

ASCA 1300 PROFESSIONAL SUPPORT LINE RESEARCH – OCTOBER 2013

BACKGROUND TO THE REPORT

This report contains summary data from ASCA’s Professional Support Line from April 2009 to October 2013 collected by counsellors during the course of a counselling call. The focus of calls to the 1300 line is short term counselling support and referral rather than data collection. In some cases not all the data has been collected as the information was neither disclosed nor discussed.

During this period a total of 4376 calls were recorded. This does not represent the full call numbers as data collection processes were not fully established in earlier years. All figures and any percentages quoted in this report are based on recorded cases only.

TYPE OF CALLER

Of the 4, 376 cases the type of caller was recorded in **3, 357** cases. The breakdown is shown in Table 1. This shows that the vast majority (74%) of callers are survivors.

Table 1. Type of caller (N=3,357)

Type of caller	% of Respondents
Survivors	74%
Supporters of survivors (excludes partners of survivors)	13%
Health Care Professionals	7.6%
Support workers (professional role)	1.6%
Partner of survivors	1.1%
Other:	2.7%

PLACE OF ABUSE

Location of abuse was recorded for **897** of the 4, 376 cases (20%) and is presented in Table 7.

Table 7: Place of Abuse (N=897)

Place of Abuse	% of Respondents
Home	76.0%
Institutions	9.7%
Schools	7.5%
In care	5.4%
Community/r sporting organisations	2.8%
Other	10.5%

AGE AT WHICH ABUSE OCCURRED

Age of abuse was recorded for **1,708** cases (39%). This information is recorded in Table 2. Results show the extreme vulnerability of pre-pubescent children; the most common age of abuse being in the 6-10 year age range. In addition 3.5% of recorded cases reported that abuse was ongoing at the time of the call. Given that the vast majority of callers are adults, this illustrates that even in adulthood some survivors are unable to escape their abusive situation.

Almost 10% of callers disclosed abuse at multiple ages, but this figure may be far higher given the nature of the 1300 support line.

Table 2. Age at which Abuse Occurred (N = 1,708)

Age Range	% of reporting respondents
0-5 years	17.2%
6-10 years	37.3%
11-15 years	27.2%
16 years and over	5.3%
Ongoing abuse	3.5%
Multiple ages	9.4%

TYPES OF ABUSE

Of the 4,376 cases a total of 2,029 cases disclosed the type of abuse they had experienced.

Table 3. Types of Abuse (N=2,029)

Type of Abuse	% of respondents
Emotional abuse	39.0%
Physical	35.5%
Sexual	78.5%
Neglect	7.4%
Witnessing DV	2.8%

43% of cases reported multiple forms of abuse. Of the 867 callers who reported multiple forms of abuse, 382 (44%) reported three or more types of abuse.

PERPETRATOR DETAILS

Of the 4,376 cases recorded, 1,686 cases had perpetrator details recorded. In 85% of cases a single perpetrator is recorded, while multiple perpetrators are recorded for 15%. Lack of reporting of multiple perpetrators does not however mean that the caller did not experience repeated abuse from more than one perpetrator. Due to the nature of the service, full details of abuse history are often not disclosed. Research suggests that re-victimisation is common.

(1) GENDER OF PERPETRATOR

Gender of perpetrator was reported for 1,284 of the 4,376 cases (29%). Table 4 illustrates that the majority of perpetrators are male, as is consistent with mainstream research.

Table 4 : Reported Gender of Perpetrator (N=1,284)

Gender details	% of respondents
Male	87%
Female	28%
Both	15%
Not recorded/not disclosed	71%

(2) SURVIVOR'S RELATIONSHIP TO PERPETRATOR

Of the 4,376 cases recorded there are 1,686 cases where the relationship of the perpetrator to the survivor are recorded (39% of cases). Details of Relationship to Perpetrator are reported in Table 5. This table demonstrates similar patterns of relationship to their abuser in mainstream research. For example children are most likely to be abused by a family member (82%) and are least likely to be abused by a stranger. Only 0.8% of callers reported abuse by a stranger as their sole form of abuse.

Table 5: Relationship to Perpetrator (N=1,686)

Relationship to Perpetrator	% of Respondents*
Immediate family	63.8%
Extended family	18.6%
Family friend	10.3%
Religious	9.2%
Teacher	6.2%
Stranger	2.7%
In Care	2.7%
Health professional	1.9%

- Percentages do not add up to 100% as 15% of callers report multiple categories of abuser.

IMPACT OF ABUSE ON SURVIVOR

Impacts of abuse were noted in 888 cases (20%). Of these 42% reported a single impact and 57% reported multiple impacts. Of those that reported impacts on their life the following areas were identified in Table 6.

Table 6: Impact of Abuse on Survivor (N=888)

Impact of Abuse	% of Respondents
Mental Health problems	78.4%
Relationships with immediate family	51.7%
Partner	28.8%
Physical health problems	23.6%
Employment Difficulties	21.7%
Relationships with extended family	21.2%
Relationships with friends	18.1%
Suicidality	14.8%
Alcohol abuse	12.0%
Illicit Drug use	9.6%
Involved in crime	3.7%

As noted before the majority of callers who reported impacts reported multiple impacts. Of the 509 callers who reported multiple impacts 100 of them **(20%) reported impacts in 5 or more areas**, which illustrates the seriousness and wide-reaching effects of child abuse.