

Sexual offending in Australia 2023–24

Child sexual abuse

Online child sexual abuse

Youth justice

Over-representation

Sullivan, T. (2026). *Sexual offending in Australia 2023–24* (Statistical Report No. 60). Australian Institute of Criminology. <https://doi.org/10.52922/sr78328>

Context: The Australian Sexual Offence Statistical (ASOS) collection brings together police-recorded data from every state and territory on all types of offending, including penetrative and non-penetrative offences, persistent sexual abuse, child sexual abuse material (CSAM), image-based sexual abuse and enabling conduct such as grooming and procurement. This report describes all individuals police proceeded against in 2023–24 and their identified victims. It does not capture unreported or undetected offending.

10,359

offenders proceeded against by police for a sexual offence

9767

identified victims, of whom 84% were female

93%

of alleged sexual offenders were male

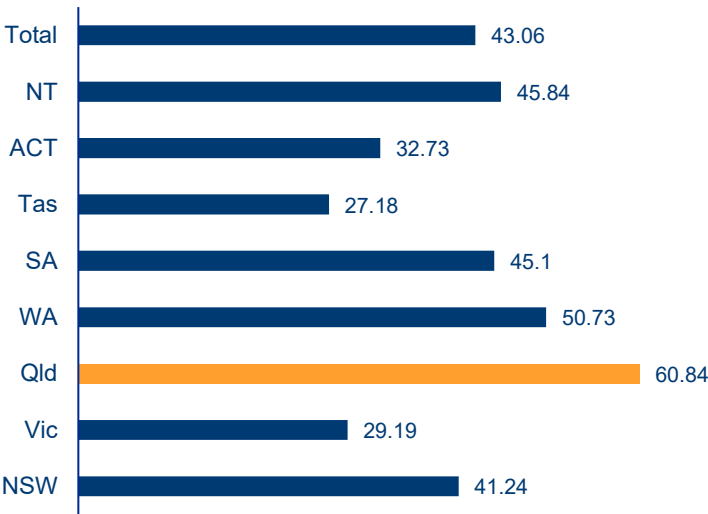
1 in 7

offenders was aged under 18 years

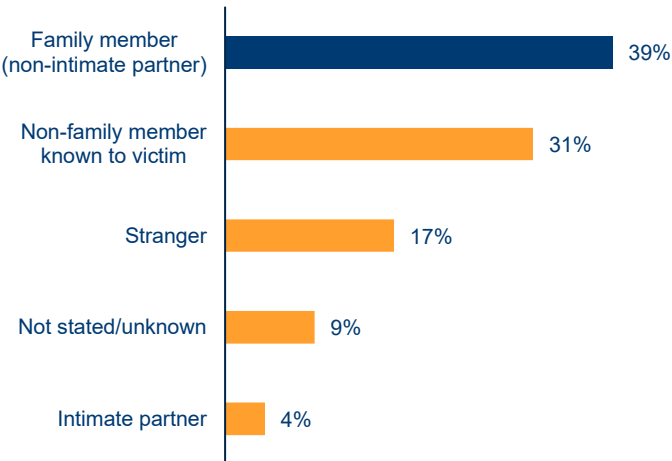
Key findings:

Non-penetrative sexual conduct was the most common offence type (58% of offenders). Youth offenders were most commonly proceeded against for CSAM offences (42%), partly reflecting ‘sexting’ between juveniles being classified as CSAM in some jurisdictions; 73% of girls proceeded against had a CSAM offence.

Total sexual offenders by jurisdiction, 2023-24
(Rate per 100,000 relevant population)



Relationship to primary victim, adults with child sexual offences (%)



- National increase and state disparities:** In 2023-24, Australian police proceeded against 10,359 individuals for sexual offences, representing a slight national rate increase to 43.06 per 100,000 population (up from 42.61 in 2022-23), with rates varying significantly by state.
- Queensland’s high volume and rate:** While New South Wales (NSW) recorded the highest absolute number of offenders (3100), Queensland followed closely with the second-highest volume (2999) and registered the highest offender rate in the country at 60.84 per 100,000 population.
- Most child sexual offending occurred close to home:** Adults proceeded against for only child sexual offences were most commonly a non-intimate partner family member of the victim (39%), and only 17% were strangers to their primary victim. 78 per cent of adults with child sexual offences offended at or around a residential location.
- 16 per cent of youth offenders and 12 per cent of adult offenders were Aboriginal, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander, or Torres Strait Islander.

Summary: This report provides the most complete national picture of police-recorded sexual offending to date. Offending remains overwhelmingly male-perpetrated and for child victims, most often by someone known to the child in a residential setting. The large share of young people proceeded against for CSAM has mostly been dealt with by caution. The reported data reflects police action only, not the true prevalence of sexual violence.