



Latest report lays bare 11 years of strangulation, suffocation, asphyxiation and smothering homicides in England and Wales

There were **342 strangulation homicides from 2011 to 2021** and **75%** of these victims were **female**.

Overall, female victims of strangulation homicide aged 16 or over were **54 times more likely to have been killed by an ex-partner or partner than a male victim of strangulation homicide**.

A new report by the [Institute For Addressing Strangulation](#) shows that:

- **96% of cases of domestic strangulation homicides** where the victim was aged 16 or over, the **sex of the suspect was male**.
- The most **frequent place for a female to be fatally strangled (86%) or suffocated (74%)** was in a house. (The data does not include details on whether the house was the victim's own home).
- **Female victims of strangulation homicide** were most commonly **aged between 25 and 34**, whereas **male victims** were most commonly in the **35-44 age** category.

Data shows that **25% of strangulation homicides** from 2011 to 2021 victims were **male** with **male victims of strangulation homicide** most likely to have been **strangled by a friend or acquaintance**

Furthermore, in **strangulation homicides** where the **victim was a child aged under 16**, the sex of the **suspect was more evenly distributed** (11 male suspects and 10 female suspects).

[An embargoed copy of the full report can be accessed here.](#)

Dr Gemma McKenzie, author of the report and Research Officer at the Institute, said:

"This report highlights the terrible statistics regarding women being strangled and suffocated by (ex) partners in domestic homicide settings. It exposes the dark corners of this method of killing which warrant further investigation. These unexplored areas include infanticide, elder abuse, parricide (killing of a parent) and the circumstances of adult male victims of strangulation homicides.

Behind every homicide statistic is a person who had friends, family, thoughts, feelings, dreams and hopes. IFAS has been set up to address this form of violence and to work with agencies on prevention. However, we can't tackle the incidences of strangulation and suffocation homicides without a full understanding of the phenomenon.

We recommend better recording and categorisation of ONS data related to strangulation and suffocation homicides which in turn will help increase



awareness and understanding of the range of people who may become a victim of strangulation and suffocation homicide.”

Cherryl Leach, Deputy Chief Executive of Advocacy After Fatal Domestic Abuse (AAFDA) said:

“This much needed report is a sensitive and eye-opening read. It highlights the need, and paves the way, to understand the full range of victims of fatal strangulation so that we can better protect people in the future. AAFDA’s case work and advocacy support of those impacted by fatal domestic abuse makes us aware that so much violence can be prevented if the right information is known and acted on. We welcome IFAS shining a light on this crime.”

Methodology:

In January 2023, we sent the Home Office a Freedom of Information (FOI) request about the data they held on strangulation and suffocation homicides in England and Wales. The full set of questions is available from IFAS on request. ONS swiftly returned answers to our FOI request and provided 11 years’ worth of data on strangulation and suffocation homicides dated from 1st April 2010 to 31st March 2021 (worded by ONS as ‘year ending March 2011 to March 2021’). This report contains the presentation of data received from the Home Office in response to our FOI requests.

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About the Institute For Addressing Strangulation

The Institute for Addressing Strangulation was established in 2022 following the introduction of new legislation on strangulation and suffocation as a stand-alone offence. **Funded by the Home Office**, The Institute for Addressing Strangulation (IFAS) sits within the Faculty of Forensic & Legal Medicine (FFLM) and works in partnership with Bangor University and SafeLives.

The Institute aims to:

- Raise awareness of the dangers of strangulation and suffocation, provide training and resources regarding management & prevention, and support associated research.
- Establish best practise for the management of:
 - victims and their families
 - perpetrators.
- Work with Policy makers and commissioners to maximise the capacity and expertise required to enhance victim safety.



Institute For
Addressing
Strangulation