

PLEASE NOTE: *The information collected relates to details and facts disclosed by callers in the process of their contact with the service. The service does not seek to solicit information for statistical purposes, as the primary aim of the service is to provide support and information.*

In 2003, **18,902** calls were made to the service which represents an increase of 26% on calls made to the service in 2002.

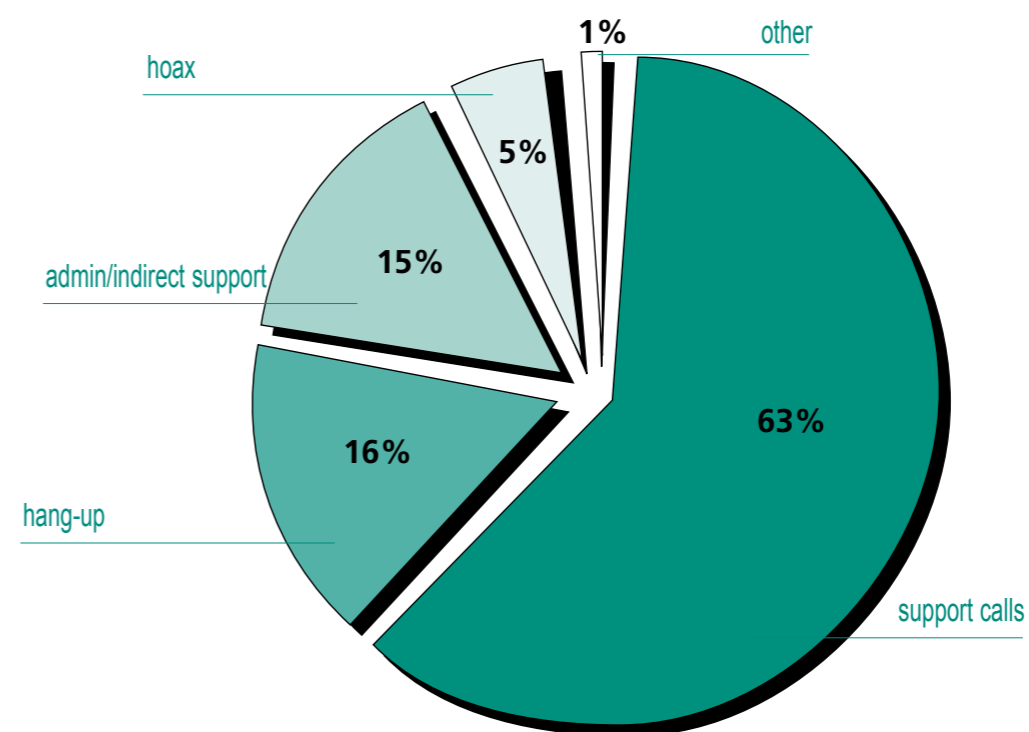
The Women's Aid National Freephone Helpline responded to **12,908** calls in 2003 which represents a 17% increase in calls responded to by the service in 2002.

However, the Helpline also recorded 5,994 missed calls (calls that could not be answered as all support workers were engaged on the lines) in 2003 which represents a massive 52% increase on the number of calls missed in 2002.

Calls received

Chart 1 below indicates the breakdown of calls received. The vast majority of calls dealt with support of women experiencing physical, mental, sexual or financial abuse at the hands of an intimate male partner.

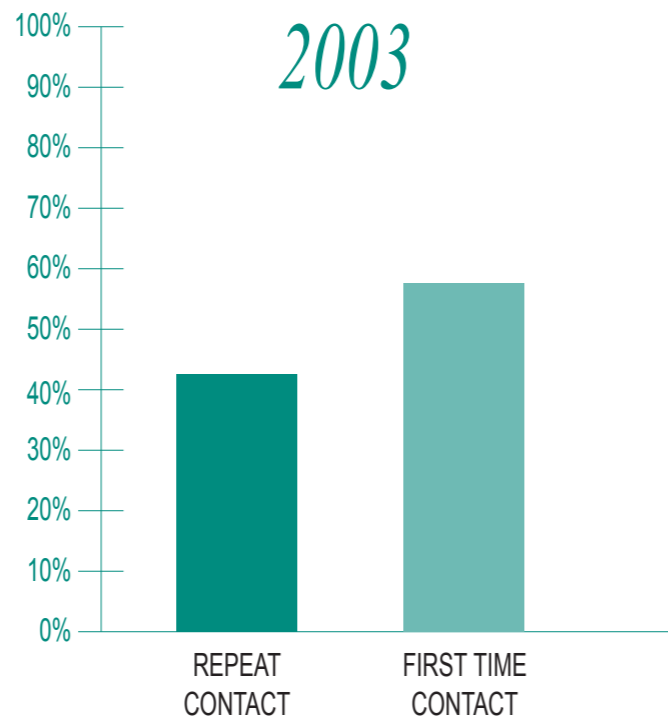
In a much smaller number of support calls women were seeking support or information on issues either indirectly related or unrelated to domestic abuse; these calls include support and information on family planning, mental health issues or legal information on topics such as discrimination, legislation and criminal law.



Admin/indirect support calls refers in the main to those many calls that the line receives from other voluntary and statutory bodies looking for information or support on issues arising in their work that pertain to domestic abuse. Agencies/individuals using our service include: members of the Gardai, social workers, local support services, GPs and hospital staff.

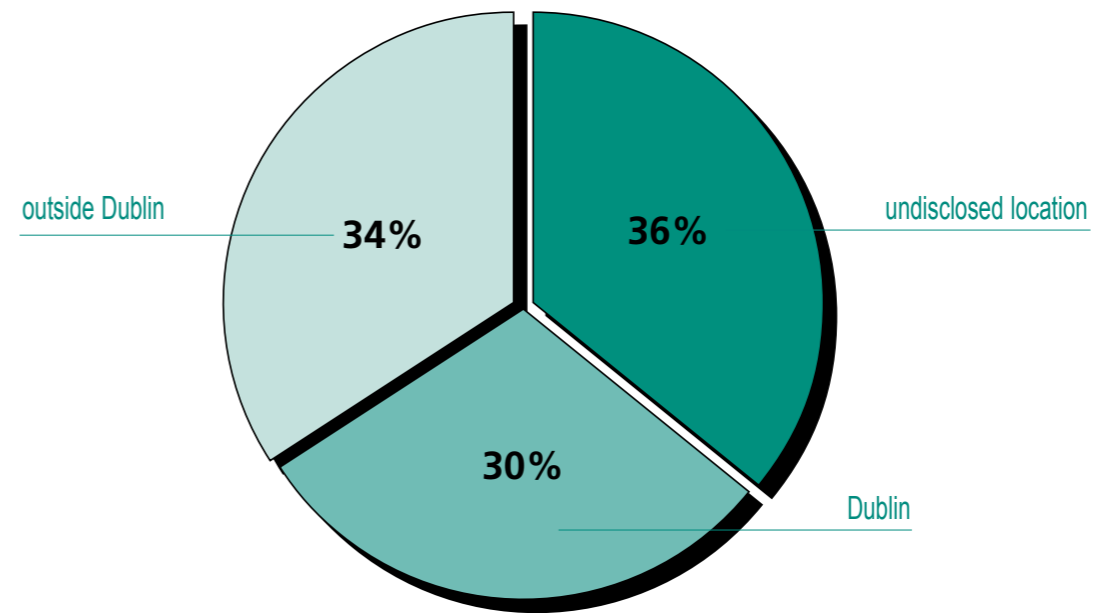
Repeat and first time contacts with the helpline

In 2003, 42% of callers disclosed that they were in repeat contact with the service. In some cases women will use the service for years to access non-directive support while coping with or overcoming an abusive situation. Considering the percentage of repeat callers it can be surmised that up to 58% of callers accessed support for the first time with Women's Aid in 2003.



Location of callers

Chart 3 outlines the location of service users (where disclosed). 36% of calls did not disclose their location, 30% of calls contacted us from Dublin and 34% of calls disclosed that they were calling from outside Dublin.



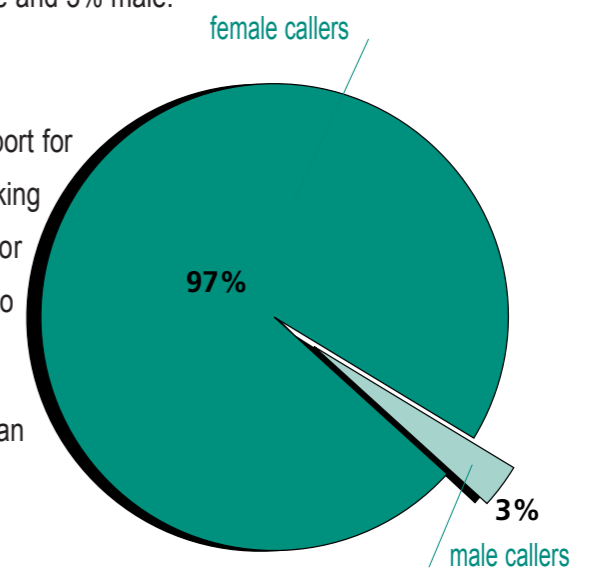
Gender of callers

Chart 4 illustrates the percentage breakdown of the gender of callers to the Helpline. The overwhelming majority of callers (97%) were female and 3% male.

Breakdown of Female callers: 97% of total

Of the women calling, 86% were calling to access support for themselves in relation to domestic abuse. 6% were making enquiries about the service or required support or information on issues not necessarily directly related to domestic abuse e.g. family planning information.

A further 7.9% were calling on behalf of an abused woman and 0.1% were seeking support or information on behalf of an abused man.



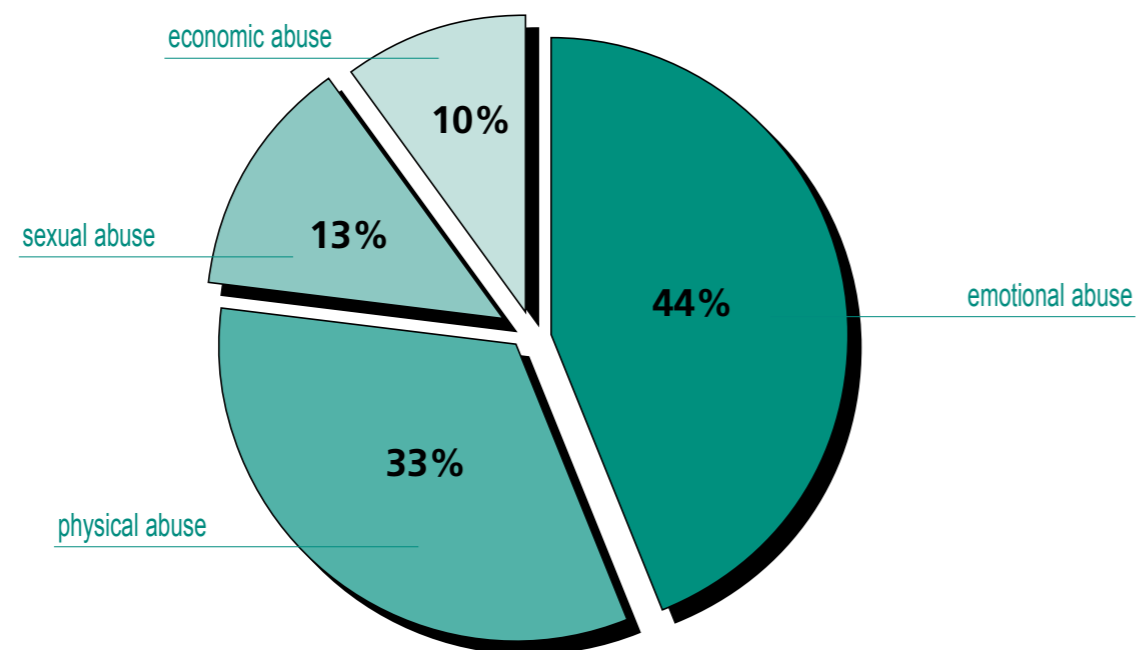
Incidences of abuse reported to the helpline

Chart 5 demonstrates the breakdown of instances of abuse disclosed by callers to the helpline. Many callers disclose that they have experienced multiple forms of abuse at the hands of their abuser.

Actual Instances of Abuse Named By Callers

| | |
|-----------------|---------------|
| Emotional Abuse | 4,556 |
| Physical Abuse | 3,371 |
| Sexual Abuse* | 1,352 |
| Economic abuse | 1,038 |
| Total | 10,317 |

*Specific reports of rape numbered 511.

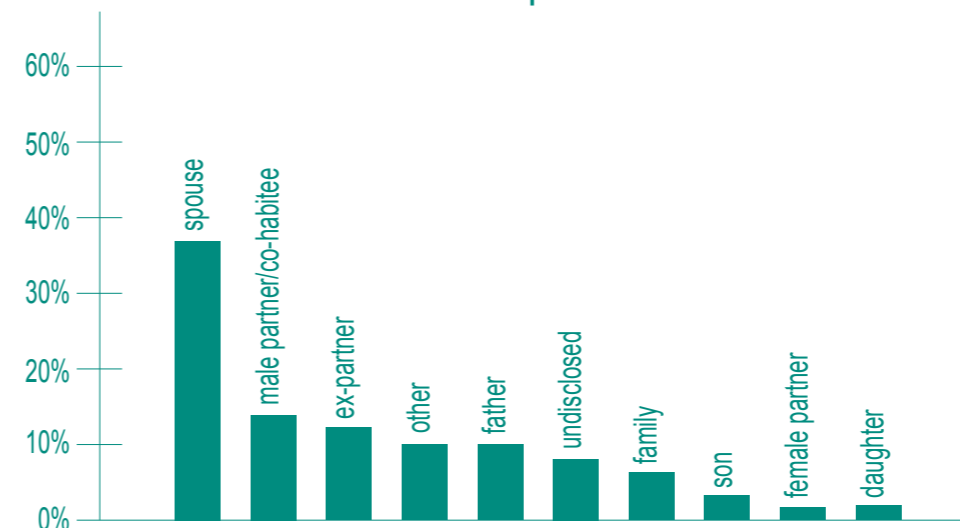


Perpetrators of abuse

Chart 6 shows the relationship between women experiencing abuse and their abuser. Marriage remains the most common context for domestic violence amongst callers to the service, with 37% of women disclosing that their husband was their abuser.

The second highest percentage (13%) of abuse disclosed was perpetrated by either a male partner or male co-habitee.

Relationship with abuser



An almost equally large number of women (12%) are also experiencing abuse from an ex-partner. Abuse by an ex-partner can take the form of continued physical abuse, harassment, threats, stalking, abuse of a woman during access visits with children and financial abuse such as non-payment of maintenance.

The majority of instances where the abuser was "Undisclosed" refers to instances of sexual abuse.

NATIONAL FREEPHONE HELPLINE STATISTICS 2003

NATIONAL FREEPHONE HELPLINE



1800 341 900



Women's Aid

1800 341 900