

Teen girls in most deprived areas 5 times as likely to be assaulted

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Teen girls living in the most deprived areas are five times as likely to be assaulted as their affluent male and female peers, reveals research published online in *Emergency Medicine Journal*.

Young men are twice as likely to be a victim of assault as young women, but the link between deprivation and assault is far stronger for their female peers, the study shows.

Violence is the third leading cause of death among 15 to 19 year olds and the 14th leading cause of death among 10 to 14 year olds worldwide. In 2007, around 66,000 children and teens in England and Wales were treated for injuries sustained during violent assault.

The researchers base their findings on [emergency care](#) records between October 2005 and September 2006 for the seven hospitals serving the three cities of Cardiff, Swansea, and Newport, and six feeder towns including Merthyr Tydfil, Caerphilly, Bridgend and Neath Port Talbot.

During the 12 months of the study, almost 1,500 children and teens up to the age of 17 were treated for assault injuries.

Rates of assault for boys and young men were similar in both cities and towns - 14.2/1000 of the population in cities and 13.1/1000 in towns.

Those living in the most deprived areas - identified by postcode - were between 2 (towns) and 2.6 (cities) times as likely to be a victim of

violence as those living in the most affluent areas.

Assault rates for boys and young men were twice as high as they were for [girls](#) and young women during the study period. The rates for girls were 6/1000 of the population in cities and 5.6/1000 in towns.

But the disparity between girls living in the most deprived areas and those living in the most affluent was significantly wider than it was for boys.

Girls in the most deprived city areas were more than five times as likely to be assaulted as their peers living in the most affluent areas. Those living in the most deprived areas of towns were almost three times as likely to be assaulted.

"A principal means of preventing violence is targeted policing, informed by knowledge about where, precisely, violence occurs. In the past, police resources have been redeployed from feeder towns and suburbs into city centres as part of efforts to target resources more effectively," comment the authors. "However on the basis of these findings, this redeployment may not be justified."

Provided by British Medical Journal

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