

Children, violence and vulnerability 2025

The scale of violence
affecting children



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Main findings and summary



Executive summary

The Youth Endowment Fund (YEF) surveyed nearly 11,000 children aged 13–17 in England and Wales to hear directly from them about their experiences of violence.

The results are being shared across separate reports, each focusing on a different theme. This first report looks at the **scale of violence**: how many children are affected, how often it happens, the different forms it takes – including online violence and online conversations about harming others – and why some young people become involved.

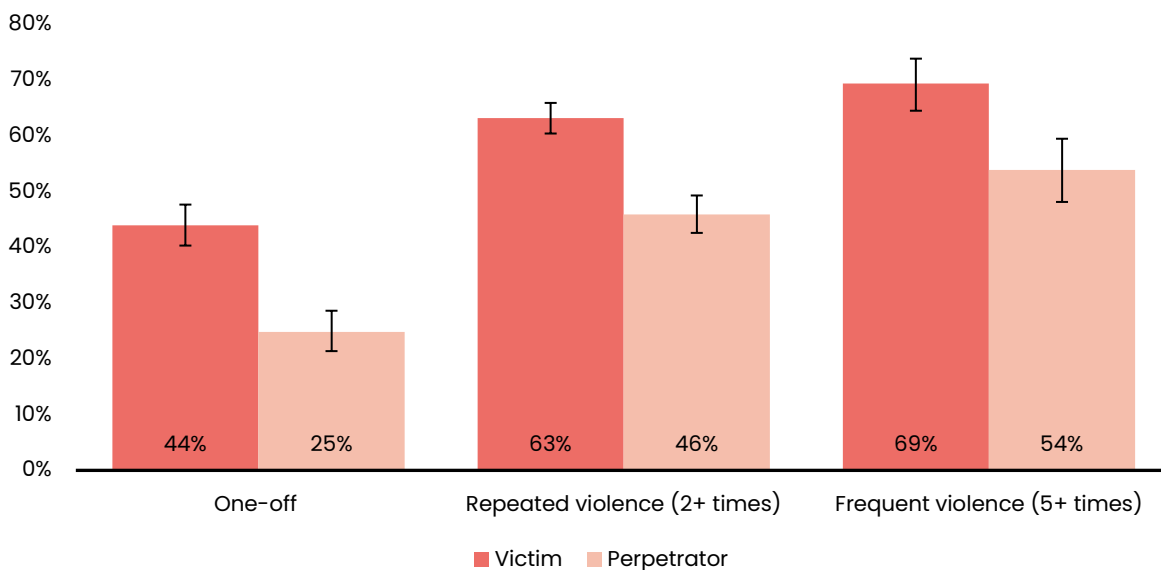
Here's what we found.

Violence is common, with a minority experiencing serious violence requiring medical treatment.

Violence continues to shape the lives of too many teenage children. In the past year, nearly one in five (18%) said they had been a victim, one in eight (13%) admitted to carrying out violence themselves and half (50%) told us they had witnessed violence being committed against someone else. For many, these were not isolated incidents: almost two-thirds of victims and perpetrators said violence had happened more than once, and around one in five reported it happening at least five times.

Injury is more common among teens experiencing repeated violence.

PROPORTION OF VICTIMS AND PERPETRATORS WHO REPORTED INJURY, BY FREQUENCY OF VIOLENCE EXPERIENCED

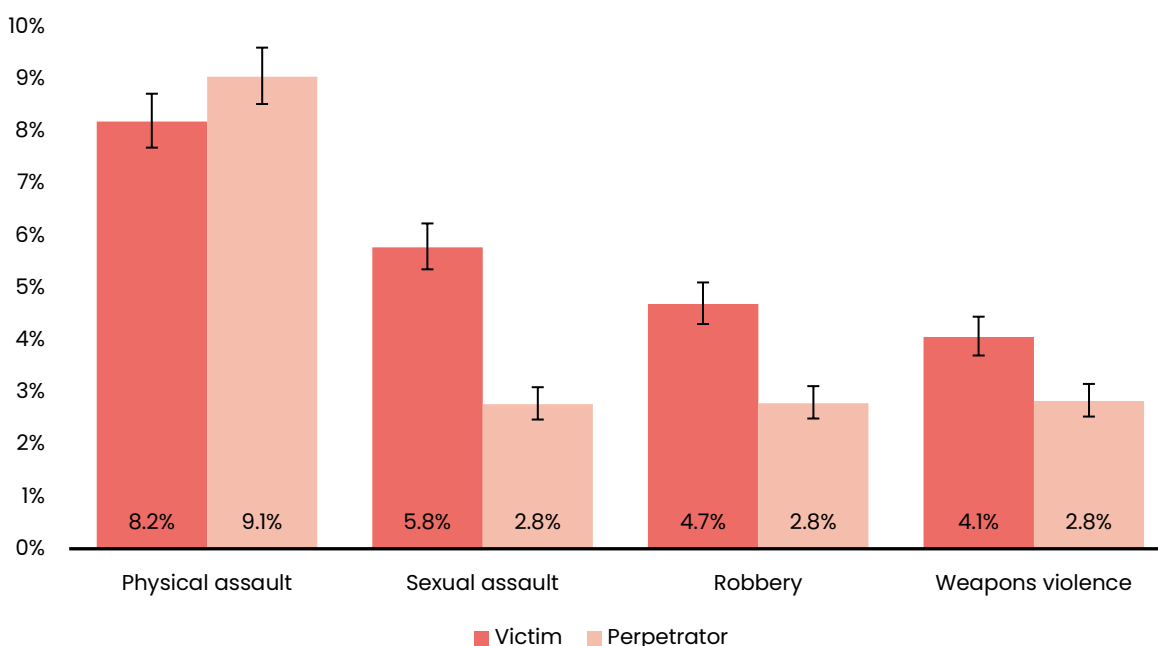


Note. Error bars represent 95% confidence intervals – this reflects the range we expect the true value to fall within.

The violence teenage children experienced took many forms – from physical and sexual assault to robbery and threats with weapons. And the consequences were often severe. Nearly three in ten victims (29%), equivalent to 5.2% of all teenage children in England and Wales, needed medical treatment from a doctor or at a hospital. A small but worrying proportion (2.1%) reported carrying a weapon in the past year. Among them, almost a third (32%) had carried a kitchen knife and 23% a zombie knife or machete – equivalent to 20,000 13–17-year-olds across England and Wales.¹

Physical assault is the most common type of violence experienced.

PROPORTION OF 13–17-YEAR-OLDS WHO'VE BEEN VICTIMS AND PERPETRATORS OF DIFFERENT TYPES OF VIOLENCE



Note. Error bars represent 95% confidence intervals – this reflects the range we expect the true value to fall within.

When teenage children caused serious harm to others (where the victim required treatment from a doctor or at a hospital), there were responses from adults in authority in almost all cases (90%). Nearly three in 10 said they got into trouble at school (29%), and around a quarter said they were either excluded from school (24%) or the police were involved (24%). Yet fewer than four in 10 said they were offered support to stop it from happening again (39%). This imbalance suggests that while punishments are common, offers of help to address the underlying causes are far less consistent.

It's often assumed that violence exclusively involves boys. And our survey shows that boys are significantly more likely to perpetrate violence (15% of boys compared to 11% of girls), be victims of serious violence requiring medical treatment (5.6% of boys compared to 4.7% of girls) and to carry weapons (2.4% of boys compared to 1.7% of girls). However, these statistics also show that girls are vulnerable.

¹ Estimates derived using the Office for National Statistics [mid-2024 population estimates](#).

As one of our Youth Advisory Board members said:

“

I think sometimes those conversations are so specific to young men. And I think we forget that young girls are involved in violence just as much, maybe, and sometimes in different ways, but I know I've heard conversations around adults where they're like, 'Oh, I'm so glad I've got girls because I don't have to worry about that issue'. You do, but you just think, 'Oh, it's only a certain demographic of people that are involved in knife carrying, or violence in general'.

”

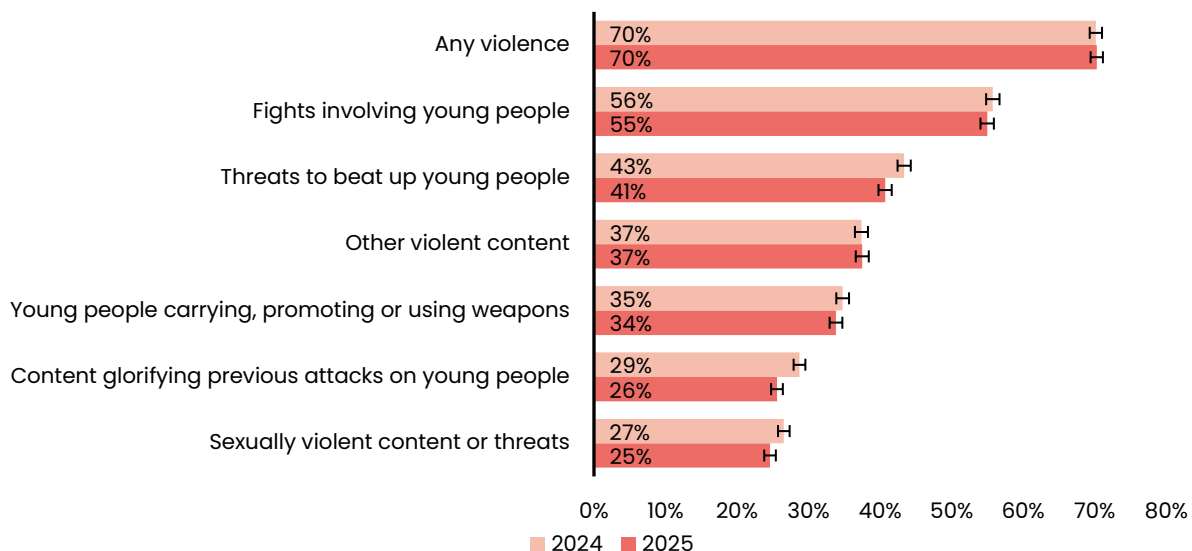
Ajada, YEF Youth Advisory Board member

Most teenage children are exposed to online discussions about harming others.

While half of 13–17-year-olds witnessed violence in person, even more encountered it online. Seventy per cent said they had seen real-world violence shared on social media in the past year. This included footage of fights, threats and weapons and content glorifying violence and sexual violence.

Most teens continue to see real-world acts of violence on social media.

PROPORTION OF 13–17-YEAR-OLDS SEEING DIFFERENT TYPES OF VIOLENCE ON SOCIAL MEDIA



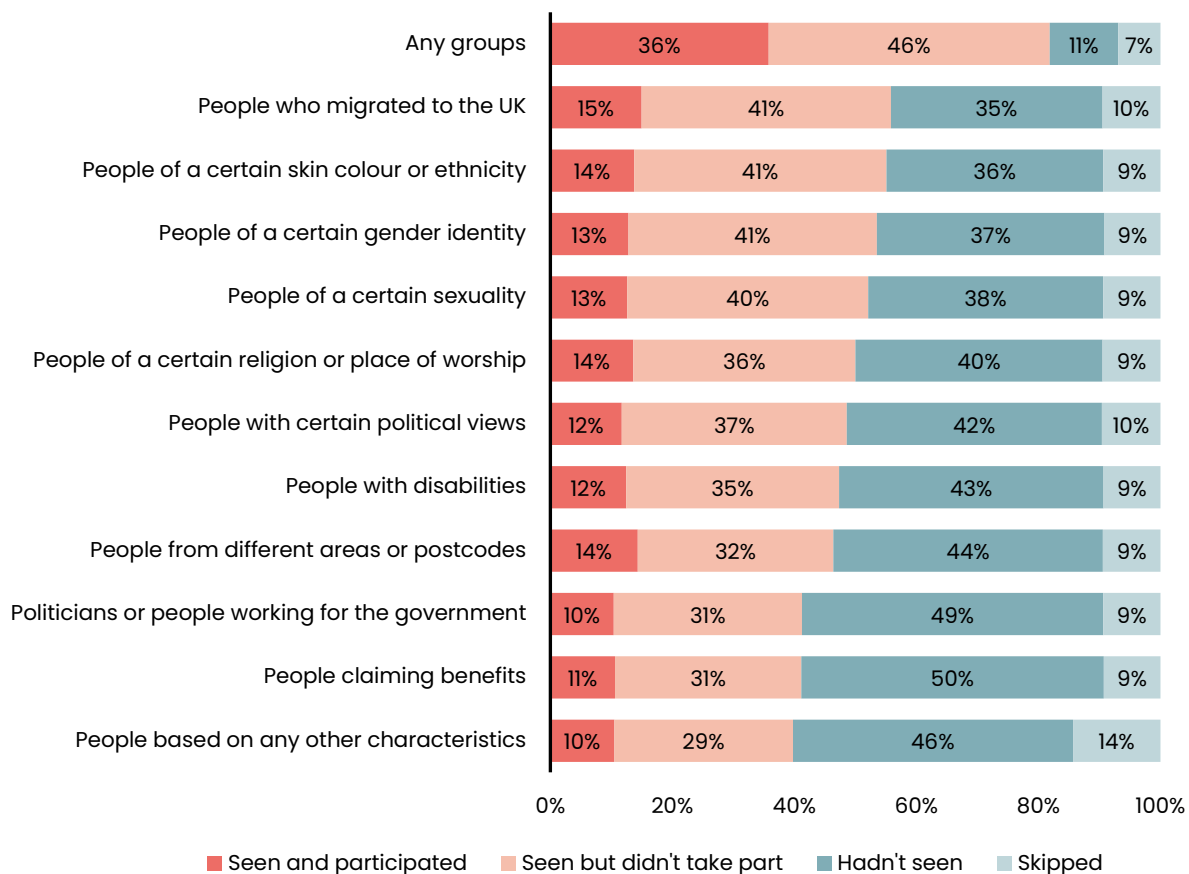
Notes. Error bars represent 95% confidence intervals – this reflects the range we expect the true value to fall within. Figures for 2024 have been updated from those published last year to reflect the revisions in the weighting methodology – for more details, see the technical report on our website.

Against the backdrop of the 2024 summer riots, we also wanted to understand whether discussions about harming specific groups are appearing in what teenage children see online and the extent to which teens are engaging with these discussions.

The findings are stark. In the past year, more than four in five 13-17-year-olds had seen conversations online about hurting (physically or emotionally) specific groups and over a third said they'd taken part in these conversations, either to support or challenge those opinions. Migrants were the most frequent target, but this was followed closely by conversations about harming people based on their skin colour, ethnicity or gender identity.

Most teenage children have seen content online about harming specific groups.

PROPORTION OF 13-17-YEAR-OLDS WHO'VE SEEN CONTENT DISCUSSING HARMING SPECIFIC GROUPS ON SOCIAL MEDIA



Young people report that being continuously exposed to violent content online impacts their day-to-day lives. As one of our Youth Advisory Board members commented:

“

Even things like walking back from school, it affects how you view your journey. Because I think, like, when my little sister is coming back from school and it's dark, I get worried, and it might not be a fear that is justified, but you still worry about people, and, like, after you hang out with your friends, you text them and be like, 'Did you get home safe?' Like it affects everything, I think.

”

Elijah, YEF Youth Advisory Board member

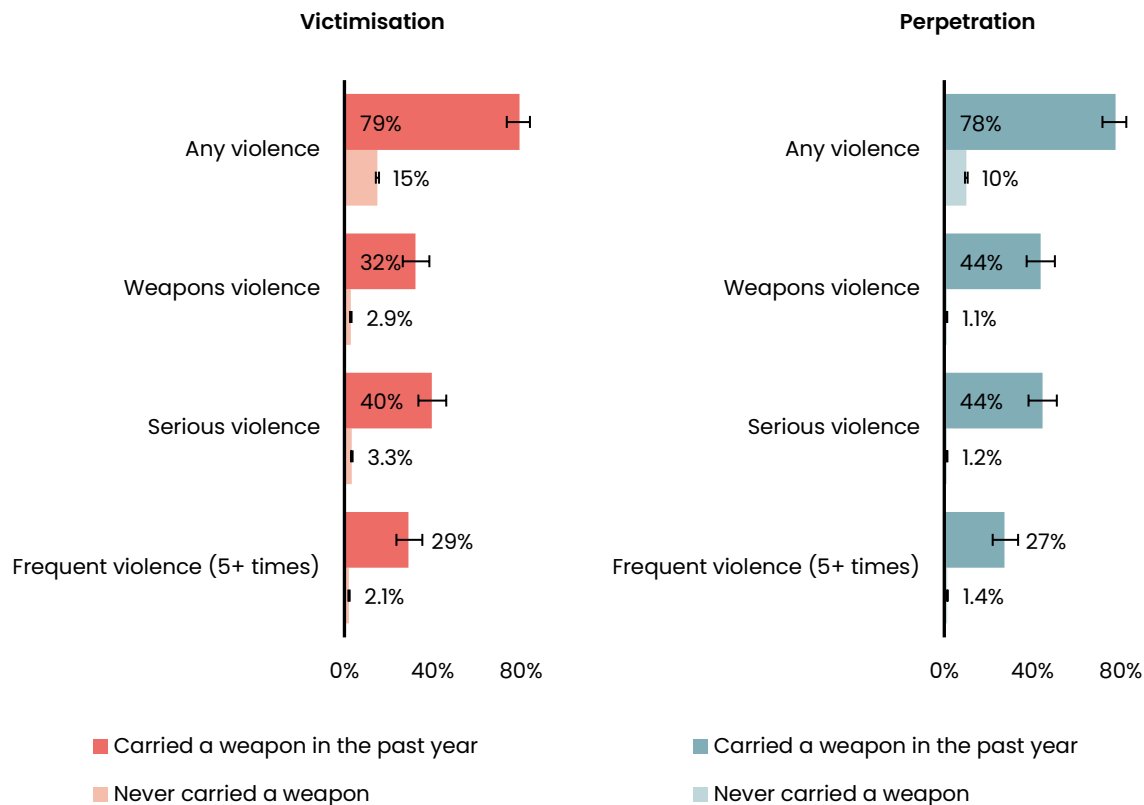
Victimisation and perpetration go hand in hand.

The boundary between being a victim of violence and a perpetrator of violence is often blurred. Two in five victims (39%) had carried out violence, while more than half of perpetrators (53%) had also been victims. The overlap was even greater in serious cases: almost half (49%) of victims who needed medical treatment said they had also perpetrated violence, while over three-quarters (77%) of perpetrators whose actions caused injury had themselves been victims.

Victimisation was also closely linked to weapon carrying. Seventy-nine per cent of teenage children who carried a weapon in the past year had been victims of violence, making them five times more likely to have been victims than those not carrying weapons. They were 14 times more likely to have been a victim of repeated incidents of violence, suggesting that cycles of violence may drive some children to arm themselves for defence, retaliation or other reasons.

Most teens who carry weapons have been victims and perpetrators of violence.

PROPORTION OF 13-17-YEAR-OLDS WHO'VE BEEN VICTIMS AND PERPETRATORS OF VIOLENCE, BY WHETHER THEY'VE CARRIED A WEAPON



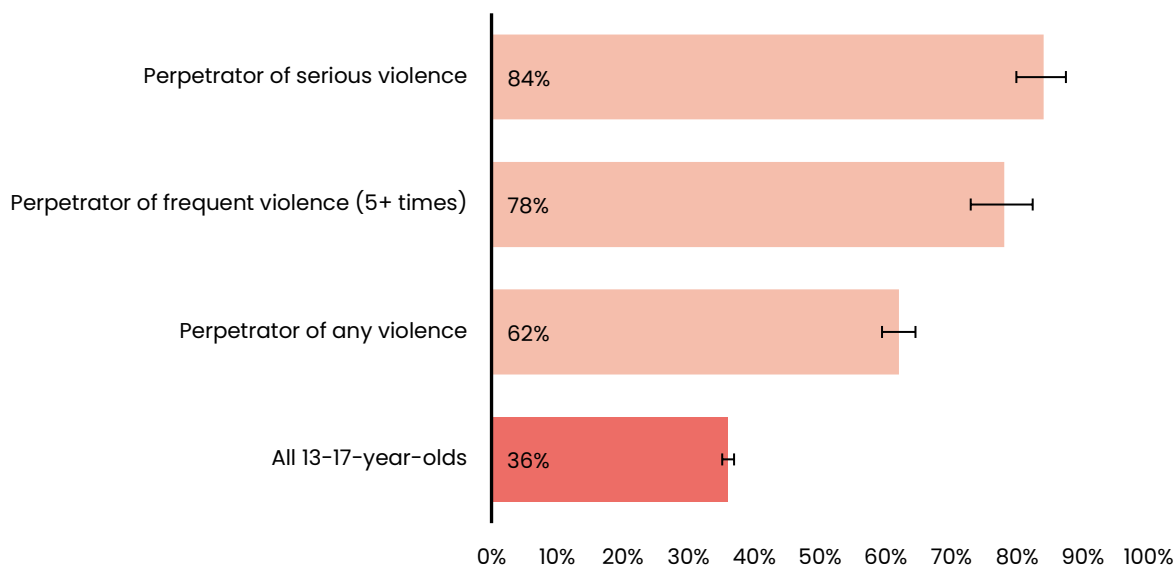
Note. Error bars represent 95% confidence intervals – this reflects the range we expect the true value to fall within.

Teens most affected by serious or repeated violence were also far more likely to have taken part in online conversations about harming others. Among perpetrators whose actions led to medical treatment for their victims, 84% said they had participated in online discussions about harming certain groups, compared to 36% of all 13-17-year-olds.

Taken together, these findings show how experiences of offline violence, weapon carrying and harmful online spaces overlap with one another. For the children most deeply affected, these are not isolated incidents but experiences in a wider cycle of harm.

Teens involved in real-world violence are more likely to engage in discussions about harming people online.

PROPORTION OF 13-17-YEAR-OLDS PARTICIPATING IN ONLINE CONVERSATIONS ABOUT HARMING SPECIFIC GROUPS, BY TYPES OF VIOLENCE PERPETRATED



Note. Error bars represent 95% confidence intervals – this reflects the range we expect the true value to fall within.

What works to prevent violence?

Preventing violence means ensuring children receive support that is appropriate, proportionate and effective. Yet fewer than one in five teenage children who perpetrated violence received help to stop it from happening again.

Intervening in these moments can make a real difference. Children arrested for the first time or for less serious offences are less likely to reoffend if they receive support instead of prosecution – with informal pre-court schemes reducing reoffending by 30%. Similarly, A&E Navigator programmes place youth workers in hospitals to connect with children and young people admitted with violence-related injuries, offering practical help, emotional support and routes away from further harm.

Support should not only respond when harm occurs but also reach children early to prevent it. Programmes that build trusted adult relationships – such as mentoring and sports programmes – have been shown to reduce violence, as have cognitive behavioural and trauma-specific therapies that help children manage their emotions and recover from emotional and physical trauma.

With violence and harmful content highly visible online, social skills training can be utilised to help teenage children think critically, show empathy and respond constructively to divisive or provocative content.

Together, these approaches show that **violence is not inevitable**. With timely, evidence-based and compassionate action, we can help all children live a life free from violence.

Headline findings

Violence is common, with a minority experiencing serious violence requiring medical treatment.

Fewer teenage children were affected by violence compared to last year.

50% of 13-17-year-olds in England and Wales said they'd witnessed violence in the past 12 months, compared to 55% last year. 18% were victims of violence, compared to 20% last year. 13% perpetrated violence themselves, compared to 16% last year. These changes could point to a reduction in violence or may be due to changes in who responded to the survey.

More than 1 in 4 victims and 1 in 4 perpetrators have been involved in serious violence.

5.2% of all 13-17-year-olds and 29% of victims had experienced serious violence – violence requiring treatment by a doctor or at a hospital. 3.3% of all 13-17-year-olds and 26% of those who'd perpetrated violence said they'd committed serious violence that required the victim to see a doctor or go to the hospital.

Less than half the teens perpetrating serious violence receive support to prevent it from happening again.

34% of 13-17-year-olds who'd perpetrated violence said they got in trouble at home for it. 23% said they got in trouble at school. 14% said they were temporarily or permanently excluded from school. 9% said the police were involved. 18% said they were offered support and training to help them better control their actions, increasing to 39% of those who'd perpetrated serious violence that required medical treatment.

Most teenage children are exposed to online discussions about harming others.

The majority of teens continue to see real-world acts of violence involving young people on social media.

70% of 13-17-year-olds saw violent content on social media in the past 12 months, compared to 70% last year. 55% saw fights involving children or young people. 41% saw threats against another child or group of young people. 34% saw children or young people carrying, using or promoting weapons. These figures are roughly the same as what we found in last year's survey.

An even greater share sees conversations online about harming specific groups.

82% of 13-17-year-olds said they'd seen conversations online talking about harming specific groups based on their characteristics. The most commonly seen were conversations about hurting people based on their migration status (56%), skin colour or ethnicity (55%) and gender identity (54%). This content was viewed by all ages – 82% of 13-year-olds said they'd seen such content, compared to 78% of 17-year-olds.

1 in 3 participate in these conversations themselves.

36% of 13-17-year-olds said they'd participated in conversations on social media about harming specific groups based on their characteristics. Boys (39%) were more likely than girls (34%) to have participated in these conversations. Migrants in the UK was the most common topic discussed, with 15% of children having participated in conversations about harming this group.

Victimisation and perpetration go hand in hand.

4 in 5 teens who've perpetrated serious violence have been victims themselves.

39% of 13-17-year-olds who'd been victims in the past year also said they'd perpetrated violence. 57% of those who'd been victims of serious violence (i.e. requiring medical treatment) had perpetrated any type of violence, and 37% said they'd perpetrated serious violence. 53% of those who'd perpetrated violence said they'd also been victims, rising to 77% of those who'd perpetrated serious violence. 58% who'd perpetrated serious violence had been victims of serious violence themselves.

Most teens who carry weapons have been victims of violence.

79% of weapons carriers had been a victim of some form of violence, compared to 15% of those who'd never carried weapons. 32% of weapons carriers had been victims of weapon-related violence, compared to 2.9% of those who'd never carried weapons. 40% of weapons carriers had been victims of serious violence, compared to 3.3% of those who'd never carried weapons.

Teens involved in real-world violence are more likely to engage in online discussions about harming people.

62% of perpetrators of real-world violence had participated in online conversations about harming specific groups. This rose to 78% among frequent perpetrators and 84% when the victim needed medical treatment. These percentages compare to 36% of all 13-17-year-olds who'd participated in these online discussions.

Methodology



About this year's survey

Question and thematic overview

This is our fourth annual survey of children's experiences of violence. This year, we surveyed nearly 11,000 13–17-year-olds across England and Wales about their experiences over the past 12 months. In this year's survey, we focused on the following themes.

- What's the scale and nature of violence experienced by teenage children, as victims, perpetrators and witnesses, in person and online? What are the characteristics of the teens most impacted?
- How prevalent is relationship violence? How does this impact boys and girls differently? What do teens view as acceptable behaviour?
- How prevalent are mental health difficulties and neurodevelopmental conditions among teenage children? How do these overlap with experiences of violence? Where do teens turn to for support?
- How many teenage children are at risk of or experience criminal exploitation? What are the routes into and out of exploitation?

This is the first report in this year's series. It covers the overall prevalence of violence (victimisation and perpetration) and how it compares to the findings from last year. We've added new questions related to the seriousness of violence experienced, including violence that requires medical treatment. We've also asked about violence online, with new questions about exposure to and participation in online activity that promotes violence against others.

What we did

This year, a total of 10,835 13–17-year-olds responded to our survey, compared to 10,387 last year. This slightly larger sample size ensured we heard sufficiently from smaller groups.

As with last year, we used an online survey conducted by our survey partner, [Savanta](#). The average survey completion time was around 14 minutes, and the survey was live between May and July 2025. Questions typically related to children's experiences over the preceding 12 months.

To ensure the results were nationally representative, we did two things:

- Firstly, we set quotas for key groups. These were age, gender, ethnicity, region and socioeconomic status. The quotas were based on each group's share of the population using Census 2021 population estimates for 13–17-year-olds.
- Secondly, we weighted the results to ensure overall representativeness. This year, we worked with survey consultants from University College London (Dr Krisztián Pósch and Ana Cristancho) to refine the methodology for applying weights to ensure the results are as accurate as possible, particularly when looking at findings by subgroup. All results from last year's survey have been updated to reflect the revised weighting methodology to ensure results are as comparable as possible. For more details on this, see the technical report on our website.

How children were kept safe

Children were invited to take part in the survey and were made aware of the types of questions that would be asked. Anyone could refuse to take part. For all children aged 15 or under, a parent or guardian had to consent for them to take part. Participants could drop out of the survey at any time. Participants were asked to complete the survey on their own and in a safe place where their responses could not be seen. It wasn't possible to look back at previous responses once questions had been answered. At the beginning and end and throughout the survey, participants were signposted to relevant support services.

Approach to reporting results

The smaller the number of responses, the less confident we are in the results. For this reason, we generally don't report results where the total number of responses to a particular question was less than 50. All group comparisons mentioned in the report are statistically significant at a 95% confidence level, unless otherwise noted.

What to be aware of

Like all research, our survey has some limitations. We're trying to understand what teenage children across England and Wales have experienced. While our sample of 10,835 13-17-year-olds is comparably large for this type of survey (for context, the Office for National Statistics' [Crime Survey of England and Wales](#) reached 1,528 10-15-year-olds in 2023/24 and has consistently reached around 3,000 young people in recent years), it still represents a small proportion of all children in the country. It's important, therefore, to remember these limitations when interpreting the results:

- Weights are applied to ensure that the results are broadly representative of the national populations of England and Wales. This year, we refined the results so we can more accurately speak to certain subgroups (e.g. by race). However, there are limits to the extent to which weights can be applied to cover variations across all interlocking characteristics. There should be particular caution when looking at results by region due to the challenge in applying interlocking weights at this level.
- The sample size is significantly larger than in other surveys of this kind. However, when we look at the results for some smaller subgroups (e.g. by region, ethnicity and age), these individual groups can be small. This makes it hard to draw generalised conclusions for some smaller populations.
- The subject matter (children's experiences of violence) is sensitive. While we ensured the framing of the questions was suitable for children, it's possible that some may have been unwilling to respond openly and honestly, particularly about things they may have done.
- Caution should be taken when making comparisons between this year's survey and last year's. Whilst we've updated the results from last year to reflect some observable differences in who was recruited, we cannot fully rule out that any differences in the results between the years reflect unaccounted-for changes in the characteristics of those who responded.

Detailed findings



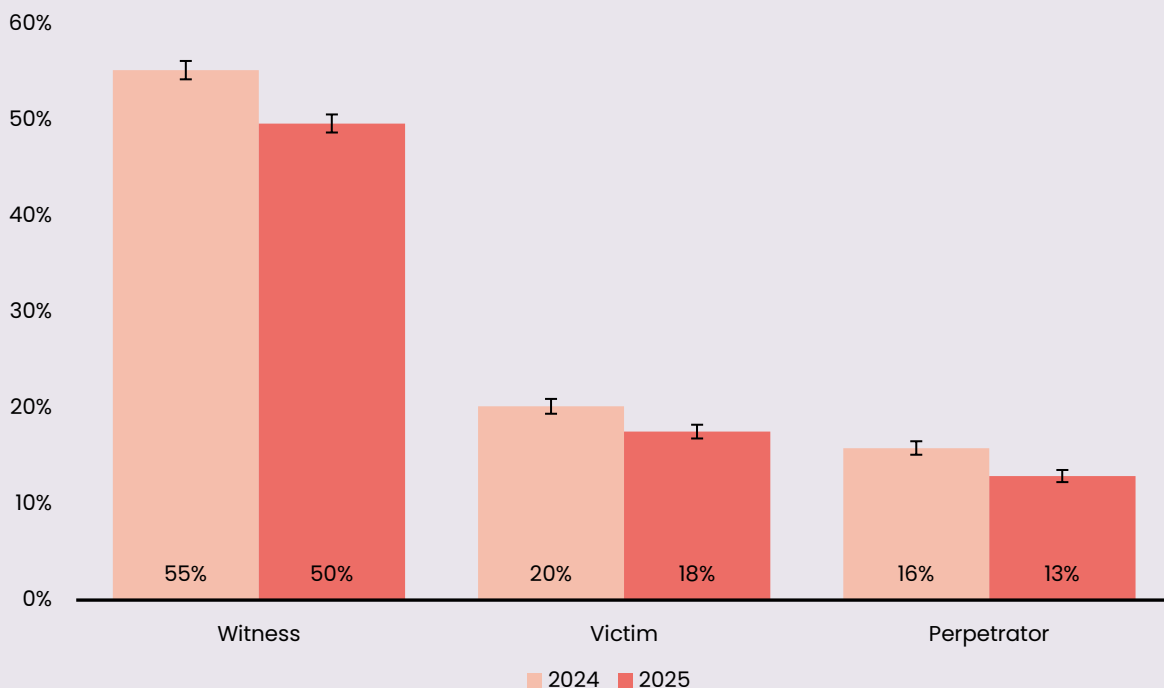
What we found

Violence is common, with a minority experiencing serious violence requiring medical treatment.

Fewer teenage children were affected by violence compared to last year.

Results from this year's survey again show that a worrying minority of children aged 13–17 years have directly experienced violence as victims and perpetrators. This year, 18% of 13–17-year-olds said they'd been a victim of violence in the past 12 months, equivalent to roughly 660,000 13–17-year-olds across England and Wales.² Thirteen per cent said they'd perpetrated violence themselves, equivalent to 490,000 13–17-year-olds across England and Wales. Half (50%) said they'd witnessed violence happen to someone else.

FIGURE 1.1: PROPORTION OF 13–17-YEAR-OLDS IN ENGLAND AND WALES WHO WERE WITNESSES, VICTIMS AND PERPETRATORS OF VIOLENCE IN THE PAST 12 MONTHS, BY SURVEY YEAR



Notes. Error bars represent 95% confidence intervals – this reflects the range we expect the true value to fall within. Figures for 2024 have been updated from those published last year to reflect the revisions in the weighting methodology – for more details, see the technical report on our website.

² Estimates derived using the Office for National Statistics [mid-2024 population estimates](#).

These estimates are lower than they were last year, when we found that 55% of 13–17-year-olds had witnessed violence, 20% had been victims and 16% had perpetrated violence themselves. These differences between the years are statistically significant. However, it's not clear whether this reduction is a result of decreases in the underlying experiences of violence or changes in the composition and characteristics of respondents to the survey between the years that couldn't be fully accounted for by the weighting strategy.

How did we ask about the types of violence experienced?

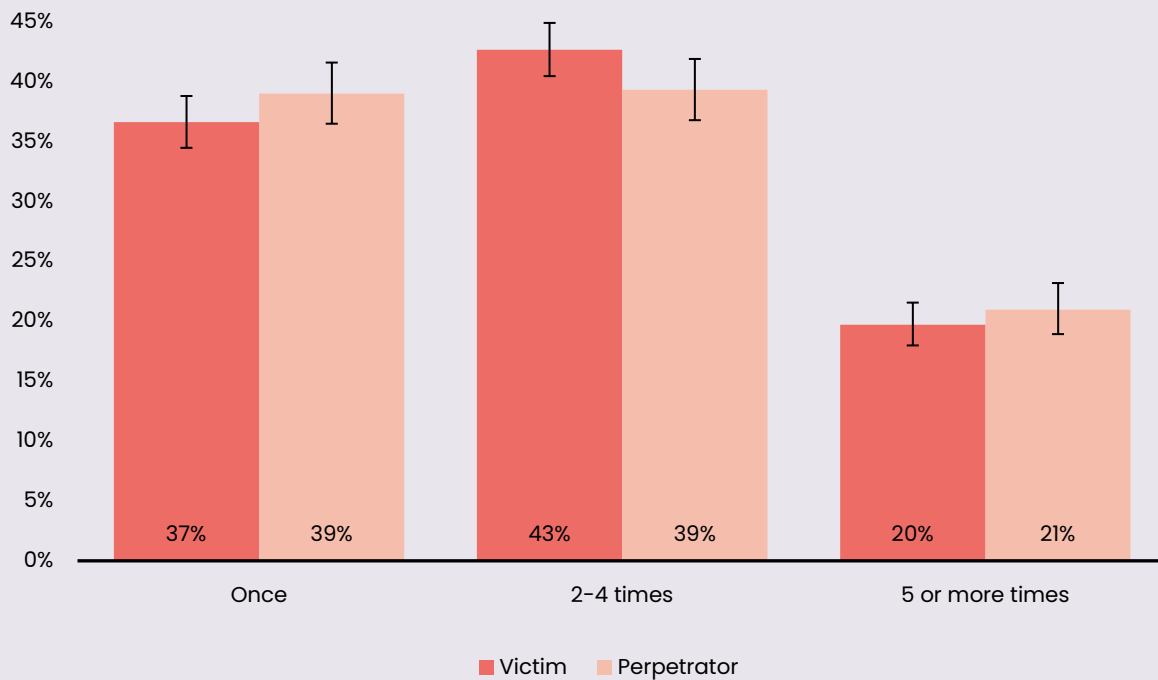
When asking children whether they'd experienced violence in the past 12 months as victims or perpetrators, we used the following definition:

“The use of force or threat of force against another person or people, for example, punching someone, threatening someone with a weapon or mugging someone. This also includes sexual assault, which is when somebody intentionally touches someone in a sexual way without their consent”.

We also asked about experiences of specific acts of violence, including robbery (taking something with force or the threat of force), physical assault, sexual assault and weapons violence (threatening to use or using a weapon on someone). We considered someone to have experienced violence if they said they'd experienced violence when given the general definition or said they'd experienced robbery, physical assault, sexual assault or weapons violence.

Most children exposed to violence have experienced more than one instance of it. Sixty-two per cent of 13–17-year-olds who'd been victims of violence (11% of all 13–17-year-olds) and 60% of 13–17-year-olds who'd perpetrated violence (7.8% of all 13–17-year-olds) said it had happened more than once. Twenty per cent of victims (3.5% of all 13–17-year-olds) and 21% of perpetrators (2.7% of all 13–17-year-olds) said it had happened five or more times.

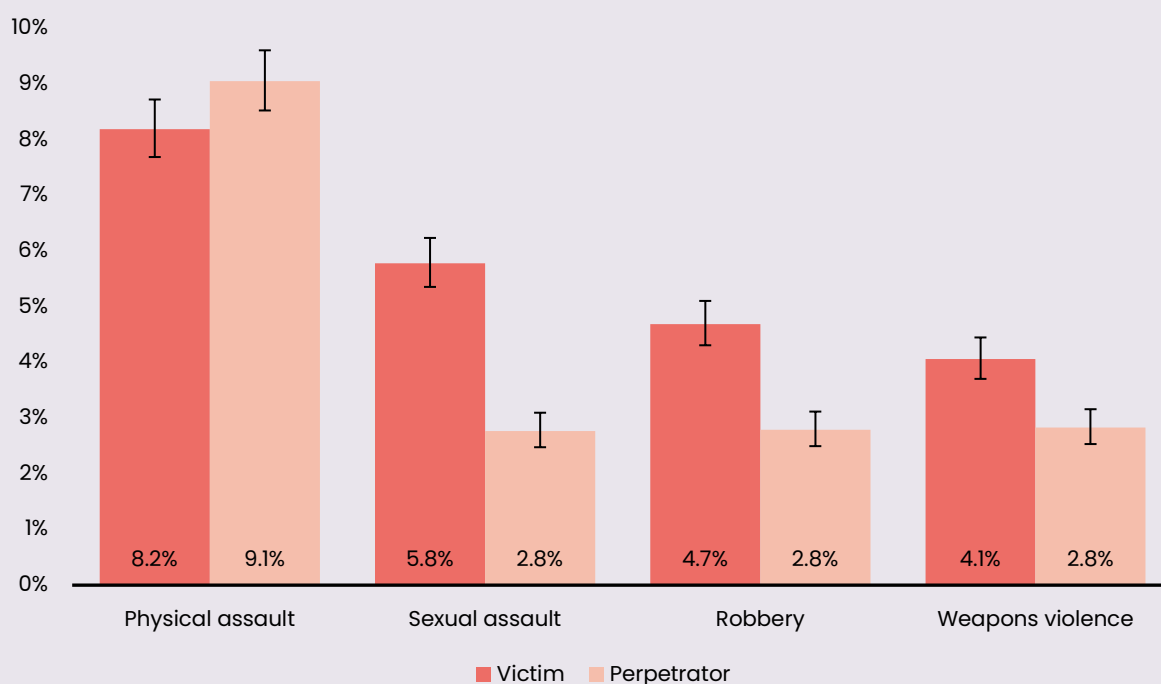
FIGURE 1.2: PROPORTION OF 13–17-YEAR-OLDS WHO’VE BEEN VICTIMS AND PERPETRATORS OF VIOLENCE WHO EXPERIENCED MORE THAN ONE INCIDENT IN THE PAST 12 MONTHS



Note. Error bars represent 95% confidence intervals – this reflects the range we expect the true value to fall within.

Eight point two per cent of all 13–17-year-olds have been victims of physical assault, 5.8% sexual assault, 4.7% robbery and 4.1% threatened or hurt with a weapon. This follows a similar pattern to last year, where physical assault affected 9.3% of all 13–17-year-olds, sexual assault 6.4%, robbery 5.5%, while 5% experienced a violent incident involving a weapon. Perpetration rates show a similar pattern, with 9.1% of 13–17-year-olds saying they’d perpetrated physical assault, 2.8% saying they’d sexually assaulted someone, 2.8% saying they’d robbed someone and 2.8% saying they’d used a weapon to threaten or hurt someone. This represents a slight change from last year, when 11% reported physically assaulting someone, 4.9% said they had sexually assaulted someone, 5.3% said they had robbed someone and 4.8% said they had used a weapon. As mentioned earlier, it isn’t clear whether this change is a result of an actual change in experiences of violence or changes in the samples between years.

FIGURE 1.3: PROPORTION OF 13–17-YEAR-OLDS WHO’VE BEEN VICTIMS AND PERPETRATORS OF DIFFERENT TYPES OF VIOLENCE



Note. Error bars represent 95% confidence intervals – this reflects the range we expect the true value to fall within.

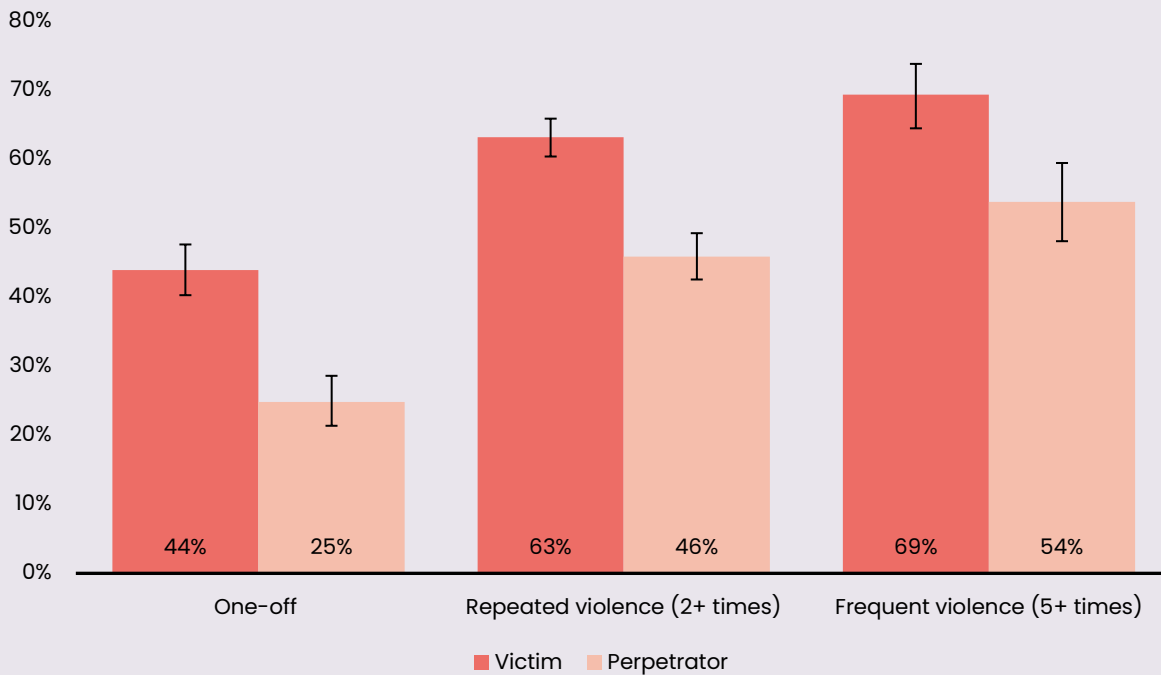
More than one in four victims and one in four perpetrators have been involved in serious violence.

To understand the seriousness of the violence experienced, we asked about two things. Firstly, whether the violence experienced led to injury (being bruised, scratched, cut or otherwise physically injured). Secondly, and for the first time this year, whether the violence experienced led to the victim seeking medical treatment (seeing a doctor or going to a hospital).

Over half (56%) of 13–17-year-olds who reported being a victim of violence said they were injured in some way. This is equivalent to 10% of all 13–17-year-olds or around 370,000 teenage children.³ Injury was more common for repeat victims of violence. Forty-four per cent of 13–17-year-olds who’d been a victim of one-off violence reported experiencing injury, increasing to 63% of those who were victims twice or more and 69% of those victimised five times or more.

For perpetrators of violence, 37% reported that their victim was injured, equivalent to 4.8% of all 13–17-year-olds or around 180,000 teenage children. As with victims, repeat or multiple incidents of violence also increased the risk of injury. For one-off perpetrators, 25% reported their victim being injured, increasing to 46% if there had been two or more incidents and 54% if there had been five or more incidents.

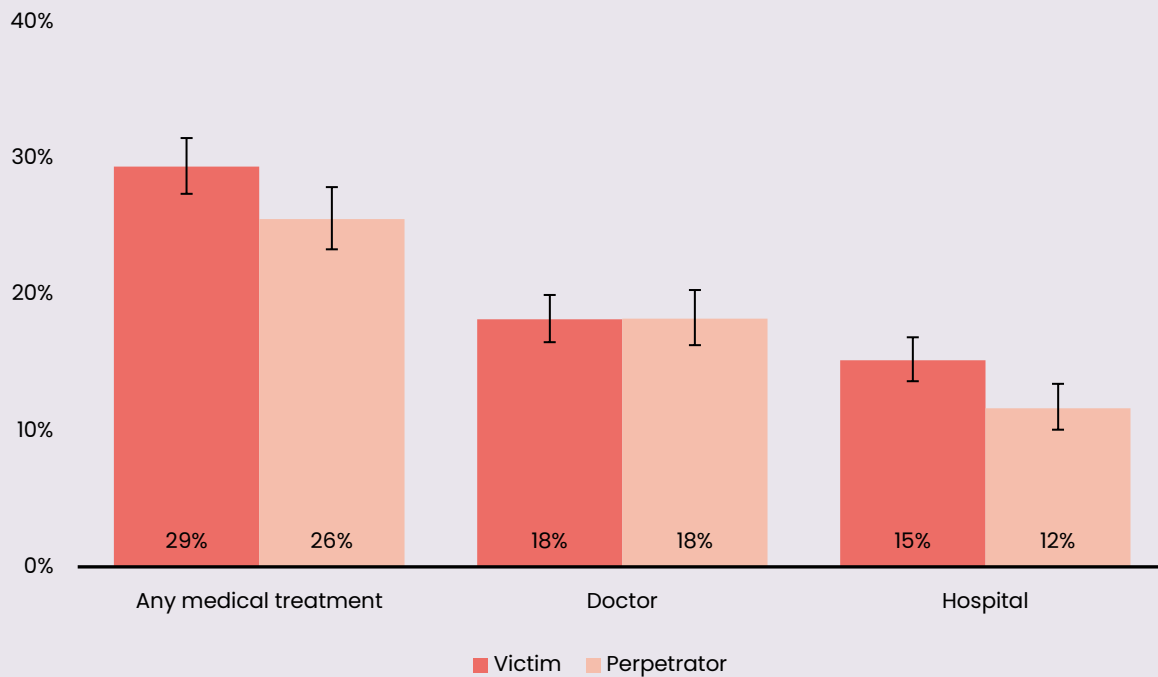
³ Estimates derived using the Office for National Statistics [mid-2024 population estimates](#).

FIGURE 1.4: PROPORTION OF VICTIMS AND PERPETRATORS WHO REPORTED INJURY, BY FREQUENCY OF VIOLENCE EXPERIENCED

Note. Error bars represent 95% confidence intervals – this reflects the range we expect the true value to fall within.

Turning to more serious injury, 29% of victims reported seeking medical treatment as a result of the violence they experienced – equivalent to 5.2% of all 13-17-year-olds. This included 18% visiting a doctor or other medical professional at a medical practice or urgent care centre and 15% going to a hospital for treatment. Children who'd perpetrated violence were slightly less likely to say the victim had to seek medical treatment (26%) – equivalent to 3.3% of all 13-17-year-olds. This may be due to perpetrators not always knowing the outcomes for those they injured. Overall, we define violence resulting in treatment by a doctor or at a hospital as serious violence.

FIGURE 1.5: PROPORTION OF VICTIMS OF VIOLENCE WHO HAD TO SEEK MEDICAL TREATMENT, BY WHETHER THE RESPONDENT WAS THE VICTIM OR PERPETRATOR

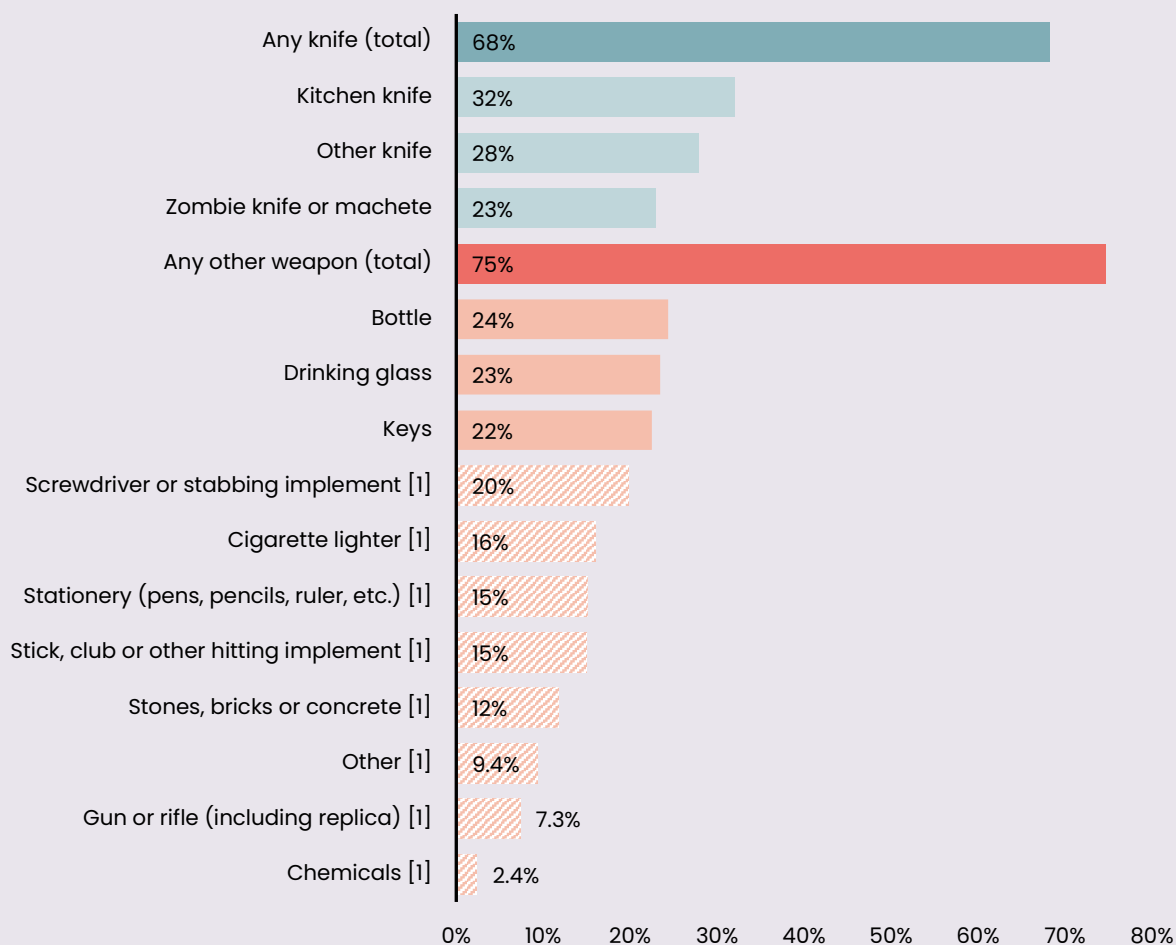


Note. Error bars represent 95% confidence intervals – this reflects the range we expect the true value to fall within.

Two point one per cent of all 13–17-year-olds reported carrying a weapon in the past 12 months, equivalent to 80,000 13–17-year-olds in England and Wales.⁴ Two point seven per cent reported carrying a weapon more than 12 months ago. This reflects a fall from last year's survey, when 5% reported carrying a weapon in the previous 12 months. However, we did change how we asked the question this year, which could account for some of this difference. So we cannot say whether this fall reflects an underlying reduction in weapons carrying, changes in the composition of who responded to the survey or the difference in how we asked about it.

⁴ Estimates derived using the Office for National Statistics [mid-2024 population estimates](#).

FIGURE 1.6: TYPES OF WEAPONS CARRIED AS A PROPORTION OF 13-17-YEAR-OLDS WHO SAID THEY'D CARRIED A WEAPON IN THE PAST 12 MONTHS



[1] Bars with striped shading have cell counts of less than 50, so these figures should be interpreted with caution.

Note. Proportions do not add up to 100%, as more than one type of weapon may have been carried.

Of those who said they'd carried a weapon in the past 12 months, 68% reported carrying any kind of knife, equivalent to 1.4% of 13-17-year-olds in England and Wales (or 50,000).⁵ This includes 32% of weapons carriers who'd carried a kitchen knife (equivalent to 0.7% or 30,000 13-17-year-olds), 23% who'd carried a zombie knife or machete (equivalent to 0.5% or 20,000 13-17-year-olds) and 28% who'd carried another type of knife. In total, 75% of weapons carriers carried a weapon other than a knife (equivalent to 1.6% or 60,000 13-17-year-olds). These weapons include bottles (24%), drinking glasses (23%) and keys (22%).

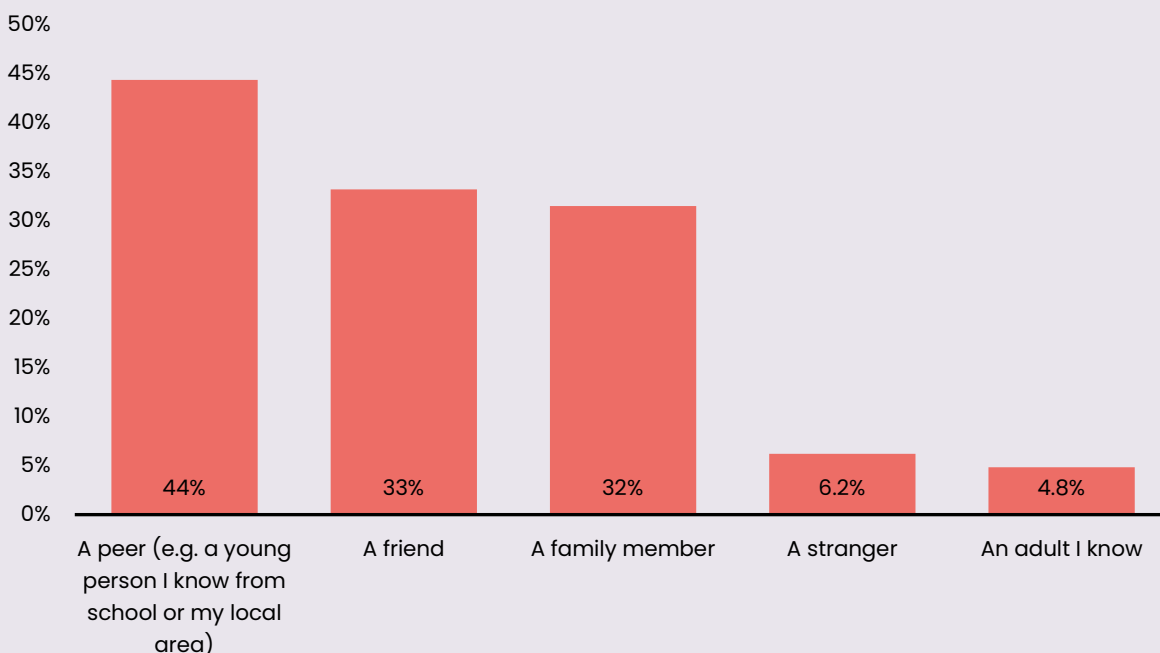
⁵ Estimates derived using the Office for National Statistics [mid-2024 population estimates](#).

How does this compare to other surveys?

Our finding that 2.1% of 13–17-year-olds reported carrying a weapon and 1.4% reported carrying a knife broadly aligns with the findings from other recent surveys. For instance, the UK [Millenium Cohort Study](#) found that 6.4% of 17-year-olds had carried or used a weapon in 2021. In addition, the Mayor's Office for Policing and Crime's [We are London Youth Survey \(2021–22\)](#) found self-reported weapon carrying among school children in London to be 2% for knives and 3% for other weapons. Geographic, age and question wording differences can explain small differences, but the overall picture is consistent – self-reported weapon carrying among children is uncommon and seemingly concentrated in a small minority.

This year, we wanted to find out more about whom young people were being violent towards. These people include friends and other young people (e.g. young people from their school or local area), as well as adults within their family and other adults they're not related to. The group that 13–17-year-olds were most likely to have perpetrated violence against was peers (44%), followed by friends (33%) and family members (32%). Very few said they'd perpetrated violence against a stranger (6.2%) or an adult outside their family (4.8%).

FIGURE 1.7: WHO CHILDREN PERPETRATED VIOLENCE AGAINST, AS A PROPORTION OF 13–17-YEAR-OLDS WHO'D PERPETRATED VIOLENCE

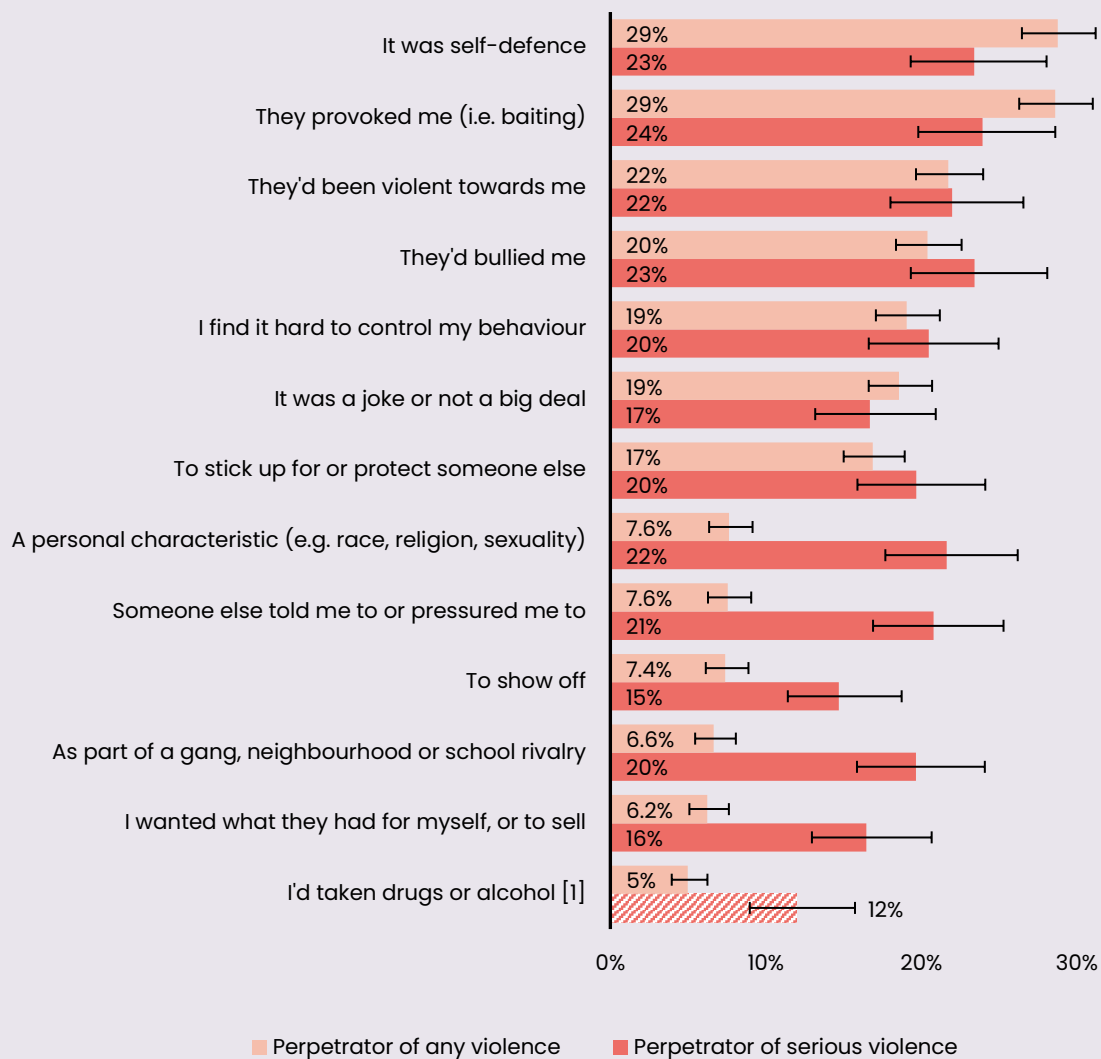


Note. Proportions do not add up to 100%, as perpetrators of violence may have done so more than once to different people.

Amongst the reasons given for committing acts of violence, self-defence (29%) and being baited into it (29%) were the most common reasons. Almost one in five (19%) 13–17-year-olds who'd perpetrated violence said it was a joke or not a big deal. When looking specifically at incidents of more serious violence (where the victim required medical treatment from a doctor or at a hospital), perpetrators showed

different motives. The proportion who cited self-defence and being provoked as motives fell (from 29% to 23% and from 29% to 24%, respectively), though they remained among the most common motives. In contrast, being motivated by prejudice increased (from 7.6% to 22%), as did being pressured by someone else (7.6% to 21%); gang, neighbourhood or school rivalry (6.6% to 20%); wanting what the victim had (6.2% to 16%); and showing off (7.4% to 15%).

FIGURE 1.8: REASONS 13–17-YEAR-OLDS PERPETRATED VIOLENCE, BY TYPE OF VIOLENCE



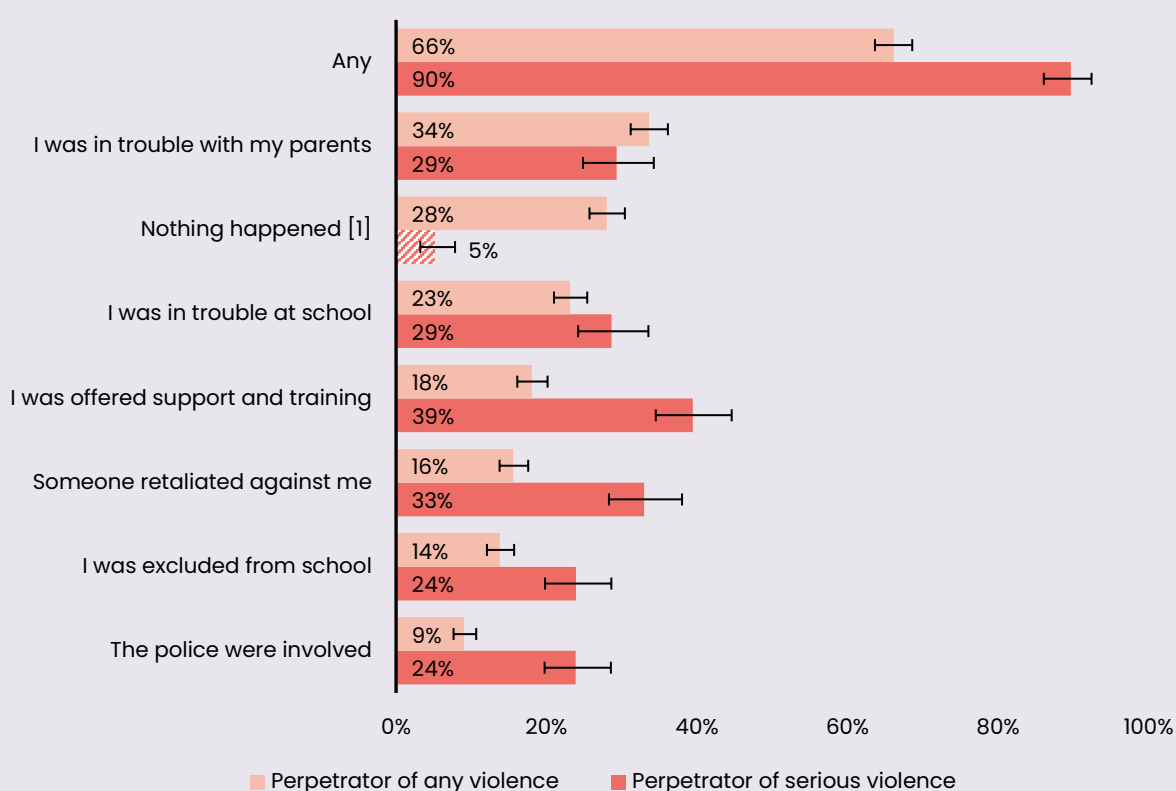
[1] Bars with striped shading have cell counts of less than 50, so these figures should be interpreted with caution.

Note. Error bars represent 95% confidence intervals – this reflects the range we expect the true value to fall within.

Less than half the teens perpetrating serious violence receive support to prevent it from happening again.

We asked 13–17-year-olds who'd committed violence in the past 12 months what happened to them as a result. Consequences varied; 28% said nothing happened, 34% reported getting in trouble with their parents, 23% reported getting in trouble at school, 14% were temporarily or permanently excluded, 9% reported police involvement and 16% reported retaliation by the victim or someone the victim knew. Only 18% were offered support or training by their school, youth workers, the police or others to help them better control their actions.

FIGURE 1.9: CONSEQUENCES OF VIOLENCE FOR PERPETRATORS, BY TYPE OF VIOLENCE



[1] Bars with striped shading have cell counts of less than 50, so these figures should be interpreted with caution.

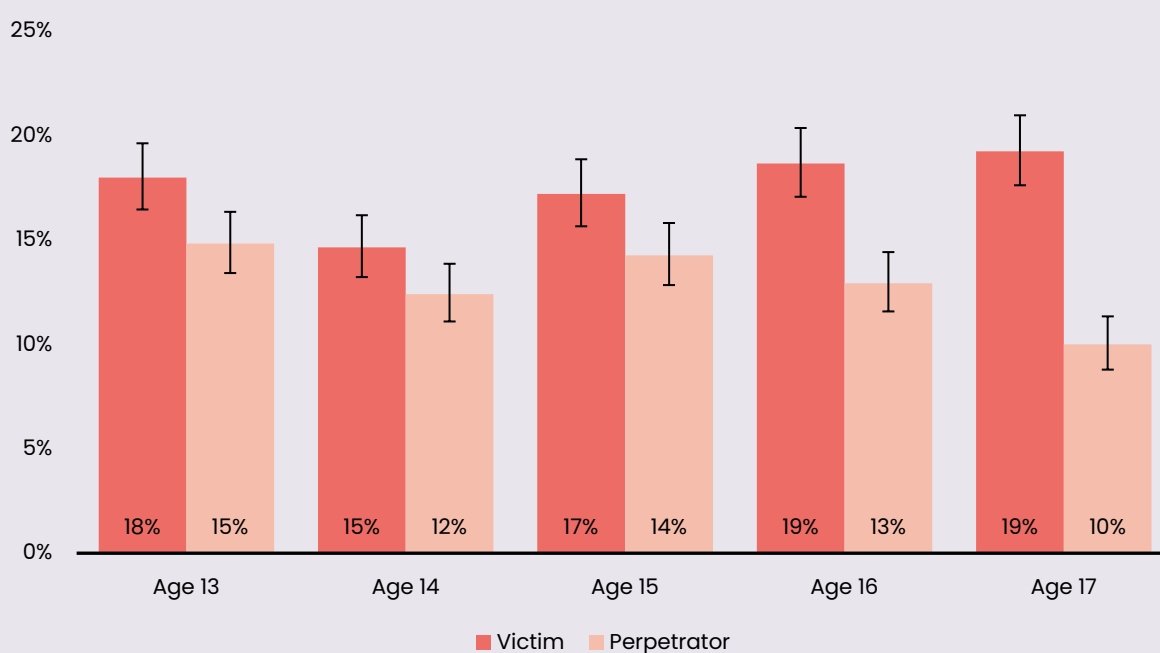
Note. Error bars represent 95% confidence intervals – this reflects the range we expect the true value to fall within.

For those committing more serious violence, a higher proportion received some sort of intervention or response from those in authority. School and system responses were more common, with 29% getting in trouble at school, 24% being temporarily or permanently excluded and 24% being involved with the police. These children were also more likely to receive support, increasing to 39% compared to 18% of all perpetrators of violence. However, they were also more likely to say that their victim or someone the victim knew had retaliated against them (33%) compared to those who'd perpetrated any type of violence (16%).

Perpetration is more common at younger ages.

There was no clear pattern of victimisation by age. Eighteen per cent of 13-year-olds, 15% of 14-year-olds, 17% of 15-year-olds, 19% of 16-year-olds and 19% of 17-year-olds reported victimisation. For perpetration, there also wasn't a clear pattern by age among those aged 13 to 16. But 17-year-olds were significantly less likely than all other age groups to have perpetrated violence. For example, 15% of 13-year-olds reported perpetration, compared to just 10% of 17-year-olds.

FIGURE 1.10: PROPORTION OF 13–17-YEAR-OLDS WHO'VE BEEN VICTIMS OR PERPETRATORS OF VIOLENCE IN THE LAST 12 MONTHS, BY AGE



Note. Error bars represent 95% confidence intervals – this reflects the range we expect the true value to fall within.

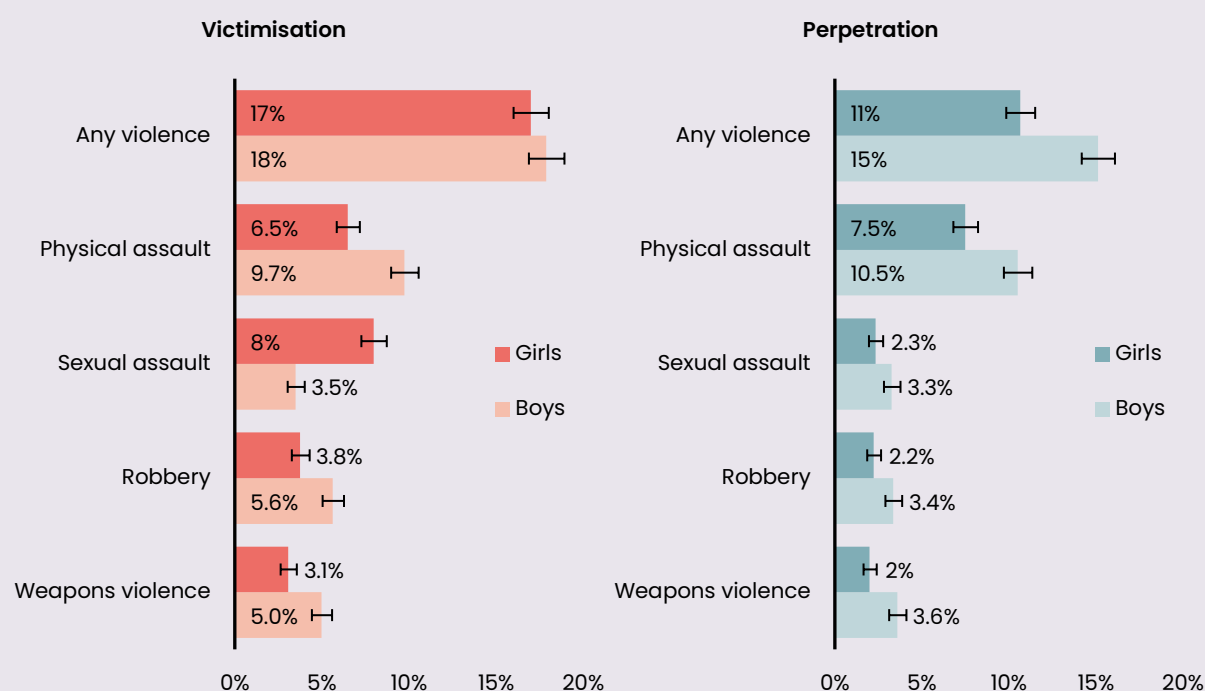
While overall levels of violence victimisation weren't lower for older teens, older victims did report lower rates of serious violence. Amongst teens who'd been victims of violence, 25% of 16–17-year-olds had been a victim of violence requiring medical treatment, compared to 33% of 13–15-year-olds. And older perpetrators were less likely to have perpetrated serious violence. Amongst those who'd perpetrated violence, 17-year-olds were also significantly less likely to have perpetrated violence requiring medical treatment (17%)⁶ compared to all other ages (26–28%).

⁶ This estimate is based on fewer than 50 responses, so it should be treated with caution.

Boys are more likely than girls to perpetrate violence and more serious types of violence.

There were no statistically significant differences between the rates of violence victimisation reported by boys (18%) and girls (17%), though there were differences in the specific types of violence experienced. Boys were more likely than girls to have been victims of robbery (5.6% compared to 3.8% of girls), physical assault (10% compared to 6.5% of girls) and weapons violence (5% compared to 3.1% of girls), while girls were more likely to have been victims of sexual assault (8% compared to 3.5% of boys). All these differences were statistically significant. Looking at perpetration, boys were more likely to report perpetrating violence – 15% compared to 11% for girls. This was the case across all types of violence: robbery (3.4% compared to 2.2% of girls), physical assault (10.5% compared to 7.5% of girls), sexual assault (3.3% compared to 2.3% of girls) and weapons violence (3.6% compared to 2% of girls). Boys were also more likely to report carrying a weapon in the past 12 months – 2.4% compared to 1.7% of girls. All these differences are statistically significant.

FIGURE 1.11: PROPORTION OF 13–17-YEAR-OLDS WHO REPORTED BEING VICTIMS OR PERPETRATORS OF SPECIFIC TYPES OF VIOLENCE, BY GENDER



Note. Error bars represent 95% confidence intervals – this reflects the range we expect the true value to fall within.

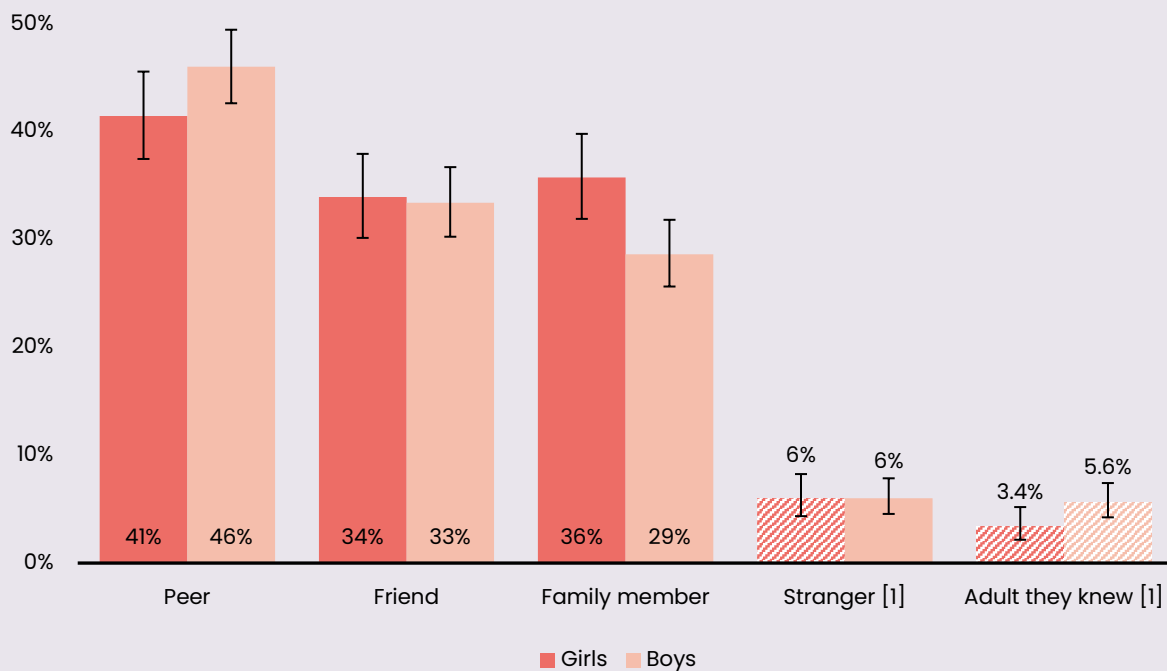
When it comes to the seriousness of the violence experienced, boys were more likely than girls to have experienced serious violence that required medical treatment (by a doctor or at a hospital) as victims – 32% of boys who were victims of violence compared to 28% of girls. This is equivalent to 5.6% of all boys and 4.7% of all girls. Boys were also slightly more likely to have perpetrated serious violence, but the difference wasn't statistically significant – 27% of boys who'd perpetrated violence said their victim needed medical

treatment compared to 24% of girls. This is equivalent to 4% of all boys and 2.5% of all girls. Rates of violence experienced by non-binary children and children who selected 'other' as their gender identify couldn't be reported, as the total number who responded to the survey was too low to report on.

Girls are more likely to commit acts of violence against family members.

There weren't many differences between girls and boys who perpetrated violence in terms of their relationship to the victims. The exception to this was family members. Of those who'd perpetrated violence in the past year, girls (36%) were statistically significantly more likely than boys (29%) to have perpetrated violence against family members. In contrast, boys were more likely to have been violent towards peers (46% compared to 41% of girls), but the difference wasn't statistically significant.

FIGURE 1.12: WHO CHILDREN PERPETRATED VIOLENCE AGAINST, AS A PROPORTION OF 13-17-YEAR-OLDS WHO'D PERPETRATED VIOLENCE, BY GENDER



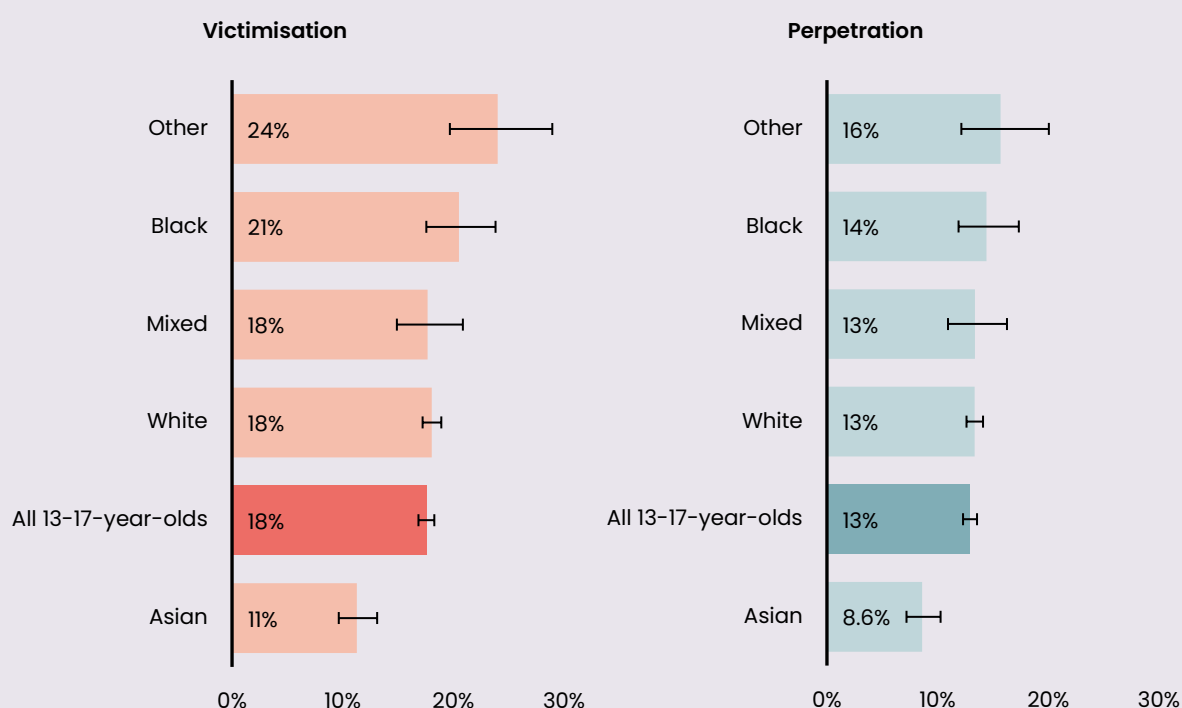
[1] Bars with striped shading have cell counts of less than 50, so these figures should be interpreted with caution.

Notes. Error bars represent 95% confidence intervals – this reflects the range we expect the true value to fall within. Proportions do not add up to 100%, as there may have been more than one victim or act of violence reported.

Teenage children from Asian backgrounds are the least likely to be involved in violence.

Teenage children from Asian backgrounds were the least likely to report being victims and perpetrators of violence. Eleven per cent of 13–17-year-olds from Asian backgrounds reported being victims of violence in the past 12 months, compared to 18% of all 13–17-year-olds. Twenty-one per cent of Black 13–17-year-olds, 18% of 13–17-year-olds from Mixed ethnicity backgrounds and 18% of 13–17-year-olds from White backgrounds reported being victims – all statistically significantly higher rates than for 13–17-year-olds from Asian backgrounds.

FIGURE 1.13: PROPORTION OF 13–17-YEAR-OLDS WHO WERE VICTIMS AND PERPETRATORS OF VIOLENCE, BY RACE



Note. Error bars represent 95% confidence intervals, which reflect the range we expect the true value to fall within.

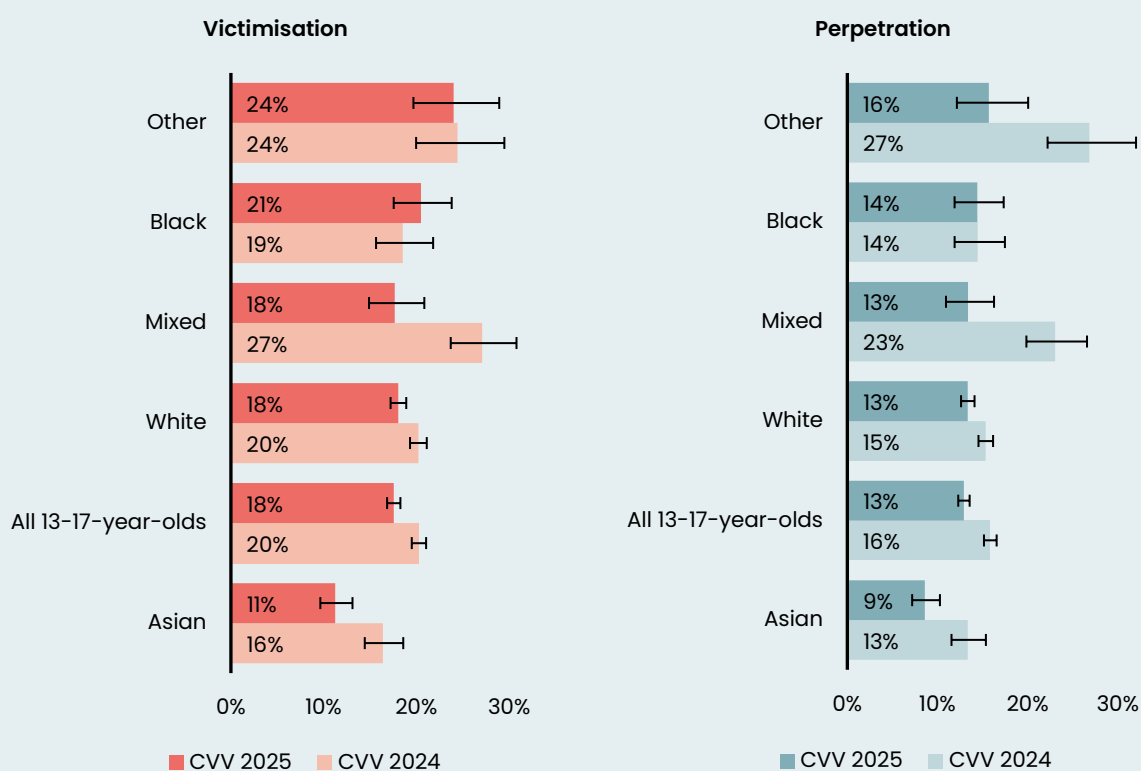
The pattern is similar for rates of perpetration by race. Eight point six per cent of 13–17-year-olds from Asian backgrounds reported perpetrating violence in the past 12 months, compared to 13% of all 13–17-year-olds. Fourteen per cent of 13–17-year-olds from Black backgrounds, 13% of 13–17-year-olds from Mixed ethnicity backgrounds and 13% of 13–17-year-olds from White backgrounds reported perpetrating violence, all significantly higher than for 13–17-year-olds from Asian backgrounds.

Differences in violence victimisation and perpetration rates between teenage children from all other ethnic backgrounds were not statistically significant due to the small relative sample sizes for these subgroups. For example, we cannot say whether 13–17-year-olds from Black backgrounds were more or less likely to be victims or perpetrators of violence compared to 13–17-year-olds from White backgrounds.

How does this compare to our previous findings?

Children from all backgrounds face violence, but children from certain ethnically minoritised groups are disproportionately impacted. Black children in particular are over-represented amongst the victims of serious violence and at all stages in the criminal justice system. It's vital, therefore, that through this survey, we try to understand how children's experiences of violence differ by race. However, it's challenging to use surveys like ours to capture an accurate picture of these differences. Whilst the overall number of children who responded to this year's survey was large (10,835), the number of respondents from specific racialised groups was relatively small. We had 687 responses from 13-17-year-olds from Black backgrounds and 692 responses from 13-17-year-olds from Mixed ethnicity backgrounds. These numbers are in line with the share of children from Black and Mixed ethnicity backgrounds in the total population of 13-17-year-olds in England and Wales (both 6%) but small overall, creating uncertainty in our estimates.

FIGURE 1.14: PROPORTION OF 13-17-YEAR-OLDS WHO WERE VICTIMS AND PERPETRATORS OF VIOLENCE, BY RACE (2024 AND 2025 RESULTS COMPARED)



Note. Error bars represent 95% confidence intervals, which reflect the range we expect the true value to fall within.

Comparing our findings this year to last year's survey, we again found that teenage children from Asian backgrounds were less likely to experience violence than average – as victims (11% compared to 18% of all 13-17-year-olds) and perpetrators (8.6% compared to 13% of all 13-17-year-olds). Last year we found the same relationship, with 16% of teenage children from Asian backgrounds saying they were victims of violence (compared to 20% of all 13-17-year-olds) and 13% saying they were perpetrators (compared to 16% of all 13-17-year-olds). The differences across both years were statistically significant.

How does this compare to our previous findings? (cont.)

However, findings for other smaller groups are less consistent across the years. This year, we found that teenage children from Black backgrounds were more likely to be victims of violence (21%) compared to the total for all teens (18%). There was no difference in perpetration rates between Black teens (14%) and the total for all teens (13%). Last year we found the opposite, with Black teens slightly less likely to report being victims (19%) or perpetrators (14%) than all teens (20% and 16%, respectively). However, these differences were not statistically significant.

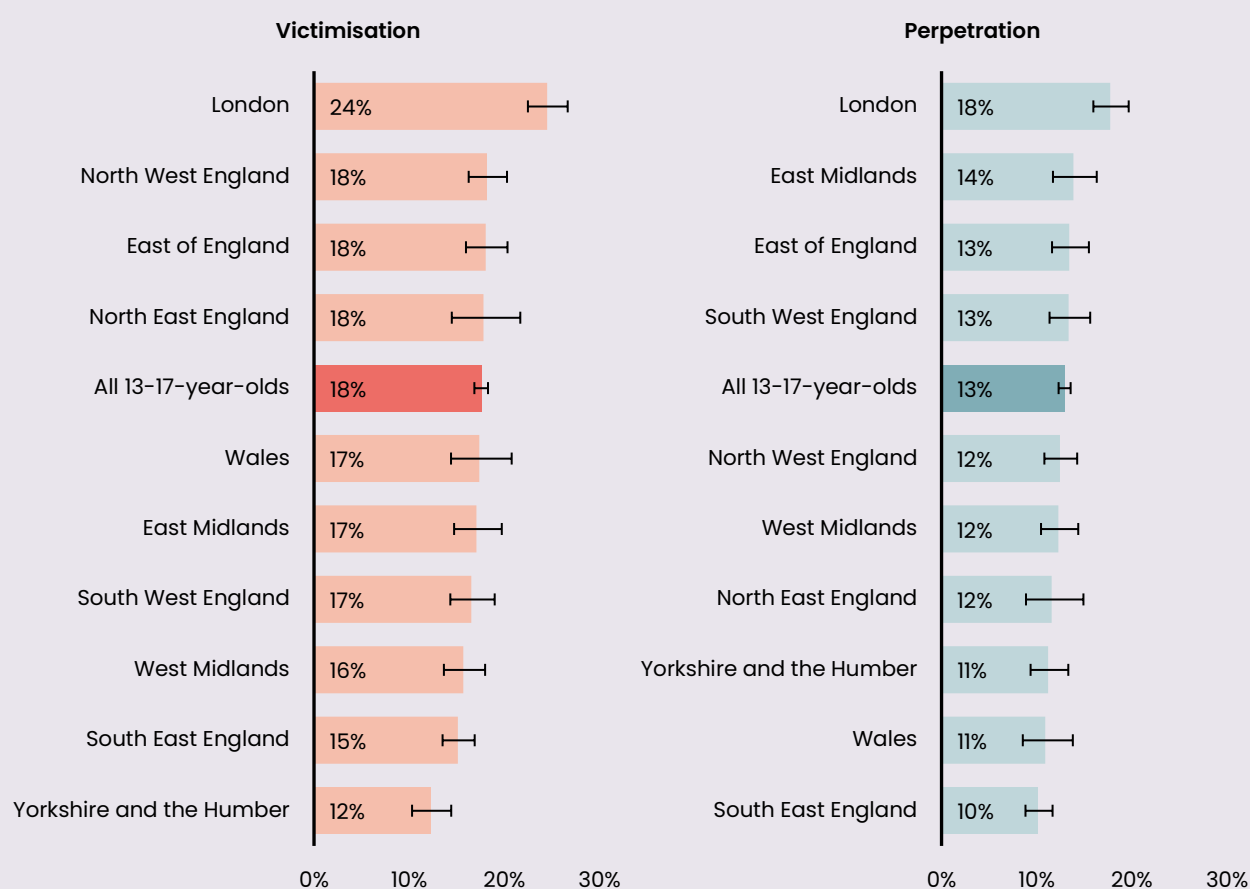
In contrast, teenage children from Mixed ethnicity backgrounds reported much lower rates of violence this year than the year before. Victimisation rates amongst teens from Mixed ethnicity backgrounds fell from 27% last year to 18% this year, and perpetration rates fell from 23% to 13%. In last year's results, violence victimisation and perpetration rates were higher than average amongst teens from Mixed ethnicity backgrounds, whereas this year, they were in line with the average rates across all teens.

Overall, this year we found some evidence that 13-17-year-olds from Black backgrounds were more vulnerable to experiencing violence than last year. Teenage children from Mixed ethnicity backgrounds were far less likely to report experiences of violence. These differences could be due to changes in the sample composition – we made a number of changes this year in the approach to sampling and weighting to ensure the survey results better reflected the population of England and Wales, including within subgroups, such as by race. However, these differences may also simply be due to the underlying uncertainty of sampling from these smaller groups.

Rates of violence victimisation and perpetration are highest in London.

London is a notable outlier, with the highest rates of violence victimisation (at 24%) and perpetration (at 18%) compared to all other regions. This contrasts with Yorkshire and the Humber, which is the region with the lowest rates of violence victimisation (at 12%), and the South East, which has the lowest rates of violence perpetration (at 10%). There were not many other statistically significant differences when comparing the other regions.

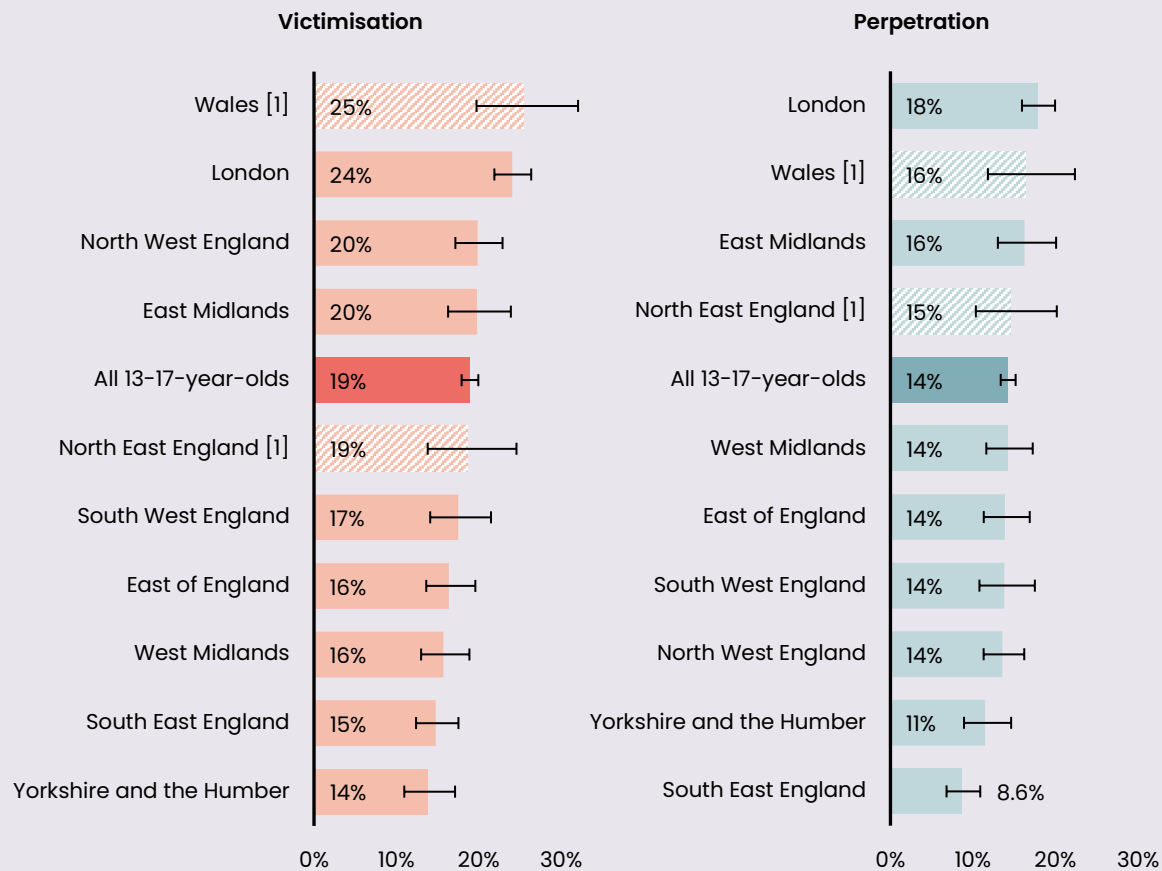
FIGURE 1.15: PROPORTION OF 13-17-YEAR-OLDS WHO'VE BEEN VICTIMS AND PERPETRATORS OF VIOLENCE, BY REGION



Note. Error bars represent 95% confidence intervals, which reflect the range we expect the true value to fall within.

The higher rates of violence victimisation and perpetration in London may, in part, reflect the fact that it's the only region which is almost exclusively made up of urban conurbations. When we looked across rates of violence experienced by all 13-17-year-olds who said they live in a city (defined as either an inner city area or a suburban area of a city), violence rates were notably higher than for 13-17-year-olds in more rural areas. For example, the proportion of all 13-17-year-olds living in inner city areas who were victims or perpetrators of violence was 21% and 16%, respectively, compared to 18% and 13% for all of England and Wales. To dig into this further, we've looked at the regional differences in victimisation and perpetration rates for city areas only.

FIGURE 1.16: PROPORTION OF 13-17-YEAR-OLDS LIVING IN CITIES WHO'VE BEEN VICTIMS AND PERPETRATORS OF VIOLENCE, BY REGION



[1] Bars with striped shading have cell counts of less than 50, so these figures should be interpreted with caution.

Note. Error bars represent 95% confidence intervals, which reflect the range we expect the true value to fall within.

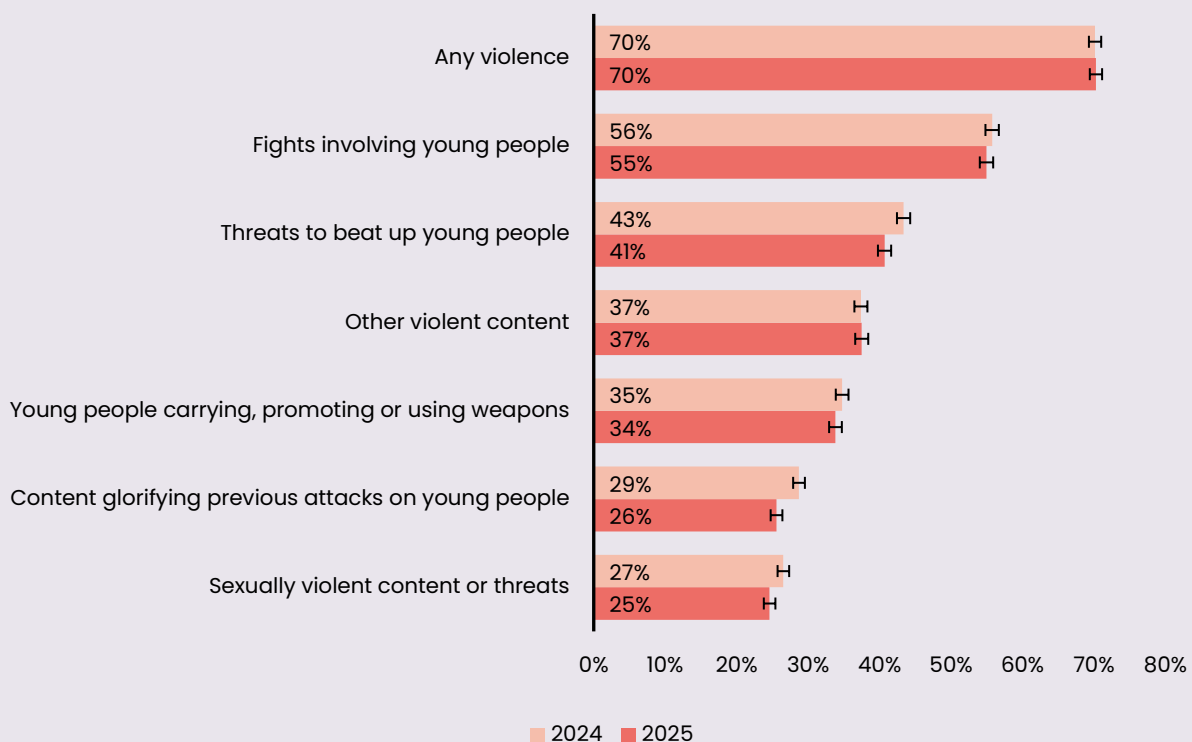
Comparing violence rates for 13-17-year-olds living exclusively in cities does, to some extent, explain why London is a regional outlier, although rates are still higher than in most other regions. Looking at victimisation for 13-17-year-olds in cities within regions, rates are actually highest in Wales, not London, at 25% compared to 24%. The next highest is the North West at 20%. Looking at perpetration rates in cities across regions, London remains the highest at 18%, but the difference between London and the next highest – Wales and the East Midlands at 16% – is much smaller and no longer statistically significant. Some caution is required in interpreting these results, given the relatively small sample sizes and high uncertainty in these estimates.

Most teenage children are exposed to online discussions about harming others.

The majority of teens continue to see real-world acts of violence involving young people on social media.

We asked whether teenage children had seen different types of real-world violence on social media using the following definition: “We’re interested in real-world violence (not including content in the news, on TV, in video games or in films), including people in your local area or that you know.” The majority (70%) of 13–17-year-olds said they’d seen real-world acts of violence on social media in the past 12 months. This is equivalent to over 2.5 million 13–17-year-olds across England and Wales.⁷ The most common type of content was fights involving young people (55%), followed by threats to beat up young people (41%); young people carrying, promoting or using weapons (34%); the glorification of violence that had been carried out against young people (26%); and sexually violent content (25%). This mirrors last year’s pattern, where overall exposure was 70%, with fights (56%) and threats to beat up young people (43%) being the most frequently seen.

FIGURE 2.1: PROPORTION OF 13–17-YEAR-OLDS SEEING DIFFERENT TYPES OF VIOLENCE ON SOCIAL MEDIA



Notes. Error bars represent 95% confidence intervals, which reflect the range we expect the true value to fall within. Figures for 2024 have been updated from those published last year to reflect the revisions in the weighting methodology – for more details, see the technical report on our website.

⁷ Estimates derived using the Office for National Statistics mid-2024 population estimates.

An even greater share sees conversations online about harming specific groups.

This year, we added a new question about whether children had either seen or participated in conversations, threads, groups or chatrooms on social media talking about harming (emotionally or physically) specific groups in society. Eighty-two per cent of 13–17-year-olds reported seeing such content on social media in the preceding 12 months, with 36% saying they had participated in it. This is equivalent to over three million 13–17-year-olds across England and Wales seeing conversations online inciting violence against others, and 1.4 million participating in them.⁸ It's important to note that the question about participating in these conversations did not specify how young people were engaging. It is possible that some could have engaged to defend the groups that were being discussed.

How did we ask about the conversations children had been part of online?

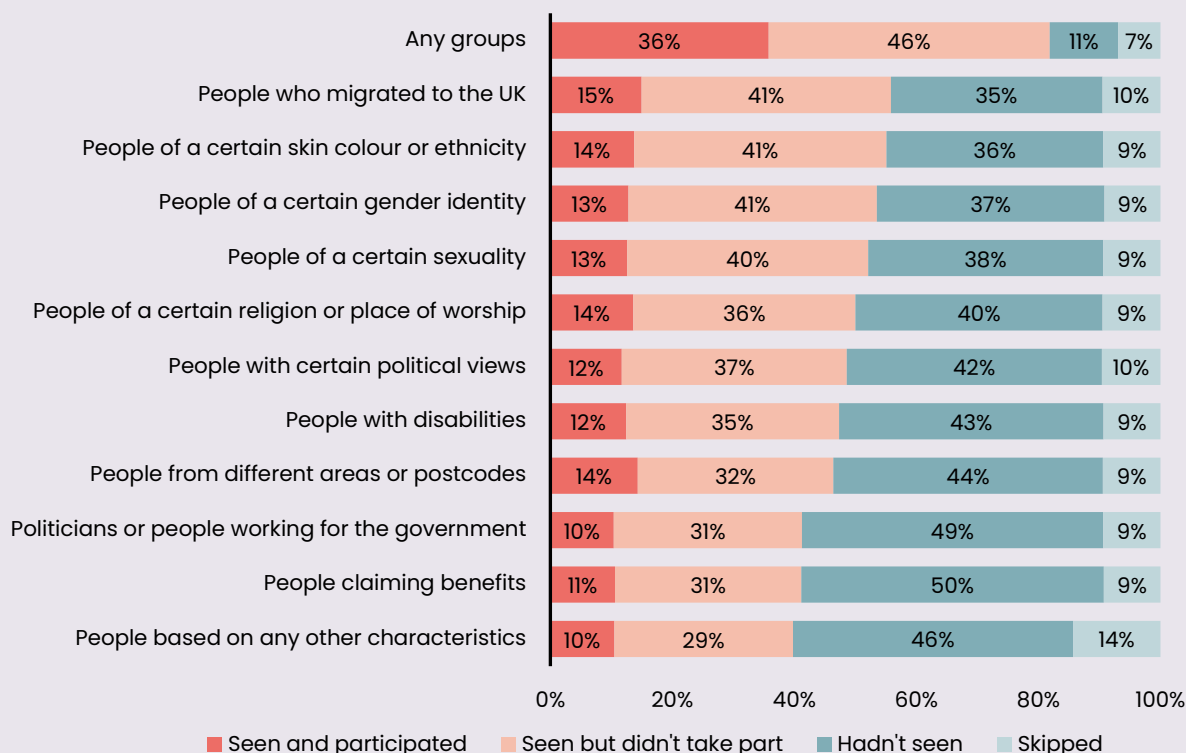
When asking children about the conversations about specific groups, we asked:

“In the past 12 months, have you seen or participated in conversations, threads, groups or chatrooms on social media talking about harming (emotionally or physically) any of the following...”

We asked whether they had seen these types of conversations and whether they had participated. But we didn't ask how they participated and whether it was to agree or join in with the calls to harm people or whether it was to disagree or defend the groups being discussed.

The most common topic was content about harming migrants in the UK, which 56% of 13–17-year-olds had seen, 15% had participated in and a further 41% had seen but not participated. This was followed closely by content about harming people of a different skin colour or ethnic background (55% had seen, 14% had seen and participated, and 41% had seen but not participated) and people of a certain gender identity (54% had seen, 13% had seen and participated, and 41% had seen but not participated).

⁸ Estimates derived using the Office for National Statistics [mid-2024 population estimates](#).

FIGURE 2.2: PROPORTION OF 13-17-YEAR-OLDS WHO'VE SEEN CONTENT DISCUSSING HARMING SPECIFIC GROUPS ON SOCIAL MEDIA

In addition to these, we also asked a separate question about whether teens had seen material on social media in the preceding year that encouraged violence against women or girls. Thirty-nine per cent said they had, up from 33% last year – a statistically significant increase. However, it's important to note that changes in the results between years may, in part, be due to changes in the composition and characteristics of respondents to the survey that couldn't be fully accounted for by the weighting strategy.

How does this compare to other data sources?

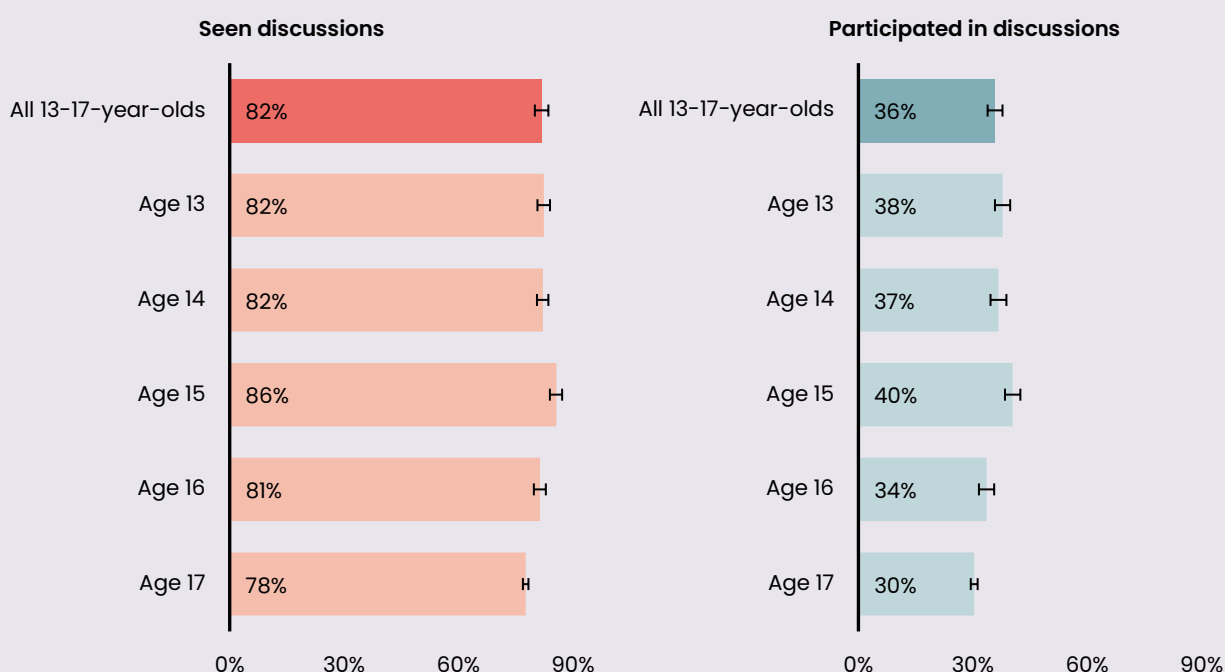
Ofcom's [Online Nation 2024](#) reports that 68% of UK internet users aged 13 and over encountered at least one "potential harm" in the preceding four weeks. For 13-17-year-olds, hateful content was reported by 17% in the preceding four weeks, with teens most likely to meet their most recent harmful encounter on TikTok (22%) and YouTube (13%). A recent [BBC Bitesize poll](#) of 2,000 teenagers reported that 55% had seen racist, sexist or homophobic content, and 45% had seen extreme violence. International evidence also points the same way. UNICEF's [multi-country review](#) found that a sizeable proportion of 12-16-year-olds reported seeing hate messages (8-58%) and violent images (15-55%) in the preceding year, with older children more exposed.

Exposure to violent content shows a mixed picture by age.

There wasn't a consistent pattern of exposure to real-world violence on social media by age. The proportion who'd seen any form of violence online was similar across all ages, apart from a small peak at age 15 – 74% of 15-year-olds had seen real-world violence on social media compared to 69% of 13-year-olds, 70% of 14-year-olds, 68% of 16-year-olds and 70% of 17-year-olds. There was a similar pattern for fights involving children and young people, which were most seen by those aged 15 (60%), compared with 55% at ages 13 and 14 and 53% and 52% at ages 16 and 17, respectively. Other types of violence showed a slightly different pattern: younger teens aged 13-15 were more likely to have seen threats, whereas exposure to weapons and sexually violent content rose with age. For example, 43% of 13-year-olds had seen threats against other young people, compared to 36% of 17-year-olds, whilst 35% of 17-year-olds had seen young people with weapons compared to 31% of 13-year-olds, and 28% of 17-year-olds had seen sexual violence compared to 20% of 13-year-olds.

Similarly to seeing any form of violence online, the proportion of teenage children who'd seen conversations on social media about harming specific groups peaked at age 15 and fell amongst older teens. Eighty-six per cent of 15-year-olds had seen such content, compared to 82% of 13- and 14-year-olds and 81% of 16-year-olds. Seventeen-year-olds were the least likely to have seen such content, at 78%. Participation in such content also fell with age: 16- and 17-year-olds were the least likely to have participated in any of these conversations, at 34% and 30%, respectively, compared to 37-40% for 13-15-year-olds.

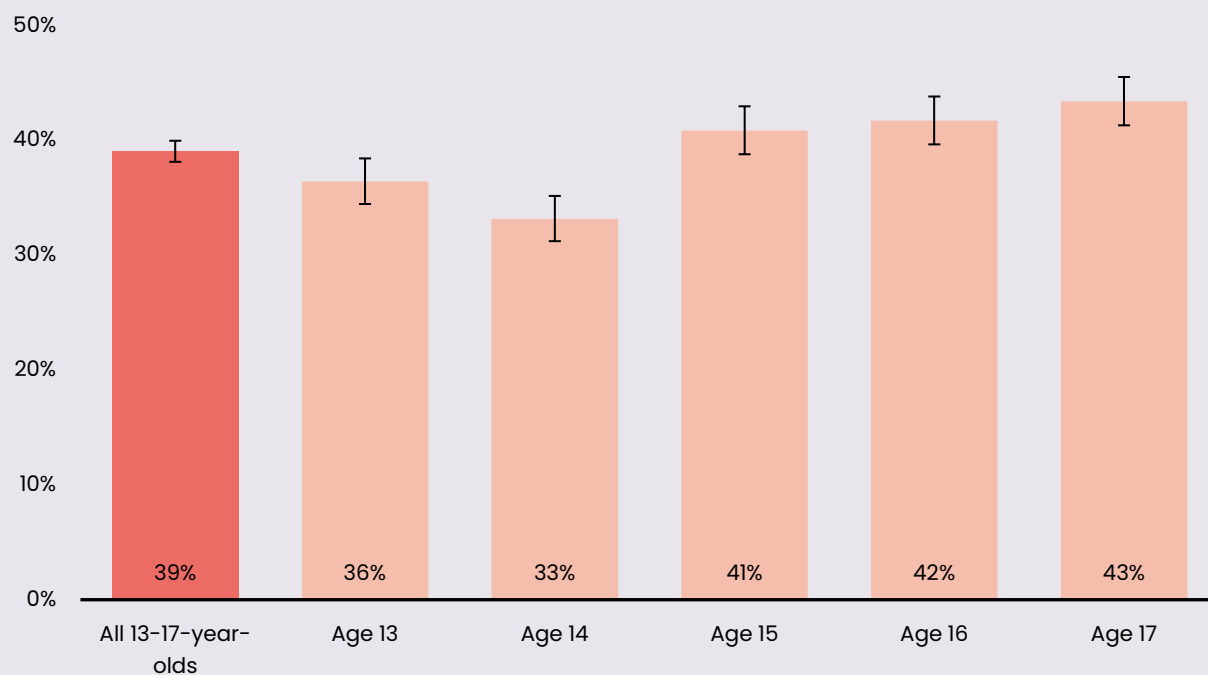
FIGURE 2.3: PROPORTION OF 13-17-YEAR-OLDS WHO'VE SEEN AND PARTICIPATED IN ONLINE DISCUSSIONS ABOUT HARMING SPECIFIC GROUPS, BY AGE



Note. Error bars represent 95% confidence intervals – this reflects the range we expect the true value to fall within.

In contrast to the other measures of online violence, exposure to content promoting violence against women and girls appeared to increase with age. At age 13, 36% said they'd seen such content, increasing to 41%, 42% and 43% at ages 15, 16 and 17, respectively.

FIGURE 2.4: PROPORTION OF 13–17-YEAR-OLDS WHO'VE SEEN CONTENT ONLINE PROMOTING VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN AND GIRLS, BY AGE



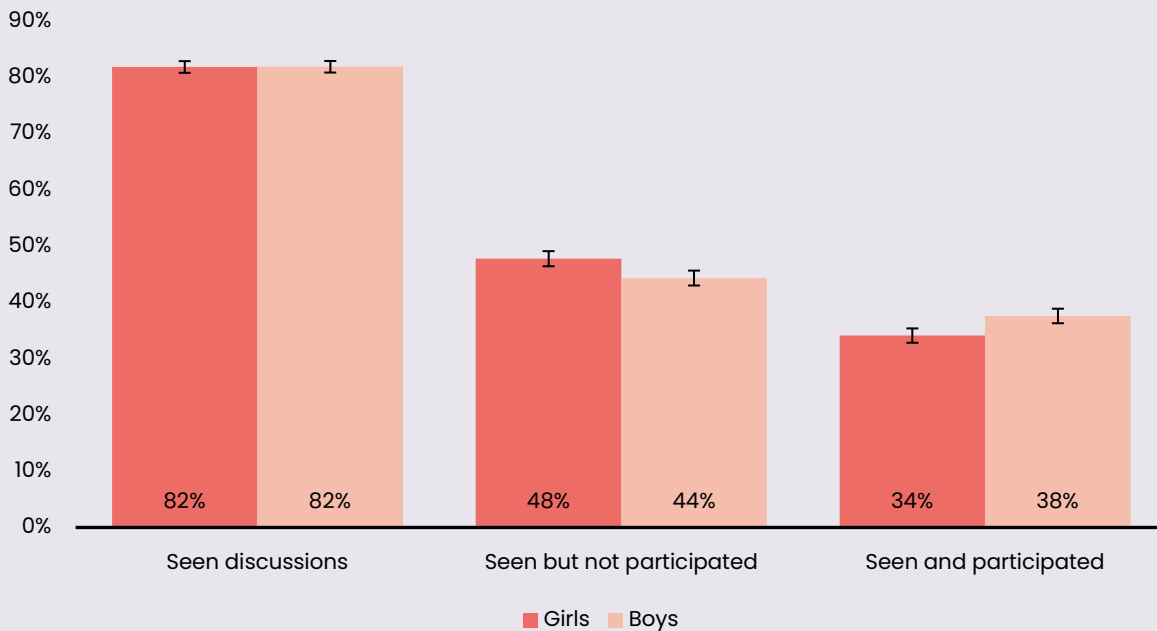
Note. Error bars represent 95% confidence intervals – this reflects the range we expect the true value to fall within.

Girls are more likely to report seeing content online promoting violence against women and girls.

There was no significant difference between girls and boys in terms of their overall exposure to violent content on social media, at 71% and 70%, respectively, but there were some small differences in the types of violence seen. Girls were somewhat more likely to have seen fights (56% compared to 54% for boys) and sexual violence (27% compared to 23% for boys).

Similarly, when it came to discussions online about harming specific groups, there were no differences in the overall proportion of boys and girls seeing such content, but boys were more likely to participate. Eighty-two per cent of both boys and girls had seen such discussions; however, 38% of boys had participated in these conversations compared to 34% of girls.

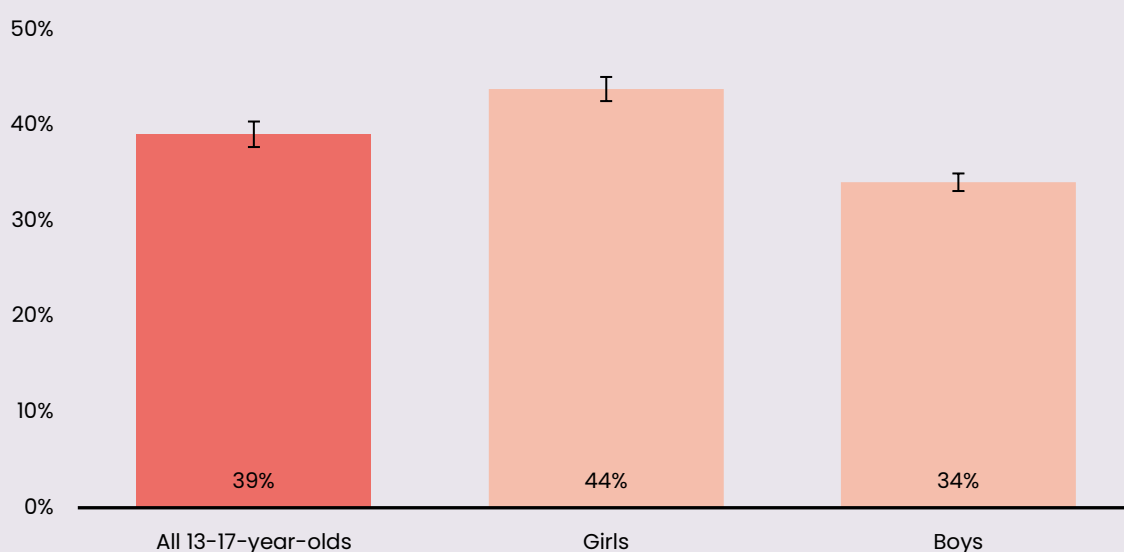
FIGURE 2.5: PROPORTION OF 13-17-YEAR-OLDS WHO'VE SEEN AND PARTICIPATED IN DISCUSSIONS ABOUT HARMING SPECIFIC GROUPS, BY GENDER



Note. Error bars represent 95% confidence intervals – this reflects the range we expect the true value to fall within.

Girls were more likely than boys to say that they'd seen content online that promoted violence against women and girls – 44% of girls compared to 34% of boys. This difference may, in part, be explained by girls being more likely to recognise such content when they see it, particularly when it's targeted at them specifically.

FIGURE 2.6: PROPORTION OF 13-17-YEAR-OLDS WHO'VE SEEN CONTENT ONLINE PROMOTING VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN AND GIRLS, BY GENDER



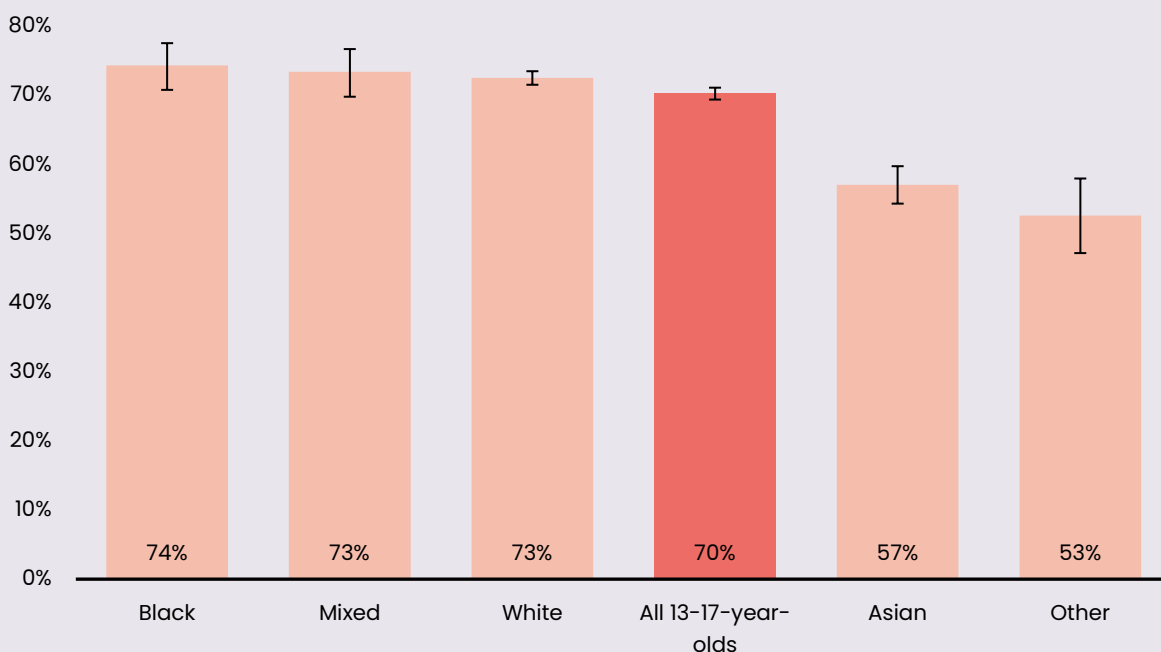
Note. Error bars represent 95% confidence intervals – this reflects the range we expect the true value to fall within.

Teenage children from Asian backgrounds are less likely to be exposed to violent content online.

Exposure to violent content on social media varied by race. Teenage children from Asian backgrounds were the least likely to report seeing any type of real-world violence on social media, at 57%. This compares to teens from Black, Mixed and White backgrounds at 74%, 73% and 73%, respectively. These were all statistically significantly higher rates than for teens from Asian backgrounds.

Teens from Asian backgrounds were also less likely to report seeing material on social media that encouraged violence against women and girls. Thirty-four per cent of 13–17-year-olds from Asian backgrounds had seen this type of content, compared to 40%, 41% and 40% of 13–17-year-olds from Black, Mixed and White backgrounds, respectively. These were all statistically significantly higher rates than for 13–17-year-olds from Asian backgrounds.

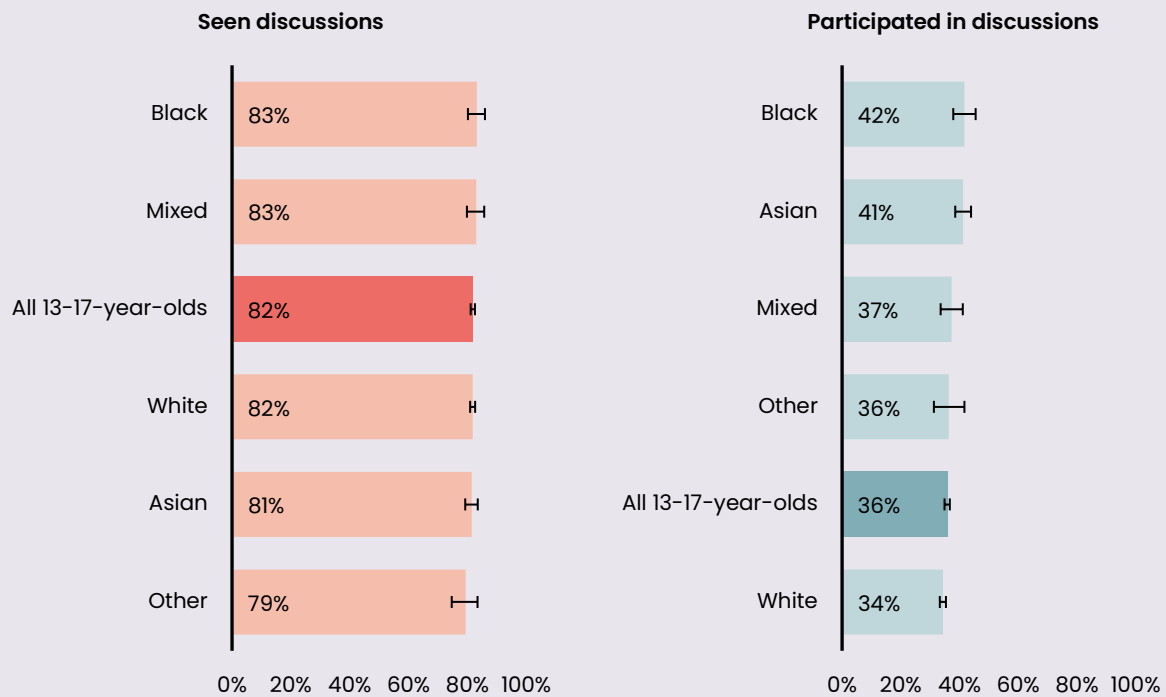
FIGURE 2.7: PROPORTION OF 13–17-YEAR-OLDS WHO'VE SEEN VIOLENT CONTENT ON SOCIAL MEDIA, BY RACE



Note. Error bars represent 95% confidence intervals, which reflect the range we expect the true value to fall within.

When it came to exposure to discussions online about harming specific groups, there were no statistically significant differences by race for the proportion of teenage children viewing such content. However, there were differences in those taking part. Thirty-six per cent of all 13–17-year-olds reported participating in such online discussions, but the rates for 13–17-year-olds from Black (42%) and Asian (41%) backgrounds were statistically significantly higher. There were no other statistically significant differences. It's important to emphasise that the higher reported rates of participation in such discussions by teens from Black and Asian backgrounds could reflect that they were more frequently the targets of abuse or harassment based on their characteristics and were therefore more likely to be compelled to engage. Participating in such conversations could have been to speak up for minority groups.

FIGURE 2.8: PROPORTION OF 13-17-YEAR-OLDS WHO'VE SEEN AND PARTICIPATED IN ONLINE DISCUSSIONS ABOUT HARMING SPECIFIC GROUPS, BY RACE



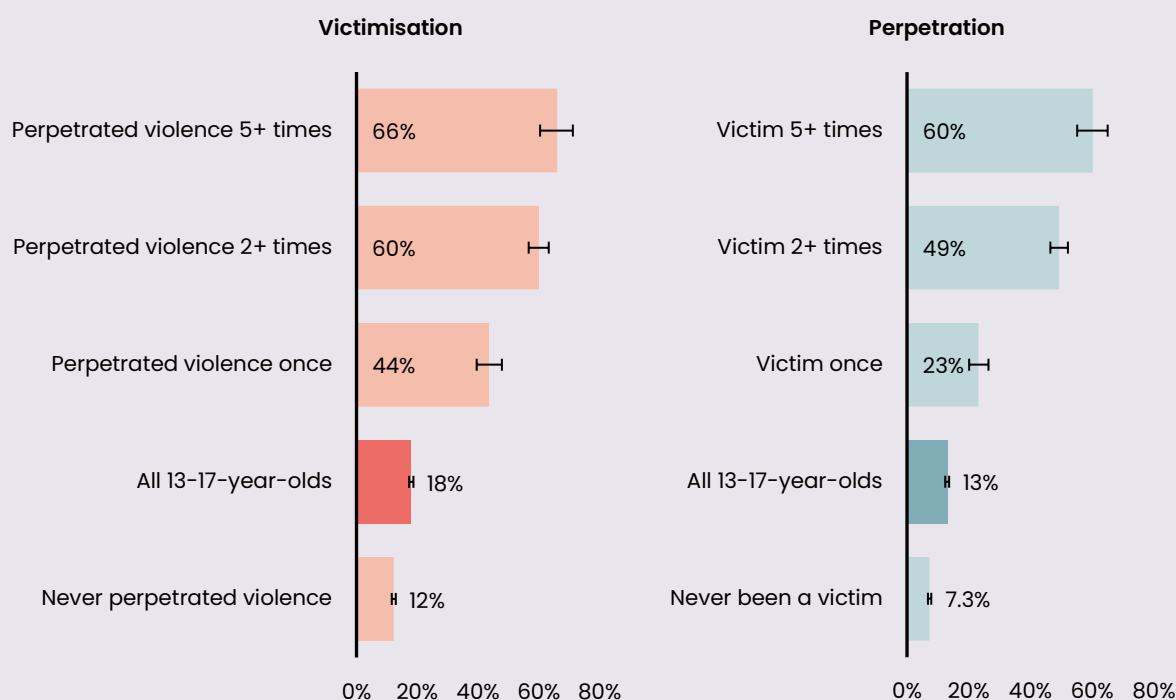
Note. Error bars represent 95% confidence intervals, which reflect the range we expect the true value to fall within.

Victimisation and perpetration go hand in hand.

Four in five teens who've perpetrated serious violence have been victims themselves.

As we found in last year's survey, there is a large overlap between teenage children who've been victims of violence and those who've perpetrated it. This year, we found that 39% of 13-17-year-olds who'd been victims in the past year also said they'd perpetrated violence, while 53% of 13-17-year-olds who'd perpetrated violence said they'd also been victims. This overlap was larger for those exposed to more serious types of violence. Fifty-seven per cent of 13-17-year-olds who'd been victims of serious violence that required medical treatment also said they'd perpetrated some form of violence. Thirty-seven per cent had perpetrated serious violence requiring medical treatment. Amongst 13-17-year-olds who'd perpetrated serious violence, 77% had been a victim of violence, and 58% had been a victim of serious violence specifically.

FIGURE 3.1: PROPORTION OF 13-17-YEAR-OLDS WHO'VE BEEN VICTIMS OF VIOLENCE BY WHETHER THEY'VE PERPETRATED VIOLENCE THEMSELVES, AND VICE VERSA



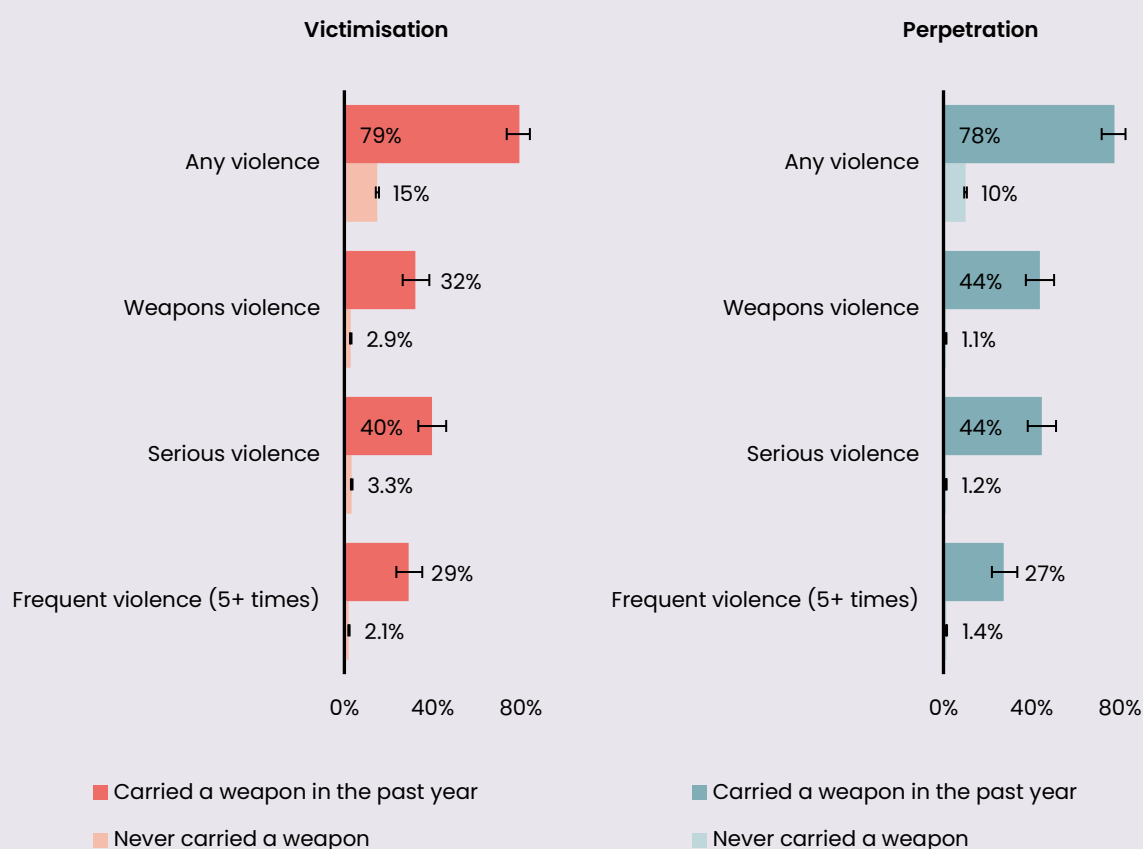
Note. Error bars represent 95% confidence intervals – this reflects the range we expect the true value to fall within.

The more violent incidents children had experienced, the more likely they were to have been both a victim and perpetrator of violence. While 18% of all 13-17-year-olds had been victims of violence, this rose to 44% of those who'd perpetrated violence once in the past 12 months, 60% of those who'd perpetrated violence twice or more and 66% for those who'd perpetrated violence five times or more. Similarly, 13% of all 13-17-year-olds had perpetrated violence, rising to 23% of those who had one experience of being a victim, 49% of those who'd been a victim twice or more and 60% of those who'd been a victim five times or more.

Most teens who carry weapons have been victims of violence.

Teenage children who carry weapons are significantly more likely to have been victims of violence. Seventy-nine per cent of 13-17-year-olds who carried a weapon in the past year had been a victim of some form of violence, compared to 15% of 13-17-year-olds who'd never carried weapons (five times higher). Thirty-two per cent of weapons carriers had been victims of weapons-related violence, compared to 2.9% of those who'd never carried weapons (11 times higher). Forty per cent of weapons carriers were victims of serious violence requiring medical treatment by a doctor or at a hospital, compared to 3.3% of those who'd never carried weapons (12 times higher). Twenty-nine per cent of weapons carriers were victims of frequent violence (five or more times in the past 12 months) compared to 2.1% of those who'd never carried weapons (14 times higher).

FIGURE 3.2: PROPORTION OF 13-17-YEAR-OLDS WHO'VE BEEN VICTIMS AND PERPETRATORS OF VIOLENCE, BY WHETHER THEY'VE CARRIED A WEAPON



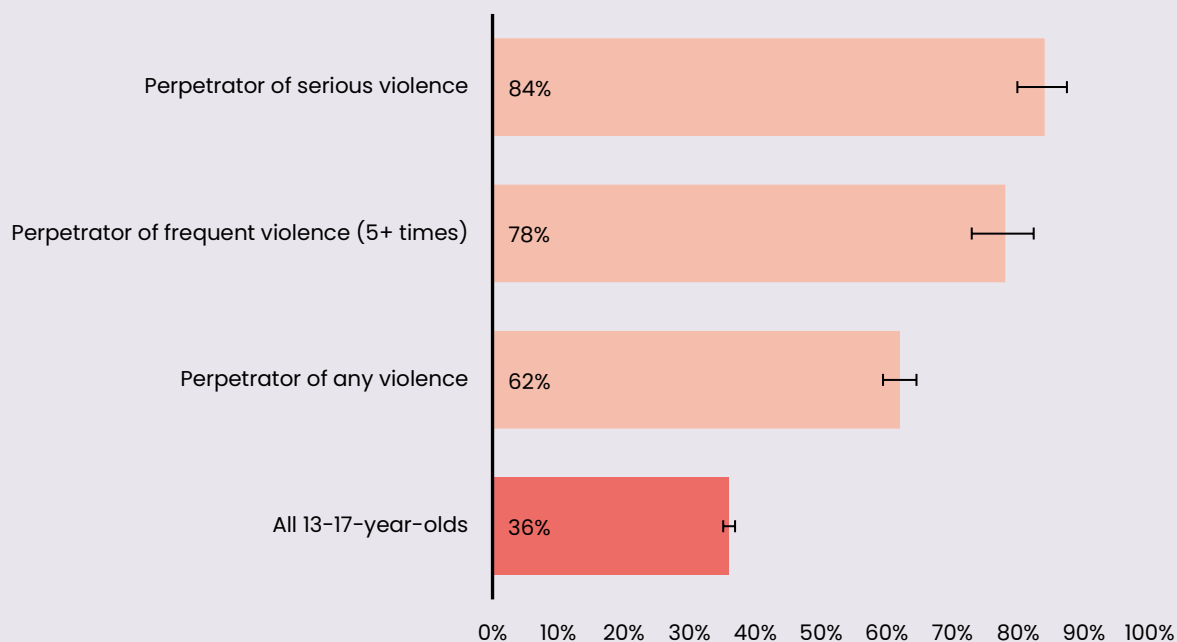
Note. Error bars represent 95% confidence intervals – this reflects the range we expect the true value to fall within.

Teenage children who'd carried weapons were also significantly more likely to have perpetrated violence, particularly weapons violence and serious violence requiring medical treatment. Seventy-eight per cent had perpetrated any form of violence, nearly eight times the rate for those who hadn't carried weapons (10%). Forty-four per cent had actually used a weapon to threaten or hurt someone, and the same proportion (44%) had perpetrated violence that resulted in their victim visiting a doctor or hospital for their injuries – 38 times the rate for those who hadn't carried weapons (1.2%).

Teens involved in real-world violence are more likely to engage in online discussions about harming people.

The proportion of 13–17-year-olds who'd perpetrated violence increased from 13% of all teens to 16% among those who'd viewed violence online and 22% among those who'd viewed content promoting violence against women and girls. It was also 22% for those who'd participated in online discussions about harming specific groups. Experiences of violence as a victim increased from 18% of all 13–17-year-olds to 22% for those who'd viewed violence online, 30% for those who'd viewed content promoting violence against women and girls, and 27% for those who'd participated in online discussions about harming specific groups.

FIGURE 3.3: PROPORTION OF 13–17-YEAR-OLDS WHO'VE PARTICIPATED IN ONLINE CONVERSATIONS ABOUT HARMING SPECIFIC GROUPS, BY TYPES OF VIOLENCE THEY'VE PERPETRATED



Note. Error bars represent 95% confidence intervals – this reflects the range we expect the true value to fall within.

Looking at those who'd perpetrated violence, the majority had participated in online conversations about harming others. Overall, 36% of all 13–17-year-olds had participated in such conversations. This rose to 62% of those who'd perpetrated violence, 78% of those who'd perpetrated violence five or more times in the previous year and 84% of those who'd perpetrated serious violence requiring medical treatment by a doctor or at a hospital. However, it's important to remember that we don't know whether children were engaging with these conversations to agree with them or to defend the groups being spoken about.

Youth Endowment Fund

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