



# STIR: Safeguarding Teenage Intimate Relationships

Connecting Offline and Online Risks

# The Project

- 2 year EU –funded (Daphne III) project
- 5 European countries – England, Bulgaria, Cyprus, Italy and Norway.
- *Four main aims:*
  - Map relevant European research, **policy and practice**
  - Document the **incidence, manifestations, impact and dynamics of online/offline** experiences of partner violence–**QUANTITATIVE RESEARCH**
  - Explore **young people’s own experiences** – **QUALITATIVE RESEARCH AND YOUTH ADVISORY GROUP**
  - Development of web-based **resource and app for young**  
<http://stiritup.eu>
  - <http://stiritapp.eu/stiritapp.apk> (app for Android)
  - <http://www.medinstgenderstudies.org> (current projects)



# The Research

## Targeting Young People 14-17 years

- **QUANTITATIVE:**

- *Self completion* questionnaires in schools
- *Random Selection* of gymnasiums and lyceums on a pancyprian basis (urban and rural areas)
- *Stratified sampling*: closely following a population representative distribution

- **QUALITATIVE**

- *In-depth interviews* with young people
- Recruitment through *snow-balling*
- Pre-requisite for selection: to have had experiences of intimate partner violence- either as victims or perpetrators

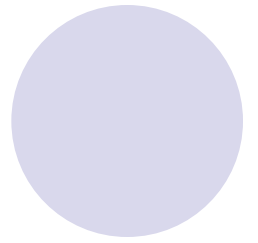
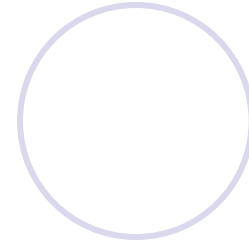
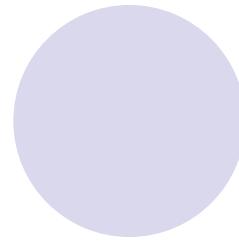
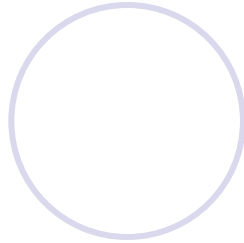
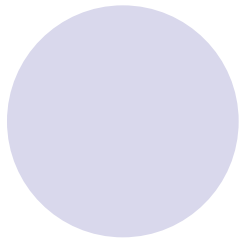
# Sample Structure- Quantitative

	Number	Percent
<b>GENDER</b>		
Female	346	54%
Male	296	46%
<b>AGE</b>		
14	132	20.6%
15	159	24.8%
16	172	26.8%
17	179	27.9%
<b>REGION</b>		
Nicosia	226	35%
Limassol	192	30%
Larnaka	107	17%
Ammochostos	49	8%
Paphos	68	11%
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>642</b>	<b>100.0</b>

# Qualitative Sample



- 14 young people from Nicosia
- 11 girls and 3 boys
- Majority of them were 17 -18 years
  - 1 → 14 years
  - 1 → 15 years
  - 3 → 16 years
  - 7 → 17 years
  - 2 → 18 years
- 8 were victims, 2 were perpetrators and 4 were both victims and perpetrators



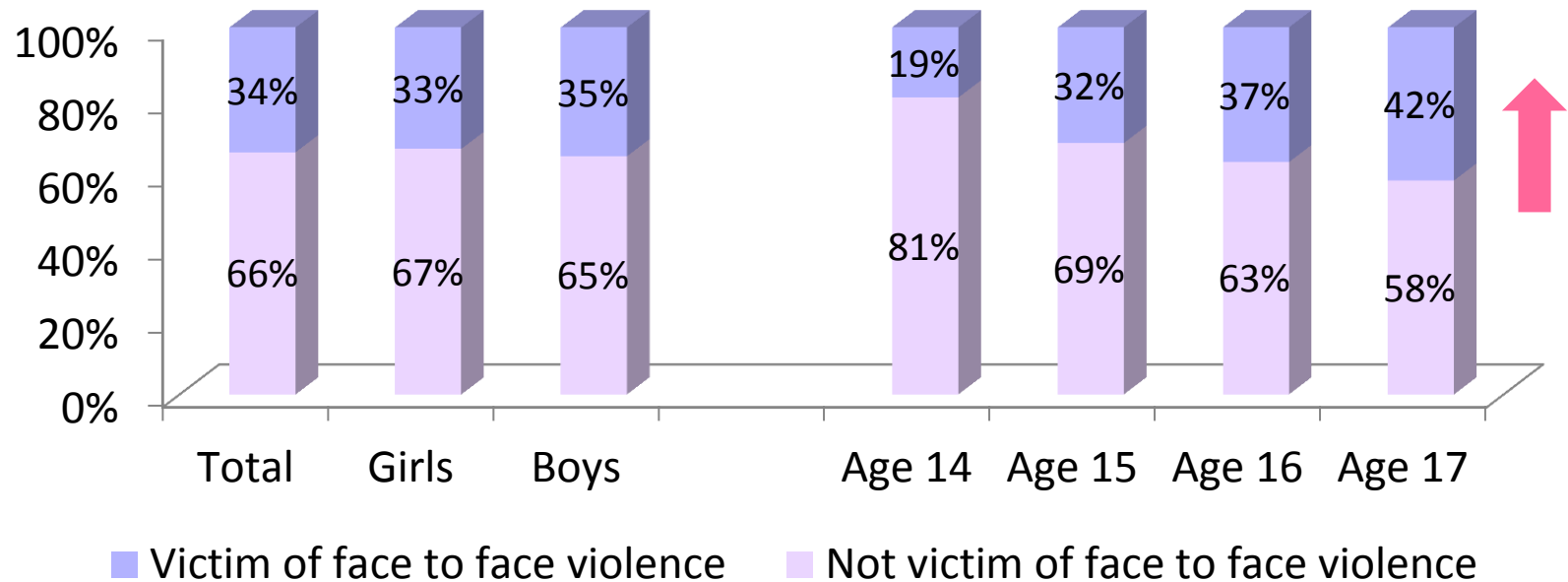
**MANIFESTATIONS OF INTIMATE  
PARTNER VIOLENCE IN  
ADOLESCENT RELATIONSHIPS**

# The context- Characteristics of the Sample

- 79% (505 out of the 642) are currently or have been in a relationship (rises to 86% among 16-17 year olds)
- Very **high use of new technologies**:
  - 99% receive texts/emails/instant messages
  - 86% send or receive videos/pictures
  - 94% use social networking sites
- 77% claim to be **doing well at school**
- 13% have experienced **domestic violence** (3% physical)
- 21% have been **victims of bullying**
- 17% perpetrators of bullying
- 40% with **negative gender attitudes** (gender stereotypes)

# Face to Face Intimate Partner Violence

Base: 503 teenagers

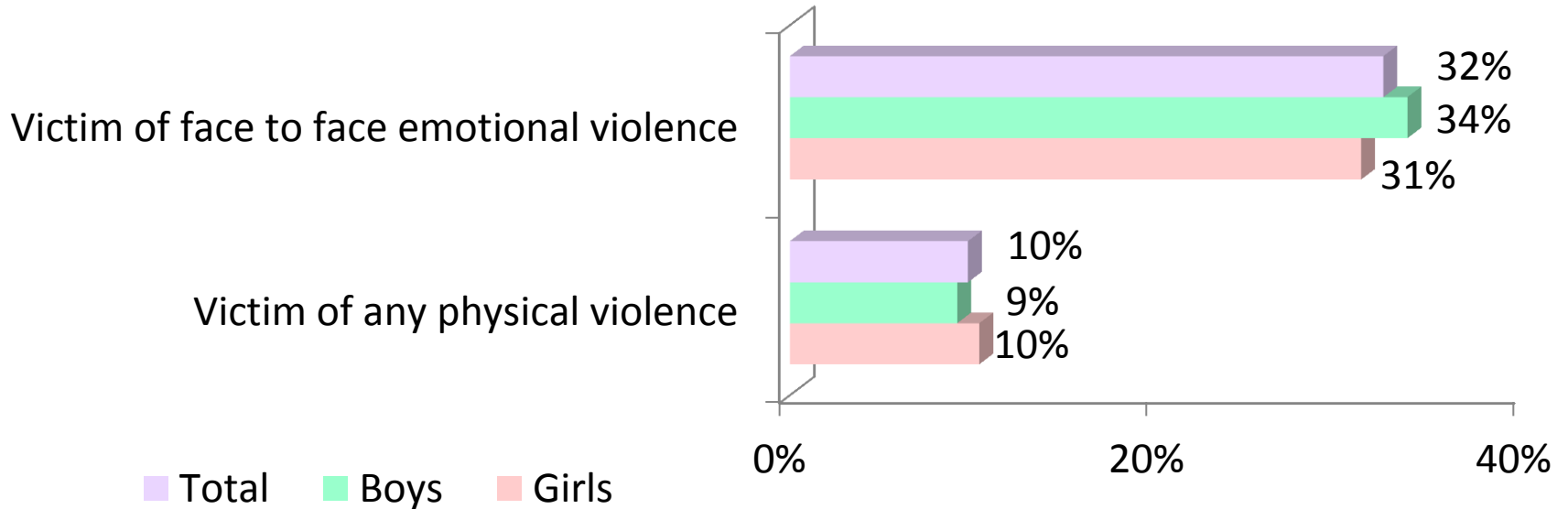


- Includes both physical and emotional abuse
- *Emotional Abuse*: putting someone down, shouting, screaming, making negative comments, ridiculing, threatening to hurt
- *Physical abuse*: slapping, hitting, holding someone down.
- *More severe physical force* such as punching, strangling, beating someone up, hitting someone with an object



# Physical vs. Emotional Face 2 Face IPV

Base: 503 teenagers



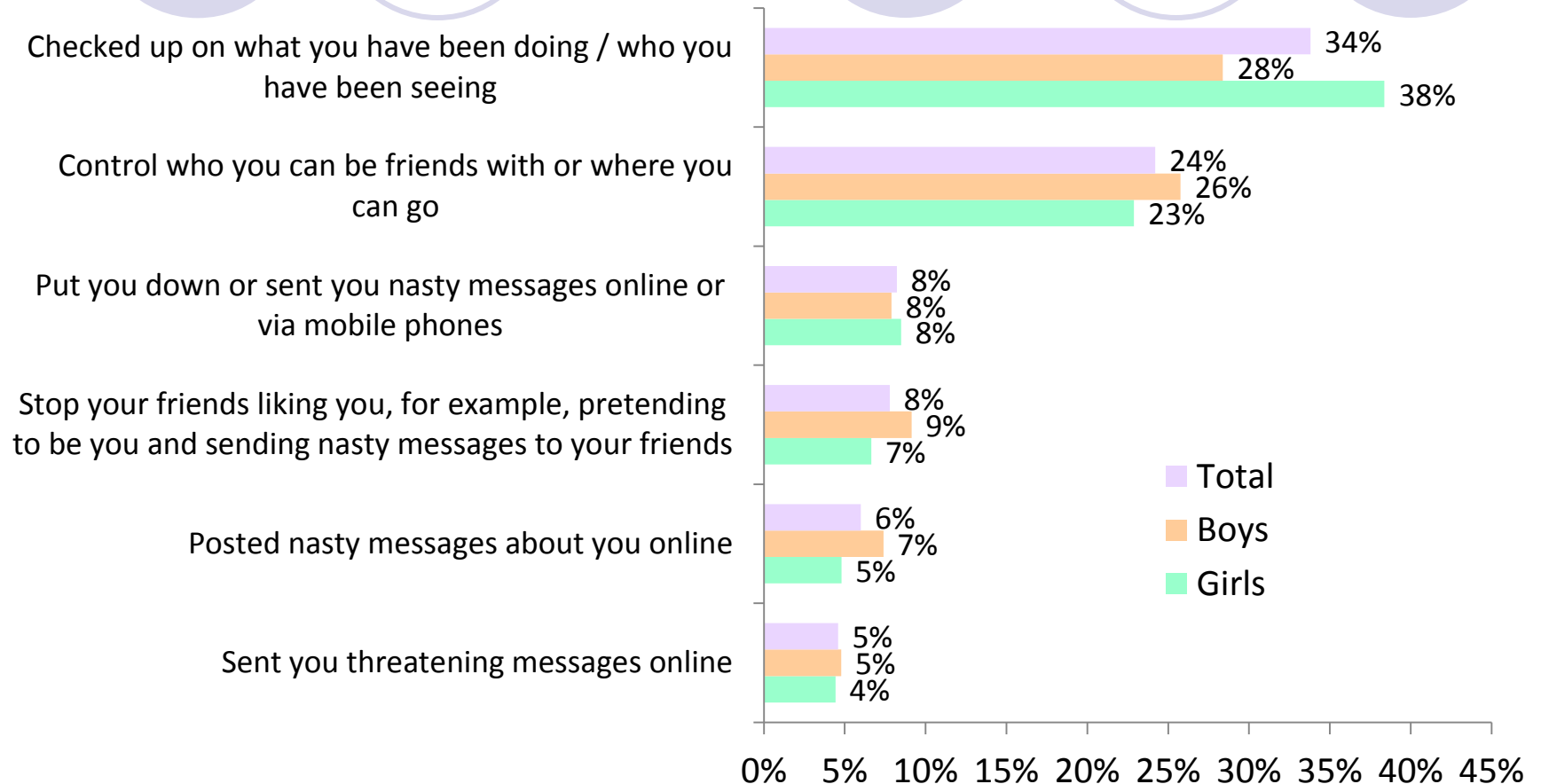
- Higher incidences of emotional vs. physical abuse
- No statistically significant differences between boys and girls in terms of incidence of face to face abuse

# Other forms of Emotional Violence- Qualitative Research

- **Jealousy** : controlling where someone can go, what they can wear, who they can be friends with
- **Control**: demands for partner to 'check' in, constant phone calls to see what they are up to
- **Surveillance**: calling friends to see what partner is up to, showing up uninvited
- **Isolation**: preventing from spending time with friends
- **Threatening** to break up if partner didn't do as asked

# Online Violence

Base: 500 teenagers



- 44% have experienced some form of online partner violence
- No differences between boys and girls.
- Increases with age: 36% aged 14y, 52% aged 17y)

# Online Forms of Partner Violence- Qualitative

- Checking **who Facebook friends are** and **demanding to 'unfriend'** certain friends (especially of the opposite sex)
- Asking for partner's **Facebook password** so they can check their personal messages and 'block' friends themselves
- Through partner's account **sending messages to friends**, especially friends of opposite sex, asking them to **'back-off'**
- **Monitoring posts and 'likes'** and demanding from partner to delete them
- Using 'likes' on posts or pictures to **'get back'** at partner

He asked me for my Facebook password [...] He contacted those friends I used to talk to and told them with that I have a boyfriend and never to speak to me again... I had many fights with my friends because of him (my boyfriend), Girl 14 years

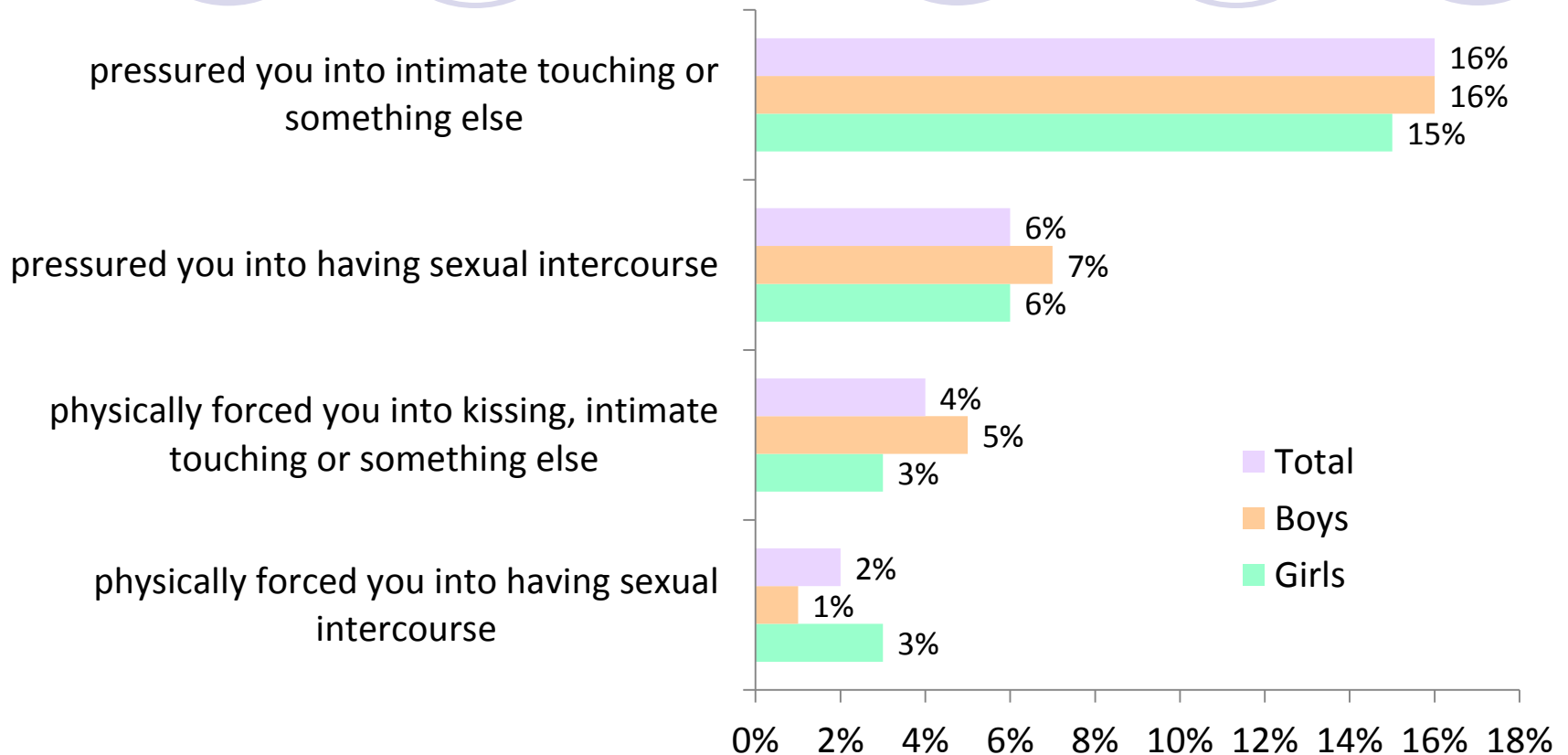
He asked me for my Facebook password and you know the phrase 'When you have nothing to hide, you have nothing to fear' so I gave it to him so he could see that I was ok, Girl 17 years

People may think that it is not a good idea to stop 'liking' posts because my boyfriend said so, but I think that's the way it should be because if he is reasonable, I should also be reasonable, Girl 16 years

He got mad (when I 'liked' a post). He got mad and we got into an argument about this, and about comments I put. He got mad for example about why I commented that someone's photo was great for example, and then he would delete the comment. I also deleted (his comments) and it evened the score, Girl 17 years

# Sexual Violence- Face to Face

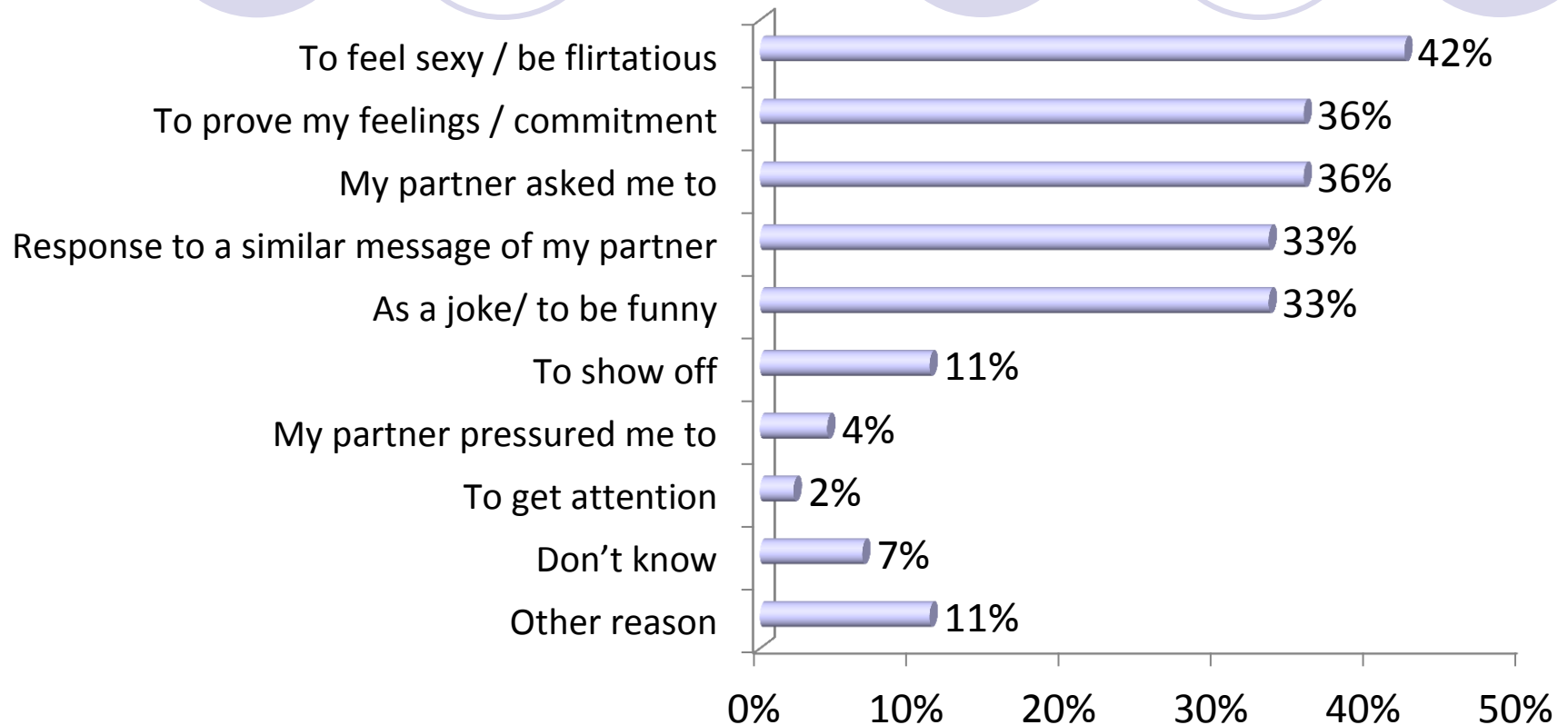
Base: 490 teenagers



- ≈ 1 in 5 (18%) have experienced some form of sexual partner violence
- Higher incidence among 16 year olds, domestic violence victims, young people with negative gender attitudes

# Sexting – Sending Sexual Messages Online or on Mobile Phones

Base: 45 teenagers



- 5.6% of girls and 15% of boys (Stat. Sig.) have sent sexual messages of themselves to their partner- during or after the relationship had ended
- 13% of girls and 29% of boys **have shared** the sexual message of their partner
- Majority (49%) claiming that they did it as a 'joke'

# Sexting—Qualitative Results

- Common trend to send naked pictures of themselves through ‘Snapchat’, because it is not ‘stored’
- Younger people would be more inclined to send sexual texts’, in order to feel ‘sexual’ , ‘wanted’ and ‘desired’ or in order to flirt— express their sexuality
- Some young people claim to send these texts out of love, feeling the need to comply with the partner’s request. It is also a sign that the other person finds you attractive (it's flattering).
- *‘Boys ask their girlfriend's for a picture so that they can brag about it to their friends’*
- *‘Boys may want a naked picture to take revenge and vindictively pay their girlfriend back for something she did’*

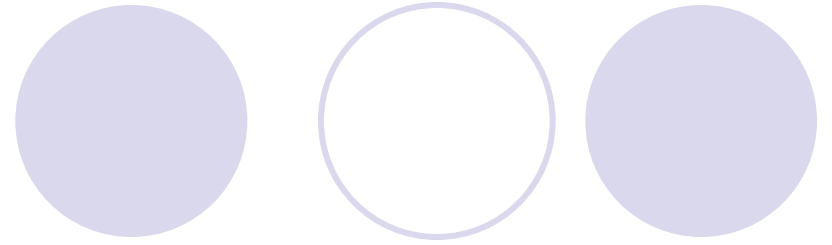
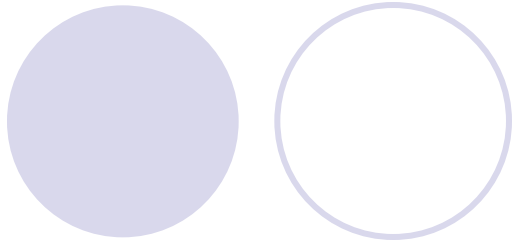


*One girl in my class had sent a (naked) picture of herself to her boyfriend and in the end this picture ended up in the Facebook accounts of the entire class! [...] Basically because she broke up with him it must have been some kind of revenge.*

*The whole school had turned against her....the boys would harass her in the school. It wasn't nice. And she also suffered sexual abuse. Well, it was sure that this was coming! They would send her messages, they would forcefully grab and kiss her and touch her against her will.*

*She slashed her wrists 5-6 times because of this.*

*Girl, 15 years*



**ASSOCIATED FACTORS**

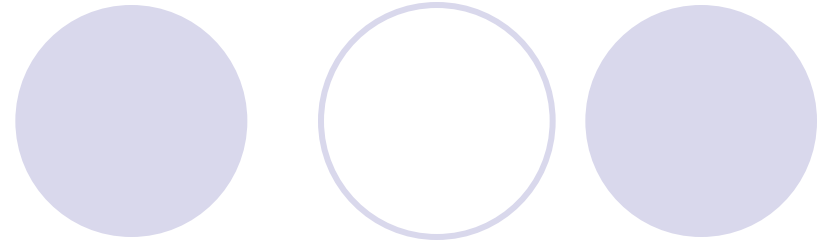
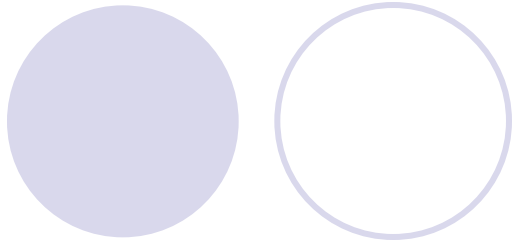
# Associated Factors- VICTIMS of ONLINE Violence

Associated Factor	Girls	Boys
Age	.285	<b>1.629</b>
Older partner (2 years or older)	.566	<b>1.621</b>
Having aggressive friends	.461	<b>.815</b>
Negative Gender Attitudes	.579	<b>2.446</b>
Bullying Perpetrator	.809	<b>1.200</b>
Bullying Victim	<b>.491</b>	-.314
Both bullying victim and bully	<b>1.025</b>	.124

- *Logistic regression analyses were run Nagelkerke R square has been used. In the social sciences R2 above 0.2 are generally considered as good*

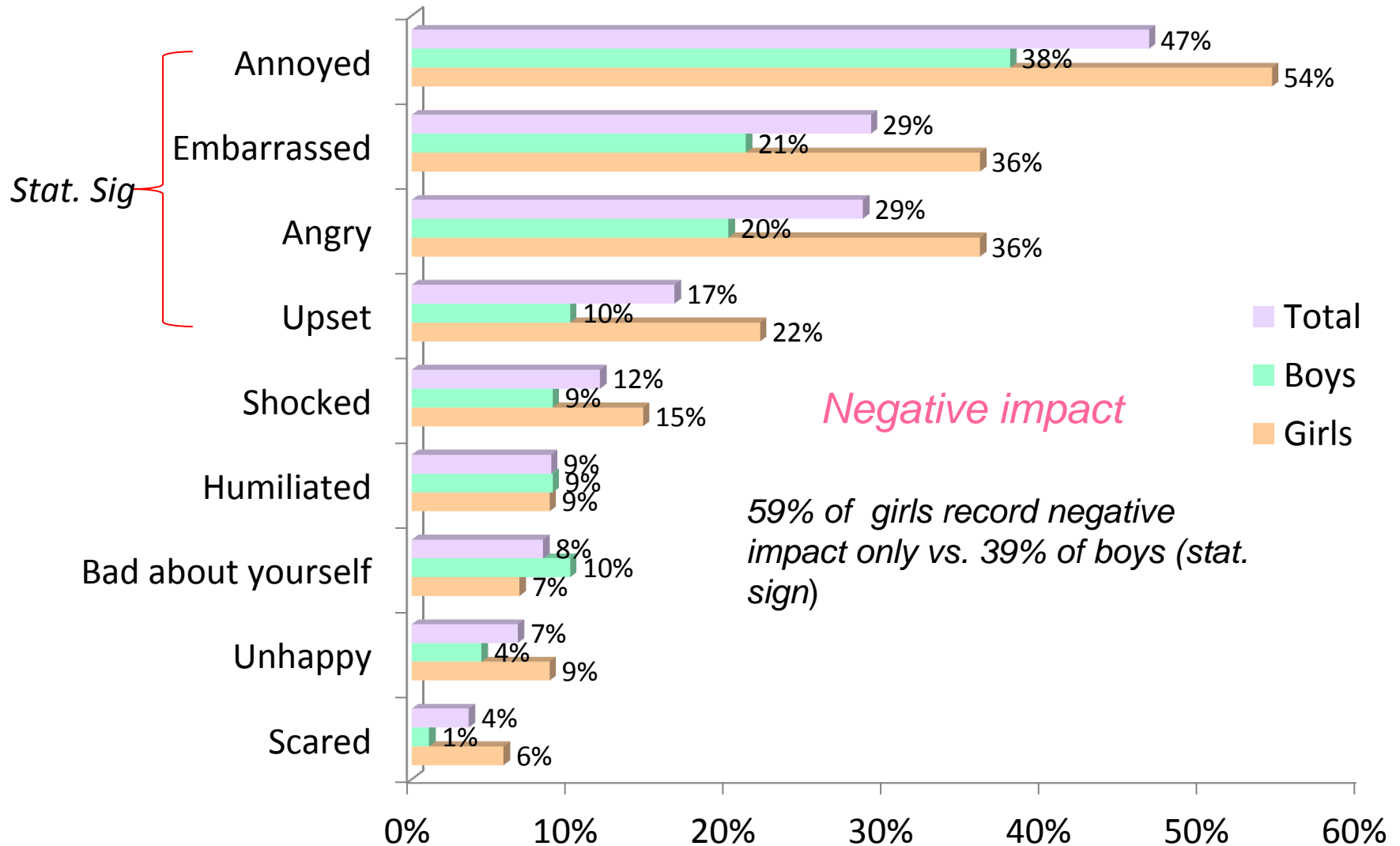
# Associated Factors- PERPETRATORS of ONLINE Violence

Associated Factor	Girls	Boys
Age	.392	<b>2.724</b>
Older partner (2 years or older)	.407	<b>1.158</b>
Having aggressive friends	.954	<b>1.557</b>
Bullying Victim	.364	<b>.640</b>
Bullying Perpetrator	<b>.838</b>	.485
Violence at home	<b>.666</b>	.496
Negative Gender Attitudes	<b>.633</b>	.574

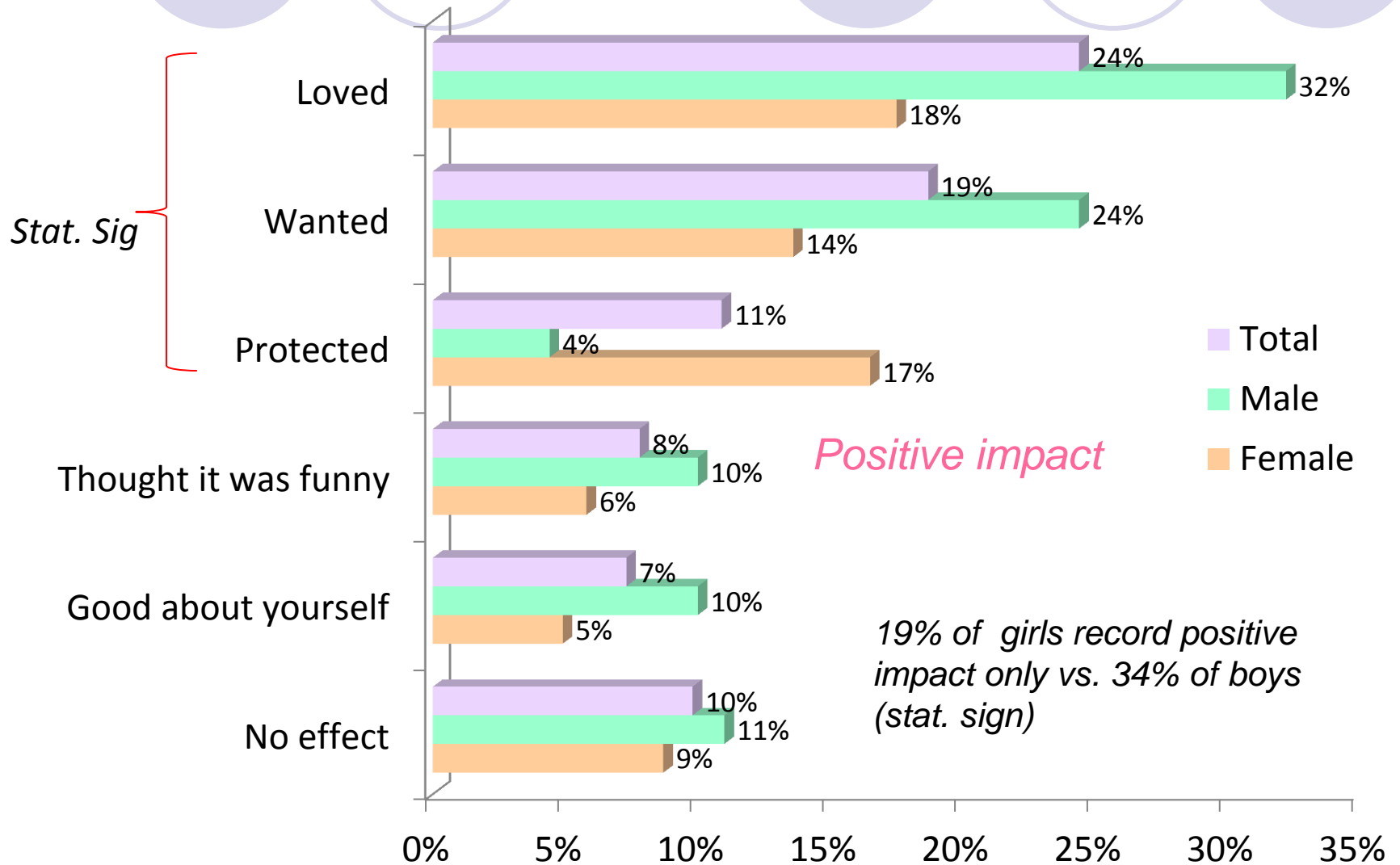


# **IMPACT OF IPV IN ADOLESCENT RELATIONSHIPS**

# Impact of Experiences of Online Violence



# Impact of Experiences of Online Violence



# Impact of experiences-Qualitative

There were times when some of my friends would not even talk to me... They would say that because you are in a relationship now with him you don't talk to us, you don't go out with us anymore, you don't even say 'hello', Girl 17y

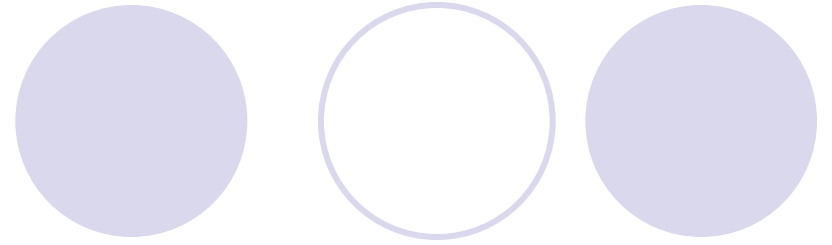
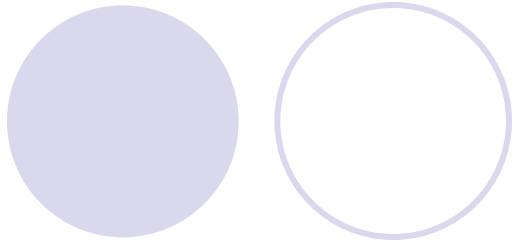
Because I didn't want to break up with him, because I really liked him and wanted him, I would just take it and keep my mouth shut, Girl 17y

I developed many insecurities about myself, about my identity, about who I am... even about my friends... about everything... , Girl 16y

It was the way he was forcing me (to have sex)... he was so adamant, I had never seen him like this. It was one of the few times that I couldn't handle it and I would break down and cry in front of him [...]His whole behavior was so horrible [...] I couldn't take it. I was a mess. Psychologically I was a mess , Girl 18y

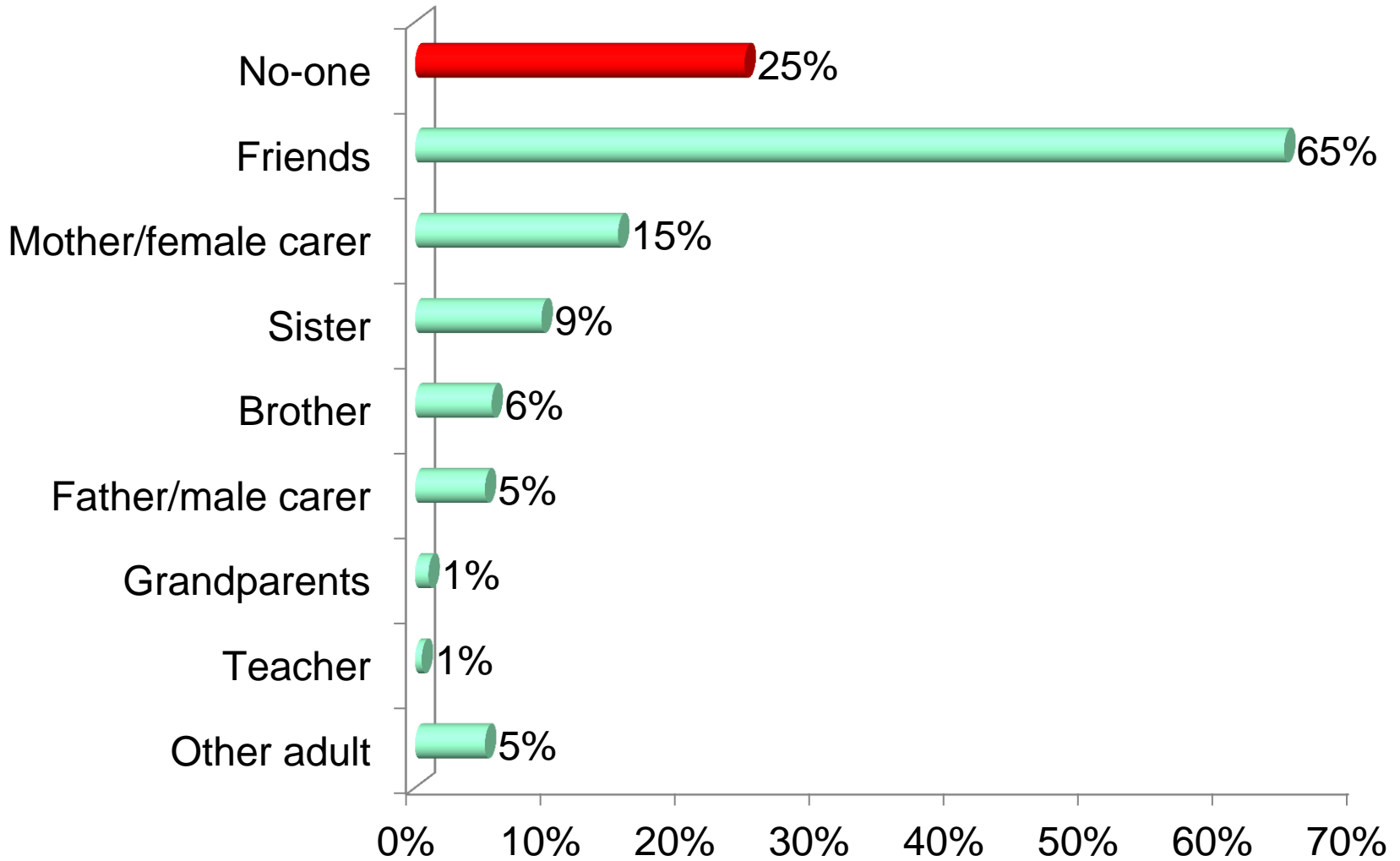
..he disrespected me at all levels...I never felt so devastated..., Girl 16y





**INTERVENTIONS- ASKING FOR HELP**

# Help- seeking



# Qualitative Results- Perceptions about the abuse

- Considering offline and online control as '**normal**', 'acceptable', 'justifiable', 'reasonable'.
- *'Jealousy is a **sign of love** and caring'*
- *'It's a **phase** and it will pass'*
- *'This is just a **part of being in a relationship**'.*
- Accepting the abuse because it's **difficult to break up**: *'because it was a long relationship, and it was my comfort zone, my security blanket... and it was just hard to let it go'*
- Justifiable because they do the same thing back too *'it evens the **score**'*
- **'Victim-blaming'** : *'If you give him a reason, for example if you wear something short'*
- *'It's ok to give your Facebook password or let him check your phone to show that you have nothing to hide'*

Basically I don't know, I did not want to talk to anyone of my teachers, I do not feel comfortable talking to (teacher / counselor), especially about personal issues, I do not feel comfortable talking to strangers .... I don't trust them.. Girl 17y

Well I don't think that friends can help. Basically because some of them probably never had a relationship so there's nothing they can tell you really. They couldn't get into your shoes; they would just give you their opinion but that wouldn't count much. Girl, 15y

I felt a lot better when people that are close to me, people that I trust talk to me and give me that strength so this relationship won't bring me down. Girl, 18y

What would click for young people let's say, was not if someone told me 'this is what is right and this is what is a wrong in a relationship' but if they said 'do you feel this?', 'are you experiencing such and such' and then you'd say 'Oh yes, I do feel that', 'yes this is thing is happening in my relationship'. They would then clarify that 'do you know that this actually that', Girl 16y

**Thanks for your attention!**

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