

## WHAT'S NEW?

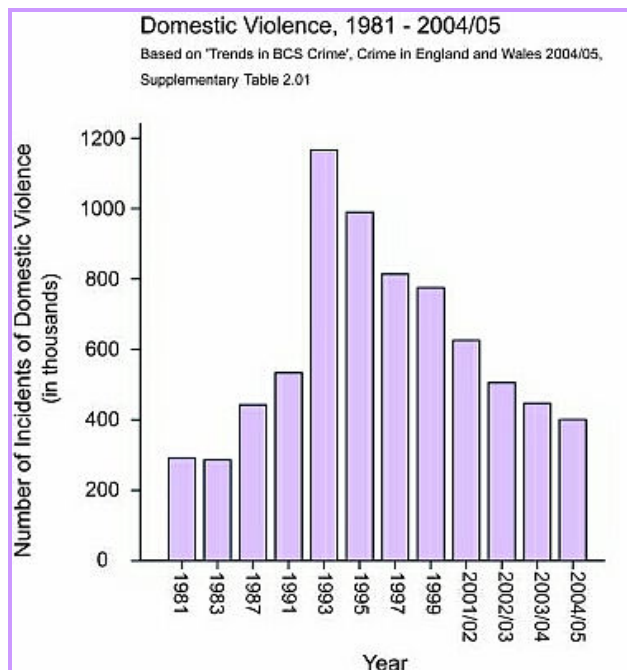
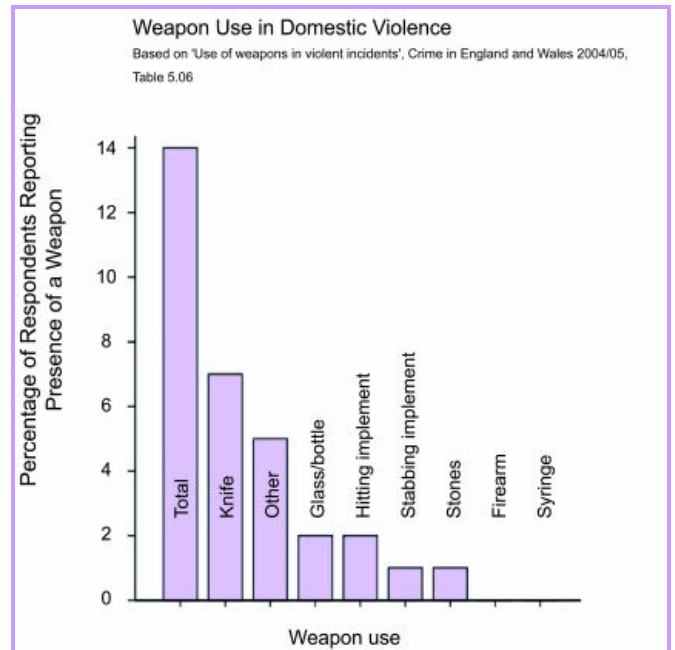
The UK Home Office has released "Crime in England and Wales 2004/2005".

Domestic violence has been declining since the early 1990's.

The British Crime Survey (BCS) indicates that the ongoing downwards trend has continued.

However, domestic violence still accounts for around 17% of violent crime.

This equates to 32% of violent incidents against women.



77% of respondents who had experienced domestic abuse were female, with women aged 16-24 most at risk.

Domestic violence has the highest repeat victimisation rate of all violent crimes.

46% of respondents reported two or more incidents of abuse.

86% of incidents did not involve any weapon other than physical force or psychological torment.

In cases where the presence of a weapon was reported, it was most likely to be a knife.

## HOMICIDE AND VIOLENCE

Homicide in England and Wales remained a rare event.

72% of homicide victims were male.

64% of the 231 female victims were killed by a current or former partner.

29% of all victims were killed with a knife/sharp instrument (28% male, 30% female).

The second most common method used against men (19%) involved hitting or kicking.

For female victims, the second most frequent homicide method was strangulation or asphyxiation (19%).

A blunt instrument was used in 7% of female homicides.

Death by burning also accounted for 7% of female victims, followed by hitting/kicking (6%).

In 2004/05, shootings accounted for 9% of all homicides (11% of male, and 5% of female victims).

Young men aged 16-24 were most at risk of being affected by violence.

14.6% of young men had been a victim of violent crime once or more in the 2004/2005 period.

In contrast, 3.6% of all adults had been a victim of violent crime.

The highest rates of offending were for males aged 16 to 17 years: 33 per cent had committed a violent offence in the previous year.

Weapons were used in around one quarter of all violent crimes.

The most commonly used weapons were hitting implements (7%), followed by knives and glass/bottles (both 6%).

Weapons were most commonly used in 'acquaintance' violence, where the victim and offender knew each other (33% of all offences).

Weapons were least commonly used in domestic violence (14%).

Weapon use and the types of weapons used have remained stable since 1995.

Firearms were used in 1% of all violent offences.

Firearms were used in 4.2% of all robberies.

Firearms described as handguns were used in 67% of robberies involving firearms, and shotguns in 6%. 13% involved unidentified firearms, and 6% involved imitation firearms.

## HUMANITARIAN CRISIS

“Mortality in the Democratic Republic of Congo”, published in British medical journal *The Lancet*, has revealed that Congo is experiencing a deadly and largely unaddressed humanitarian crisis.

The research demonstrates that around 38 000 people are dying each month, with most of these deaths from “...easily preventable and treatable illnesses rather than violence”.

The biggest killers are malaria, diarrhoea, respiratory infection, and malnutrition, which together account for over 50% of deaths.

Up to 20% of children are malnourished, and under 5's are at particular risk of succumbing to disease.

Maternal deaths are also common.

The study highlights the urgent need for increased humanitarian aid.

Too often, we assume that the majority of deaths in conflict-stricken countries come as a direct result of violence.

This leads us to the temptingly simple conclusion that focusing upon conflict alone will enable us to prevent further deaths.

It is increasingly apparent that we must put aside this comforting view, and work to improve medical support, nutrition, and infrastructure, as well as further our understanding of the root causes and mechanisms of conflict.

### References:

#### Crime in England and Wales

Coleman, K., Hird, C., & Povey, D. (2006). *Violent Crime Overview, Homicide and Gun Crime 2004/2005 (Supplementary Volume to Crime in England and Wales 2004/2005)*. Home Office Statistical Bulletin, 02/06.  
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#### Humanitarian crisis

Coughlan, B., Brennan, R., Ngoy, P., Dofara, D., Otto, B., Clements, M., & Stewart, T. (2006). Mortality in the Democratic Republic of Congo. *Lancet*, 367, 44-51.

## GOOD LUCK!

Good luck to all women's shooting teams competing at the XVIII Commonwealth Games in Melbourne, Victoria, Australia (March 15-26) – an event well timed to coincide with the opening of 2006 duck season in Victoria!