances in the profile of those who responded to the survey relative to the survey population. The weighting takes into account gender, age, ethnicity, and urbanisation. A further non-response adjustment accounts for different response rates by region and urbanisation. The weighting also adjusts for a household's probability of selection, and the underrepresentation of people living in larger households. The profile of the New Zealand population used for weighting comes from Statistics New Zealand's population estimates and projections, which are based on the 2001 Census.⁸

While this weighting corrects for imbalances in the sample of people actually interviewed, it cannot account for all response bias. This is because the people who responded may differ in various respects from those who did not. For instance, they may differ with regard to lifestyle or marital status – factors that were not corrected for during weighting.

The information on offences for Victim Form analysis is also weighted to take account of the probability that the offence was selected for Victim Form completion.

Box 1.2 Statistical significance

Because NZCASS estimates are subject to sampling error, differences between population subgroups may occur by chance. Tests of statistical significance are used to identify which differences are reliable ones.⁹ Only differences that are statistically significant at the 90% confidence level or better are usually reported. This is the level at which, if there was truly no difference, we would expect to see smaller differences than we have observed at least 9 times out of 10. The 90% confidence level is used rather than the more stringent 95% one because the sample size is small for some groups (for example, young people). Reporting at this level increases the number of groups that can be compared.

While statistically significant differences could reflect real differences across surveys or across groups, they could also be caused by other methodological factors, including response bias and design changes.

Although a difference may not be statistically significant (e.g. it might just be due to random sampling variation), it may nevertheless be worth commenting on because the difference, if real, would have relevant policy implications.

⁸ For a more detailed discussion of weighting and other statistical analyses undertaken for NZCASS, see Reilly and Sullivan (2007).

⁹ The significance tests used in this report allow for the complex multistage sample design used for NZCASS. Tests that assume a simple random sample are not appropriate, as they would overstate the reliability of the results.

2 Features of sole-parent households in NZCASS

In 2006, about 10% of all households and 21% of households with dependent children were single-parent households, of which about 80% were headed by women (Families Commission, 2008). While these proportions are projected to remain fairly stable until 2021, they represent a marked change over time. In 1981, for instance, sole-parent households comprised only 5% of all households and 8% of households with dependent children.

NZCASS is a sample survey in which only a small proportion of the New Zealand population is questioned. Results are therefore subject to random sampling variation, which means that the characteristics of the 517 respondents in sole-parent households in the NZCASS sample will not necessarily provide an entirely accurate picture of sole-parent households in New Zealand. Moreover, no survey achieves complete response because some households cannot be contacted or – more often – refuse to be interviewed. NZCASS reduces the effects of non-response by weighting results to restore imbalances in the profile of those who responded to the survey (see Box 1.1, Weighted data). This is helpful, but rests on the assumption that respondents in the sample are similar in terms of victimisation experience, for instance, to demographically similar people who are omitted from the sample.

Other New Zealand surveys will also give a picture of the characteristics of sole-parent households, but will be subject to the same constraints of sample size and non-response. The Census will provide the most accurate picture – at least in terms of the factors asked about in the Census.

This chapter looks at the characteristics of sole-parent households as measured by NZCASS, compared with other households with children, and New Zealanders as a whole. (Sole-parent households formed 9% of the sample of households after weighting.) The section examines differences in household characteristics (such as area of residence and tenure type) and personal characteristics of the respondents interviewed (such as age). The majority of those interviewed in sole-parent households are sole parents themselves (see Section 1.2, Sole-parent households versus sole parents), but some were the children of sole parents.

■ 2.1 Personal and social differences between sole-parent households and others

Sole-parent households in NZCASS were in general more socially and economically disadvantaged than both other households with children and New Zealand households as a whole. The NZCASS results, then, are much in line with other sources of information about sole-parent households in New Zealand and other countries. Table A1, Characteristics of sole-parent households, other households with children, and all New Zealand households, shows the details.

The main respects in which there was a statistically significant difference between sole-parent households and one or the other of the other two groups were as follows.

- **Gender** – More respondents in sole-parent households were female (72%) than in other households, where the gender split was even; 81% of the parents in the sole-parent households were female.

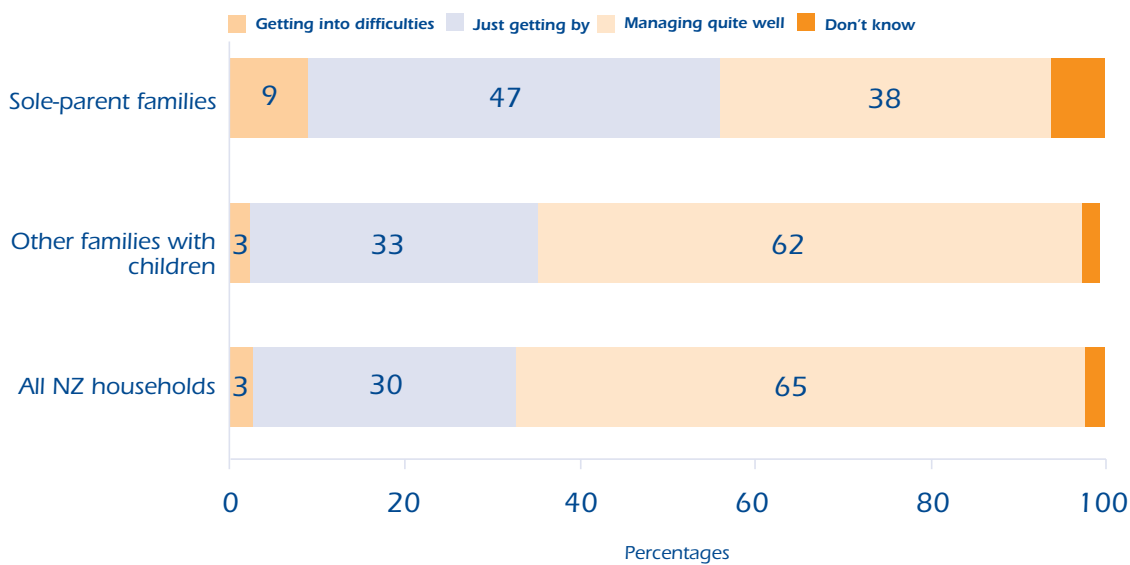
- **Age** – More respondents in sole-parent households were aged 15–24 (33%) than in the other two groups, where about one-fifth of respondents were in this age group. Fewer respondents in sole-parent households were aged 40–59 (33%) than in other households with children (41%). Very few respondents in sole-parent households and other households with children were aged 60 or more, whereas one-fifth of the NZCASS sample as a whole were aged 60 or more. The age of parents in sole-parent households and other households with children did not differ greatly. Approaching half were under age 40. There were rather more parents (6%) aged over 60 in other households with children than there were parents in this age-group in sole-parent households (2%).
- **Ethnicity** – There were more respondents in sole-parent households who were Māori (23%) than in other households with children (17%) or New Zealand households as a whole (13%).¹⁰
- **Marital status** – Rather more than half (57%) of those in sole-parent households had never been married, while most of the rest (36%) were divorced or separated. (Divorced and separated respondents formed 7% of the NZCASS sample as a whole.)
- **Household size** – Sole-parent households were smaller than other households with children. This would be expected as there is only one parent rather than two, although more detailed inspection of household composition also showed that other households with children had more children. There were just two people in 43% of sole-parent households. There were five or more in 7% of sole-parent households, compared to a figure of 31% in other households with children.
- **Employment status** – Fewer people in sole-parent households were in employment than in other households with children or New Zealand households as a whole. For parents only, 54% of those in sole-parent households were employed, as against 76% in other households with children.
- **Socio-economic status** – Sole-parent households were more likely than the other two groups to be of lower socio-economic status, as measured by the New Zealand Socio-economic Index (NZSEI).¹¹
- **Tenure** – More than half of sole-parent households (53%) were in rented accommodation, whereas the figures were much lower for other households with children (24%) and New Zealand households in general (29%). Overall, 15% of those in sole-parent households were social renters (renting from a Local Authority or the Housing New Zealand Corporation). This compares with 8% in other households with children, and 7% of all New Zealand households.

¹⁰ The ethnicity of respondents in NZCASS was assessed with a question virtually identical to that in the 2006 Census. Where respondents identified themselves as belonging to more than one ethnic group, each group was used in analysis. Thus, a respondent who identified with both Māori and Pacific ethnic groups was included in both for analysis purposes. On unweighted numbers, the proportion of those in sole-parent households who identified as being either sole Māori or Māori and another ethnicity was high (43%). However, this reflects the deliberate oversampling of Maori in NZCASS. The process of weighting serves to give more nationally representative results, so that the experiences of the high number of Māori in the sample does not dominate the picture.

¹¹ NZSEI is a scale that reflects the socio-economic status of people based on the occupation of the main income earner in their household. Each participant in NZCASS was given a score between 10 and 90 based on this occupation. These scores were then grouped into six ranges for presentation of the data in tables. The higher the score, the higher the socio-economic status. (A difference from the 2001 survey is that a coding of 'NZSEI unspecified' was avoided by asking more detailed questions of people who were not directly in paid employment.)

- **Locality** – More sole-parent households lived in ‘other major urban areas’ (26%) than other households with children (20%) or New Zealand households as a whole (23%). These are urban centres with populations of over 30,000 that are smaller than metropolitan areas, but larger than secondary or rural/minor urban areas. Fewer sole-parent households lived in the smallest rural/minor urban areas with populations of less than 10,000 (18%) than other households (22%).
- **Deprivation** – Sole-parent households more often lived in the two most deprived quintiles (fifths) of the country as measured by the NZ Index of Deprivation (NZDep);¹² 54% of them did so, as against 42% of other households with children and all New Zealand households. This result was mirrored in a question which asked respondents to describe how well they were managing on their household income. Those in sole-parent households more often described themselves as ‘getting into difficulties’, or as ‘just getting by and unable to save if they wanted to’ (see Figure 2.1).

Figure 2.1 How well sole-parent households were managing on household income



¹² NZDep, developed by the Health Services Research Centre at the Ministry of Health, is made up of a weighted average of nine Census measures of socio-economic status and has become a standard measure of relative deprivation in New Zealand. The index divides New Zealand into equal tenths. A score of 10 indicates that a geographic area is in the most deprived 10% of all areas in New Zealand. For this report, the deciles have been reduced to quintiles (five parts) to make better use of sample numbers.

3 Victimisation risks in sole-parent households

Previous reports on NZCASS have already identified that sole-parent households were disproportionately at risk of most types of victimisation in 2005 (Mayhew and Reilly, 2007a; Mayhew and Reilly, 2009). Information on lifetime experience of violence by partners also showed that those in sole-parent households were at high risk. Among men in sole-parent households, 45% had experienced violence by a partner at some stage, compared with 30% of male New Zealanders as a whole. The disparity was even wider for women in sole-parent households: 63% had experienced partner violence at some stage, as against 21% of all women (Mayhew and Reilly, 2009).

This chapter has three parts.

- Section 3.1 draws together some of the findings on victimisation risks in 2005 from previous reports on NZCASS results.
- Section 3.2 looks at the unevenness of victimisation among sole-parent households, contrasting it with the picture for other households with children. We look at the proportion of people who had never been victimised, and – for those who were victimised – the number of victimisations they experienced.
- Section 3.3 reports the results of analysis in Reilly and Mayhew (2009) which examined whether sole-parent status per se explains the higher risks that sole-parent households face.

3.1 Levels of risk in sole-parent households

The level of victimisation risk in sole-parent households can be assessed by both prevalence rates and incidence rates (see Box 3.1, Prevalence and incidence rates), and we do so here. We concentrate on the following types of victimisation. (These terms are also defined in the Glossary.)

- **All victimisation** – all the forms of victimisation that NZCASS measured. Risks are based on all respondents.
- **All household offences** – burglary, thefts from a dwelling, other household thefts, vandalism to household property, thefts of vehicles, thefts from vehicles/vehicle interference, and vandalism to vehicles. Risks are based on all respondents.
- **Burglary** – one form of household victimisation, comprising more than one-third of the total number of household offences. Risks are based on all respondents.
- **Vehicle crime** – another subset of household victimisation, comprising thefts of vehicles, thefts from vehicles/vehicle interference, and vandalism to vehicles. This, again, is a sizeable proportion of household offences – just under one-third. Risks are based on vehicle-owning households.

- **All personal offences** – covering sexual offences, assaults, threats (to the person and property), robbery, thefts from the person, thefts of personal property, and vandalism to personal property. Risks here as based on the best approximation of ‘parents’ that was possible in relation to sole-parent households and other households with children (see Section 1.2, Sole-parent households versus sole parents).
- **Confrontational offences** – a subset of personal offences, which comprise here assaults, threats and robberies (which are small in number). Confrontational offences amount to about three-quarters of the total number of personal offences. Sexual offences are omitted.¹³ Risks are based on ‘parents’.

Box 3.1 Prevalence and incidence rates

The level of victimisation can be measured by means of two rates (or risks). These are also defined in the Glossary.

The *prevalence rate* (percent of people victimised once or more) is a common measure in victim surveys. It measures the number of people or households that have been victims of a given offence at least once, expressed as a percentage of the relevant population.

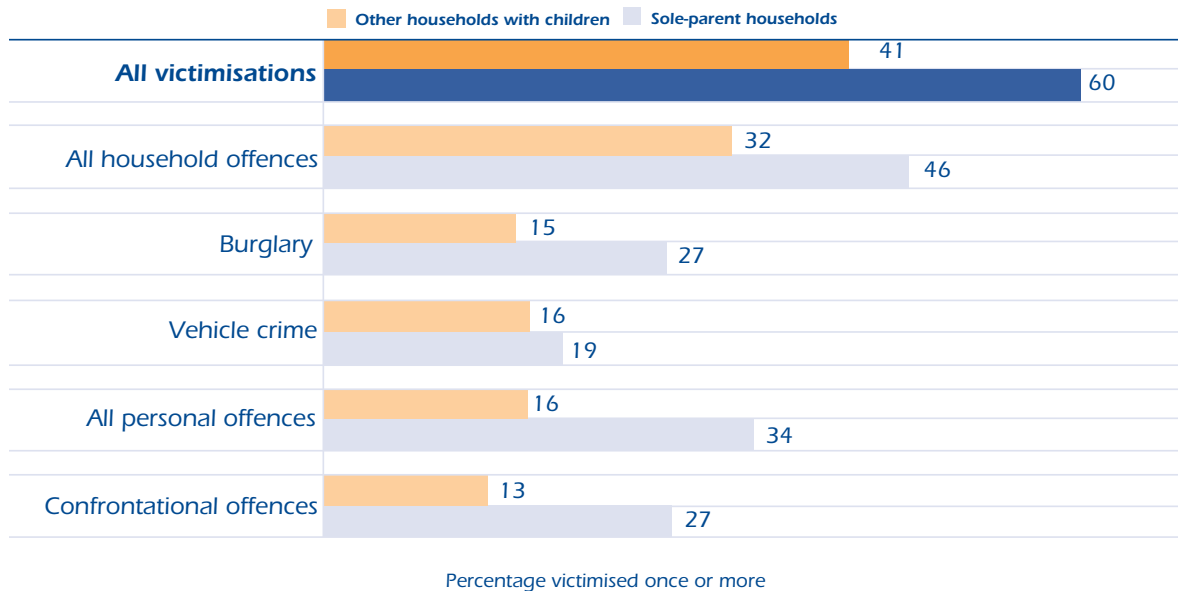
The *incidence rate* (the number of offences per 100 people) is the total number of offences that occurred, again expressed as a percentage of the total relevant population. It takes into account the fact that some people are victimised more than once, so an incidence rate will be higher than the corresponding prevalence rate.

Prevalence risks

Figure 3.1 shows prevalence risks for sole-parent households and other households with children. (Risks for other households with children were a little higher than those for all New Zealand households because this last ‘average’ category contains a sizeable proportion of households – 21% – in which the respondent was aged 60 or older. These older respondents have comparatively low risks.)

¹³ Relatively few people reported sexual victimisation so estimates are statistically fragile by subgroup. Risks were higher for women, but since women are overrepresented in sole-parent households the inclusion of sexual victimisation would skew results. Mayhew and Reilly (2009) looked at sexual victimisation risk for women. They found that women who were single, were in sole-parent households, or were beneficiaries experienced more sexual victimisation. In 2005, 15% of women in sole-parent households said they had experienced one or more incidents of sexual victimisation, compared with 4% of women overall. The 15% estimate, however, is statistically fragile.

Figure 3.1 Prevalence risks for sole-parent households and other households with children



Notes:

Risks of vehicle crime are based on vehicle-owning households.

Risks for all personal offences and confrontational offences are based on parents.

From Figure 3.1 it can be seen that:

- the proportion of sole-parent households victimised once or more in 2005 (60%) was a good deal higher than for other households with children (41%)
- the narrowest gap between sole-parent households and other households with children was in relation to vehicle crime
- the largest gap between sole parents and other parents was in relation to personal offences, reflecting the pattern for confrontational offences.¹⁴

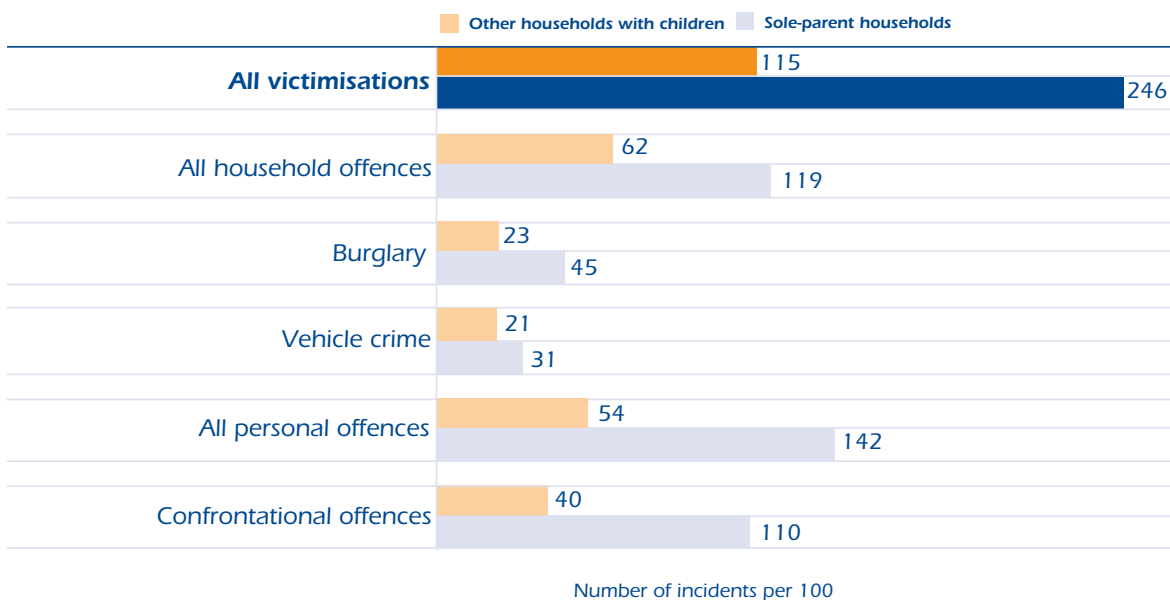
¹⁴ NZCASS allows a distinction to be made between confrontational offences committed by partners, people well known, and other offenders. On the face of it, confrontational offences committed by a partner (i.e. someone who was a spouse or intimate partner at some stage since the beginning of 2005) were particularly high for sole parents – being nearly four times higher (at a prevalence level of 24%) than for other households with children, but the reliability of this risk estimate for sole parents is statistically very weak.

Incidence risks

Figure 3.2 shows incidence risks for sole-parent households and other households with children. The gap in incidence risks is more pronounced than that in prevalence risks. This signifies that, when victimised, those in sole-parent households are victimised more on average. In other words, those in sole-parent households are particularly likely to be subject to what is known as repeat (or *multiple*) victimisation.

The overall average number of victimisations of any type among those victimised in sole-parent households was 4.1, as against 2.8 among victims in other households with children. (These figures are based on dividing the incidence rate by the prevalence rate.) The greater number of offences per victim was rather more marked in relation to personal offences and the subcategory of confrontational crime than it was in relation to household offences.

Figure 3.2 Incidence risks for sole-parent households and other households with children



3.2 The unevenness of victimisation

The fact that sole-parent households are victimised (on prevalence figures) more often than other households with children is one illustration of the unevenness of victimisation risk – countering the notion of there being any average risk. The unevenness of victimisation is illustrated in another way: the probability of being victimised more than once, if victimised, is also unevenly spread (in fact it is more so than the probability of being victimised at all). The consequence of this is that a small number of victims experience the majority of victimisations. This phenomenon is by no means singular to NZCASS; it is one of the best-known lessons from victim surveys in a large number of countries, all of which illustrate it.¹⁵

¹⁵ Pease (1998) has a good overview of findings about repeat victimisation, as well as the strengths and limitations of survey data on it. For instance, the usual calendar year period on which it is measured places an artificial bound on the number of repeat incidents that can be counted.

As seen, those in sole-parent households are particularly likely to be subject to repeat victimisation. Table 3.1 presents the frequency distribution of victimisation for all offences covered by the survey as experienced by sole-parent households and other households with children. The respective columns refer to:

- Columns 1a and 1b: the percentage of adults in NZCASS in terms of the number of times they were victimised, if at all
- Columns 2a and 2b: the percentage of victims in NZCASS, in terms of the number of times they were victimised
- Columns 3a and 3b: the percentage of victimisations measured by NZCASS in terms of whether victims were victimised once, twice, or three or more times.

In both sole-parent households and other households with children, the result of note is that some people were repeatedly victimised. In 2005, 29% of sole-parent households in New Zealanders were victimised three times or more (column 1a), with the figure being 13% for other households with children (column 1b). (This, of course, is consistent with the difference in the number of victimisations per victim in the two family groups.) Offences against these more highly victimised respondents in sole-parent households accounted for 83% of all the offences against sole-parent households measured in the survey (column 3a). Offences against the more highly victimised respondents in other households with children accounted for just over two-thirds (68%) of all the offences against other households with children (Column 3b).

Table 3.1 Frequency distribution for all offences in 2005: sole-parent households (SPH) and other households with children (OHWC)

Column	% of adults ¹		% of victims		% of victimisations	
	1a SPH	1b OHWC	2a SPH	2b OHWC	3a SPH	3b OHWC
Number of victimisations						
None	40%	59%	–	–	–	–
One	19%	21%	31%	50%	8%	18%
Two	12%	8%	20%	19%	10%	14%
Three or more	29%	13%	49%	31%	83%	68%
Prevalence	60%	41%				
Sample size	517	1,902				

Notes:

¹ Based on all those aged 15 or over (i.e. parents and children). Percentages do not necessarily add to 100% because of rounding.

Table 3.1 confirms that more sole-parent households were frequently victimised than other households with children, which of course gives rise to the higher average number of victimisations for sole-parent households. As for victims (as opposed to the full samples), the percentage in sole-parent households who experienced three or more victimisations was higher (49%, column 2a) than among victims in other households with children (31%, column 2b). The average number of offences per victim for the two victim groups was very similar, however.

Section 4.1, Sole-parent households that were victims and those that were not, provides the best information NZCASS can offer on the characteristics of those sole-parent households that were subject to the heaviest victimisation.

■ 3.3 Explaining why sole parents are at greatest risk

Bivariate and multivariate analysis

Key Findings (Mayhew and Reilly, 2007a) looked at victimisation risks in terms of sole parentage as well as many other factors, such as ethnicity and area of residence. It confirmed the findings of the two previous New Zealand national crime surveys that sole-parent households faced a high risk of criminal victimisation compared with many of those in any other household types. The *Key Findings* looked at risks using *bivariate* analysis, which in effect examined risks in terms of one correlate at a time (such as sole parentage, ethnicity and area of residence).

The high level of risk among sole parents was also examined in a later report on the results the NZCASS (Reilly and Mayhew, 2009). In this report, *multivariate* analysis was used to account for the overlap of different risk factors. This is important in understanding which particular factors matter most in understanding risk. For instance, sole-parent households more often live in deprived areas and both sole-parent households and those in deprived areas are at high risk. Multivariate analysis deals with this overlap. Multivariate techniques produce so-called models in which the most predictive combinations of many overlapping factors are selected and their effects estimated.

The multivariate analysis in Reilly and Mayhew (2009) examined which factors emerged as most important for the NZCASS sample in relation to risks of burglary, vehicle crime (thefts of and from vehicles and vehicle interference), and confrontational (violent) crime. Confrontational crime was broken down into offences by partners, by people well known to the victim, and by other offenders (strangers or those known casually or by sight).

The results indicated that sole-parent status *per se* was generally unimportant in explaining the higher risks among sole-parent households. Rather, the reason for sole parents' higher risks that was evident from bivariate analysis was because of a coincidence between sole-parent status and a nexus of associated risk-related factors, such as a younger age profile, and more personal and neighbourhood economic strain.

This result was supported by results from multivariate analyses of risk based on victimisation surveys carried out in many other Westernised countries, which Reilly and Mayhew (2009) draws together. These other analyses incorporated measures of household structure, as well as other measures, in several cases more extensive than those available in NZCASS. There is much consistency in results between NZCASS and the international studies as to the main risk factors, but the international analyses give a more rounded picture of what most influences people's risks than NZCASS results can do on their own. As with NZCASS results, sole-parent status *per se* did not – with one exception (see below) – appear itself to be the explanation for higher victimisation risks.

The exception in NZCASS and in some other studies was that sole-parent status seemed to be a factor in relation to burglary. Reilly and Mayhew (2009) argued that the NZCASS finding might be related to the type of property in which sole-parent households live (burglars, of course, are unlikely to know what type of family occupies a particular property). One of the international studies which included a measure of low household security found this to be more predictive of

a high burglary risk than household type (Mayhew et al., 1993). Tseloni (2006) also showed that sole parents living in apartments were particularly more at risk than those sole parents living in houses. Thus, the high burglary risks for sole-parent households could be due to housing-related factors not measured in NZCASS. The level of home security that can be afforded by those living in Housing New Zealand Corporation homes, for instance, could be low, and many sole parents live there (see Chapter 2, Features of sole-parent households in NZCASS).

4 The types of sole-parent households most at risk

This chapter considers in more detail how victimisation risks vary for different types of sole-parent households.

- Section 4.1 looks at sole-parent households that were victimised and those that were not, to see where any differences lie.
- Section 4.2 compares victims in sole-parent households with victims in other households with children, to assess whether there are particular subgroups of sole-parent households that are especially vulnerable to overall victimisation. It also looks at the picture as regards personal offences against parents only.
- Section 4.3 examines those in sole-parent households who have been victimised at lower and higher frequency rates. The purpose here is to see whether there is anything distinctive about sole-parent households that were victimised most often, drawing comparisons with the most heavily victimised in other households with children.

4.1 Sole-parent households that were victims and those that were not

As seen, 60% of those in sole-parent households had been victimised in 2005 in some way at least once. This section compares this 60% with the 40% of sole-parent households that were not victimised. It draws on an unweighted sample of 305 victims and 212 non-victims. Comparisons between victims and non-victims can only be tentative because of these relatively small numbers.

The differences between sole-parent households that were victimised and those that were not are examined by looking at the proportion in each of the two groups that had particular characteristics. The most reliable differences between victims and non-victims in sole-parent households are set out below (see Table A2, Characteristics of victims and non-victims in sole-parent households, for further details).

- Proportionately more sole-parent victims (67%) were in the bottom half of the NZSEI scale than non-victims (48%).
- Sole-parent households that were victimised were more likely to be social renters (20%) than non-victims (7%).
- Proportionately fewer sole-parent households that were victimised were 'managing quite well' on their income (33%) than non-victims (46%).
- Proportionately fewer sole-parent households that were victimised lived in minor urban and rural areas than non-victims (15% and 21%), although proportionately more victims lived in the South Island (27%, versus 15% of non-victims).

Many of the differences between sole-parent households that were victimised and those that were not are consistent with the general pattern of risks across the NZCASS sample as a whole (see, e.g., Mayhew and Reilly, 2007a; Cunningham et. al., forthcoming). Other differences not commented on above were in the same direction as overall results – for instance with regard

to there being proportionately more Māori among victims – but did not achieve statistical significance.

4.2 Victims in sole-parent households and victims in other households with children

In comparing the experiences of victims in sole-parent households and those in other households with children, one could potentially look at differences in incidence risks as well as prevalence risks (as Chapter 2, Features of sole-parent households in NZCASS, did). The focus here, though, is on prevalence risks, since *relative standard errors* (RSEs) (see Glossary) are generally smaller and this makes for more robust analysis. One could also potentially look at a range of different types of victimisation. The main focus here is on experiences in relation to any victimisation (since this gives the best numerical base), although risks for parents only are considered in relation to personal offences, the majority of which were confrontational.

Two general caveats should be borne in mind in interpreting the remaining results in this section. First, a bivariate analysis approach is taken when considering differences between victims in sole-parent households and those in other households with children. As Section 3.3, Explaining why sole parents are at greatest risk, explained, bivariate analysis looks at one characteristic at a time (for instance, the ethnicity of victims in the two types of household); it does not take into account the fact that other factors might be implicated at the same time – in this case, that the ethnicity of those in sole-parent households might be associated with other characteristics in a different way than applies to other households with children. Secondly, while the analysis shows some associations between particular characteristics and victimisation in the two household formations, we cannot be sure of the causal relationship, if any, although in many cases plausible explanations can be suggested.

Personal and social differences in terms of risk

Chapter 2, Features of sole-parent households in NZCASS, showed that overall risks of victimisation were higher for those in sole-parent households, compared to other households with children. The overall prevalence rate for sole-parent households was 60%, compared to 41% for other households with children (see Table A3, Percentage risk differentials between groups of sole-parent households and other households with children: All offences). This is a differential of 1.4 (on unrounded prevalence figures). The question of interest here is whether this overall differential of 1.4 is similar across *different subgroups* of sole-parent households and other households with children. This addresses the issue of whether some subgroups of sole-parent households face particularly elevated risks, or less elevated risks compared to their counterparts in other households with children.

To assess this, we looked at risk differentials that were greater than (or less than) the average overall prevalence victimisation risk differential of 1.4, expressing this as a percentage (called *the percentage risk differential*).¹⁶ For present purposes, we have taken as noteworthy a percentage risk differential in excess of 15% more, or in excess of 15% less, than the average differential of 1.4. Some threshold other than 15% could have been taken, but inspection of the data suggested

¹⁶ Risk differentials are similar to relative risks and odds ratios, which are often presented in multivariate analysis such as logistic regression.

15% was a reasonable choice. It was likely to identify differences of practical significance, and also takes some account of random sampling error.

An example of the percentage risk differential may help. The overall prevalence victimisation risk for Pacific peoples' sole-parent households is 71%, as against 41% in other Pacific households with children – a differential of 1.8. The percentage risk differential is thus 21% higher than the average differential of 1.4 between all sole-parent households and other households with children (on unrounded figures). The prevalence risk for all victimisations in European sole-parent households is 62%, as against 40% in other European households with children. This is a differential of 1.6, and is 8% higher than the average differential of 1.4. On the 15% differential rule we have applied, then, Pacific peoples in sole-parent households appear distinctive (with elevated risks), whereas Europeans in sole-parent households are less so.

Table A3 shows overall prevalence risks for different subgroups of sole-parent households and other households with children. Also shown are the actual differentials between each subgroup and the percentage risk differential compared with the overall differential of 1.4. The percentage risk differential is omitted when either of the risk estimates for particular subgroups has a RSE greater than or equal to 25% – which indicates a very high degree of unreliability in the risk estimates. The main results from this analysis are discussed further below.

A similar analysis was done looking at personal offences for parents only. The overall risk differential was larger (at 2.1) than that for all offences (1.4) based on parents and children. This reflects the results in Section 3.1, Levels of risk in sole-parent households, which indicated a larger gap between sole-parent households and other households with children in relation to personal offences.

Table A4 shows the risk differentials for personal offences for different subgroups of parents. The picture of those sole parents who were at more elevated or less elevated risk was broadly similar to that on the basis of all victimisations against parents and children. However, there is more statistical instability of the figures due to the smaller base numbers of respondents and the lower level of risk for personal offences. (The percentage risk differential for Pacific parents, for instance, was larger for personal offences than for all offences, but this cannot be viewed as statistically sound.)

Table 4.1 summarises the results of these two analyses. It shows which subgroups of sole-parent households and sole parents only (for personal offences) seemed particularly *more* at risk than their counterparts in other households with children. This was on the basis of a percentage risk differential of 15% or higher than the average for the two family groups. These are indicated by ✓. The results also show subgroups for whom there was somewhat less of a difference in risks between subgroups of sole-parent households and their counterparts in other households with children. This was on the basis of a percentage risk differential of 15% or more lower than the average for the two family groups. These are again indicated by ✓. Subgroups in Columns A and B that are marked [✓] were the same direction of risk, but did not meet the ±15% threshold; those that are marked - are statistically unstable estimates because of high RSEs on one or both of the estimates.

Table 4.1 Subgroups of sole-parent households (SPH) with more and less elevated risks compared to other households with children (OHWC)

		A	B
		All family members – all offences	Parents only – personal offences
SPH at more elevated risks relative to OHWC			
	Pacific peoples	✓	–
	In a de facto relationship	✓	–
	Engaged in home duties	✓	–
	Social renters	✓	[✓]
	Those in metropolitan cities other than Auckland	✓	✓
	Those in the South island	✓	✓
SPH at less elevated risks relative to OHWC			
	Aged 15–24	✓	✓
	Māori	[✓]	✓
	Single/never married	✓	✓
	Paid employment or self-employed	[✓]	✓
	Unemployed/on benefits	[✓]	✓
	Private renters	[✓]	✓
	Homeowners	[✓]	✓
	The most deprived quintile (NZDep)	[✓]	✓
	Those in Auckland	✓	–
	Other major urban areas	[✓]	✓

Notes:

Groups marked with a ✓ in Column A are those for which the percentage risk differential is 15% or more higher or 15% or more lower than the average differential of 1.4 between overall risks for sole-parent households and other households with children. Groups are only shown where the differences in risks for the subgroups within the two family types are statistically significant. Groups marked with a ✓ in Column B are those for which the percentage risk differential is 15% or more higher or 15% or more lower than the average differential of 2.1 between risks of personal offences for sole parents and other parents in households with children.

Subcategories that are marked [✓] were in the same direction of risk, but estimates did not meet the ±15% threshold.

Subcategories that are marked – were statistically unstable because of very high RSEs.

The subgroups at most elevated risk

On the basis of all offences, the following subgroups of sole-parent households seemed particularly more at risk compared to similar groups in other households with children.

- **Pacific peoples** – As said previously, Pacific peoples in sole-parent households had more elevated risks than Pacific peoples in other households with children. The percentage risk differential was 21%.
- **Those in a de facto relationship** – Respondents in sole-parent households who were in a de facto relationship had more elevated risks compared to their counterparts in other households with children.¹⁷ The percentage risk differential for all offences was 15%, and it was similar for personal offences. It may be that some of the elevated risk is attributable to offences committed by de facto partners, but the NZCASS data does not sustain a test of this.

¹⁷ There are various circumstances in which a person in a sole-parent household might be in a de facto relationship. Their partner might be in prison, for instance, or out of touch. Perhaps more likely is that the sole parent is in a relationship with someone else who is not considered to share a parenting role.

- **Home duties** – Those in sole-parent households who said they were involved in home duties (as opposed to being employed, unemployed/on benefits, or a student) had more elevated risks than those doing home duties in other households with children. The percentage risk differential for all offences was 53% higher than the average differential. A possible explanation of this finding is that being engaged in home duties is more of a marker of very low income in sole-parent households (because it usually means reliance on benefit income) than it is in other households with children, where there might well be other wage-earning adults. However, the number of those in sole-parents households engaged in home duties was small (n = 16). The result therefore may be a function of the particular individuals interviewed.
- **Social renters** – Sole-parent households that were social renters had more elevated risks than social renters in other households with children. The percentage risk differential was 24% higher than the average differential for all offences. One cannot be sure about the reason for this, but it may be that the social rented properties in which sole-parent households live are different from the social rented properties in which other households with children live, in terms of area for instance. It may also be that the presence of more adults in other households with children who are social renters provides more natural surveillance.
- **Those in metropolitan cities excluding Auckland** – Sole-parent households in these largest cities had more elevated risks compared to other households with children. The risk differential was 20%. Auckland seems rather a special case, as discussed below.
- **South Island** – Sole-parent households in the South Island also had more elevated risks compared to other households with children in the South Island. This may reflect distinctive features of disadvantage among sole-parent households in the South Island, or perhaps the fact that other households with children in the South Island are comparatively more advantaged.

The subgroups at less elevated risk

Table 4.1 also shows those subgroups of sole-parent households that had percentage risk differentials of 15% or more *lower* than those for similar groups in other households with children (indicated by ✓). It is probably not correct to interpret these subgroups of sole-parent households as being relatively protected since it is difficult to say whether some groups of sole-parent households are better placed in victimisation risk terms than others, or that some groups of other households with children are worse placed.

The following subgroups of sole-parent households emerged at less elevated risks than was the case for sole-parent households as a whole.

- **Those aged 15–24** – The overall victimisation risk differential for this age group (1.2) was 16% lower than the average (1.4). The risk differential for personal offences for young sole parents (1.3) was 38% lower than the overall risk differential of 2.1. The actual difference in risks between the two types of parents, however, was not statistically significant – maybe not surprisingly, given the small base numbers involved. One implication of the less narrow difference in risks for those aged 15–24 in the two family groups may be that more very young sole parents than very young coupled parents in other families live in supportive environments with other relatives. It is important to note, however, that risks were still higher for 15–24-year-olds in sole-parent households than they were for their counterparts in other households with children. Moreover, the absolute level of risk for this age group – particularly for personal offences – was a fair degree higher in both family types than it was for other age groups.

- **Single/never married** – Those in sole-parent households who described themselves as single/never married had a percentage risk differential of 20% lower for all offences, indicating that relative to the overall average risk difference for the two family groups, singles in sole-parent households were not as vulnerable as some other groups.¹⁸ There will be a relationship with age here though, and it may be that the result is sensitive to the slightly different assumptions that were made regarding which young people in the two household formations were parents and which were children (see Section 1.2, Sole-parent households versus sole parents).
- **Those in the most deprived fifth of New Zealand as measured by NZDep** – The risk differential for personal offences for parents (1.7) was 19% lower than the overall average (2.1). The risk differential for all offences (12% lower) was in the same direction.¹⁹ One interpretation of this is that the burden of victimisation also hits hard for other households with children who live in the most deprived fifth of New Zealand. This is consistent with results from international research, which has shown that risks come with the territory in the most socially deprived areas (see e.g. Tseloni, 2000).
- **Those who were unemployed and/or on benefits** – The risk differential for personal offences against parents (1.5) was 30% lower than the average. (The differential for all victimisations was unexceptional.) The implication of this result is that those who are unemployed and/or on benefits in other households with children are disadvantaged in victimisation terms compared to other subgroups in other households with children.
- **Private renters and homeowners** – The risk differential for personal offences against parents for both owners and private renters was 16% lower than the average. Thus, while risks for sole parents who were renting privately, or who were owner occupiers, were still higher than other counterpart parents, the gap between them was narrower than for the two types of parents overall. This may suggest that sole parents who are not reliant on social housing are rather better placed.
- **Those living in Auckland** – The percentage risk differential for sole-parent households living in Auckland was 15% lower for all offences. It was in the same direction but lower (at –6%) for personal offences against parents. It may be that sole-parent households in New Zealand’s largest city are more economically heterogeneous and thus less susceptible, on average, to the higher risks of victimisation characteristic of the more socially deprived.
- **Māori** had a lower risk differential (1.6) which was 24% less than the average of 2.1 for all personal offences. On the face of it, this indicates that – as far as risks of personal offences are concerned – Māori sole parents are not overly disadvantaged compared to Māori parents in another other family type. Cunningham et al. (forthcoming) found that the most significant differences lay between Māori and European couples with children.

¹⁸ The other large group in sole-parent households was the divorced or separated. The percentage risk differential was not exceptional for them compared to the relatively small number of those divorced or separated in other households with children.

¹⁹ The pattern for other NZDep quintiles did not lend itself to clear interpretation, and the pattern was not consistent across all offences and personal offences.

4.3 The most victimised

As Chapter 1, Introduction, said, the overall research programme into sole parentage is focusing on protective factors that help prevent unfavorable outcomes for sole-parent households, and on resilience factors that are associated with sole-parent households coping better with adverse circumstances.

This section is most pertinent to resilience factors which we have taken to be those that may assist sole parents who have been victimised to avoid being victimised again. It examines whether there is anything that differentiates those in sole-parent households who had been victimised once or twice (*lower-frequency victims*) from those who had been victimised more often than this (*higher-frequency victims*). This dichotomy was dictated by statistical considerations, since there was an insufficient number of sole-parent households victimised only once ($n = 93$). The same dichotomy was applied to victims in other households with children.

Two points made in Chapter 1 are worth repeating. The first is that NZCASS was not designed to investigate the transition from the status of lower-frequency victim to the status of a higher-frequency victim. The limited one-year recall period is one factor here, since it essentially defines victim status on the basis of that period only. The second point to bear in mind is the limited sample size for sole-parent households, which constrains analysis possibilities.

Differences in risk

We looked first at overall victimisation risks for lower- and higher-frequency victims among sole-parent households and other households with children. The results from this analysis are in Table A5. They show two main things.

- Virtually all the subgroups of victims in sole-parent households (e.g. women or those aged 15–24) divided into roughly a similar proportion of lower-frequency victims and higher-frequency victims. For example, of the 59% of women who were victimised, 31% of them were lower-frequency victims, and 28% were higher-frequency victims; the figures for 15–24-year-olds were 30% and 34% respectively. Where there were some apparent differences, they were not statistically significant because of high RSEs.
- The proportion of the different subgroups in other households with children who were lower-frequency victims was, in general, fairly similar to the proportion of victims in sole-parent households. For instance, 27% of women in other households with children were lower-frequency victims as against 31% of women in sole-parent households – not a statistically significant difference. In contrast, however, the proportion of the different subgroups in other households with children who were higher-frequency victims was by and large a good deal lower than in sole-parent households. For instance, 13% of women in other households with children were higher-frequency victims, as against a much higher 28% of women in sole-parent households. What this is showing again, then, is that it is higher frequency victimisation which is more singular to sole-parent households.

Can the results in Table A5 say anything about resilience to victimisation among sole-parent households – i.e. what characteristics might prevent higher-frequency victimisation? The answer to this is difficult to say. The results simply indicate what characteristics are *associated with* being subject less often to higher-frequency victimisation than is the case overall, rather than what might *prevent* a lower-frequency victim becoming a higher-frequency one.

To investigate these associations, we looked at which subgroups in sole-parent households did not have as high a frequency of victimisation as did sole-parent households overall, where 29% were subject to high frequency victimisation. Of the results which are reliable (i.e. not subject to high RSEs) and statistically significant, the groups in sole-parent households who experienced higher-frequency victimisation less often than was the case overall were:

- those aged 40–59, among whom 20% experienced heavy victimisation compared with 29% overall; those in sole-parent households who are older, then, might be seen as having some resilience
- those who were in paid employment or self-employed (22%)
- those in the smallest minor urban and rural areas (21%).

Mayhew and Reilly 2007b showed that 61% of households in these less populated areas were members of Neighbourhood or Rural Support (although only where they existed, which was in 23% of areas). Given that NZCASS cannot provide evidence of the extent to which people know and support each other in their communities, the level of social supports may warrant further exploration as a protective or resilience factor against victimisation. There is also, perhaps, an argument that people know each other better anyway in small communities.

Among other households with children, being aged 40–59 was also associated with a lower rate of higher-frequency victimisation than the average, as was living in the smallest minor urban and rural areas. Being in paid employment or self-employed, however, was less obviously a resilience factor as regards very heavy victimisation in other households with children. On the other hand, being in the highest status NZSEI group was.

5 Concern about crime

NZCASS collected a fair amount of information on the level and nature of people's concern about crime. This chapter presents results from the perspective of sole-parent households, and looks at whether there is anything distinctive about them.

- Section 5.1 looks at how sole-parent households compare with other households with children as regards their concern about crime.
- Section 5.2 looks at how victims in sole-parent households differ from non-victims.
- Section 5.3 sees whether victims in sole-parent households are more or less concerned than victims in other households with children.
- Section 5.4 compares concern about crime among those who had been victimised at lower and higher frequency rates.
- Section 5.5 draws together some points about the results, but it concludes that there is little to say in relation to protective and resilience factors.

5.1 Sole-parent households and other households with children

One would expect sole-parent households to register more concern about crime than other households with children since sole-parent households are overrepresented in the groups that previous NZCASS results have shown to be most concerned about crime (Mayhew and Reilly, 2007b). Across a range of measures of concern, these include women, Māori, social renters, those in the most deprived areas, and victims. While the results below largely support the expectation that those in sole-parent households will be more concerned about crime, differences between them and other families are by no means marked, and some even disappear with simple controls for age and gender. The main findings are discussed below. Most details are in Table A6.

Crime problems in the neighbourhood

More sole-parent households (41%) felt there was a crime problem in their neighbourhood than other households with children (36%), although area and tenure will play a role. Those who said there was a crime problem in their neighbourhood were asked what the problems were. Sixteen types of problems were mentioned with some frequency. There were only marginal differences between sole-parent households and others in how often they were mentioned. (All groups, for instance, were most likely to mention a local burglary problem.) However, more sole-parent households than other households with children cited the following as problems: youths on the street/youths fighting (cited by 29%); drunken behaviour and underage drinking (22%); and assault (15%). Differences between other groups (for instance, victims and non-victims in sole-parent households) were by and large not marked, and/or did not reach statistical significance. The types of crime problems identified by those who felt there was a crime problem in their neighbourhood, therefore, are not shown in Table A6.

Changes in crime

In response to a question on whether the level of local crime had increased, decreased or stayed the same over the past two years, the majority of the two family groups felt it had stayed the same. Among sole parents, 23% felt crime had increased, compared with 21% of other households with children – not a statistically significant difference.

Worry about victimisation

When asked how much they worried about nine specific types of victimisation, the frequency with which the two family groups mentioned them as a source of worry was generally similar. (Being fairly or very worried about being in a traffic accident caused by a drunken driver was a major concern across the board.) However, sole-parent households were more worried about being assaulted by people they knew (25% were very or fairly worried) than other households with children (20%).

Feelings of safety after dark

When asked whether they walked alone in their neighbourhood after dark, 52% of those in sole-parent households said they did not – a higher rate than those in other households with children (45%). Domestic responsibilities will be a factor in this as well as concern about crime – a point discussed in Section 5.5, Discussion.

Those who did walk alone after dark were asked how safe they felt. Those who did not were asked how safe they would feel. This duo of questions is common in crime surveys, even though it is fragile for measuring concern about crime since it does not refer to crime, is hypothetical for those who say they do not go out, and fails to capture other anxieties (cf. Mayhew and Reilly, 2007b: 39).

Taking the two questions together, 37% of those in sole-parent households reported that they felt (or would feel) a bit or very unsafe walking alone in their neighbourhood after dark – higher than those in other households with children (31%). However, given that overall far more women than men feel unsafe, as do more of those aged 60 or more, a better comparison is on the basis of women only, and restricted to those under 59. On this basis, there was no difference in feelings of safety after dark between women in sole-parent households and other women: about 46% of both groups felt a bit or very unsafe.

Related questions looked at how often people went out for entertainment at night in their downtown area (i.e. local town or city centre), and – if they did – how fearful they felt. There was little difference in the frequency of going out at night for entertainment: about four in five of both family groups said they did. However, of those who did go out at night, more of those in sole-parent households (23%) said that they had at some time felt fearful than those in other households with children (18%). While there is no strong gender differentiation on this particular question, age plays a large part, with people aged 40 or more feeling more fearful. When analysis was restricted to those under 40 only, there was little difference between those in sole-parent households and others. Just under a quarter said they had felt fearful when out at night for entertainment.

The impact of fear of crime on quality of life

Respondents were asked directly about the effect of fear of crime on their quality of life. The question was:

How much is your own quality of life affected by fear of crime, on a scale from 0 to 10, where 0 is no effect and 10 is total effect on your quality of life?

The scores were divided into three groups:

- scores of 8 to 10 for those where the impact was high.
- scores of 4 to 7 for moderate impact
- scores of 0 to 3 for those for whom fear of crime had a minimal impact on their quality of life.

The proportion of sole-parent households who fell into the high impact category was very similar (8%) to that for other households with children (9%). Combining moderate and high impact put 46% of sole-parent households into this category. This was higher – although not statistically significantly so – than the 43% for other households with children.

5.2 Victims and non-victims in sole-parent households

The expectation here was that victims in sole-parent households would feel more concerned about crime than non-victims. This is because previous NZCASS results (in line with those from other victim surveys) have shown that victims are overrepresented in the groups most concerned about crime (see Mayhew and Reilly, 2007b). One example is younger people, who are more often victimised as well as registering more concern except on the ubiquitous question of ‘feeling safe out alone after dark’. Other examples of groups who are both more concerned and at higher risk are those living in social rented property, and those who are unemployed and/or on benefits. This overlap between concern and victimisation, however, is more than coincidental. Rather, the extensive volume of research on people’s concern about crime suggests that being victimised exerts an effect on concern that is independent of other social demographics (see Ditton and Farrall, 2000, for example).

The general tenor of results here in relation to sole-parent households is that victims were indeed rather more concerned than non-victims, although many of the differences between them were slight or did not achieve statistical significance. The more reliable differences between victims and non-victims in sole-parent households as regards their concern about crime are as follows.

- **Crime problems in the neighbourhood** – More victims (49%) than non-victims (29%) felt that there was a crime problem in the neighbourhood.
- **Worry about victimisation** – Victims who owned vehicles (or were in a vehicle-owning household) seemed more worried about having their car damaged or broken into (62% very or fairly worried) than non-victims (48%). Victims were also more worried about having their car stolen (56% were) than non-victims (47%). More victims were worried, too, about being assaulted by people they knew (29%) than non-victims (19%).
- **Fear when out at night downtown for entertainment** – More victims (26%) than non-victims (19%) had felt fearful at some time when they had been out in the last year. (The frequency of going out did not differ.)

■ 5.3 Victims in sole-parent households and other households with children

Comparing victims in sole-parent households with victims in other households with children showed relatively few differences between them as regards their concern about crime. The level of their concern on a variety of measures was similar, as was the pattern of their concerns. However, of nine types of possible victimisation that respondents were asked about, victims in other households with children were more concerned about four of them. These were being in a traffic accident caused by a drunken driver, burglary, being attacked and robbed, and being assaulted by strangers.

■ 5.4 The most victimised

We also looked at differences in concern about crime between victims who had experienced one or two victimisations and those who had experienced three or more victimisations. The question here is whether higher-frequency victimisation increases concern (as one might expect it to) in the same way for the two family groups.

- Among lower-frequency victims, measures of concern about crime were generally fairly similar across the two family groups. For instance, 41% of victims in sole-parent households felt there was a crime problem in their neighbourhood, as against 40% of victims in other households with children. Where levels of concern differed, it was in the direction of lower-frequency victims in other households with children being more concerned. For instance, more of them said that fear of crime had a moderate or high impact on the quality of their lives (47%) than lower frequency victims in sole-parent households (38%).
- In line with expectations, levels of concern were fairly consistently higher among higher-frequency victims in both family groups. For instance, while four in ten lower-frequency victims felt there was a crime problem in their neighbourhood, nearly six in ten of the higher-frequency victims felt this.
- As was the case with lower-frequency victims, those in other households with children who were more heavily victimised tended, if anything, to be more concerned than those more heavily victimised in sole-parent households (although by no means all of the differences were statistically robust). One exception to this was that the more heavily victimised in sole-parent households were more worried about being assaulted by someone they knew (39% were very or fairly worried) than their counterparts in other households with children (31%).

■ 5.5 Discussion

As said, we know that the experience of victimisation is an important driver of concern about crime. The fact that higher-frequency victims are more concerned than lower-frequency victims, then, is what one would expect. In the present results, nonetheless, higher-frequency victimisation in other households with children seemed to raise levels of concern rather more than higher-frequency victimisation in sole-parent households. It is not clear why this was so. It may be that higher-frequency victimisation for sole-parent households is more a fact of life. It may also be that concern about crime is pushed down the ladder for sole-parent households that have other things to worry about. Certainly, Young et al. (1997) found that New Zealanders in general were at least as worried about other accidents and misfortunes happening to them or others as they were of criminal victimisation.

There are no obvious conclusions to draw from these results about resilience to heavy victimisation (or indeed, about protection against victimisation). What victims feel about crime and the risk it poses to them can be more readily seen as a response to their experiences, rather than a factor driving what they might experience. For reductions in victimisation risk to occur, one would need to posit that worry about the risks of victimisation causes people to take more precautions. NZCASS had only two questions which tap precautionary behaviour. The first was whether people avoided walking alone in their neighbourhood after dark. The second was whether people had avoided going to a downtown area for entertainment in the last year. Neither question is very satisfactory.

The first question – whether people did not walk alone in their neighbourhood after dark – is simply measuring possible avoidance behaviour against street crime, at a particular time of day. It also takes little account of the fact that domestic responsibilities and a preference for staying in influences what people do after dark. The 1996 New Zealand National Survey of Crime Victims survey asked people who never went out after dark why this was. The main reasons people gave were age or disability, that they were happy to stay in, or that they did not think there was anything interesting to do. Only a small minority of those who never went out mentioned crime-related fears (Young et al., 1997). The second question – whether people avoided going to a downtown area for entertainment in the last year – is also not very discriminating since only a minority (about a fifth) had not done so.

In the event, too, the results gave little support to the idea that going out less frequently is associated with lower victimisation risks. None of the differences between victims and non-victims on either of the two behavioural questions was statistically significant; nor were the differences between lower-frequency and higher-frequency victims. It is fair to say, though, that this may say more about the limitations of the two behavioural questions than about the association between risk and lifestyle. In discussing the evidence on this, Reilly and Mayhew (2009) point to considerable evidence that the risks of confrontational crime outside the home, for instance, are higher for those who have an active lifestyle, whether measured by the frequency with which they went out or the types of places they visited. In terms of victimisation by property crime, too, it is well-attested that those with better home security face lower initial risks of burglary, as well as lower levels of subsequent victimisation (e.g. Triggs, 2005), with the same protective factor applying to those owning better secured cars (Home Office, 2006).

6 Neighbourhood Support

Neighbourhood (or Rural) Support (NS) operates in New Zealand to ‘make homes, streets, neighbourhoods and communities safer and more caring places in which to live’ (New Zealand Police, 2007). NZCASS had a module of questions about NS. Among the questions asked was whether NS was operating in the area where respondents lived, and – if so – whether the household was a member.

This chapter looks at NS in terms of sole-parent households.

- Section 6.1 examines what proportion of sole-parent households live in an area covered by NS (i.e. in an area where a NS scheme was operating), and how many were members if there was a scheme. Comparisons are made with other households with children.
- Section 6.2 looks at NS coverage and membership in relation to victims and non-victims in sole-parent households.
- Section 6.3 sees whether NS coverage and membership levels for victims in sole-parent households differed from those for victims in other households with children.
- Section 6.4 compares NS coverage and membership levels among those who had been victimised at lower and higher frequencies.
- Section 6.5 briefly discusses the results.

6.1 Sole-parent households and other households with children

Mayhew and Reilly (2007b) showed that, in line with international evidence, NS coverage in New Zealand is higher in areas which are less deprived and where the household crime rate is lower. The proportion of households covered by NS was also highest in urban areas outside the largest cities (i.e. outside Auckland and the other metropolitan cities), with those in the North Island better covered than those in the South Island. In terms of social and personal characteristics, homeowners were better covered than renters, and those aged 60 or more were better covered than those younger. Coverage levels were lower for the unemployed and those who were not married. There was no clear pattern for ethnicity.

When a NS scheme operated, those most likely to be members were similar in many respects to those most likely to be covered. New Zealand Europeans had higher membership rates than other ethnic groups.²⁰ Membership rates were also high in less populated areas.

²⁰ Mayhew and Reilly (2007b) also showed that potential support for NS is widespread in New Zealand, with over four in five of those with no current scheme in their area saying they would join. Analysis of results for the two family groups, victims and non-victims, and higher- and lower-frequency victims showed no statistically significant differences in this respect.

Table A7 summarises the results which are discussed below.

Coverage and sole-parent households

In sole-parent households, 16% of respondents knew that NS was operating in their area. This was lower than the 22% in other households with children. Although the difference was not statistically significant, it is consistent with the fact that sole-parent households were more often in housing situations typified by lower coverage (living in rented accommodation, for instance).

A problem of reliably assessing the coverage level for sole-parent households, nonetheless, is that the proportion of respondents in sole-parent households who did not know whether NS was operating was higher (39%) than among other households (30%). When respondents did not know whether NS was operating, it is difficult to say whether or not it was. Being unaware of whether NS was operating was associated with other characteristics more evident in sole-parent households (for instance, being a social renter, or being in a minority ethnic group).²¹

Membership and sole-parent households

Those people who knew they lived in an area covered by NS were asked whether their household was a member. In sole-parent households, 36% said they were members. While this was a fair degree lower than in other households with children (50%), the difference was again not statistically significant, but is consistent with the fact that sole-parent households were overrepresented in groups for which membership rates were low even when there was scheme coverage – for instance, those in more deprived areas, non-European households, and renters.

Combining coverage and membership levels together, the indications are that 6% of all sole-parent households were members of NS, as against 11% of other households with children. As Mayhew and Reilly (2007b) say, however, these figures are likely to be underestimates because of the problem of respondents not knowing whether or not a scheme was operating.

6.2 Victims and non-victims in sole-parent households

Among sole-parent households that had been victimised, 13% said there was a Neighbourhood Support (NS) scheme operating in their area, as against a higher 21% of non-victims. Among both groups, however, nearly four in ten respondents did not know whether there was a scheme in the area, so real coverage levels are somewhat difficult to judge.

Of those who knew they were covered by a NS scheme, a smaller 32% of victims said they were members than non-victims (39%) – not a statistically reliable difference. Taking into account both the different coverage and membership levels means that 4% of all victims were members of NS, as against 8% of non-victims – again not a statistically significant difference.

²¹ Moreover, those aged 15–24 years (who, as seen, are overrepresented in sole-parent households) were particularly likely to not know whether there was NS coverage in the area in which they lived, while those over age 60 were better informed. Basing analysis only on those respondents aged between 25 and 59 years, however, made little difference to the results.

■ 6.3 Victims in sole-parent households and other households with children

Section 3.3, Explaining why sole parents are at greater risk, showed a number of groups of sole-parent households that were particularly distinct in terms of victimisation risk compared to other households with children. Some, but not all, of these groups were characterised by lower than average NS coverage and/or membership levels – in particular those in metropolitan cities and Pacific people (for whom membership, but not coverage, was low). To this extent, then, one might expect some differences between victims in sole-parent households and victims in other households with children with regards to NS – and these differences emerged. Fewer victims in sole-parent households lived in areas covered by NS (13%) than victims in other households with children (23%). Where there was a scheme, membership of NS was also lower among victimised sole-parent households (32% were members) than among victims in other households with children (47%).

■ 6.4 The most victimised

Examining differences with regard to NS between higher- and lower-frequency victims is somewhat constrained statistically, but the tenor of results is that both groups of victims in sole-parent households were less well covered by NS than their counterparts in other households with children. Among those victimised three times or more in sole-parent households, for instance, 11% were covered by a scheme, as against 24% of their counterparts in other households with children.

■ 6.5 Discussion

There were fairly clear results presented above that indicate that sole-parent households are less well covered by NS and less likely to be members of it, particularly if they are victimised. To the extent, then, that NS is an indicator of social capital, sole-parent households are disadvantaged and may be cut off from some networks of social support that would be helpful to them.

Any contention, though, that lack of engagement in NS is a cause of the higher victimisation rates evident in sole-parent households is questionable. Mayhew and Reilly (2007b) reviewed the international literature on the effectiveness of NS as a crime-reducing mechanism, and concluded that although NS might well make neighbourhoods more caring places, there is lack of conclusive evidence that it reduces victimisation. A large number of studies have generally found no effect as regards NS reducing crime, and while one recent meta-analysis (Bennett et al., 2006) does not rule out a modest effect, the evaluators were still cautious about this.

7 Awareness of victim support agencies

All respondents in NZCASS were asked which community agencies (other than the Police) they were aware of that can help victims of crime. Respondents were not prompted, but were asked to remember and name agencies themselves. In the context of this report, being more aware of the existence of support agencies might indicate that agency resources are drawn upon in a way that provides some protection from victimisation, over and above any supportive care that they may also offer.

This chapter looks at levels of awareness of victim support agencies in sole-parent households.

- Section 7.1 examines what proportion of sole-parent households were aware of agencies, which agencies they knew of, and how this differed from other households with children.
- Section 7.2 looks at awareness on the part of victims and non-victims in sole-parent households.
- Section 7.3 examines whether what victims in sole-parent households knew differed from what victims in other households with children knew.
- Section 7.4 compares awareness of support agencies among those who had been victimised at lower and higher frequencies.
- Section 7.5 provides a very short discussion.

Table A8 summarises the results, which are discussed below.

7.1 Sole-parent households and other households with children

Overall, 66% of respondents in sole-parent households were able to mention one or more community agencies available to help victims – a higher figure than among other households with children (62%). However, given that women and those aged 25–59 were more likely to know of victim agencies, we restricted analysis to these groups for a better comparison. This done, the difference in awareness of agencies largely disappeared: 78% of women aged 25–59 in sole-parent households were able to mention one or more agencies, as against 75% of their counterparts in other households with children – not a statistically significant difference.

Among those who mentioned agencies they were aware of, the most frequently named agency was Victim Support. There was little difference between respondents in sole-parent households (41% of whom mentioned Victim Support) and other households with children (38%). The next most frequently mentioned agency was Women's Refuges. Rather more of those in sole-parent households mentioned these (20%) than in other households with children (14%). Because of a fairly large gender and age bias in awareness of Women's Refuges, a better comparison is between women only, aged 25–59. On this basis, there were still more women in sole-parent households who mentioned Women's Refuges (31%) than in other households with children (24%).

Other agencies were mentioned less frequently, perhaps because they are not so readily associated with supporting victims of crime. These included Citizens' Advice Bureaux, church groups, Rape Crisis, and the Salvation Army. Less than one in ten of those in either sole-parent households or other households with children mentioned them.

■ 7.2 Victims and non-victims in sole-parent households

Rather more victims in sole-parent households mentioned one or more community agencies that offered support to victims (68%) than non-victims (63%), although the difference was not statistically significant.

There was little difference between victims and non-victims who knew of agencies as regards the agencies they mentioned.

■ 7.3 Victims in sole-parent households and other households with children

Victims in sole-parent households were more often able to mention one or more agencies that offered support to victims of crime (68% could do so) than those in other households with children (63%). While this was not statistically significant, the result based on parents alone was that 80% of sole parents mentioned one or more agencies, as against 69% of parents in other households with children. More sole-parent victims also mentioned Women's Refuges (27%) than other parents (16%), although there was little difference on the full samples of victims (i.e. with children included).

■ 7.4 The most victimised

There is rather little that can be said about differences in awareness of victim support agencies with regards to higher- and lower-frequency victims, since numbers are small. If anything, those victimised more frequently were somewhat more alert to the existence of helping agencies than those victimised less frequently. This was so in both sole-parent households and other households with children.

■ 7.5 Discussion

In the region of two-thirds of NZCASS respondents said they knew of one or more agencies (other than the Police) that would be available to them for help or assistance if they were a victim of crime. It should be borne in mind here that respondents were not prompted about existing agencies, and if they had been many more might have acknowledged that they knew of services available to victims.

This said, the results as they stand show no evidence that sole-parent households were any less familiar with potential sources of help. It may be that sole-parent households have more frequent dealings with support agencies in general and learn about those operating to support victims.

8 Reactions to victimisation

Information provided in the Victim Forms (see Section 1.3, Measuring victimisation) allows us to assess various aspects of victims' responses to what happened to them. This chapter looks at some of these responses.

- Section 8.1 looks at the technical limitations as regards what the results can say about protective and resilience factors.
- Section 8.2 considers reactions to victimisation incidents among those in sole-parent households as against those in other households with children.
- Section 8.3 looks at reactions to offences against lower- and higher-frequency victims.
- Section 8.4 discusses results.

The offences described in the Victim Forms relate to offences that occurred in 2005 as well as any time in 2006 before the interview took place – an average period of 15.5 months. This increases the numerical base. The information refers to victimisations rather than victims (some victims will have completed more than one Victim Form). Strictly speaking, discussion should describe victimisations, but for easier reading, we usually refer to victims.²²

The information comes from up to three Main Victim Forms which were completed if a respondent answered affirmatively to any of the main screener questions. Additional information comes from up to three Self-Completion Victim Forms which were completed by those who answered affirmatively to the Self-Completion screener questions. These Victim Forms asked about the last incident that happened. The first and second Self-Completion Victim Forms covered, respectively, offences committed by partners, and offences by people well known; these were largely assaults and threats to person or personal property. The third Self-Completion Victim Form covered sexual offences.

A very heavily victimised respondent, then, could have completed six Victim Forms. They could, however, have been victimised more than six times; if they were, the number of offences they experienced is counted from information collected by the screener questions on the frequency of victimisation.

■ 8.1 Technical note

It is important to understand two technical points about the analysis presented, and to recognise that it is far from a complete test of how reactions to victimisation differ between victims in sole-parent households and other households with children, and between those in the two household types who were victimised at lower and higher frequencies.

²² The data has been weighted so that the analysis is based on victimisation incidents. Victims are counted more than once if they were involved in more than one victimisation incident. Personal weights were used as the basis for calculating the incident weights.

First, the way in which the NZCASS data was collected means that it is not possible to identify fully the order in which the different victimisation incidents that victims were describing occurred.²³ In effect, with lower-frequency victims, we are considering what they said about the first and possibly a second offence they described in a Victim Form. With higher-frequency victims, we are considering what they said about all the offences they experienced; this could include the earliest offence they reported on in a Victim Form, as well as later ones. Not knowing the temporal sequencing of victimisation incidents poses a problem in considering whether victims respond to early victimisations in a way that provides resilience against being victimised again – a point discussed at the end of this section.

We also drew on offences described only in the Self-Completion Victim Forms, where the victim was asked to talk about the last incident that had happened to them if there was more than one. All offences from the three Self-Completion Victim Forms are taken together. We call them *interpersonal offences*. This 'last incident' approach has some advantages over describing reactions to offences as reported in the Main Victim Forms since it takes some account of temporal sequencing, although it still does not do so entirely.

An example may be helpful. Say respondent W (a woman) was heavily victimised and reported two offences at each of the three Self-Completion screener questions. W, then, would be speaking about the last incident in each of the three pairs – although we do not know for certain whether the last incident in any one of the pairs took place before or after other 'last' offences in the other two pairs. Another respondent M (a man), say, reported two offences at the screener questions for the second Self-Completion question; we know, therefore, that he is describing his reactions on the last occasion that he was victimised.

The second difficulty in interpreting results from the Victim Forms is that the focus is on all types of victimisation, since the numbers of different types of victimisation (burglary, for instance) are too small from which to draw reliable conclusions. This poses a difficulty with interpretation since no account is taken of the type of offence involved. Clearly, the nature of what happened will impact on a victim's response – probably more so than the type of victim involved. A very serious burglary, for instance, is likely to impact on any victim much more than a minor theft of personal property from work.

In the event, the mix of offences being described by victims in sole-parent households and other households with children was very similar (see Table A9). About one-third of all offences related to assaults and threats (although the proportion was higher – at about two-thirds – from the Self-Completion Victims Forms). About one-fifth of offences described were burglaries, and another fifth were damage to property (including vehicle damage). Despite this overall similarity in mix of offences for the two family groups, it is nonetheless difficult to pursue analytically whether the *nature* of the offences was similar (burglaries can differ in their consequences, for instance). There is also the point that the frequency and even the occurrence of victimisation is framed by the NZCASS recall period; victims may, of course, have been victimised before the recall period, and this could have influenced their reactions to the offences in the recall period that were described.

²³ This was partly because the selection of incidents for which three Main Victims Forms were completed was prioritised to ensure that less frequent offences were asked about more often. Moreover, while some information is collected about incident dates in the Victim Form, this is problematic if there was more than one incident in the same month. A further (and greater) difficulty is that the Self-Completion Victim Form collects only the year in which the last incident occurred.

From all the Victim Forms, there were 648 victimisation incidents described by victims in sole-parent households, and 1457 offences described by victims in other households with children. There were 180-Self-Completion Victim Forms answered by victims in sole-parent households and 269 answered by victims in other households with children.

Resilience factors?

Given the technical difficulties described above, there is little scope for using the information on victims' responses to victimisation incidents to say much about resilience to victimisation in the sense of what reactions may have assisted sole parents who had been victimised to avoid being victimised again. For instance, it might be argued that the act of reporting an offence to the Police might have drawn forth supportive mechanisms which could have prevented re-victimisation. However, this argument is difficult to test since it is unclear whether it was an earlier offence (rather than a later one) which was reported to the Police.

The information on reactions to victimisation below, therefore, is best seen as of descriptive value. It allows modest comparisons between victims in sole-parent households and other households with children, and modest comparisons, too, between the less and more heavily victimised. Table A10 shows the differences in what victims said.

■ 8.2 Victims' reactions to the offences

Offence seriousness

Victims were asked to rate the seriousness of each offence that happened to them using a seriousness scale where 1 represented a very minor offence and 20 represented murder. While no meaning can be attached to isolated scores, we judged the most serious offences to be those with scores of 10–20; fairly serious offences to be those with scores of 5–9; and least serious offences to be those with scores of 1–4. Seriousness ratings are clearly influenced by objective factors such as degree of injury and emotional upset. Previous analysis of NZCASS results has shown that within particular crime categories (burglary or assault, for instance) there is much variation in ratings of seriousness, in that most have large standard deviations. This is because offences within crime types will vary considerably in nature.

Victims in sole-parent households were more likely to give seriousness scores in the most serious category of 10–20 (42% did so) than victims in other households with children (32%). For the subset of interpersonal offences described in the Self-Completion Victim Forms, the same pattern emerged: 52% were rated as most serious by victims in sole-parent households, as against 36% of offences similarly rated by victims in other households with children.

Was it a crime?

Victims were also asked whether they considered what happened to them to be a *crime*, *wrong but not a crime*, or *just something that happens*. The question, of course, is relying on respondents' definitions, and it cannot be assumed they have a legal understanding of what constitutes a crime. The question is also relatively crude for assessing whether or not offences should be within scope of official attention. Nor do the answers necessarily signify the degree of distress incurred: something that just happens may have been frightening, even so. Nonetheless, the question puts the offences mentioned by respondents into some perspective.

There was little difference between victims in sole-parent households and other households with children in the proportion of offences thought to be a crime: just under six in ten were thought to be so. Slightly more victims in other households with children, however, felt the offence was just something that happens (22%) than victims in sole-parent households (16%).

For the subset of interpersonal offences described in the Self-Completion Victim Forms, the same general pattern emerged, although for both groups of victims, fewer of the interpersonal offences were thought to be crimes. This reflects the fact that sexual offences, threats and assaults measured by the survey were less often thought to be crimes (Mayhew and Reilly, 2007a).²⁴

The impact of the victimisation incidents

NZCASS asked, 'So overall, how much were you affected by the incident?' Consistent with the fact that victims in sole-parent households more often judged what happened to them to be most serious, more of them (63%) said they were affected very much or quite a lot than did victims in other households with children (49%). The same pattern was evident in relation to the subset of interpersonal offences described in the Self-Completion Victim Forms, although a greater proportion of both family groups was affected.

Mayhew and Reilly (2008) show that women were in general more often very or quite a lot affected by what happened (although it may be that men are more disposed to play down their reaction). Since women dominate as victims in sole-parent households, we analysed the responses of women only. This showed a higher level of upset among both groups of female victims, although a greater degree of upset was still evident among female victims in sole-parent households (68% were very or quite a lot affected) than among female victims in other households with children (56%).

Victims were also asked about the types of emotional reactions they had to what happened (multiple responses were allowed). In line with other surveys that have asked a similar question, the main reaction was anger/annoyance (cf. Ditton et al., 1999): about four in five victims in both family groups were angry or annoyed by what happened. The next most common response was to become more cautious, with 44% of victims in sole-parent households mentioning this, as against 36% of victims in other households with children. For the subset of interpersonal offences, though, there was little difference between victims in the two family groups.

Other reactions were less commonly recalled, but victims in sole-parent households were more likely to mention them. Women in both family types reported a greater number of reactions than men.

Reporting to the Police

Overall, NZCASS results showed that 32% of all offences were said to have become known to the Police (Mayhew & Reilly, 2007a). They were reported either by the victim or another household member, or Police found out in some other way – perhaps because a neighbour told them, or they were already on the scene. (We use the terms reported to the Police as shorthand for offences that the Police came to know about.)

²⁴ Mayhew and Reilly (2007a) note that there is clear discordance between assessments of seriousness and victims' views about whether what happened was a crime or not. Thus, whereas many sexual offences, assaults and threats were regarded as serious, many were not thought of as crimes. Similarly, relatively few thefts and vandalism offences were given high seriousness scores, but they were nonetheless more often judged as unequivocally criminal.

The proportion of offences reported to the Police by victims in sole-parent households (36%) was not statistically different from that reported by victims in other households with children (29%). The picture for interpersonal offences described in the Self-Completion Victim Forms was somewhat different; 36% of offences against those in sole-parent households were reported – over double the proportion of those against other households with children (17%).

Victims who did not report were asked why not. (They could give more than one reason.) The reasons given by the two family groups were largely similar. The main response was that victims felt that the offence was too trivial, or not worth reporting: 40% of victims in sole-parent households said this, and 48% of victims in other households with children – not a statistically significant difference. About one-fifth of both family groups felt that what occurred was a private matter, and roughly the same proportion said that they had dealt with the matter themselves. The only statistically significant difference between victims in sole-parent households and those in other households with children was that more of the former (9%) said they feared reprisals/it would make matters worse than the latter (4%). This was a minority response nonetheless.

The picture for interpersonal offences described in the Self-Completion Victim Forms was generally similar, although rather more offences went unreported because they were felt to be a private matter or were felt best dealt with personally. Both these responses were given more often by victims in other households with children than victims in sole-parent households.

Whether victims told other people

Experiencing crime is not an everyday occurrence, and telling other people about it will be a normal reaction. Not unexpectedly, then, the majority of victims mentioned what had happened to someone, with the figures higher for victims in sole-parent households (82%) than for victims in other households with children (79%). For interpersonal offences, rather fewer victims talked about what had happened with others, but still more victims in sole-parent households spoke to someone (76% did so) than victims in other households with children (65%).

The people most commonly talked to were friends and neighbours, and immediate family members/partners. The pattern was similar for both family groups, except that a higher proportion of victims in sole-parent households told friends and neighbours (80%) or other relatives (31%) than victims in other households with children (70% and 23% respectively). Relatively few victims spoke to medical personnel, although those who did so might have incurred a greater degree of injury or been more distressed. The proportion was rather higher among victims in sole-parent households (11%) than among victims in other households with children (5%), although the difference was not statistically robust.

Need for further assistance

Victims were asked whether there was any assistance or advice that they would have liked but did not receive. Only a minority of victims said there was, with the figures statistically indistinguishable for victims in sole-parent households (15%) and those in other households with children (13%). Rather more victims of interpersonal offences, though, said they would have appreciated more help: 24% of those in sole-parent households said so, and 16% of those in other households with children. This was not a statistically significant difference, and the difference narrowed when analysis was restricted to female victims.

There were no statistically sound differences between victims in sole-parent households and those in other households with children as regards what type of help they wanted. In the region of half of both family groups who would have appreciated further assistance wanted counselling,

someone to talk to, emotional support, or advice on how to keep safe. Other needs were expressed less frequently. A quarter (26%) of victims in sole-parent households who said they wanted further help mentioned that they would have liked some financial assistance. While this was higher than among victims in other households with children (15%), the difference was not statistically robust. As a proportion of all victims in sole-parent households, those who said they would have appreciated financial assistance came to 4%.

■ 8.3 The most victimised

Because of sample sizes, there are statistical constraints in distinguishing between the reactions of those victims who were less frequently victimised (i.e. those subject to one or two victimisations) and those who were more frequently victimised (i.e. those subject to three or more victimisations). It should also be borne in mind (as explained in Section 8.1) that the responses of the two groups are effectively showing the average of their responses across any of the victimisations they experienced.

This said, there were some differences in the responses to victimisation between the less and more heavily victimised. These were as follows.

- **Offence seriousness** – A higher proportion of the more heavily victimised in both the family groups assessed their victimisations as in the most serious category than did the less heavily victimised. Among the more heavily victimised, more victims in sole-parent households assessed the offences as most serious (46%) than victims in other households with children (36%).
- **Impact of victimisation** – More of the heavily victimised in both the family groups said they had been affected very much or quite a lot by what happened. In this group, more victims in sole-parent households said this (69%) than victims in other households with children (57%).
- **Reporting to the Police** – While there were no strong differences in levels of reporting to the Police between the less and more heavily victimised, more of the heavily victimised who did not report said it was because they feared reprisals. The heavily victimised in sole-parent households more often said this (11%) than their counterparts in other households with children (5%).
- **Need for further assistance** – Rather more of the heavily victimised in both family groups said they would have appreciated further help and assistance than lower-frequency victims, but there was little difference between the more heavily victimised in sole-parent households and other households with children.

■ 8.4 Discussion

The results in this chapter simply describe victims' reactions to offences they experienced. It is difficult to say whether these reactions provide protection against further victimisation, or increase resilience to it.

All offences were analysed together, which was reasonable insofar as the mix of offences described by victims in sole-parent households and other households with children was largely similar. Nonetheless, offences of the same type may still have differed in their particular circumstances, and it was not possible to take account of this.

There were several indications that the impact of victimisation may be greater for sole-parent households.

- Victims in sole-parent households were more likely to give a high seriousness score to the offences against them than victims in other households with children – although it is difficult to say whether these figures reflect subtle differences in the nature of what happened, differences in victims’ judgements of seriousness, or differences in how the two different family types were able to cope with what happened.
- There was little difference between victims in sole-parent households and other households with children in the proportion of offences thought to be a crime. However, slightly fewer victims in sole-parent households felt the offence was just something that happens than did victims in other households with children.
- More victims in sole-parent households said they were affected very much or quite a lot by what happened (63%) than did victims in other households with children (49%). This difference remained after controlling for gender (necessary because women tend to more affected).

While the impact of victimisation may be greater for victims in sole-parent households, other results did not indicate noticeable differences between victims in the two family types. It would be of concern, for instance, if victims in sole-parent households reported offences less often to the Police. The results here give no indication that this was the case, although since the main determinant of whether an offence is reported is how serious it is judged to be (Mayhew and Reilly, 2007), the fact that victims in sole-parent households tended to ascribe higher seriousness scores to offences against them is likely to be a factor in reporting levels.

It would also be of concern if there was evidence that victims in sole-parent households were not in a position to be able to share their experiences of victimisation. Again, the results here do not seem to indicate this – at least as judged by the question on whether they had talked to someone about what happened. Nor was there any evidence that victims in sole-parent households were more likely to express the need for further assistance or advice: only a minority expressed such a need, with the figure little different from that for victims in other households with children.

9 Conclusions

This report has drawn together a wide range of results from NZCASS pertaining to the victimisation experiences of sole-parent households. Much analysis is new, although two central thrusts of the results are not. The first is that compared to the best comparator group of other households with children, sole-parent households are disproportionately more likely to experience some victimisation. The second thrust is that those sole-parent households that are victimised in the first place are likely to experience multiple offences (29% of sole-parent households, for instance, had experienced three or more offences in 2005, as against 13% of other households with children).

This chapter comments on:

- the policy implication of the fact that sole-parent households are at higher risks of victimisation, even though sole parentage per se is not the main driver (Section 9.1)
- what has been learned about protective and resilience factors in relation to victimisation risks (Section 9.2)
- what the direction of future research on sole parentage and victimisation might be (Section 9.3).

9.1 Sole parents as a high-risk group

Many sole-parent households are socially and economically disadvantaged, although some will not be. (In the NZCASS sample, for instance, 23% of sole parent households were at the high end of NZSEI (scores of 60–90), 46% were homeowners, and 44% of sole parents were employed.) Since social and economic disadvantage – as well as other factors such as a younger household structure – have been shown to underpin the pattern of victimisation risk in New Zealand (and other countries), the results of NZCASS are hardly surprising in showing sole-parent households to be at heightened risk of victimisation.

The analyses in this report have not taken into account statistically the risk-heightening social and economic characteristics of sole-parent households to see whether sole parentage per se influences risk. However, another report on NZCASS did so (Reilly and Mayhew, 2009). This was clear in its conclusion that NZCASS (and a large number of other international analyses of the determinants of risk) do not indicate that sole-parent status per se influences risks. Rather, the conclusion is that sole-parent households simply more often fall into high-risk groups – for instance, being non-European, having a younger household structure, more often living in deprived areas, and more often living in rented accommodation.

In policy terms, the fact that sole parentage is not itself the main driver of higher victimisation risks should not obscure the fact that many sole-parent households nonetheless have inherent disadvantages associated with high risk. Their collective experience, then, is worse. From a policy perspective, therefore, they merit attention. However, it is very debatable whether a focus on sole-parent households would make the best use of criminal justice resources. Crime prevention and victim service initiatives targeted at more socially and economically deprived areas as a whole are likely to be more worthwhile. Such initiatives will encompass the high-risk groups most likely to be represented there, including sole-parent households.

■ 9.2 Protective and resilience factors

A key focus of the present report was to identify those protective and resilience factors that can enable sole-parent households to achieve positive outcomes in the context of victimisation. Protective factors were taken as being those associated with sole-parent households not experiencing any victimisation. Resilience factors were taken as those that may assist sole-parent households that have already been victimised once to avoid being victimised again.

There were considerable limits to identifying protective and resilience factors in relation to sole-parent households, in particular resilience factors. Section 1.4, Protective and resilience factors, discussed these limits. They essentially arise from the cross-sectional nature of NZCASS, which means that it is not possible to look at previous and subsequent experiences outside the limited recall window that the survey takes.²⁵ There are also difficulties in identifying the sequencing of different episodes of victimisation. This makes it hard to say whether any one type of reaction to victimisation (which may be pertinent to resilience) came before or after another type.

Protective factors

The results on victimisation risks for sole-parent households and other households with children indicate which personal and social factors are associated with being victimised – at least over a given one-year period. By the same token, the results show the factors that are associated with not being victimised. In the broadest sense, these might be seen as protective factors – bearing in mind that many are immutable (age and ethnicity, for instance).

The general thrust of the results is that what protects sole-parent households from victimisation is largely the same as what protects other households with children (and indeed other household formations). The protective factors for one family group, in other words, also seem to apply to another. For instance:

- fewer of those aged over 49 years in both sole-parent households and other households with children were victims than respondents younger than this
- fewer Europeans in both family groups were victims
- fewer of those in employment were victims, with the same applying to those of higher NZSEI status and those who owned their properties.

It may of course be that there are protective factors that are singular to sole-parent households, but NZCASS struggles to identify these.

Section 4.2, Victims in sole-parent households and victims in other households with children, identified some subgroups in sole-parent households for whom the gap in risks compared to their counterparts in other households with children was less pronounced– even though the risks for sole-parent households were still higher. We noted that this could mean either that these subgroups of sole-parent households are relatively well-protected, or that the equivalent subgroups in other households with children are relatively *less* well-protected in victimisation terms than other households with children.

²⁵ Some information is collected on victimisation experiences outside this window, but not in a manner that adds to further understanding of protective and resilience factors.

One important finding on this front was that for those in the most deprived quintile of New Zealand, the burden of victimisation hits hard for other households with children as well as sole-parent households – a finding consistent with international research that has shown that risks come with the territory in the most socially deprived areas. In a similar vein, parents who are unemployed and/or on benefits face higher risks of victimisation from personal offences, whatever the family formation.

The results on victimisation risks across different areas of New Zealand were of some interest on two main fronts. First, for those living in Auckland, the gap in risks between sole-parent households and other households with children was rather narrower than elsewhere. It would be injudicious to see Auckland as protecting sole-parent households. Rather, the result may signify that sole-parent households in Auckland are more economically heterogeneous and thus, as a group, are rather less susceptible to the higher risk of victimisation that is common for the more socially deprived.

Secondly, in terms of being *less* protected, sole-parent households in the South Island stand out. It is difficult to say why this is so. For the NZCASS sample as a whole, risks in the South Island were midway between those in the Upper North island (where risks were highest) and those in the Lower North Island. However, the differences in risks were not particularly great, which argues against there being any great disparity in terms of policing or social provision, for instance. It may be, then, that the types of sole-parent households in the South Island are distinctive in some way, in terms of being less protected. For example, NZCASS shows that only 5% of sole-parent households in the South Island live in the most advantaged quintile as measured by the NZ Deprivation Index – a statistically significant difference from the 24% of other households with children living in that quintile in the South Island.

■ 9.3 Resilience factors

What helps those who have been victimised once to avoid being victimised again has not been particularly well identified in victimological research. Some of the clearest answers have been in relation to the security of household property (see e.g. Zedner, 2002, Morris et al., 2003). Sole-parent households may be at a disadvantage here – for instance with regard to not being in a position to have a newer, better-secured car, or living in a home for which others share responsibility for security hardware. Less is known about whether changes in leisure patterns and going out behaviour help – although the fact that risky lifestyles are associated with higher risks of personal crime may indicate they would. Other nuanced resilience factors – such as developing emotional and social resources to be able to rise above hardship – are clearly not particularly amenable to investigation in cross-sectional studies, leaving aside the point of how easily these factors (which may be subtle) could be measured.

In this report, factors related to resilience to victimisation could only be inferred from differences between those victimised more and less frequently. It would fair to say that not a great deal was revealed. Section 4.3, *The most victimised*, showed that whereas 29% of sole-parent households

overall experienced higher frequency victimisation, the subgroups who experienced this less often were:

- those aged 40–59
- those who were in paid employment or self-employed
- those living in the smallest minor urban and rural areas.
- These were factors that also provided protection from victimisation in the sense that overall prevalence risks for the same subgroups were also lower. Resilience from further victimisation, then, may mirror protection from initial victimisation in these results.

■ 9.4 Future research on sole parentage and victimisation

It can now be seen as well-established that sole-parent households are at higher risk of victimisation. NZCASS (like its earlier counterparts) has proved a good vehicle for establishing this. Future sweeps of NZCASS will be able to continue to document the risks that sole-parent households face. One obvious improvement will be to add a question asking about the respondent's role in the family to resolve whether incidents against young adults involve a parent or a child. However, it would be optimistic to think that future sweeps of NZCASS will be able to track whether victimisation risks are increasing or decreasing. One reason for this is that the representation of sole-parent households in the overall sample will inevitably be modest. This will mean that there will be substantial sampling error attached to estimates over time, making it difficult to reach conclusions about change. Another reason is that it would be difficult to disentangle whether any changes in risks are due to changes in the social and demographic composition of sole-parent households.

Investigating protective factors in future research in New Zealand will be best done through the large-scale NZCASS. However, as this report has shown, the protective factors identified are likely to be those which are associated with lower victimisation risks across the board. Elucidating particular factors that may be singular to sole-parent households would require different approaches – some of which are discussed later.

Resilience to victimisation poses another – and more difficult – issue. In terms of the overall research work programme, resilience can roughly be conceived of as something which avoids a bad state becoming a worse one. In terms of victimisation, as said, we have operationalised this as being the difference between being an occasional victim and being more heavily victimised.

A key difficulty is that cross-sectional surveys such as NZCASS cannot cope well with investigating the transition between being a *non-victim*, a *once or twice victim*, and a *heavy victim*. Cross-sectional surveys ask a sample of people about their experiences over a fairly limited period of time, and the same people are not interviewed again – as they would be in a panel survey. It is thus not possible to capture anything other than a specified window of experience. This does little in the way of assessing how longer-term experiences may (or may not) have affected behaviour. Panel surveys provide some solution to this, but suffice it to say that they are very costly and face problems of attrition of respondents. In the victimisation survey field, only the US National Crime Victimization Survey (NCSVS) has attempted a quasi-panel design, and this feature may well fall victim to financial cuts (Rand, 2009).

In terms of NZCASS, there will continue to be interest in the victimisation experiences of particular social groups. For many of these, NZCASS is likely to offer the best information. Interest in sole-parent households emerged with acuity in 2007, after NZCASS was completed. Although it was highly reasonable that the survey should be drawn upon to give the best picture of how sole-parent households fare in relation to victimisation, expectations of what NZCASS could say required tempering given that sole-parent households comprised only a small proportion of the sample.

Other constituent groups are likely to demand attention in future. This will perhaps be a matter of political and public fashion. NZCASS has already taken on board interest in Māori as victims, and the 2001 New Zealand National Survey of Crime Victims paid attention to Pacific peoples (Young et al., 1997). Doing so required oversampling techniques, which added to costs.

Some recent candidates for more victimological attention have been the elderly (as victims of neglect and financial abuse), the disabled, and young people (whose victimisation patterns have only recently attracted as much attention as their offending patterns). Adequate coverage would mean oversampling, and in some cases special surveying techniques. Sole-parent households, then, are just one group in the queue. Given the findings to date that their experiences reflect a nexus of factors to do with social disadvantage rather than sole-parent status *per se*, there would seem no clear case for singling them out further, in our view.

Other research approaches are available, of course. In terms of resilience (or being able to rise above the experience of victimisation), there could be some scope for qualitative case studies of victimised sole-parent households to see whether they took action after victimisation, what type of action this was, and whether or not it was felt to provide protection against further victimisation. Similar case studies of other households with children would also be helpful to see whether their responses were similar.

The limitations here, though, should not be ignored. For one, small sample case studies clearly lack generalisability and one would need to take into account the variety of domestic circumstances and available social supports. Second, victimisation is multifaceted, and possible resilience will depend, for example, on the nature of what happened. Persistent experience of burglary, or thefts of household property, for instance, is likely to lead to a different response than persistent experience of confrontational crime by people the victim knows – in work settings for example. A third factor is that, to understand resilience fully, victims would need to be tracked over time.

Leaving resilience aside and bearing in mind the limitations of qualitative research, various interesting findings have emerged from this report. These suggest a number of questions which, while only tenuously related to the present findings, might nonetheless be initially explored in the qualitative research phase of the wider sole parent project.

- There are lower victimisation rates in small rural communities and in the types of local areas where NS takes best hold. Social capital may be operating to provide some protection from victimisation, and qualitative research might be able to provide some pointers as to the nature of social capital in different types of areas and how this might be measured.
- One area of social connectivity worth exploring is in relation to the children of sole parents, who need the same opportunities that children in other families receive. So, do sole parents participate fully in their communities in terms of (for example) early childhood education? If not, what are the reasons for that?

- If fear of reprisal is a factor leading to a small subgroup of sole parents feeling not able to report their victimisation to the Police, what is it about their relationship with offenders that we could learn about?
- How does the better economic status of those in employment provide protection from victimisation? Is it that the range and number of supportive relationships is increased for sole parents in employment compared with those who are not employed? Is there something else at play too? For instance, do sole parents in employment have a higher level of self-esteem, which somehow protects them from predatory and aggressive behaviour on the part of others?
- Since interpersonal violence is particularly high for sole parents, is there a common pattern in the types of relationships that sole parents tend to have with offenders?
- Why is burglary so high for sole-parent households? Since a burglar would not normally know who lived in the house they were targeting, it may be worth checking the extent to which sole parents do know the burglar. Another avenue of research might be to look more closely at the types of houses occupied by sole-parent households, in terms of security and location, for example. Qualitative research would offer most here in terms of suggesting what security and location features might be worth measuring with much larger samples.
- The Mental Health Survey found poor mental health amongst sole parents – and especially high rates of alcohol/drug use (Tobias et al., 2009). What is the relationship between alcohol/drug use and criminal victimisation of sole parents, and how might this relationship be singular to sole parents?
- Are there factors that explain both poor mental health and criminal victimisation? For example, are sole parents who are victimised more likely than those not victimised to have low self-efficacy, leaving themselves more open to predatory and aggressive behaviour on the part of others? Or is there a causal mechanism that operates in the opposite direction, with victimisation contributing to low self-esteem?

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Appendix A Supplementary tables

Table A1 Characteristics of sole-parent households, other households with children (OHWC) and all New Zealand households

	Sole-parent households %	OHWC %	All NZ households %		Sole-parent households %	OHWC %	All NZ households %
Respondent gender				NZSEI			
Male	28	51#	49#	NZSEI 70–90 (high status)	4	12#	11#
Female	72	49	51#	NZSEI 60–69	19*	15	13
				NZSEI 50–59	19	23#	22#
Respondent age				NZSEI 40–49	17	23	21
15–24	33	22#	19#	NZSEI 30–39	23	16#	17#
25–39	33	32	26#	NZSEI 10–29	19	13#	15
40–59	33	41#	34				
60 or older	2*	5(#)	21(#)	Tenure			
				Owned	46	72#	68#
Ethnicity				Private renters	38	18#	22#
European	72	70	79#	Social renters	15	8#	7#
Māori	23	17#	13#				
Pacific peoples	9	8	6#	NZ Index of Deprivation			
Asian	7	13#	9#	Quintile 1 (least deprived)	12	22#	20#
				Quintile 2	12	17#	18#
Marital status				Quintile 3	22	19	21
Legally married	2*	61(#)	51(#)	Quintile 4	22	19#	21
De facto relationship	2*	14(#)	13(#)	Quintile 5 (most deprived)	32	24#	21#
Single/never married	57	22#	24#				
Widowed	3	1#	5#	Managing on income			
Divorced/separated	36	2#	7#	Getting into difficulties	9	3#	3#
				Just getting by	47	33#	30#
No. of people in household				Managing quite well	38	62#	65#
One			22				
Two	43	2#	34#	Urbanisation			
Three or four	49	67#	31#	Auckland	32	36	31
Five or more	7	31#	13#	Other metropolitan cities	17	18	19
				Other major urban areas	26	20#	23#
Employment status				Secondary urban areas	7	5	6
Paid employ't/self-empl'd	42	68#	60#	Minor urban & rural areas	18	22#	22#
Home duties	4	9#	6				
Retired	1*	3(#)	16#	Region			
Unemployed/on benefits	28	6#	8#	Upper North Island	57	58	54
Student	24	13#	11#	Lower North Island	21	21	22
				South Island	22	20	24
				<i>Sample number</i>	517	1,902	5,416

Notes to Table A1:

* indicates a RSE greater than or equal to 25%, so the figures should be viewed with considerable caution. The RSE is obtained by dividing the standard error of the estimate by the estimate itself; it is then expressed as a percentage of the estimate.

indicates a statistically significant difference between sole-parent households and other households with children at the 10% level of statistical significance or more (two-tailed test).

(#) indicates a statistically significant difference between sole-parent households and other households with children at the 10% level of statistical significance or more (two-tailed test), but on the basis of values with a RSE greater than or equal to 25%. The differences, therefore, are not reliable.

Table A2 Characteristics of victims and non-victims in sole-parent households

	Victims %	Non-victims %		Victims %	Non-victims %
Respondent gender			NZSEI		
Male	28	27	NZSEI 70–90 (high status)	4	4*
Female	72	73	NZSEI 60–69	12	28(#)
			NZSEI 50–59	18	21*
Respondent age			NZSEI 40–49	19	14#
15–24	36	30	NZSEI 30–39	28	16#
25–39	33	31	NZSEI 10–29	20	18
40–59	30	37			
60 or older	1*	2*	NZ Index of Deprivation		
			Quintile 1 (least deprived)	11*	14
Ethnicity			Quintile 2	13*	11
European	76	67	Quintile 3	22	22
Māori	23	21	Quintile 4	22	23
Pacific peoples	11	7*	Quintile 5 (most deprived)	33	31
Asian	3*	12(#)			
			Managing on income		
Marital status			Getting into difficulties	10*	8*
Legally married	1*	3*	Just getting by	51	41#
De facto relationship	3*	1*	Managing quite well	33	46#
Single/never married	56	58			
Widowed	2*	4(#)	Urbanisation		
Divorced/separated	38	33	Auckland	30	35
			Other metropolitan cities	20	13*
Employment status			Other major urban areas	27	26
Paid employ't/self-empl'd	36	50#	Secondary urban areas	8	4*
Home duties	4*	4	Minor urban & rural areas	15	21#
Retired		1*			
Unemployed/on benefits	33	21	Region		
Student	24	23	Upper North Island	55	60
			Lower North Island	18	25
Tenure			South Island	27	15#
Owned	40	55#			
Private renters	39	36	All sole-parent households	60	40
Social renters	20	7#			
			<i>Sample number</i>	305	212

Notes:

* indicates a RSE greater than or equal to 25%, so the figures should be viewed with considerable caution.

indicates a statistically significant difference between victims and non-victims in sole-parent households at the 10% level of statistical significance or more (two-tailed test).

(#) indicates a statistically significant difference between victims and non-victims in sole-parent households at the 10% level of statistical significance or more (two-tailed test), but on the basis of values with a RSE greater than or equal to 25%. The differences, therefore, are not reliable.

Table A3 Percentage risk differentials between groups of sole-parent households (SPH) and other households with children (OHWC): all offences

	SPH	OHWC	Diff'l	% risk differential ¹		SPH	OHWC	Diff'l	% risk differential ¹
	% victims	% victims				% victims	% victims		
Respondent gender					Tenure				
Male	61	43#	1.4	-1%	Owned	52	39#	1.3	-9%
Female	59	40#	1.5	3%	Private renters	62	48#	1.3	-10%
					Social renters	81	45#	1.8	24%
Respondent age					NZ Index of Deprivation				
15-24	64	53#	1.2	-16%	Quintile 1 (least deprived)	55	38#	1.4	-1%
25-39	61	44#	1.4	-3%	Quintile 2	62	36#	1.7	17%
40-59	54	36#	1.5	4%	Quintile 3	60	40#	1.5	5%
60 or older	58*	21*	2.8	91%	Quintile 4	58	43	1.4	-6%
					Quintile 5 (most deprived)	61	48#	1.3	-12%
Ethnicity					Managing on income				
European	62	40#	1.6	8%	Getting into difficulties	64	44#	1.6	1%
Māori	62	46#	1.3	-8%	Just getting by	65	44#	1.5	2%
Pacific peoples	71	41#	1.8	21%	Managing quite well	51	40#	1.2	-11%
Asian	30*	45	0.7	-55%					
Marital status					Urbanisation				
Legally married	30*	36	0.8	-42%	Auckland	55	45	1.2	-15%
De facto relationship	83	50#	1.7	15%	Other metropolitan cities	70	40#	1.7	20%
Single/never married	59	51#	1.2	-20%	Other major urban areas	60	47#	1.3	-10%
Widowed	43*	15*	2.8	94%	Secondary urban areas	74*	38	1.9	
Divorced/separated	63	46	1.4	-4%	Minor urban & rural areas	51	32#	1.6	10%
Employment status					Region				
Paid employ't/ self-empl'd	52	41#	1.3	-8%	Upper North Island	57	43#	1.3	-8%
Home duties	62	28#	2.2	53%	Lower North Island	52	37#	1.4	-3%
Retired		15*			South Island	72	40#	1.8	25%
Unemployed/on benefits	70	48#	1.4	0%					
Student	61	56	1.1	-25%					
NZSEI									
NZSEI 70-90 (high status)	56	34	1.6	13%					
NZSEI 60-69	37*	44	0.8	-42%					
NZSEI 50-59	55	44	1.3	-12%					
NZSEI 40-49	66	45#	1.5	1%	All respondents	60	41#	1.4	
NZSEI 30-39	71	37#	1.9	33%					
NZSEI 10-29	61	38#	1.6	12%	Sample number	517	1,902		

Notes to Table A3:

1. The percentage risk differential is the differential between different groups in sole-parent households and other households with children expressed as a percentage of the average risk differential for the two family types in relation to all offences. For instance, the overall prevalence risk in Pacific peoples' sole-parent households is 71%, as against 41% in other Pacific households with children – a differential of 1.8 (on unrounded figures). The percentage risk differential is thus 21% higher than the average differential of 1.4 between all sole-parent households and all other households with children (again on unrounded figures). The percentage risk differential is omitted when either of the risk estimates for particular groups has a RSE greater than or equal to 25%.

* indicates a RSE greater than or equal to 25%, so the figures should be viewed with considerable caution.

indicates a statistically significant difference between sole-parent households and other households with children at the 10% level of statistical significance or more (two-tailed test).

Table A4 Percentage risk differentials between groups of sole parents (SP) and parents in other households with children (POHWC): personal offences

	SP	POHWC	Diff'l	% risk differential ¹		SPH	POHWC	Diff'l	% risk differential ¹
	% victims	% victims				% victims	% victims		
Respondent gender					Tenure				
Male	33	16#	2.0	-3%	Owned	25	14#	1.8	-16%
Female	34	16#	2.1	1%	Private renters	37	21#	1.8	-16%
					Social renters	51	2 #	2.3	8%
Respondent age					NZ Index of Deprivation				
15-24	46	35	1.3	-38%	Quintile 1 (least deprived)	45*	13#	3.4	
25-39	41	19#	2.2	4%	Quintile 2	22*	14	1.6	
40-59	27	13#	2.1	-1%	Quintile 3	30	15	2.0	-4%
60 or older	26*	4*	6.4		Quintile 4	36	16	2.3	8%
					Quintile 5 (most deprived)	36	21	1.7	-19%
Ethnicity					Managing on income				
European	35	16#	2.1	2%	Getting into difficulties	57	26	2.2	7%
Māori	40	25#	1.6	-24%	Just getting by	35	21	1.7	-21%
Pacific peoples	30*	12*	2.5	19%	Managing quite well	24	13	1.8	-12%
Asian	17*	10*	1.8	-15%					
Marital status					Urbanisation				
Legally married	46*	13	3.7	75%	Auckland	33	16	2.0	
De facto relationship	64*	26	2.4		Other metropolitan cities	41	13	3.1	48%
Single/never married	35	28	1.2	-41%	Other major urban areas	32	19	1.7	-21%
Widowed	9*	0	0.0		Secondary urban areas	40*	13	3.0	
Divorced/separated	34	24*	1.4	-32%	Minor urban & rural areas	28	16	1.8	-14%
Employment status					Region				
Paid employ't/self-empl'd	28	16#	1.7	-18%	Upper North Island	36	18	2.0	-3%
Home duties	34*	13	2.6	23%	Lower North Island	28	14	1.9	-8%
Retired		3*			South Island	36	14	2.6	24%
Unemployed/on benefits	44	30#	1.5	-30%					
Student	31*	22*	1.4						
NZSEI									
NZSEI 70-90 (high status)	51*	13*	4.1	93%					
NZSEI 60-69	16*	17	0.9						
NZSEI 50-59	35	16#	2.3	8%					
NZSEI 40-49	39	15#	2.6	22%	All respondents	34	16	2.1	
NZSEI 30-39	35	17#	2.1	1%					
NZSEI 10-29	40	22#	1.8	-12%	Sample number	426	1,694		

Notes to Table A4:

1. The percentage risk differential is the differential between different groups in sole parents and other parents with children expressed as a percentage of the average risk differential for the two types of parents in relation to all offences. The percentage risk differential is omitted when either of the risk estimates for particular groups has a RSE greater than or equal to 25%.

* indicates a RSE greater than or equal to 25%, so the figures should be viewed with considerable caution.

indicates a statistically significant difference between sole parents and other parents with children at the 10% level of statistical significance or more (two-tailed test).

Table A5 Percentage victimised once or twice, or three or more times in sole-parent households (SPH) and other households with children (OHWC)

	Victim once or twice		Victim three times or more		Victim once or twice		Victim three times or more		
	SPH	OHWC	SPH	OHWC	SPH	OHWC	SPH	OHWC	
	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	
Respondent gender					NZSEI				
Male	28	30	32	12#	NZSEI 70–90 (high status)	25*	28	31*	7
Female	31	27	28	13#	NZSEI 60–69	23*	31	14*	13
					NZSEI 50–59	33*	30	23	14#
Respondent age					NZSEI 40–49	24*	33	42	12#
15–24	30	33	34	20#	NZSEI 30–39	40	23#	31	14#
25–39	28	29	33	14#	NZSEI 10–29	38	26#	23	12
40–59	34	27	20	9#					
60 or older	35*	18*	23*	3*	Tenure				
					Owned	26	28	25	11#
Ethnicity					Private renters	34	34	29	14#
European	34	28#	29	12#	Social renters	37	24#	44	21#
Māori	31	26	31	21#					
Pacific peoples	18*	35(#)	54*	6*	NZ Index of Deprivation				
Asian	19*	3(#)	10*	14*	Quintile 1 (least deprived)	26*	27	29*	11(#)
					Quintile 2	30*	28	31	9#
Marital status					Quintile 3	41	28#	19*	12*
Legally married	29*	28	4*	8	Quintile 4	29	29	29	14#
De facto relationship	31*	31	52*	19	Quintile 5 (most deprived)	26	32#	36	16#
Single/never married	29	32	30	19#					
Widowed	30*	11*	13*	5*	Managing on income				
Divorced/separated	33	19*	30	27	Getting into difficulties	23*	23*	41	21*
					Just getting by	34	30	31	15#
Number of people in the household					Managing quite well	28	29	24	11#
Two	29	17*	28	8*					
Three or four	30	27	31	12#	Urbanisation				
Five or more	30	29	32	17#	Auckland	28	31	27*	14(#)
					Other metropolitan cities	31	27	39	13#
Employment status					Other major urban areas	30	33	30*	13(#)
Paid employ't/self-empl'd	30	29	22	12#	Secondary urban areas	45	28	29*	10
Home duties	28*	18	34*	10(#)	Minor urban and rural areas	30	22	21	10#
Retired		14*		1*					
Unemployed/on benefits	30	26	39	22#	Region				
Student	34	37	28	19	Upper North Island	28	30	30	13#
					Lower North Island	26	25	26*	12(#)
					South Island	41	29#	31	11#
					All respondents	30	29	29	13
					Sample number	151	500	154	276

Notes to Table A5:

* indicates a RSE greater than or equal to 25%, so the figures should be viewed with considerable caution.

indicates a statistically significant difference between victims in sole-parent households and other households with children at the 10% level of statistical significance or more (two-tailed test).

#(##) indicates a statistically significant difference between victims in sole-parent households and other households with children at the 10% level of statistical significance or more (two-tailed test), but on the basis of values with a RSE greater than or equal to 25%. The differences, therefore, are not reliable.

Table A6 Concern about crime: different groups of sole-parent households (SPH) and other households with children (OHWC)

	All OHWC	All SPH	SPH non-victims	SPH victims	OHWC victims	SPH – victim once/twice	OHWC – victim once/twice	SPH – victim three+	OHWC – victim three+
	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	%
Crime problem in neighbourhood	36	41#	29	49#	46	41	40	58	59
Lot or little more crime over the past two years	21	23	17	28#	27	22	22	34	40
Personal worries about victimisation (very or fairly worried)¹									
Traffic accident caused by a drunken driver	67	65	66	64	71#	57	68#	71	80#
Having your house burgled	60	60	61	59	68#	53	63#	66	78
Car deliberately damaged or broken into ²	58	56	48	62#	68	50	64#	74	78
Having your car stolen ²	54	52	47	56#	61	48	56#	65	72
Having your credit cards misused ²	55	50	51	50	57	41	55#	60	60
Being attacked and robbed	44	45	44	46	50#	41	45	51	61#
Being assaulted by strangers	43	43	43	43	49#	40	46	46	57#
Being sexually assaulted or raped ²	32	35	36	35	38	32	35	39	45
Being assaulted by people you know ²	20	25#	19	29#	24	20	22	39	31#
Do not walk alone after dark	45	52#	57	50	43#	46	43	53	46#
Do (would) feel a bit or very unsafe ³	31	37#	34	39	36	33	33	45	41
Women aged 15–59	47	46							
Been downtown for entertainment in last year	83	82	82	82	87	84	86	81	89
Have felt fearful if went out for entertainment	18	23#	19	26#	25	20*	21	34	35
Those aged 15–39	24	22							
Moderate/high impact of fear on quality of life ⁴	43	46	40	50#	53	38	47	61	68
<i>Sample number</i>	<i>1,902</i>	<i>517</i>	<i>212</i>	<i>305</i>	<i>777</i>	<i>152</i>	<i>501</i>	<i>154</i>	<i>277</i>

Notes to Table A6:

1 Based on those identifying a local crime problem.

2 Those for which the two car crime and the credit card questions were not applicable are excluded. However, those who said 'not applicable' to the question on sexual assault, and that on being assaulted by people they know, are included in the base.

3 Based on two questions: 'How safe do you feel...' and 'How safe would you feel...'. Those who said they did not go out alone after dark were asked 'How safe would you feel...'.¹

4 Based on the question 'How much is your own quality of life affected by fear of crime, on a scale from 0 to 10, where 0 is no effect and 10 is total effect on your quality of life?' High impact is scores of 8 to 10; moderate impact is scores 4 to 7.

'Don't knows' are included in the base.

* indicates a RSE greater than or equal to 25%, so the figures should be viewed with considerable caution.

indicates a statistically significant difference between sole-parent households and other households with children at the 10% level of statistical significance or more (two-tailed test).

Table A7 Neighbourhood Support: Different groups of sole-parent households (SPH) and other households with children (OHWC)

	NS in the area	Membership of NS where schemes operated	Membership of NS of all	Sample number
	%	%	%	
All SPH	16	36	6#	517
All OHWC	22	50	11	1,902
SPH non-victims	21	39	8	212
SPH victims ¹	13#	32	4	305
OHWC victims	23#	47#	11#	777
SPH – victim once/twice	15*	28*	4*	152
OHWC – victim once/twice	22(#)	47(#)	10(#)	501
SPH – victim three+	11	37*	4*	154
OHWC – victim three+	24#	48	12(#)	277

Notes:

1. The # here denotes a statistically significant difference between victims and non-victims in sole-parent households at the 10% level of statistical significance or more (two-tailed test).

* indicates a RSE greater than or equal to 25%, so the figures should be viewed with considerable caution.

indicates a statistically significant difference between sole-parent households and other households with children at the 10% level of statistical significance or more (two-tailed test).

(#) indicates a statistically significant difference between sole-parent households and other households with children at the 10% level of statistical significance or more (two-tailed test), but on the basis of values with a RSE greater than or equal to 25%. The differences, therefore, are not reliable.

Table A8 Awareness of support agencies for victims: Different groups of sole-parent households (SPH) and other households with children (OHWC)

	Knew one or more agency	Victim Support	Women's Refuges	Citizens' Advice Bureaux	Church groups	Rape Crisis	Salvation Army	Sample number
	%	%	%	%	%	%	%	
All SPH	66	41	20	9	7	7	8	517
All OHWC	62	38	14#	9	8	7	6	1,902
SPH, women aged 25–59	78		31					330
OHWC, women aged 25–59	75		24					860
SPH non-victims	63	41	21	9	6	7*	5	212
SPH victims	68	41	20	9	8	7	10 (#)	305
OHWC victims	63	37	14	10	7	8	5	777
SPH victims, parents only	80		27					257
OHWC victims, parents only	69#		16#					713
SPH – victim once or twice	65	43	13	10	7*	8*	8	152
OHWC – victim once or twice	62	35	13	8	7	9	5	501
SPH – victim three+	72	39	27	9	10	6*	13	154
OHWC – victim three+	66	41	15#	12	6*	5*	7 *	277

Notes:

* indicates a RSE greater than or equal to 25%, so the figures should be viewed with considerable caution.

indicates a statistically significant difference between sole-parent households and other households with children at the 10% level of statistical significance or more (two-tailed test).

(#) indicates a statistically significant difference between sole-parent households and other households with children at the 10% level of statistical significance or more (two-tailed test), but on the basis of values with a RSE greater than or equal to 25%. The differences, therefore, are not reliable.

Table A9 The composition of victimisation incidents against victims in sole-parent households and other households with children

	Sole-parent households	Other households with children
	%	%
All Victim Forms		
Assaults and threats ¹	36	31
Sexual offences	7	6
Damage to property ²	19	21
Burglary	19	20
Vehicle thefts ³	7	9
Household thefts ⁴	5	6
Thefts of personal property ⁵	7	8
Total	100	100
<i>Sample number</i>	648	1,457
Main Victim Forms		
Assaults and threats ¹	21	17
Damage to property ²	22	24
Burglary	28	28
Vehicle thefts ³	11	13
Household thefts ⁴	8	8
Thefts of personal property ⁵	11	10
Total	100	100
<i>Sample number</i>	468	1,188
Self-Completion Victim Forms		
Assaults and threats ¹	64	65
Sexual offences	18	20
Damage to property ²	16	14
Other offences	3	2
Total	100	100
<i>Sample number</i>	180	269

Notes:

1 Assaults and threats to the person and threats to vandalise personal property.

2 Actual damage to household and personal property.

3 Thefts of and from vehicles, and interference.

4 Thefts by a person with a right to be there, thefts outside the home that are not classified as burglary, and bicycle thefts.

5 Robbery, thefts from the person, and thefts of personal property.

Table A10 Reactions to victimisation

	A ¹	B ¹	C ²	D ²		A	B	C	D
	All incidents		Interpersonal ³			All incidents		Interpersonal ³	
	SPH	OHWC	SPH	OHWC		SPH	OHWC	SPH	OHWC
	%	%	%	%		%	%	%	%
Offence seriousness					Involvement of the Police				
Most serious (scores 10–20)	42	32#	52	36#	Police were notified	36	29	36	17#
Fairly serious (scores 5–9)	30	27	29	25					
Least serious (scores 1–4)	28	41#	19	39#	<i>Why Police not notified</i>				
					Too trivial/no loss/not worth reporting	40	48	24	43*
Was it a crime?					Police couldn't have done anything	28	20	26	18#
Incident thought to be a crime	57	58	39	26	Private/personal/family matter	21	17	45	39#
Wrong but not a crime	25	19	37	34	Dealt with the matter myself/ourselves	18	20	22	34(#)
Just something that happens	16	22#	20	37#	Fear of reprisals/make matters worse	9	4#	18*	9
The impact of victimisation					Involvement of others				
Affected very much or quite a lot	63	49#	75	64#	Whether told someone	82	79#	76	65#
Women only	68	56#	77	65#	<i>Who told</i>				
					Friends/neighbours	80	70#	73	63
<i>Type of impact</i>					Immediate family members	73	77	64	68
Anger	77	81	68	75	Other relatives	31	23	19	20(#)
More cautious/aware	44	36#	27	25*	Work colleague/employee/student	25	33	12*	29*
Shock	37	29#	34	36	Doctor or other medical person	11	8	21*	28
Fear	32	21#	44	30#					
Loss of confidence	32	21#	49	31#	Wanted assistance not received	15	13	24	16
Crying/tears	29	16#	51	40	Women only	17	15	25	20
Depression	22	14#	45	30#					
Difficulty sleeping	23	14#	40	27	<i>Sample size (all offences)</i>	648	1457	154	219

Notes to Table A10:

1. Columns A and B show the results for all victimisation incidents.

2. Columns C and D show the results for the last incidents of interpersonal crime described in the Self-Completion Victim Forms.

3. Interpersonal offences are those reported by parents only in any of the three Self-Completion Component Victim Forms.

* indicates a RSE greater than or equal to 25%, so the figures should be viewed with considerable caution.

indicates a statistically significant difference between sole-parent households and other households with children at the 10% level of statistical significance or more (two-tailed test).

(#) indicates a statistically significant difference between sole-parent households and other households with children at the 10% level of statistical significance or more (two-tailed test), but on the basis of values with a RSE greater than or equal to 25%. The differences, therefore, are not reliable.



Glossary

Assault is where the respondent was physically assaulted, whether or not injury occurred.

Burglary occurs if a person enters a dwelling as a trespasser with intent to commit an offence of any kind. Section 231 of the Crimes Act 1961 was redefined in 2003 to remove the requirement that the offender 'break and enter', replacing it with entry 'without authority'. This means, for example, that thefts from an 'enclosed space' (such as a yard) are now more likely to count as burglary. Attempts are included, but NZCASS covers domestic burglary only. Burglary does not cover theft by a person who is entitled to be in the dwelling at the time of the offence (see theft from a dwelling under **household offences**). A dwelling is a house, a caravan, a flat, or any connected outhouse, garage or enclosed yard.

Computer-Assisted Self-Interviewing (CASI) was used in the three Self-Completion components in NZCASS. In CASI, the interviewer gives the laptop to the respondent to allow them to report their experience of more sensitive victimisations without revealing them to the interviewer.

Confrontational offences is a term used in the current report to cover assaults, threats (to the person or personal property), and robbery (though there were few of these).

Damage is wilful damage that results from someone without lawful excuse destroying or damaging personal or household property, or intending to do so. Damage ranges from arson to graffiti. Incidents where there is nuisance only (e.g. letting down car tyres) are not included as damage.

Household is a group of people in a private dwelling who share common facilities and who consider they are a household.

Household offences refer to offences in NZCASS in which the household is considered the victim of the crime, in contrast to **personal offences**. Therefore the respondent answers on behalf of the whole household for burglary, theft from a dwelling (which is theft by someone entitled to be in the dwelling at the time of the offence), other household theft, thefts of and from vehicles, vehicle interference, bicycle theft, and damage to household property and vehicles.

NZDep (New Zealand Index of Deprivation) was developed by the Health Services Research Centre at Victoria University of Wellington. NZDep is made up of a weighted average of nine census measures of socio-economic status and has become a standard measure of relative deprivation in New Zealand. The index divides New Zealand into equal tenths. A score of 10 indicates that a geographic area is in the most deprived 10% of all areas in New Zealand. For this report, the deciles have been reduced to quintiles (five parts) to make better use of sample numbers.

NZSEI (New Zealand Socio-economic Index) is a scale that reflects the socio-economic status of people based on the occupation of the main income earner in their household. Each participant in NZCASS was given a score between 10 and 90 based on this occupation. These scores were then grouped into six ranges for presentation of the data in tables. The higher the score, the higher the socio-economic status.

Offences are experiences that respondents reported in NZCASS that are technically criminal (as they would be classified by Police).

Partners are those about whom questions were asked in the first **Self-Completion component**.

Respondents were asked about their current partner, or someone who was a partner at some time since the beginning of 2005. The partners could be of the same or the opposite sex.

People well known are those people about whom questions were asked in the second **Self-Completion component**. They comprised ex-partners (including ex-boy/girlfriends), current boy/girlfriends, family members, and others known.

Personal offences are those for which the respondent is considered the victim of the crime. They comprise sexual offences, assaults, threats, robbery, damage to personal property, and threats of damage to personal property. They also cover theft of personal property (thefts away from the home – e.g. handbags from offices – where there was no direct contact between offender and victim) and thefts from the person (which are thefts directly from the person of the victim, but which have no element of threat and either no force or only minimal force, e.g. pickpocketing). NZCASS does not cover personal offences against those less than 15 years old.

Private renters are those who rent from a private person, trust, or business.

Region was coded as Upper North Island, Lower North Island, and South Island. The Upper North Island includes all points within and north of the Waitomo, Ruapehu, Taupo, Kawerau and Gisborne districts, including Waiheke Island, and the Lower North Island consists of the rest of the North Island. The South Island covers the South Island only, so the Chatham Islands and Stewart Island are not included.

Repeat victimisation in NZCASS is where someone was victimised more than once during 2005.

Robbery is an incident where someone steals (or tries to steal) property from a respondent by physically attacking them or threatening them with force or violence either during or immediately prior to a theft or attempted theft.

Relative standard error (RSE) is obtained by dividing the standard error of an estimate by the estimate itself; it is then expressed as a percentage of the estimate. In the tables in Appendix A, the notation ‘*’ is used to indicate a RSE greater than or equal to 25%, so the figures so indicated should be viewed with considerable caution.

Sampling error arises because only a sample of the New Zealand population can be surveyed. The sample is drawn randomly and is thus a small-scale representation of the population from which it is drawn. As such, it may produce estimates that differ from the figures that would have been obtained if the whole New Zealand population had been interviewed. The size of the error depends on the sample size, the size and nature of the estimate, and the design of the survey. Sampling error is taken into account in tests of **statistical significance**.

Screener questions ascertain whether survey respondents have experienced incidents that come within the scope of the survey. The incidents are described in lay terms. The screener questions are intended to single out separate incidents of victimisation (even if there are affirmative answers to more than one screener question). The screener questions in the main questionnaire prompt respondents to exclude offences committed by partners or people well known to them, or which had a sexual element. These are covered by the screener questions in the Self-Completion components.

Self-Completion components are completed by respondents using **Computer-Assisted Self-Interviewing (CASI)**. There are three such components in NZCASS. The first focuses on assaults, threats, damage to personal property and threats to damage personal property committed by partners. The second focuses on the same offences committed by people well known to the victim. The third focuses on **sexual offences**.

Sexual offences in NZCASS are measured in a Self-Completion component that asks about forced sexual intercourse, attempted forced sexual intercourse, distressing sexual touching, and other offences of sexual violence.

Social renters is the term used for those who rent from a Local Authority or the Housing New Zealand Corporation. Those who rented but refused to say who they rented from, who gave an 'other' response, or who did not know their landlord, are included among social renters.

Statistical significance tests for the reliability of results. Because NZCASS estimates are subject to **sampling error**, differences between estimates from successive years of the survey or between population subgroups may occur by chance. Tests of statistical significance are used to identify which differences are unlikely to have occurred by chance. Tests at the 90% and 95% confidence levels are used in this report. For statistically significant results at the first level, if there were truly no difference, we would expect to see smaller differences than we have observed at least 9 times out of 10. In the second, there would be a 19 out of 20 chance of differences being smaller than the observed difference, simply due to random sampling variation. It should be noted that although a difference may not be statistically significant (e.g. it might just be due to random sampling variation), it may nevertheless be worth commenting on because the difference, if real, would have relevant policy implications.

Theft from vehicles refers both to the theft of parts and accessories of a vehicle and to the theft of contents (e.g. car radio, hubcaps or clothes left on the back seat).

Threats cover threats to kill, injure, or assault the respondent and threats to damage personal or household property. They may be addressed directly to the respondent or to some other person. The threats may be verbal or physical, but there should be an actual threat to harm the property or person. Verbal abuse is not counted as a threat.

Urbanisation is an area classification that covers:

- (i) Auckland (including the North Shore, Waitakere and Manukau Cities, along with Papakura District and parts of Rodney and Franklin Districts)
- (ii) other metropolitan urban areas (including Wellington [except Kapiti], Christchurch and Dunedin)
- (iii) other main urban areas (i.e. areas with populations of over 30,000)
- (iv) secondary urban areas (i.e. areas with populations from 10,000 to 29,999)
- (v) rural/minor urban areas (the remaining areas, which have populations of less than 10,000).

Vandalism is the term used in the report for wilful damage that results from someone without lawful excuse destroying or damaging personal or household property, or intending to do so. Vandalism ranges from arson to graffiti. Incidents where there is nuisance only (e.g. letting down car tyres) are not included when counting vandalism offences.

Vehicle crime covers

- (i) vehicle vandalism (intentional and malicious damage to a vehicle)
- (ii) theft or unauthorised taking of a vehicle
- (iii) theft from or off a vehicle
- (iv) vehicle interference (where someone tampers with a vehicle, or tries to get into it, but there is no appreciable damage, nothing is stolen and there is no indication of what was intended).

Attempts are included in (ii), (iii) and (iv).

Vehicles covers all motorised land transport such as cars, vans, motorcycles, and scooters that are either owned or regularly used by someone in the household. In counting incidents of crime involving vehicles, vehicles used solely for business purposes such as lorries or work vans are considered out of scope if they are the target of crime. Farm or quad bikes and tractors will also usually be out of scope since they are likely to be owned by a business rather than a household as such.

Victim is a household or person reporting at least one of the offences in the survey.

Victimisation is the experience (once or more) of household or personal offences in scope of the survey.

Victim Forms (VFs) collect detailed information about what happened in an offence, such as where it occurred, whether there was property loss or injury, and whether the offence was reported to the Police. Victim Forms are completed for up to three victimisations mentioned by participants at the **screening questions** in the main questionnaire. One Victim Form is completed in each Self-Completion component relating to the last incident that happened. Information in the Victim Form is used to decide whether the incident is in scope of the survey, and if it is, to allocate the appropriate offence code.

Weighted data is raw data from the survey data adjusted in various ways at the data processing stage to correct for imbalances introduced in sampling, and by the design of the survey, to produce better estimates. The weighting takes account of non-response, a household's probability of selection, the **Māori** booster sample, and the underrepresentation of people living in larger households, while aligning the sample with population figures. The information on crime incidents for analysis of Victim Forms is also weighted to take account of the probability that the incident was selected for Victim Form completion.