

Impact case study (REF3)

Institution: University of Oxford		
Unit of Assessment: 18 - Law		
Title of case study: Driving Hidden Family Violence onto the Policy Agenda: The Oxford Adolescent to Parent Violence Project		
Period when the underpinning research was undertaken: 2010 – 2020		
Details of staff conducting the underpinning research from the submitting unit:		
Name(s): Professor Rachel Condry Dr Caroline Miles	Role(s) (e.g. job title): Professor of Criminology Research officer	Period(s) employed by submitting HEI: August 2010 – present August 2010 – August 2013
Period when the claimed impact occurred: August 2013 – 31 December 2020		
Is this case study continued from a case study submitted in 2014? N		
<p>1. Summary of the impact (indicative maximum 100 words) Adolescent-to-parent violence (APV) is a complex, multifaceted and under-researched form of family violence, but has only been identified in the UK in the past decade. The University of Oxford's APV project, led by Condry, was the first large-scale study of APV in the UK. By articulating the scale and nature of the problem and raising awareness of the issue, the study led to the development of the UK government's only guidance on the problem of APV, which was provided to professionals working in health, education, social care, housing, policing, and youth justice. At practitioner level, the research has informed training, policy and on-the-ground support via organisations such as the Youth Justice Board for England and Wales, the charity Against Violence and Abuse, and the Peabody Housing Association. The development of national guidelines, increase in awareness and better reporting, and improvement in approaches to supporting the issue on the ground means these organisations are now better equipped to support thousands of families across the UK.</p>		
<p>2. Underpinning research (indicative maximum 500 words) When the University of Oxford's Adolescent to Parent Violence (APV) study, funded by the ESRC, began in 2010, APV had not been articulated or quantified within the fields of youth justice, domestic violence, policing, and criminology, particularly in the UK. APV was not recognised as a problem or named in any government publications, no official data on APV had been collated or analysed, and there was a virtual silence on the topic in the policy realm. Condry's three-year ESRC funded study, 'Investigating Adolescent Violence towards Parents' mapped the contours of the problem of APV, exploring how it was defined, experienced and negotiated by parents and adolescents and how violent assaults committed by adolescents within the home were processed and managed within the criminal justice system. This study was the first large-scale study of APV in the UK, providing the first analysis of police recorded cases in the country [R1]. Condry and research officer Miles found almost 1900 cases in a single year recorded as offences by police in London alone, and therefore some of the first systematic evidence and conceptualization of the problem. Further methods used to investigate the different dimensions included interviews with parents and young people, youth offending workers, police officers, and other practitioners providing support to families experiencing APV. These interviews provided in-depth data highlighting the severity of the impact upon families and the lack of available support services, the need for greater awareness and training, and the need for policy guidance specific to the problem of APV.</p> <p><i>"He hits me, kicks me, throws me down, and he's six feet tall now, he's a strong lad. I've had some awful injuries."</i> (Mother of son aged 16. From the ESRC-funded Oxford APV study). <i>"I trawled the internet looking for places and who to phone. And there just wasn't anything ... there wasn't a clear idea of where to go and who to contact."</i> (Mother of son aged 14. From the ESRC-funded Oxford APV study).</p>		

Other key findings from the University of Oxford APV study included:

- APV is a gendered problem, with most offences in police recorded cases committed by sons against mothers [R1]. It is poorly understood, and police officers find it difficult to navigate responding to the problem within a framework largely designed for adult domestic violence [R2].
- APV often involves a pattern of aggressive and violent acts across a prolonged period of time. As well as physically assaulting their parents, those interviewed said their teenage children had smashed up property, thrown things at their parents and made threats. Parents said this had resulted in living in fear of their own children. Families and practitioners describe a range of reasons, including substance abuse, mental health problems, learning difficulties, or a family history of domestic violence or self-harm. Some families are at a loss to explain why their child was so aggressive towards them, having raised others who did not display such behaviour. This type of violence affects all levels of society but can be harder to navigate for families who are experiencing other forms of social disadvantage. [R1, R3].
- There is a dearth of practical support for families dealing with this problem, with only a handful of localised programmes across the country working specifically on APV and a lack of funding and investment. Youth Justice services particularly struggle to respond and there is a lack of a coordinated national response. [R4]
- The study mapped some of the challenges in responding to APV in light of family dynamics and responsibilities. It identified the importance of recognising the dual role of parents responsible for their child at the same time as being a victim of their violence: the need to hold in balance the seriousness of the violence and the impact on the parent victims, with the age of the child and the importance of diversionary approaches [R5, R3]
- The Oxford study identified a very pressing need for clear guidance on APV for practitioners both nationally and locally and a greater coordination between all services that work with children and families [R3]

In 2020 Condry and Miles (now University of Manchester) designed a 'fast' research study to investigate experiences of APV in the Covid-19 pandemic lockdown. This utilised online survey and interview methods with 104 parents who had experienced APV and 47 practitioners and FOI requests to all 43 police forces in England and Wales. It found that most of the parents in the study had experienced an increase in violence during the lockdown and there had been an increase in referrals to services, but that services were struggling to support parents remotely [R6].

3. References to the research (indicative maximum of six references)

R1: (Journal article) Condry, R. and Miles, C. (2014; online November 2013) 'Adolescent to Parent Violence: Framing and Mapping a Hidden Problem', *Criminology and Criminal Justice*. 14, 3: 257-275. <http://doi.org/10.1177/1748895813500155>

R2: (Journal article) Miles, C. and Condry, R. (2016) 'Adolescent to parent violence: the police response to parents reporting violence from their children', *Policing and Society*. 26:7, 804-823 <http://doi.org/10.1080/10439463.2014.989158>

R3: (Journal article) Miles, C. and Condry, R. (2015) 'Responding to adolescent to parent violence: challenges for policy and practice', *British Journal of Criminology*, 55 (6):1076-1095 <http://doi.org/10.1093/bjc/azv095>

R4: (Journal article) Condry, R. and Miles, C. (2012) 'Adolescent to parent violence and youth justice in England and Wales', *Social Policy & Society*, 11, 2: 241-250 <http://doi.org/10.1017/S1474746411000601>

R5: (Book – available upon request) Condry, R. (2016) 'The Parent as Paradoxical Victim: Adolescent to Parent Violence and Contested Victimization', in Spencer, D. and Walklate, S. (eds.) *Reconceptualizing Critical Victimology: Interventions and possibilities*, Lexington Books.

R6: (Working paper) Condry, R., Miles, C., Brunton-Douglas, T., Oladapo, A. *Experiences of Child and Adolescent to Parent Violence in the Covid-19 Pandemic*, August 2020 https://www.law.ox.ac.uk/sites/files/oxlaw/final_report_capv_in_covid-19_aug20.pdf

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4. Details of the impact (indicative maximum 750 words)

Condry's APV study has raised awareness of the nature and scale of APV, underpinned the first ever government policy on APV published by the Home Office, and has informed training and reporting procedures for practitioners and professionals across a wide range of services that work with children and families.

Raising awareness of APV

The APV study was the first research to articulate and quantify adolescent to parent violence in the UK and highlighted the dearth of support available to families due to a lack of understanding of adolescent violence directed at parents. Media coverage following the publication of **R1** online in November 2013, including print articles in *The Times*, *The Independent* and *The Guardian* and coverage on the radio on *PM* on BBC Radio 4, *Newsbeat* on BBC Radio 1 [**C1**], gave significant national profile to an issue that hadn't hitherto been spoken about publicly. In London, where the study was carried out, the lead article of BBC London Evening News included an interview with Condry and referenced the report alongside interviews with victims and calls from charities for more support for families affected by APV, which could potentially have provided a lifeline to other families listening experiencing similar issues.

Developing policy guidance on supporting APV

Condry organised a conference at the end of the study in September 2013 to disseminate the research findings to practitioners, policy makers and academics. During the conference, Condry secured a commitment from attendees including the Youth Justice Board (YJB), the National Policing Lead and other key practitioners and policymakers, to develop a central policy guide for practitioners. This multi-agency working group included the Home Office, who committed in parallel in March 2014 to '*develop and disseminate information for practitioners working with children and families on how to identify and address the risks posed by adolescent to parent violence*' as part of its *Violence Against Women and Girls Action Plan* [**C2**]. This was the first formal recognition of APV in UK government policy. The Home Office subsequently assumed the lead of the multi-agency working group that was developing the policy guide for practitioners and the resultant guide was published by the Home Office in March 2015 [**C3**]. The guide is publicly available and contains general information about APV (renamed APVA by the Home Office to fit with their terminology for domestic violence and abuse) and specific advice for professionals working in health, education, social care, housing, policing, and youth justice, as well as advice about further support. The APV study [including **R1**, **R3**, **R4**] is referenced extensively throughout.

In 2018, the Ministry of Justice asked Condry to contribute to their consultation on *Transforming the Response to Domestic Abuse* due to her research in this area and invited her to chair a roundtable event as part of this process in May 2018. This explored how youth perpetrated domestic abuse should be addressed and included lengthy discussions about the specific response to APV. The government published their response to the consultation in January 2019 [**C4**] which included a page on APV and committed to '*draw together best practice and develop training and resources to improve the response to victims of adolescent to parent violence. We will also promote and embed existing Home Office guidance [**C3**] and general principles in addition to working with experts to develop service-specific guidance*' [**C4**, p.44].

Improving understanding of APV within the justice system and development of appropriate services to support APV

The Covid-19 pandemic has placed additional pressures on families, and **R6** showed that most families in the study who had previously experienced APV experienced an increase in violence during the first national lockdown and a significant lack of support. These findings were echoed by the HM Inspectorate of Probation in their review of youth offending services during the

pandemic in November 2020 [C5]. The review directly references R6 and quotes some of the difficulties parents faced as highlighted in R6, identifying some practical responses “YOTs [Youth Offending Teams] were acutely aware of the specific issues for parents and siblings and undertook doorstep or garden visits to check on the safety of actual and potential victims.”

As the issue of APV becomes more visible, other agencies are also looking at how they can better respond. The Mayor of London’s Office for Policing and Crime launched a tender in October 2020 to undertake a comprehensive needs assessment of Child and Adolescent to Parent Violence (CAPV) in London and to deliver a community-based parent/carer mental health support pilot. “Domestic abuse is a strategic priority for the Mayor of London, and as such, the VRU [Violence Reduction Unit] seeks to take the opportunity to understand the picture of CAPV in London and shape how services and strategy are delivered [C6 page 9]. Little is known about the families in London affected by CAPV; where they live, their protected characteristics or what support would help them. A key opportunity to improve outcomes for young people, and ensure they are safe within their homes, and therefore beyond, would be to fully understand a form of harm which is hugely under-reported; CAPV...” [C6 page 11]. The invitation to tender specifically requests that the work “further explore[s] experiences captured within Rachel Condry et al C/APV during covid-19 report” [R6] [C6 page 13].

Informing the training and practice of practitioners and professionals in relation to APV across a range of services

The findings of Condry’s work on APV [R1, R2, R3, R4] have been used by a range of agencies to evidence and inform their policies on APV, and to train staff to respond to APV.

The Operations Manager of Leeds Youth Offending Service has stated that “The Oxford research [R1] [...] conceptualised the problem, it’s actually providing evidence of the prevalence of this as a problem, it comes up with figures around who tends to be experiencing this, what are the issues, and it gets people to understand that actually this is everybody’s issue, and I think it’s really helped us move forward with the work in our city – much quicker than would have been if the research hadn’t happened” [C7].

According to the Youth Justice Board for England and Wales “The exploratory research into child to parent violence led by Rachel Condry and Caroline Miles [R1, R3, R4] was instrumental to the development of effective policy responses. Prior to the conclusion of their work, this area of social policy suffered from a limited evidence base which made it more difficult to develop effective policy responses. The APV study has been a crucial catalyst in developing both central policy responses” [C8].

Condry’s work has had a very practical impact on agencies at the forefront of dealing with APV via the Home Office Information Guide [C3]. Condry organised two launch events for the Information Guide in London and Manchester in 2015 where project partners and over 200 service leads and practitioners from local authorities across England and Wales met to discuss the guidance and how they might best implement it in their areas. The following changes in practice have subsequently been recorded:

The Head of Policy and Development at the Youth Justice Board for England and Wales confirms the guidance was sent to ‘all Youth Offending Teams in England and Wales’ and ‘as a result, a number of youth justice services have shaped their practice according to the principles outlined in the guidance’. They went on to add ‘the work with Rachel’s team is a concrete example of the impact social research can have on the development of effective policy and practice responses. Specifically, it enabled the YJB to support front-line youth justice services who were calling for central guidance to manage this complex issue’ [C8].

The charity Against Violence and Abuse also confirms: “The findings of the project [R1] have been incredibly useful at providing a national picture of APV. As this is an issue we frequently get asked about when training practitioners it has been really helpful to have robust evidence and statistics which provide a better picture of this form of abuse.... This guidance [C4] ... is

being used nationally to inform best practice. We use this document frequently when training and provided copies to delegates at our recent seminar on the Care Act and APV.” [C9].

A Senior Business Partner for Domestic Abuse at Peabody, one of London’s largest housing providers, notes: *‘The Home Office guidance, which drew upon the findings of the Oxford study, has been circulated to all my links at Peabody and the Community Safety Officers use this as a vital reference to their work on cases of APVA [Adolescent to parent violence and abuse]. We have also updated our IT systems to create a separate categorisation of APVA so we are in a better position to collect data around this and then feed this back on a national level to partners and to the Home Office as I sit on the National Violence and Women and Girls’ panel. I also share this best practice resource with other housing providers in the sector at national and international conferences regularly [...] The guidance is now part of our everyday work at Peabody and I use it as a resource in all the training I deliver which is now up to 41 housing providers nationally. This guidance not only gives practitioners a clear understanding of what APVA is but is also one of the most comprehensive resources I have seen on how to tackle this issue’ [C10].*

5. Sources to corroborate the impact (indicative maximum of 10 references)

[C1]: Media coverage including highlights of Condry’s research and the APV study, including:

- a) The Guardian, 3/11/2013, ‘Lack of support for parents who live in fear of their teenagers, study shows’;
- b) The Times, 13/11/2013, ‘Parents Live in Fear of their Own Children’;
- c) The Independent, 14/11/2013, p.41, ‘What’s Behind the Alarming Rise of Physical Assaults on Parents by their Offspring’
- d) Radio: PM, BBC Radio 4 23/01/2014, 17:50 (Recording available upon request)
- e) Radio: Newsbeat, BBC Radio 1 23/01/2014, 12:47
<https://www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/b03nttx4> (Recording available upon request)

[C2]: Home Office, 2014, *Violence Against Women and Girls Action Plan*, pp. 27 & 49.

[C3]: Home Office Information guide: Adolescent to Parent Violence and Abuse (APVA)
https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/732573/APVA.pdf

[C4]: Transforming the Response to Domestic Abuse: Consultation Response and Draft Bill, January 2019

[C5]: Her Majesty’s Chief Inspector of Probation ‘A thematic review of the Exceptional Delivery Model arrangements in probation services in response to the COVID-19 pandemic’ November 2020 <https://www.justiceinspectorates.gov.uk/hmiprobation/wp-content/uploads/sites/5/2020/11/201110-A-thematic-review-of-the-work-of-youth-offending-services-during-the-COVID-19-pandemic.pdf>

[C6]: Mayor of London Office for Policing and Crime Invitation to Tender issued on behalf of Violence Reduction Unit (VRU): *Comprehensive assessment of Child and Adolescent to Parent Violence in London* 26 October 2020

[C7]: Films summarising the Adolescent to Parent Violence project, including interviews with a number of stakeholders. <https://www.law.ox.ac.uk/content/adolescent-parent-violence>; Leeds Youth Offending Service quote is in the second video, at 13:03.

[C8]: Factual statement from Head of Policy and Development, Youth Justice Board for England and Wales, 20 January 2016.

[C9]: Factual statement from Policy Manager, Against Violence and Abuse. January 2016

[C10]: Factual statement from Senior Business Partner for Domestic Abuse at Peabody, 21 January 2016.