

## SAFETY

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Both our perception and experience of safety strongly influence wellbeing. People who hold fears for their personal safety and security are likely to have a lower quality of life and a decreased sense of wellbeing, and may find it difficult to participate fully in their community [1,2]. Where offending in a community is perceived to increase, or actually does increase, the community may become less appealing for new residents and for people who go there for recreation or other activities [3-5]. Communities with low levels of offending attract greater investment from the private sector, which in turn creates more employment opportunities and contributes to a higher quality of life, as the community is more stable and healthier [6-8].

Rates of child abuse and neglect are of particular concern in New Zealand [9]. International evidence emphasises that it is important to have a safe, secure and attached childhood. If a child experiences repeated abuse or neglect, this harms their development, progression and functioning [9]. Child abuse and neglect are risk factors for substance misuse, risky sexual behaviour, obesity, and criminal behaviour, and are associated with poorer child and adult mental health, as well as poorer educational achievement and employment outcomes [10-13].

### Key trends within safety

In the Canterbury Wellbeing Survey, respondents from greater Christchurch indicated favourable levels of perceived safety across different locations and times of day (with the exception of Christchurch City centre after dark). The indicators also suggest that the number of family violence victimisations has remained relatively stable for greater Christchurch over the last four to five years. However, the indicators suggest that the number of property-related offences has shown an upward trend prior to falling substantially during the COVID-19 lockdown period. Oranga Tamariki reports of concern requiring further action, and findings of child abuse or neglect both increased for greater Christchurch/Canterbury in 2018.

### Key equity issues within safety

The perceptions of safety indicator suggests that having a low income or being female, elderly, or non-European is associated with increased perceived risk of harm. No breakdown data are available for the remainder of the indicators (property-related offences, Oranga Tamariki notifications requiring action, child abuse or neglect victimisations, or family violence victimisations).

### What this means for wellbeing

The relationship between safety indicators and wellbeing is complex. However, lower levels of personal exposure to harm or loss are generally relatable to improved levels of wellbeing. The data show differences in perceptions of safety for some groups (such as for females after dark in their neighbourhood and/or town/city centre and for Māori walking in their neighbourhoods after dark, compared with the total population). Other indicators (property-related victimisations, Oranga Tamariki child investigations and child abuse or neglect) suggest that exposure to harm in these contexts has been relatively stable over recent years, although recent (2018 onwards) data suggest some increase in reported harm.

### Indicators in this domain

- **Perceptions of safety**
- **Property-related victimisations**
- **Child investigations**
- **Child abuse or neglect**
- **Family violence victimisations**

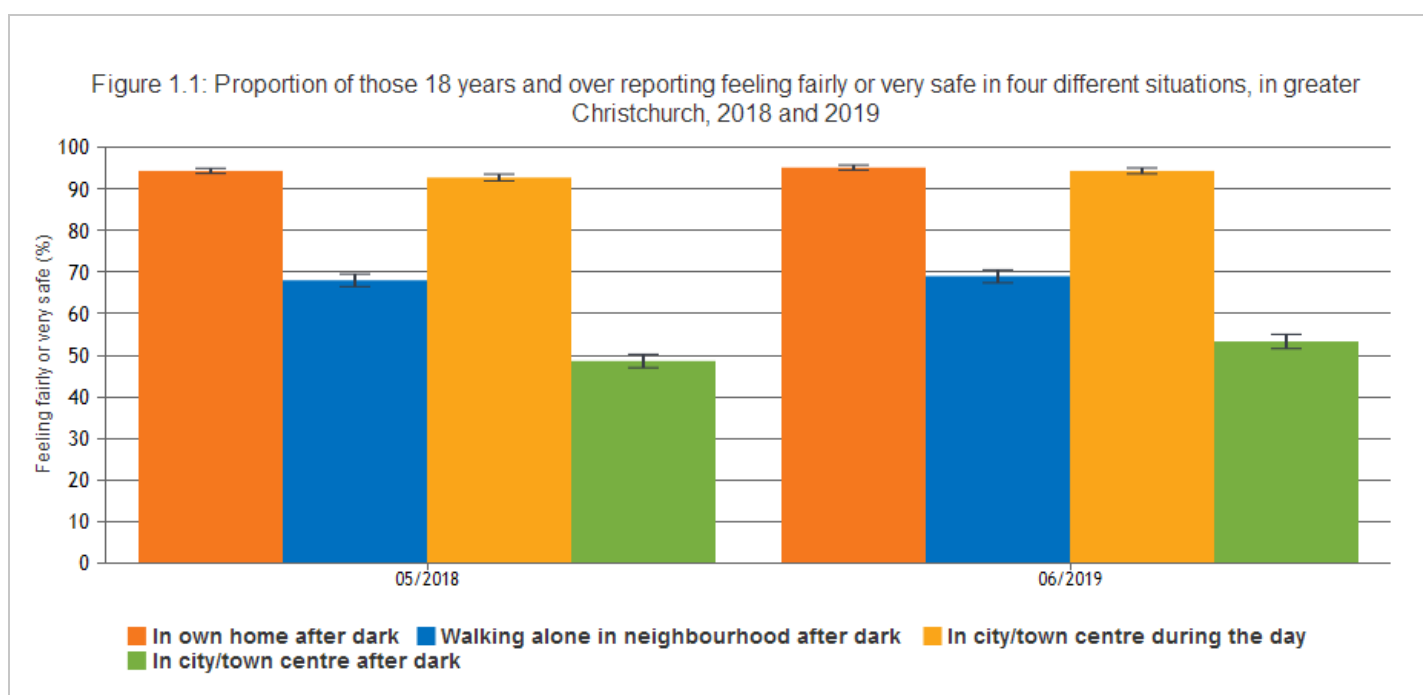


## PERCEPTIONS OF SAFETY

The wellbeing of individuals may be affected not only as a result of direct experience of harm but also as a result of a fear of harm. Individuals' perceptions of safety involves generalised judgements about the chance of injury or loss [14].

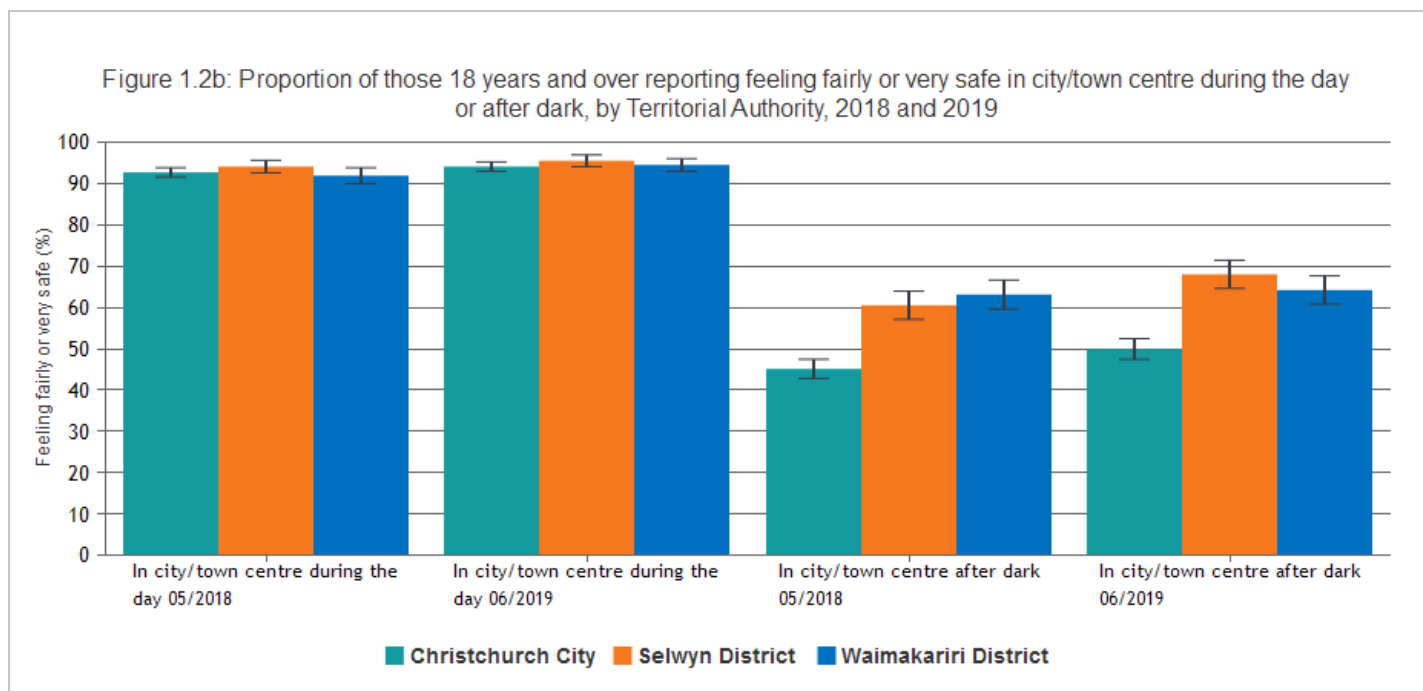
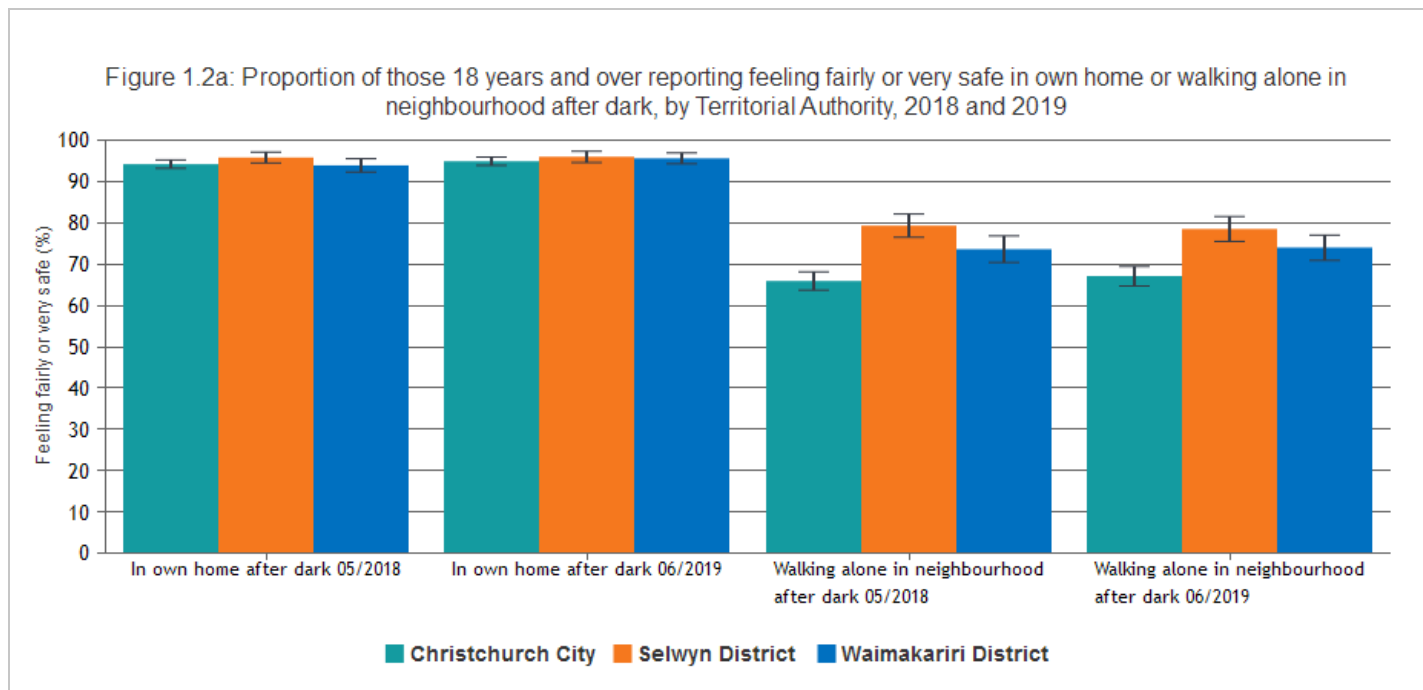
Different circumstances, times of day, and location factors tend to influence individuals' perceptions of safety. Perceptions of safety are particularly sensitive to the physical environment (e.g., one's home vs. public places) because these physical environmental factors are tangible to residents. Fear of crime may cause some people to restrict the choices they make about how to lead their lives, such as avoiding certain areas or avoiding going out at night [14,15]. The fear of crime may have more effect on some residents than actual crime and may have wider impacts on social relations [2].

This indicator presents the proportion of those 18 years and over reporting that they feel fairly or very safe in four different situations: being in their own home after dark, walking alone in their neighbourhood after dark, or walking in their city/town centre during the day, and the city/town centre after dark. This question was first included in the Canterbury Wellbeing Survey in 2018.



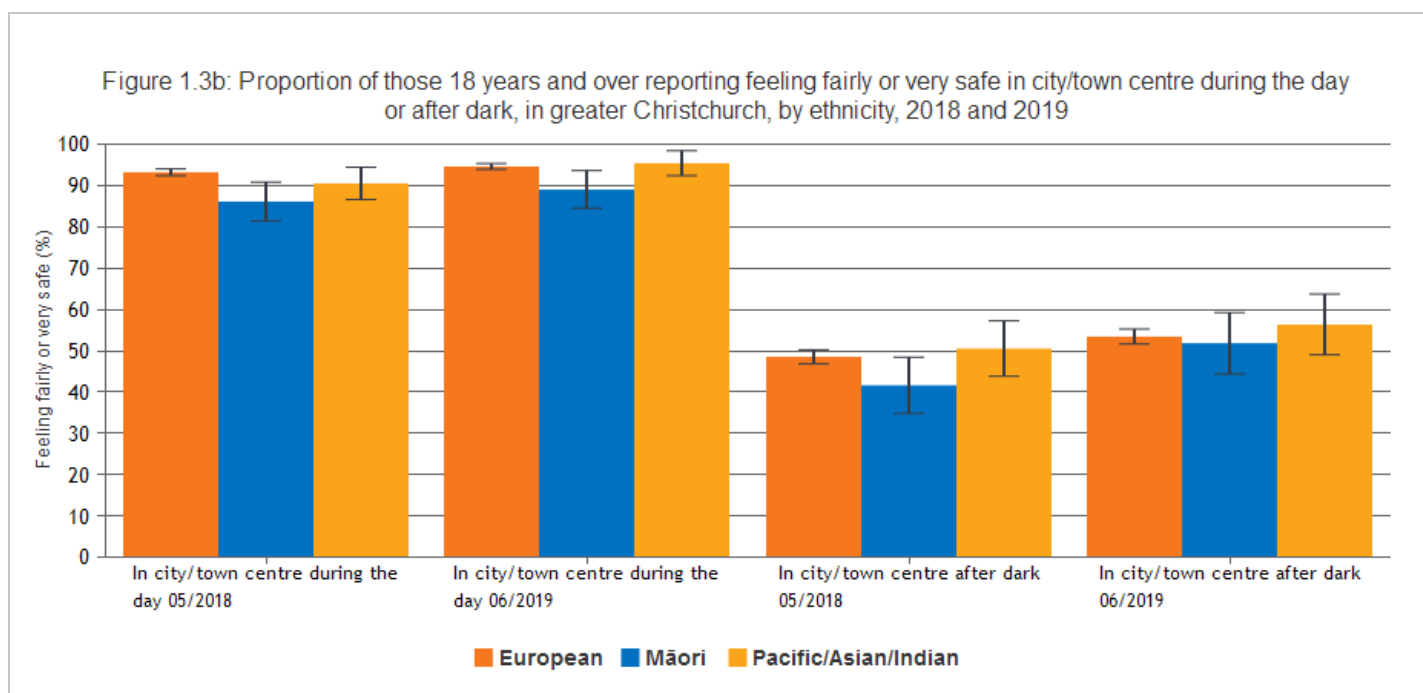
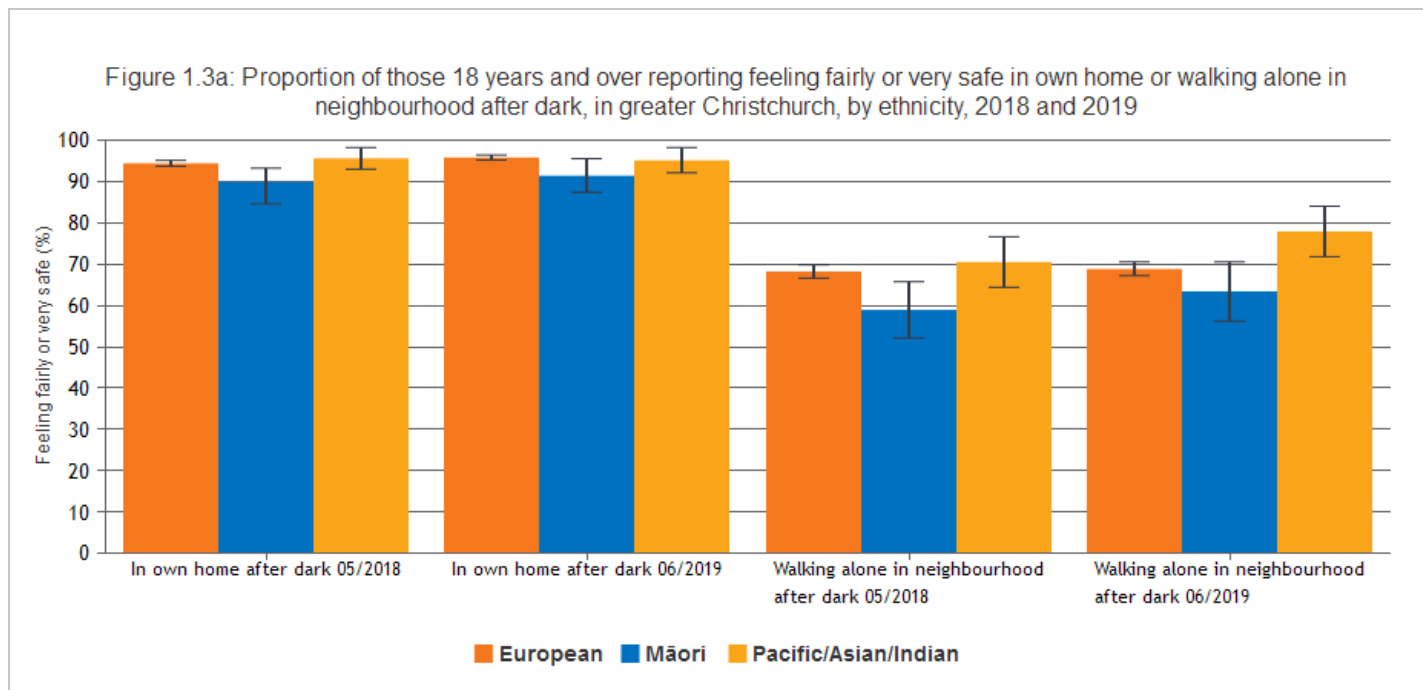
The figure shows that almost all respondents (over 90%) felt fairly safe or very safe in their own home after dark, and in the town/city centre during the day, in 2018 and 2019. Approximately 70 percent of respondents indicated that they felt fairly safe or very safe walking alone in their own neighbourhood after dark (2018 and 2019). Less than half (48.6%) of all respondents felt fairly safe or very safe walking in the city or town centre after dark in 2018, however, the proportion feeling fairly safe or very safe increased statistically significantly to 53.3 percent in 2019. The results show that different circumstances and times of day tend to influence individuals' perceptions of safety.

## Breakdown by Territorial Authority



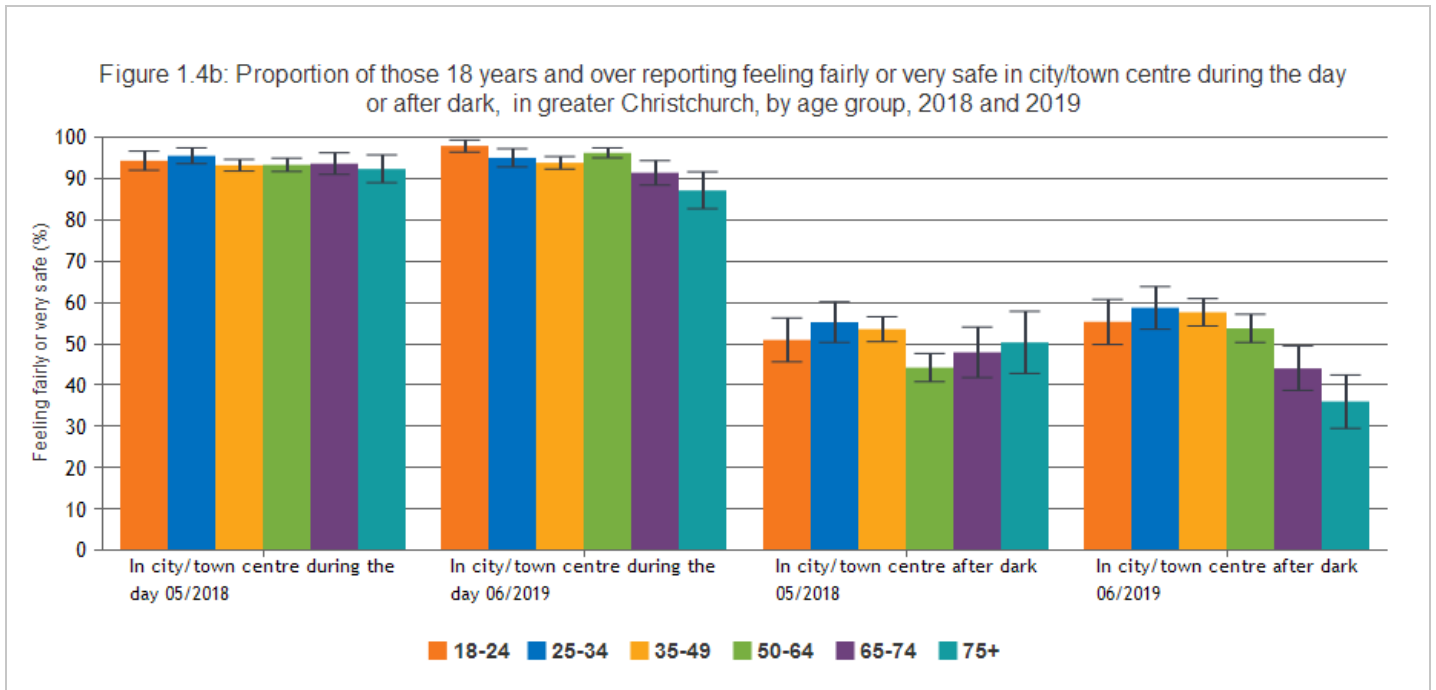
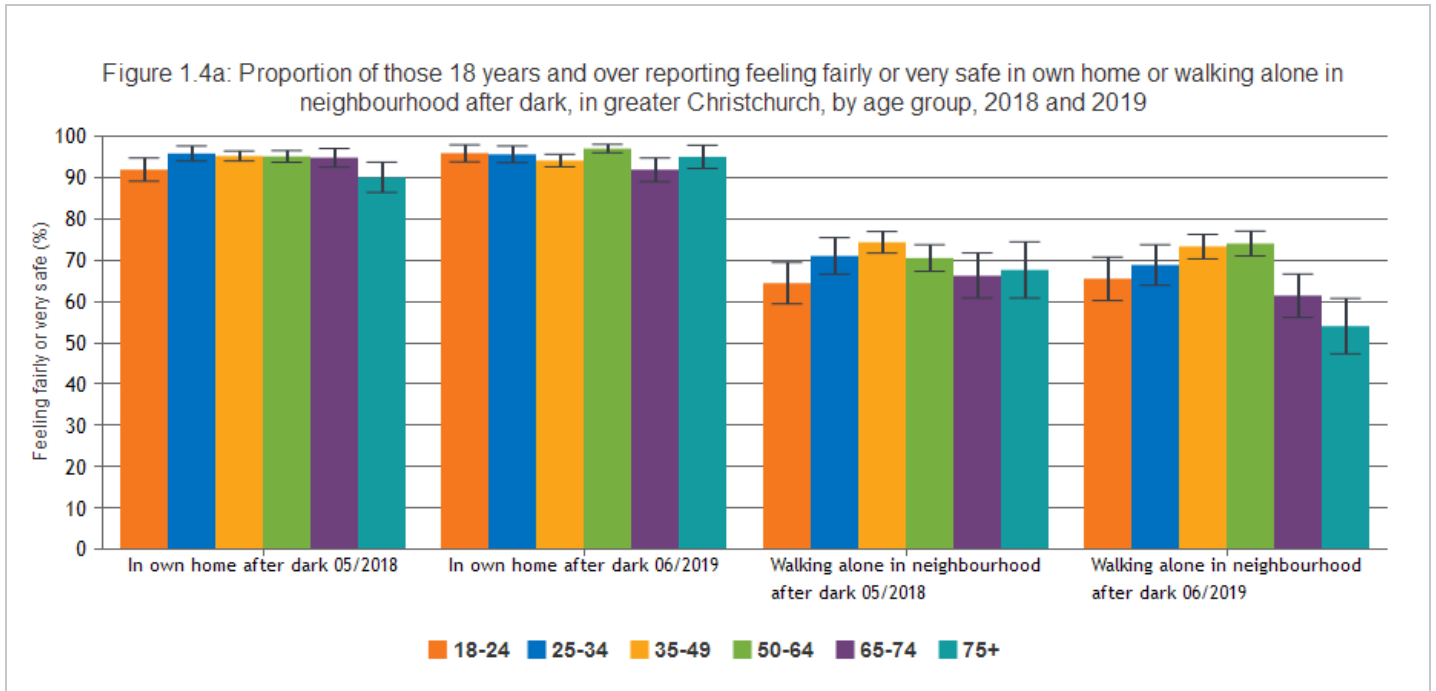
The figures show that a similar proportion of respondents (approximately 90%) felt fairly safe or very safe in their own homes after dark (Figure 1.2a) and in the town or city centre during the day (Figure 1.2b), across the three Territorial Authority areas, in 2018 and 2019. However, statistically significant differences in perceived safety are apparent for the two categories 'walking alone in their own neighbourhood after dark' (Figure 1.2a: Selwyn District, 78.5%; Waimakariri District, 74.0%; Christchurch City, 67.1%; in 2019) and 'walking in the town or city centre after dark' (Figure 1.2b: Selwyn District, 68.0%; Waimakariri District, 64.2%; Christchurch City, 49.9%; in 2019). Overall, perception of safety appears to be highest in Selwyn District and lowest in Christchurch City, particularly in the city centre after dark (although this aspect improved statistically significantly for Christchurch City during the period 2018-2019, from 45.1% to 49.9%).

## Breakdown by ethnicity



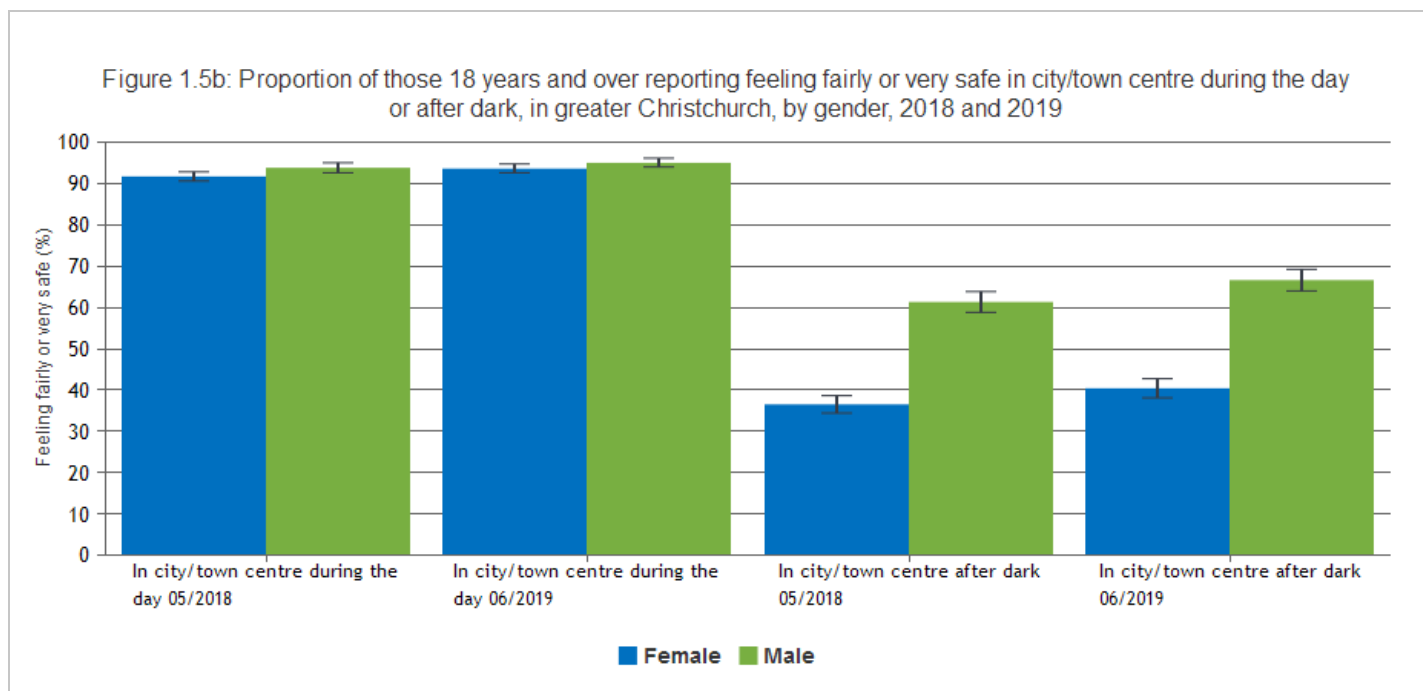
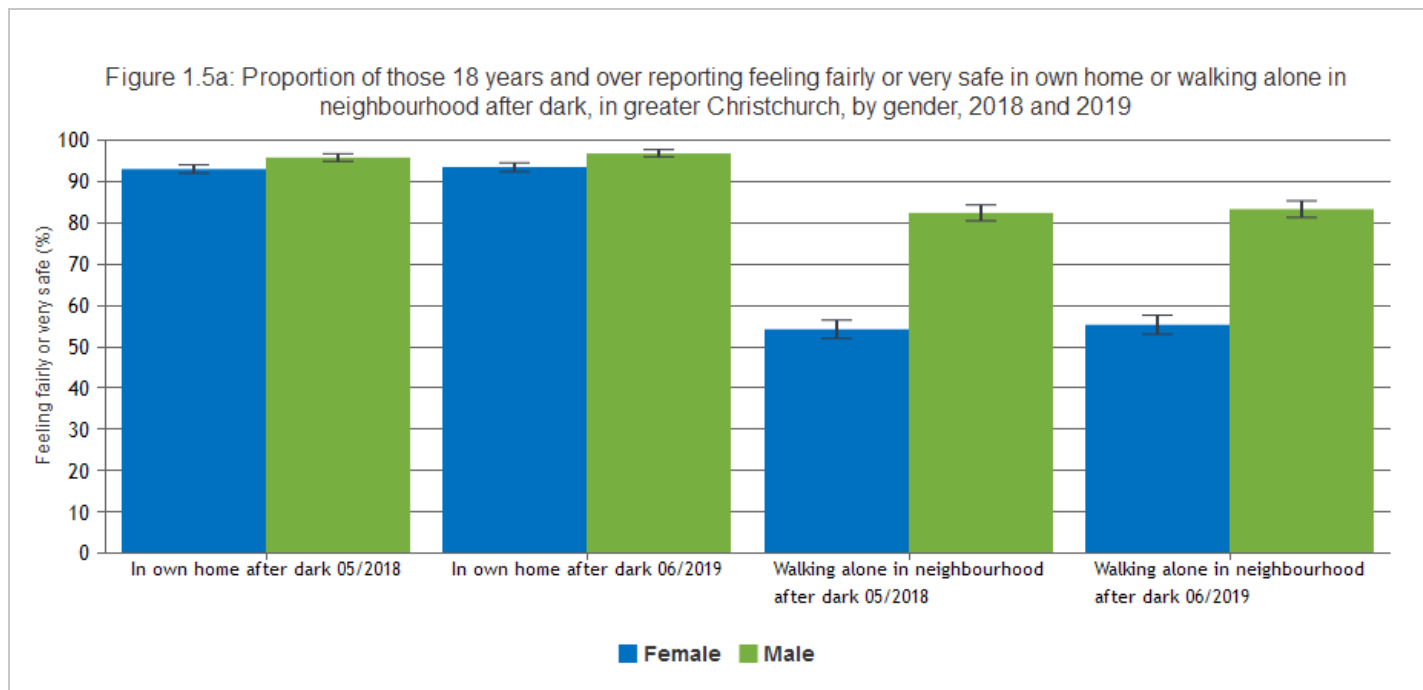
Figures 1.3a and 1.3b show perceptions of safety, by ethnicity, in 2018 and 2019. A similar pattern can be seen across all four situations: Māori respondents generally reported lower levels of perceived safety (proportion feeling fairly or very safe) than European and Pacific/Asian/Indian respondents (but the differences are generally not statistically significant). However, Figure 1.3a does show a statistically significantly lower proportion of Māori respondents reporting feeling fairly or very safe when walking alone in their neighbourhood after dark, compared with both European respondents and Pacific/Asian/Indian respondents, in 2018 (58.9%, 68.2%, and 70.5%, respectively), and Pacific/Asian/Indian respondents in 2019 (63.4% and 77.9%, respectively).

## Breakdown by age



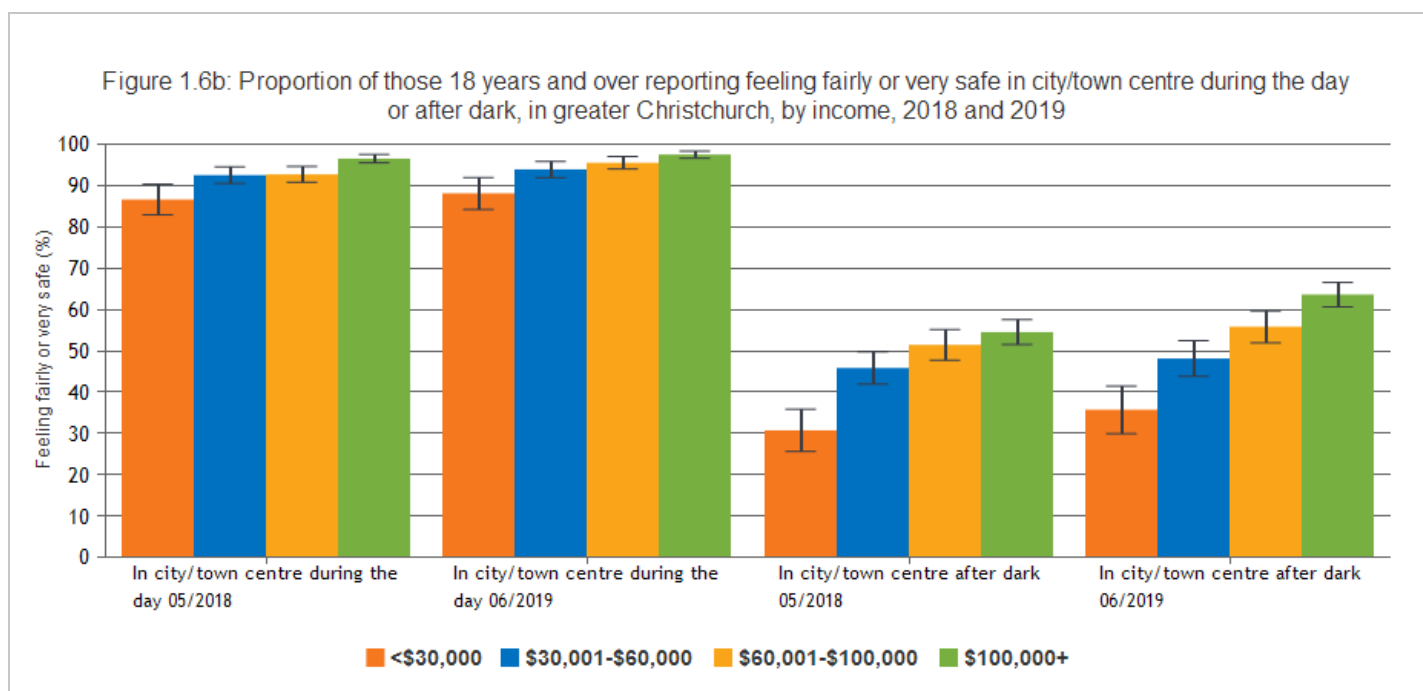
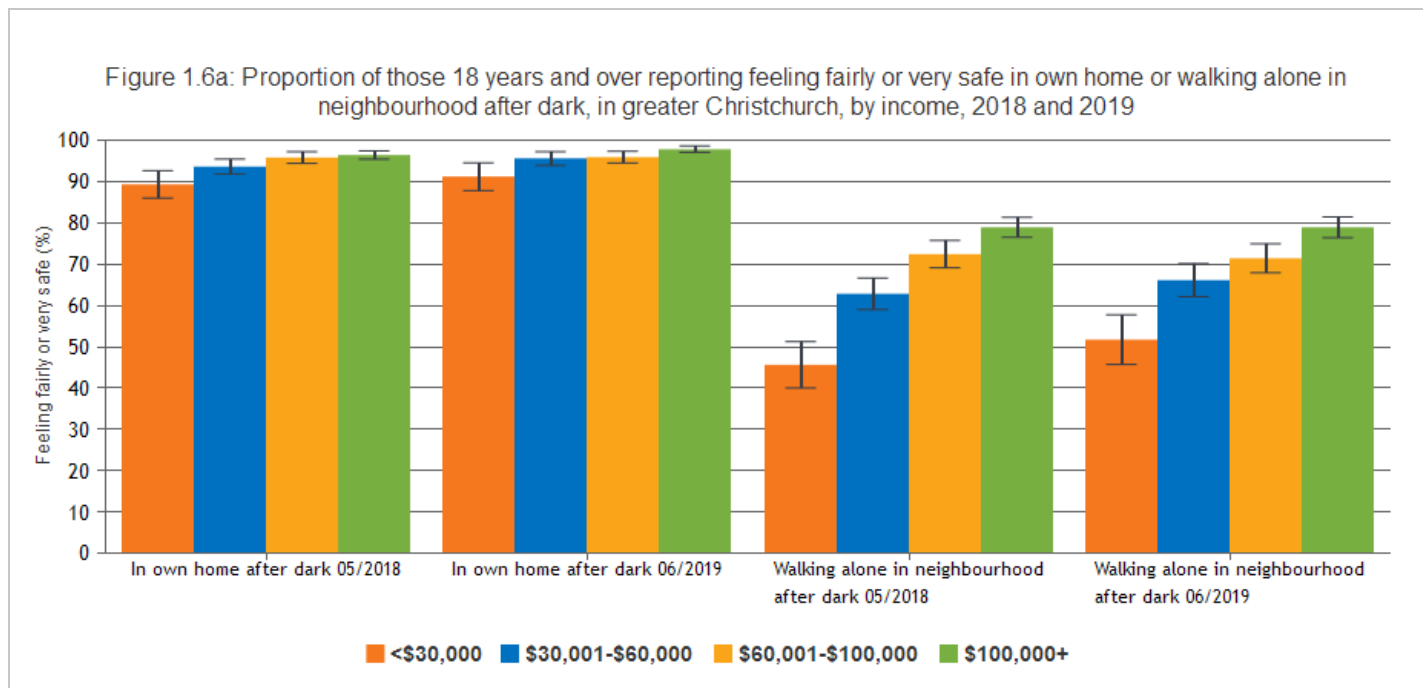
Figures 1.4a and 1.4b show perceptions of safety, by age group, in 2018 and 2019. The figures show a pattern of generally similar perceptions of safety for the age groups 18 to 24 years, 25 to 34 years, 35 to 49 years, and 50 to 64 years. However, respondents aged 65 to 74 years, and 75 years and over were statistically significantly less likely to report feeling fairly or very safe for the ‘outdoors after dark’ situations, compared with the younger age groups in 2019 (for example ‘in city/town centre after dark’, 36%, 75+ years compared with 58.7%, 25-34 years, and walking alone in neighbourhood after dark, 54.0%, 75+ years compared with 68.8%, 25-34 years). Generally, in the situations that suggest lower levels of safety (such as outdoors after dark), older respondents tend to report feeling less safe than younger respondents, and the age gradient appears more pronounced in 2019 than in 2018.

## Breakdown by gender



Figures 1.5a and 1.5b show that some aspects of the context differentially influence men and women's perceptions of safety. The results highlight women's statistically significantly lower perception of safety in outdoor environments after dark (for example, in 2019, only 40.4% of female respondents indicated feeling fairly or very safe walking in the city/town centre after dark, compared to 66.6% of males).

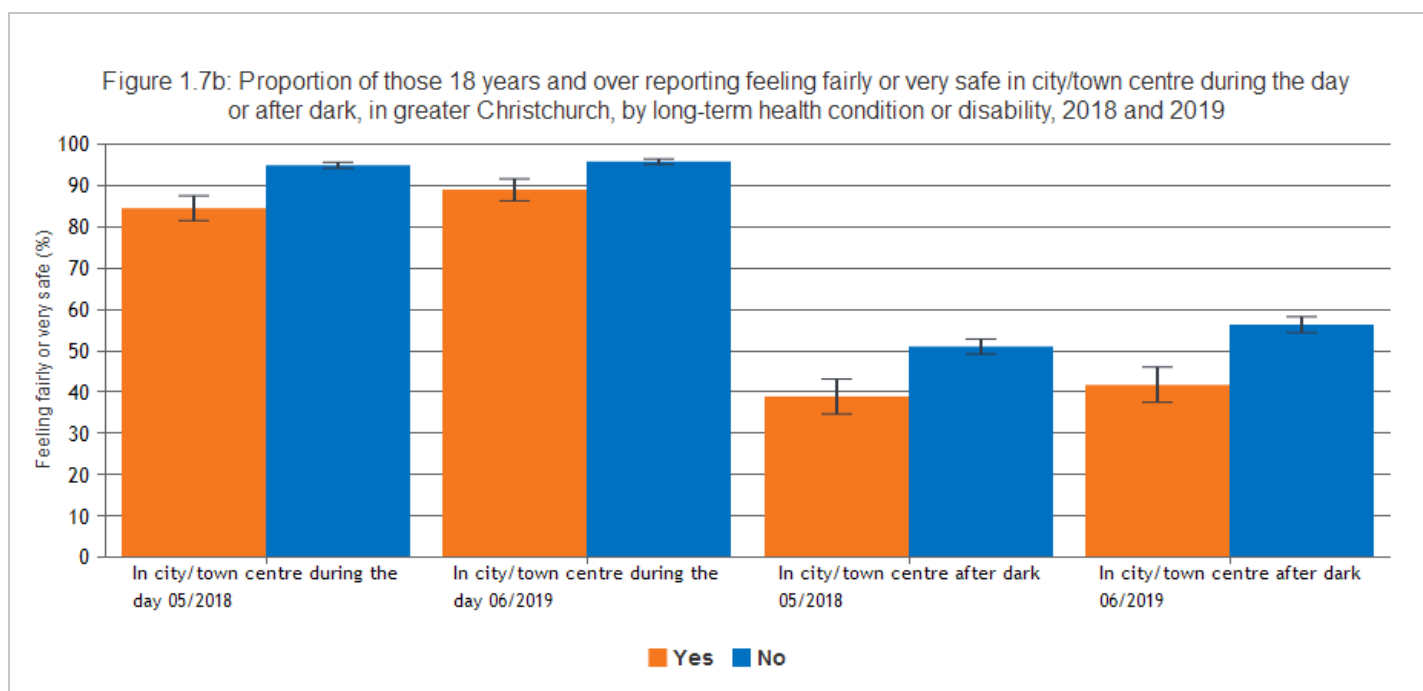
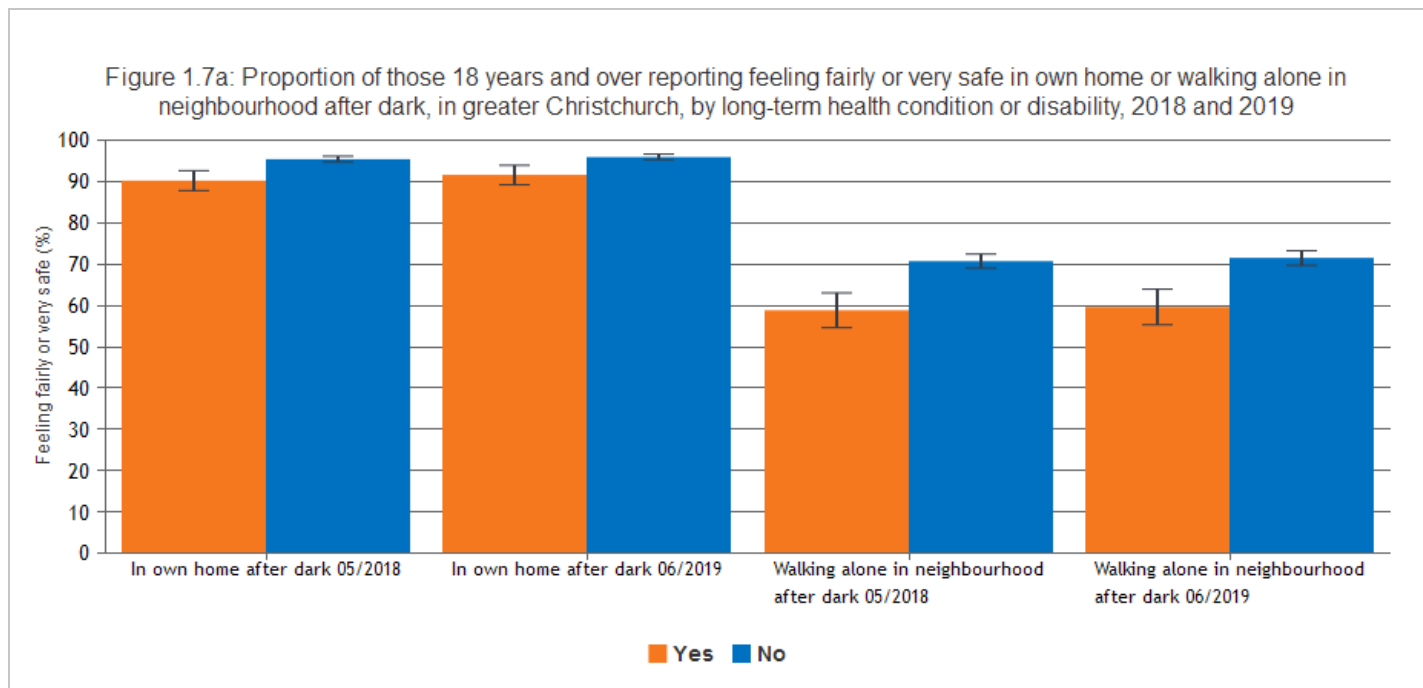
## Breakdown by income



Figures 1.6a and 1.6b show a clear positive relationship between annual household income and respondents' perceptions of safety. The proportion of respondents feeling fairly safe or very safe in each of the four situations shown tends to increase with increasing income. In all four situations (home, neighbourhood, town/city centre after dark, and town/city centre during the day) respondents from the lowest income group (<\$30,000) had statistically significantly lower levels of perceived safety compared with respondents from the highest income group (\$100,000+). In 2019, the income gradient is most pronounced for the two situations 'in city/town centre after dark' and 'walking alone in the neighbourhood after dark'.



## Breakdown by disability



The figures show that in all four situations respondents with a long-term health condition or disability had statistically significantly lower levels of perceived safety, compared with respondents without a long-term health condition or disability (averaging about 10 percentage points difference across the categories).

### Data Sources

**Source:** Canterbury District Health Board.

**Survey/data set:** Canterbury Wellbeing Survey to 2019. Access publicly available data from the Community and Public Health (Canterbury DHB) website [www.cph.co.nz/your-health/wellbeing-survey/](http://www.cph.co.nz/your-health/wellbeing-survey/)

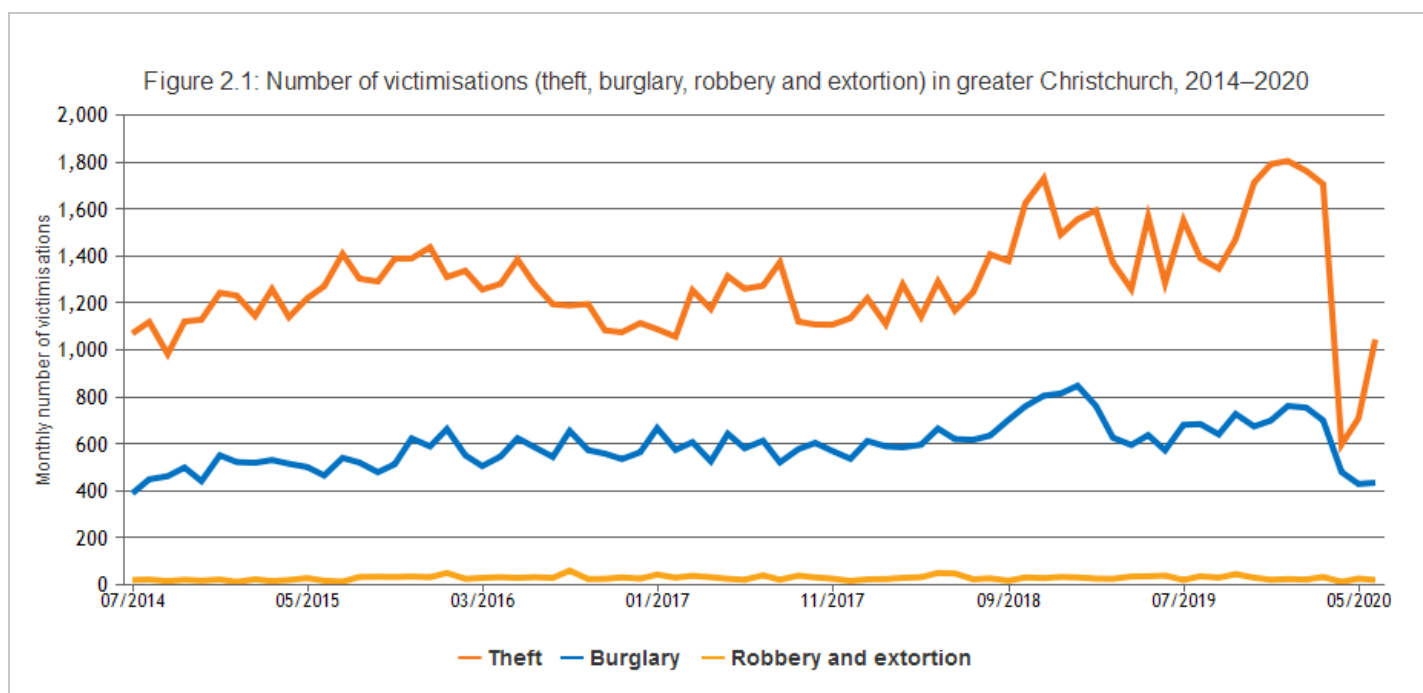
**Source data frequency:** Annually.

Metadata for this indicator is available at <https://www.canterburywellbeing.org.nz/index-data>

## PROPERTY-RELATED VICTIMISATIONS

A victimisation refers to an instance of a person, organisation or premises being exploited for a given type of offence (where an offence is any act or omission by a person that is subject to a penalty imposed by the New Zealand legal system). Property-related offences are defined as those where the intent of the offence is to obtain property or in some cases to obtain 'a benefit' (an advantage or privilege). The methods of acquisition include theft, the use of extortion or blackmail, or the use of deception [16].

This indicator presents the number of victimisations (theft, burglary, robbery and extortion) by month for the greater Christchurch area (stations from Canterbury Metro Area and Canterbury Rural combined to approximate the greater Christchurch boundary), from July 2014 to June 2020.



The figure shows reported monthly victimisation data for the period July 2014 to June 2020. Prior to the COVID-19 lockdown in early 2020, the number of victimisations for theft fluctuated from a low of 892 in September 2014 to a high of 1,804 in January 2020. The figure also shows the marked decrease in property-related victimisations during the national COVID-19 alert level-4 lockdown. Similarly, the number of victimisations for burglary has ranged from a low of 389 in July 2014 to a high of 847 in January 2019. There appears to be a trend of an overall increase in the number of theft and burglary victimisations (excluding the lockdown period). Victimisations for robbery and extortion are recorded at substantially lower numbers. This number appears relatively stable, ranging from a low of 12 in January 2015 to a high of 60 in August 2016 (generally less than 30 per month from mid-2018 to June 2020). Note that statistical trend analysis was not available for any of these data.

The Ministry of Justice also provides information on victimisations from the New Zealand Crime and Victims Survey (NZCVS). The NZCVS provides a fuller picture of crime in New Zealand than administrative data because it captures incidents of crime that may not have been reported or recorded elsewhere. The NZCVS is a nationwide, face-to-face, continuous, representative survey of adults aged 15 years and over. Respondents are asked about incidents of crime they experienced in New Zealand during the 12-month period preceding the survey interview. In Canterbury, 34.3 percent of respondents to the second NZCVS 2018-19 reported being victimised (all types of offences) once or more during the last 12-months; up from 29.8 percent in the first 2018 survey (New Zealand 30.5% and 29.3%, respectively). For property offences such as theft and/or damage, 5.2 percent of responding households (i.e., where the survey respondent's household was offended against) in Canterbury reported that they were victimised once or more during the last 12-months (pooled data from cycle-1 and cycle-2); up from 4 percent in cycle-1 (New Zealand 4.9% and 4.1%, respectively).

### Data Sources

**Source:** New Zealand Police.

**Survey/data set:** Administrative data to June 2020. Access publicly available data from NZ Police website [www.police.govt.nz/about-us/statistics-and-publications/data-and-statistics/victimisations-police-stations](http://www.police.govt.nz/about-us/statistics-and-publications/data-and-statistics/victimisations-police-stations) or from the Ministry of Justice website [www.justice.govt.nz/justice-sector-policy/research-data/nzcvs/resources-and-results/](http://www.justice.govt.nz/justice-sector-policy/research-data/nzcvs/resources-and-results/).

**Source data frequency:** Monthly.

Metadata for this indicator is available at <https://www.canterburywellbeing.org.nz/index-data>

## CHILD INVESTIGATIONS

Oranga Tamariki receive reports of possible child abuse or neglect from the courts, education, police, health, non-government organisations, families, members of the public and other notifiers. Reports of concern are those reports that include allegations of abuse or neglect including emotional, physical, and/or sexual abuse that may constitute a criminal offence. Abused and neglected children (at levels serious enough to warrant official intervention) are more likely to experience problems such as delinquency, teen pregnancy, low academic achievement, drug use and mental health problems [17]. When Oranga Tamariki receive a report of concern, a social worker determines if further action is required and what needs to happen to keep the child or young person safe. All cases receiving an investigation response are worked in consultation with Police, as necessary, following detailed protocols [18].

When monitoring outcomes such as children and young peoples' maltreatment, it is important to consider whether recorded variation is indicative of real variation in the occurrence of maltreatment (actual exposure of children to maltreatment) [12,19-22]. Monitoring data may be affected by factors that shape recognition, recording and response [28]. For example, this may include increased awareness of the need for the care and protection of children, a growing willingness by communities to contact agencies in family violence situations, high profile media cases, and social marketing campaigns, and/or changes in referral pathways [23,24].

The New Zealand referral pathways were changed in 2011, with the introduction of the Police Family Violence Investigation Report system (POLFVIR). In certain circumstances, Police now directly refer to an interagency group that specialises in preventing domestic violence, rather than referring to Oranga Tamariki. These referrals do not require statutory action by Oranga Tamariki and are recorded separately to reports of concern received by Oranga Tamariki.

This indicator presents the three-month rolling average for the number of Oranga Tamariki notifications requiring action, for the Canterbury operational area and New Zealand, from 2008 to 2018 (numbers represent reports of concern {ROC} not clients and some clients may have more than one ROC within an administrative period).

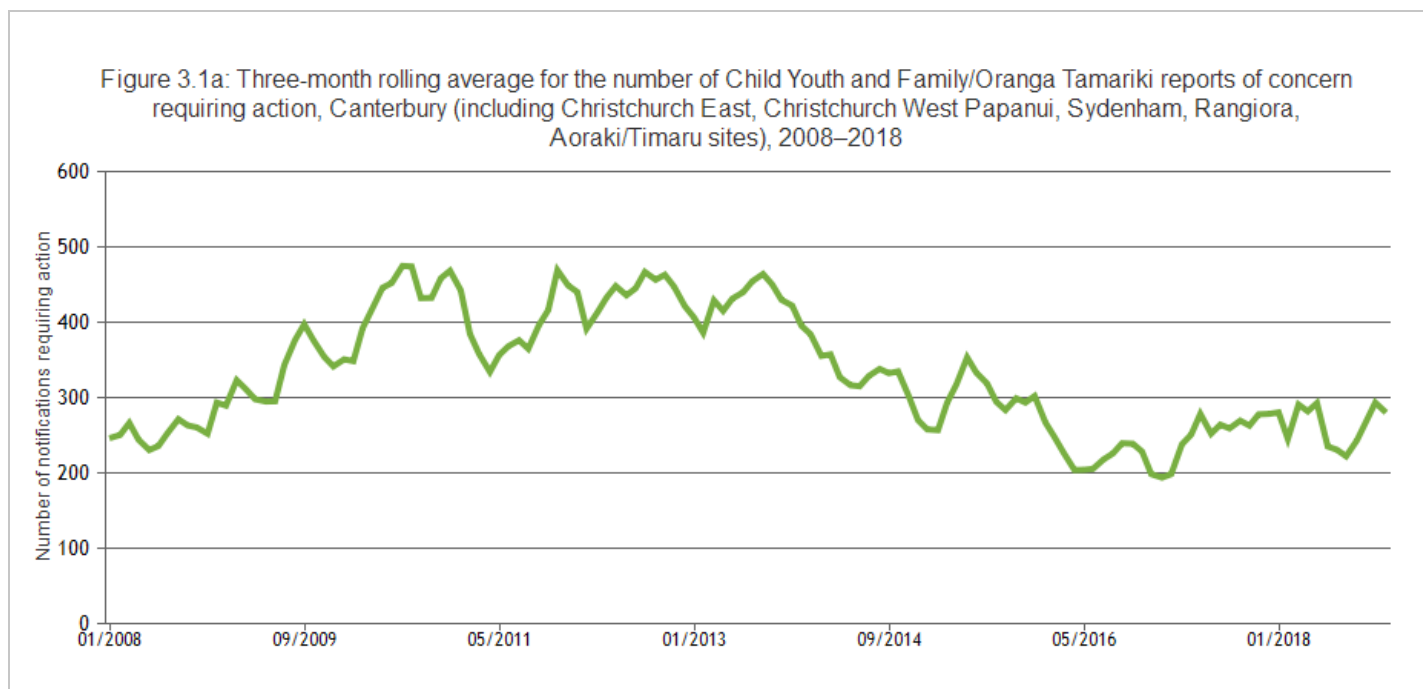
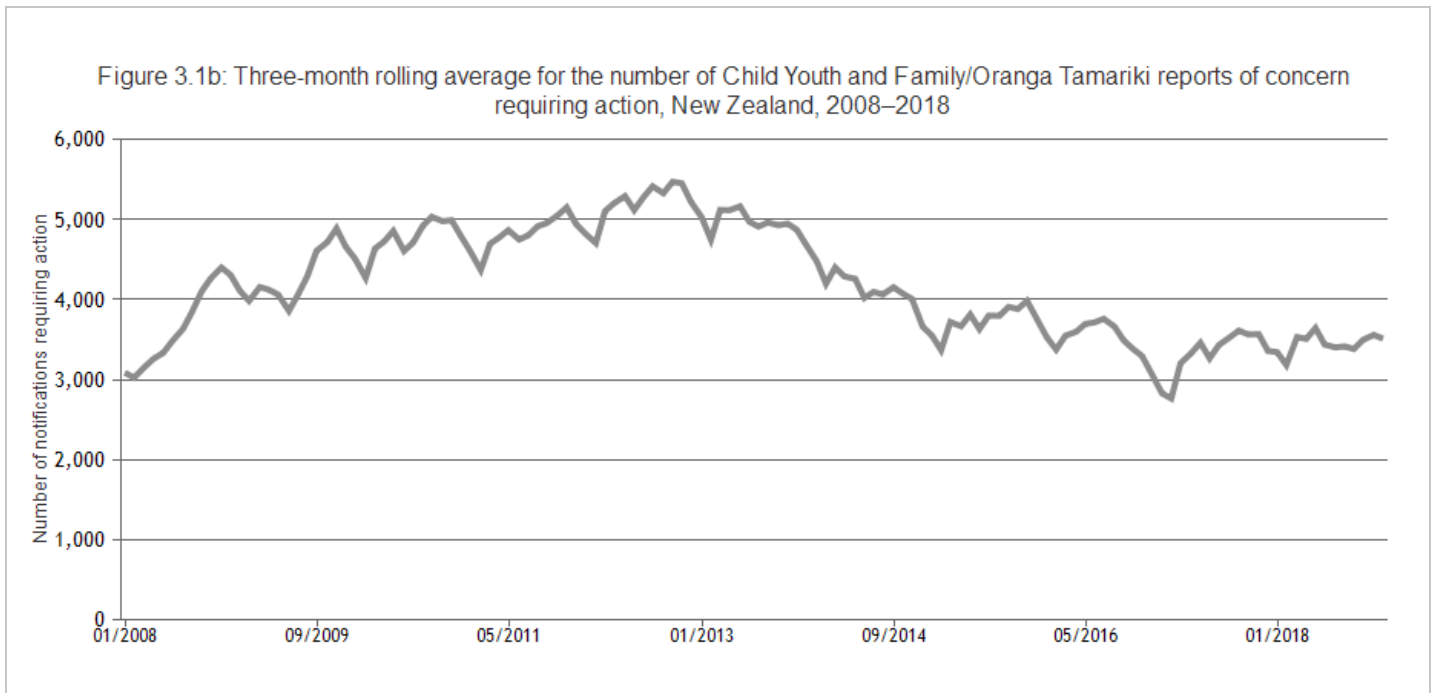


Figure 3.1b: Three-month rolling average for the number of Child Youth and Family/Oranga Tamariki reports of concern requiring action, New Zealand, 2008–2018



The figures show that the number of reports of concern requiring further action by Child Youth and Family / Oranga Tamariki (three-month rolling average) has reduced overall in the last six years, both for Canterbury and for New Zealand overall. The number of reports of concern requiring further action in Canterbury appears to be approximately proportional to New Zealand overall, on the basis of population size, for the period 2013 to mid-2016. However, figure 3.1a shows an overall upswing in the numbers of reports of concern requiring action in Canterbury since the first quarter of 2016. This compares with a pattern of relative stability for New Zealand (Figure 3.1b). In 2018, 41,379 reports of concern requiring further action were made across New Zealand with 3,162 of these being made in Canterbury (up from 39,878 and 3,022 respectively, in 2017).

### Data Sources

**Source:** Ministry of Social Development/Oranga Tamariki.

**Survey/data set:** Administrative data to December 2018. Custom data request for Oranga Tamariki sites including: Christchurch East, Christchurch West, Papanui, Sydenham and Rangiora.

**Source data frequency:** Monthly (base data).

Metadata for this indicator is available at <https://www.canterburywellbeing.org.nz/index-data>

## CHILD ABUSE OR NEGLECT

A finding of substantiated child abuse (including emotional, physical, and/or sexual abuse) or neglect is made after an investigation or assessment has been completed by Oranga Tamariki, and abuse or neglect has been substantiated. Oranga Tamariki receive reports of concern from the courts, education, police, health, non-government organisations, families and members of the public and other notifiers. Abused and neglected children (at levels serious enough to warrant statutory intervention) are more likely to experience problems such as delinquency, teen pregnancy, low academic achievement, drug use and mental health problems [17].

When monitoring outcomes such as child and young people's maltreatment it is important to consider whether recorded variation is indicative of real variation in the occurrence of maltreatment (i.e., actual exposure of children to maltreatment) [12,19-22]. Monitoring data may be affected by factors that shape recognition, recording and response [28]. For example, this may include increased awareness of the need for the care and protection of children, a growing willingness by communities to contact agencies in family violence situations, high profile media cases, and social marketing campaigns, and/or changes in referral pathways [23,24].

This indicator presents the three-month rolling average for the number of substantiated findings of child abuse or neglect annually, for the Canterbury area (the number of findings does not necessarily represent the number of individuals, as a child or young person might have more than one finding as a result of an assessment or investigation, or might have more than one assessment or investigation in the reporting period).

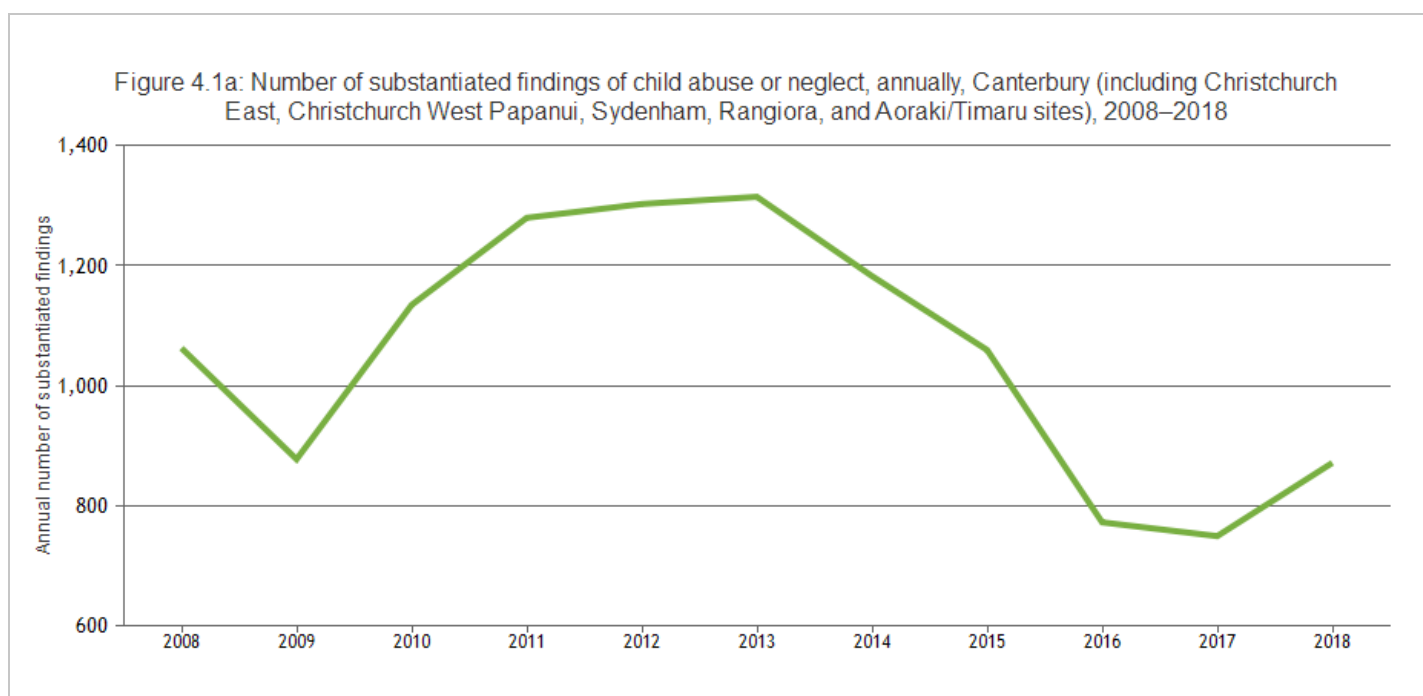
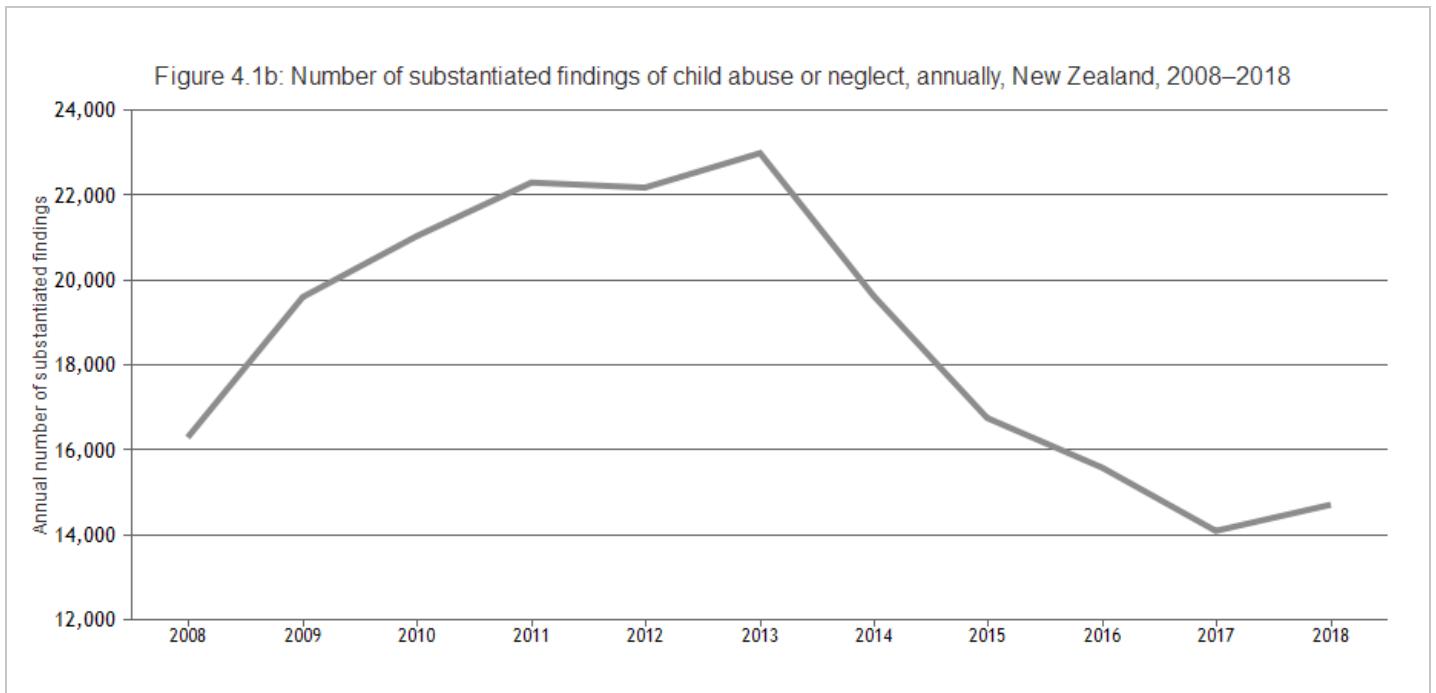


Figure 4.1b: Number of substantiated findings of child abuse or neglect, annually, New Zealand, 2008–2018



The figures show that from 2009 to 2013, Canterbury and New Zealand overall both experienced increasing numbers of recorded substantiated findings of child abuse or neglect. From 2013 to 2017, there was a decline in the number of substantiated findings of child abuse or neglect recorded, both in Canterbury and nationally. However, the 2017–2018 data show an upswing in the number of recorded substantiated findings of child abuse or neglect in Canterbury and in New Zealand overall. The annual number of substantiated findings increased in 2018 to 871 for Canterbury (from 749 in 2017) and to 14,706 for all of New Zealand (from 14,089 in 2017).

#### Data Sources

**Source:** Ministry of Social Development/Oranga Tamariki.

**Survey/data set:** Administrative data to December 2018. Custom data request for Oranga Tamariki sites including Christchurch East, Christchurch West, Papanui, Sydenham and Rangiora.

**Source data frequency:** Monthly.

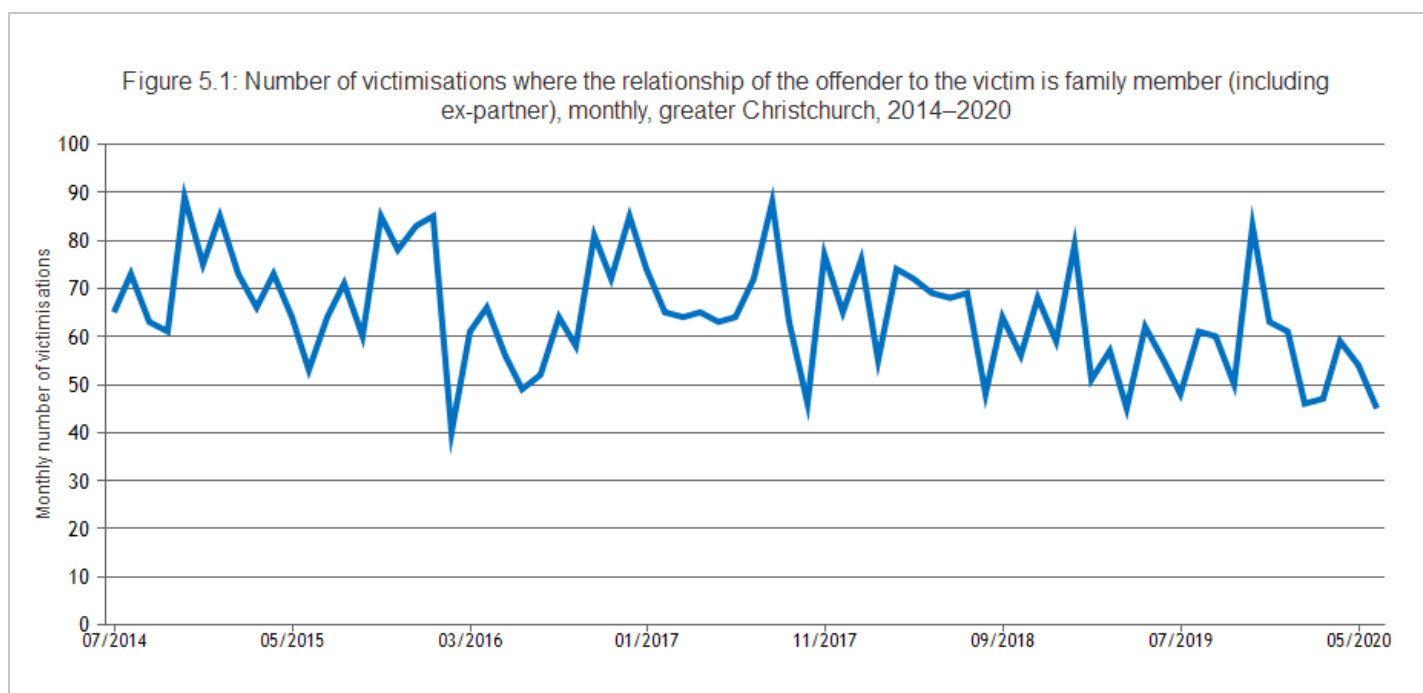
Metadata for this indicator is available at <https://www.canterburywellbeing.org.nz/index-data>

## FAMILY VIOLENCE VICTIMISATIONS

Family violence victimisations are acts intended to cause injury, sexual assault and related offences and abduction, harassment and other related offences against a person where the relationship of the offender to the victim is family member (including ex-partner) [25]. New Zealand has among the highest rates of recorded family violence in the developed world [26] and there are likely many more people affected by family violence than are captured by family violence indicators, as many instances of family violence go unreported [27].

Family violence is linked to a series of negative health and wellbeing outcomes both in the short and long term. For example, children who witness violence between parents or who are victims of parents' violence are at higher risk of experiencing behavioural problems, or bullying other children, or achieving poor school performance [28]. Domestic violence also brings about high public costs for victim support, medical care, mental health services, police, and other losses of productivity [28].

This indicator presents the number of victimisations for acts intended to cause injury, sexual assault and related offences and abduction, harassment and other related offences against a person where the relationship of the offender to the victim is family member (including ex-partner), monthly, in the greater Christchurch area (stations from Canterbury Metro Area and Canterbury Rural combined to approximate the greater Christchurch boundary).



The figure shows that there may have been some overall decline in the recorded number of victimisations for family violence in greater Christchurch over the last five years (the extent of the time-series data available under the current crime reporting system), however trend analysis is not available for these data. The number of victimisations has fluctuated and ranged from 40 to 90 per month over the period shown. The figure also shows that the number of victimisations for acts of family violence is somewhat higher during the summer months. This is likely to be related to both social and physical environmental factors (related to temperature and changes to patterns of routine activities) [25,29].

### Data Sources

**Source:** New Zealand Police.

**Survey/data set:** Administrative data to June 2020. Access publicly available data at NZ Police website [www.police.govt.nz/about-us/statistics-and-publications/data-and-statistics/victimisations-police-stations](http://www.police.govt.nz/about-us/statistics-and-publications/data-and-statistics/victimisations-police-stations)

**Source data frequency:** Monthly.

Metadata for this indicator is available at <https://www.canterburywellbeing.org.nz/index-data>



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## FIND OUT MORE

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> **NZ Police data**

This interactive website produced by New Zealand Police presents Recorded Crime Victims Statistics (RCVS) and Recorded Crime Offenders Statistics (RCOS) and Demand and Activity data.

> **Family violence data**

The New Zealand Family Violence Clearinghouse collates a wide range of information about family violence.

> **Oranga Tamariki data**

This Ministry of Social Development webpage provides links to data relating to what is now under the responsibility of Oranga Tamariki.

> **Christchurch City Council Safety in the City information**

This webpage provides safety-related data for Christchurch City.

> **Integrated Safety Response**

This New Zealand Police website provides information about the intersectoral response to family violence operating in Christchurch.

> **Safer Christchurch**

This interagency collaboration is governed by multiple agencies who are working together to make Christchurch a safer place in which to work, play, live and visit.