



NEW SURVEY RESULTS SHOW EXTENT OF OFFENCES BY FAMILY MEMBERS

Almost 80,000 adults were offended against by a family member in 2018, according to the Ministry of Justice's latest report *Offences by Family Members*.

The report, which comes off the back of the 2018 New Zealand Crime and Victims Survey, also notes that just over 100,000 adults who had a partner in the last 12 months had experienced psychological violence by an intimate partner.

Figures from the report show:

- Māori adults (4 percent) were found to be more at-risk of experiencing family member violence than European adults (2 percent).
- Adult females (2.8 percent) were more than twice as likely to report offences by family members than adult males (1.2 percent).
- Young people between 15 – 29 years of age were 1.7 times as likely to report offences by family members (3.4 percent) than New Zealand average.
- Quite often victims are injured (23 percent) and require medical attention for mental, emotional or physical health issues (15 percent) but only one in three offences by family members are reported to Police.

The *Offences by Family Members* report details who experiences offences by family members, what types of offences occur, and what services victims interact with. The offences include physical assault, sexual assault, psychological violence by intimate partners, harassment and threatening behaviour, property damage and robbery.

“The report is important because it provides precise, national level information about violence committed within families,” says James Swindells, the Ministry’s Manager of Research and Evaluation. “It tells us more about the nature of this type of offending and gives those leading interventions in this area the evidence they need to refine initiatives or develop new ones and to monitor the impact of this work.”

“Our findings show that victims of offences by family members experienced moderate-to-high levels of psychological distress, at more than four times the rate of other adults (37 percent compared to 8 percent). Data like this helps people understand the needs of those affected by violence and links with things like mental illness.”

The report also identifies that adults facing high levels of financial stress are more vulnerable to offending by family members. For example, adults who could not afford a non-essential item costing \$300 in the next month were five times as likely to have experienced an offence by a family member in the past year than those who could afford the item.

“Future work – once more data is accumulated from further cycles of NZCVS – will help to gain a deeper understanding of the relationship between offending by family members, and the demographic, socioeconomic and family circumstances of an individual,” says Mr Swindells.

The report contributes to the evidence base that supports efforts across the Justice Sector to improve community safety and reduce family and sexual violence, such as the Joint Venture for Family Violence and Sexual Violence and the Hāpaitia te Oranga Tangata, the Safe and Effective Justice programme.

The *Offences by Family Members* report is available on the Ministry of Justice [website](#).

Background

The first New Zealand Crime and Victims Survey was carried out in 2018 where 8,000 New Zealanders over 15 years of age were interviewed about their experience of crime. The main report from the 2019 New Zealand Crime and Victims Survey is due out in the coming months.

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