

5 Client groups and reasons for seeking assistance

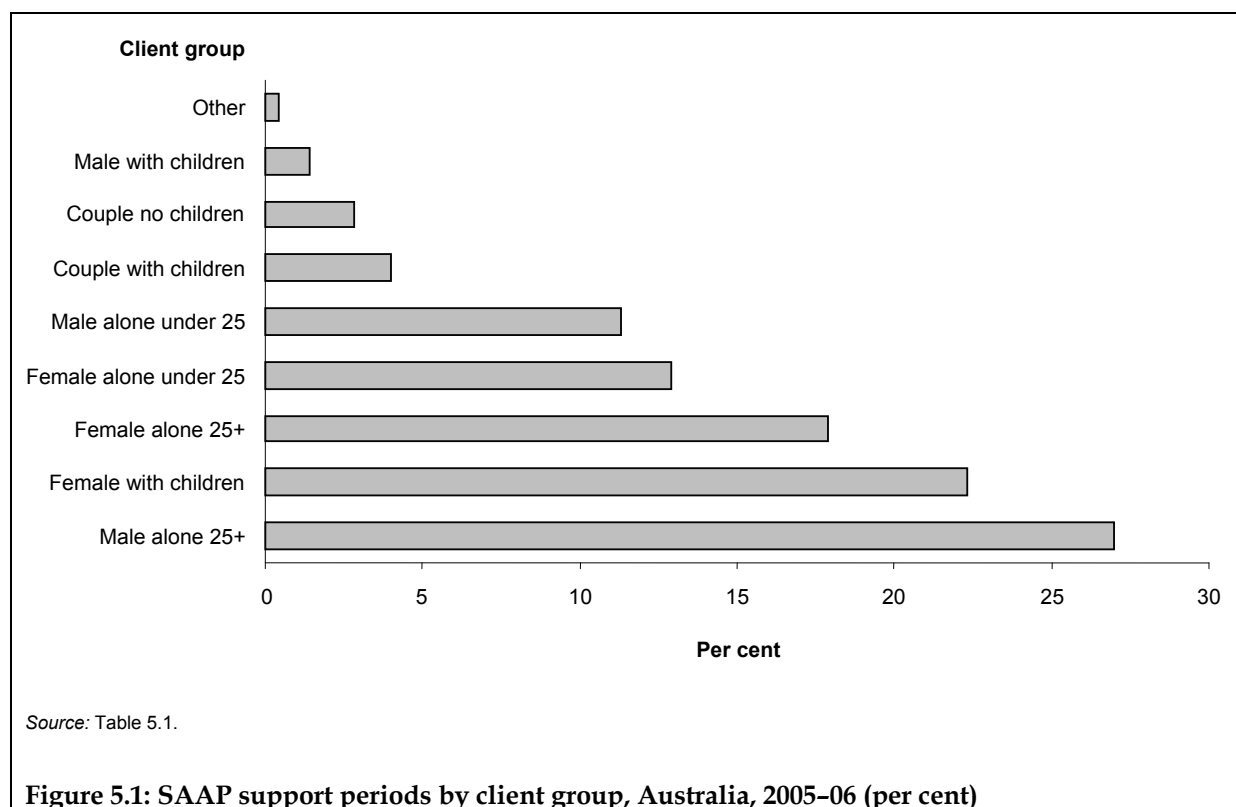
This chapter contains information on the main client groups that were supported by SAAP during 2005–06, including the type of agency they attended and their main reason for seeking assistance. For client groups presenting at SAAP agencies with accompanying children, the number of accompanying child support periods associated with each client group is also reported.

The client groups are formed according to the relationship the client has to the people they are assisted with and should not be confused with the family type (see AIHW 2005b). For example, if a married woman with children is escaping a violent situation and is supported by a SAAP agency without her partner, she would be classified as a female with children, not as a couple, and a 17 year-old male presenting with a group of friends would be classified as a person presenting alone or with an unrelated person.

Clients may have more than one support period during a reporting year (see Chapter 3). As a client may present with different people in each support period, and because the reasons they seek support may also vary, analyses in this chapter relate to support periods rather than to clients (see Glossary).

Client groups supported by SAAP

Figure 5.1 gives a breakdown of the number of support periods provided to the main client groups reported in this chapter.



Nationally, over one-quarter (27%) of support periods were provided to males aged 25 years and over presenting alone (or with an unrelated person) at SAAP agencies, and 22% were provided to female clients with children. Females aged 25 years and over presenting alone (or with an unrelated person) accounted for 18%, and unaccompanied females under 25 years accounted for 13% of support periods. This was followed by unaccompanied males aged under 25 years (11% of support periods), couples with children (4%) and couples without children (3%). Males with children accounted for 1% of all support periods.

State and territory

Client group profiles varied between the states and territories (Table 5.1). For example, in the majority of the states and territories the greatest proportion of support periods were for males aged 25 years and over presenting alone. New South Wales recorded the highest proportion (33%), followed by Queensland (31%). However, females with children accounted for the highest proportion of support periods in Western Australia (32%), South Australia (31%) and the Northern Territory (27%).

The Australian Capital Territory had the largest proportion of support periods for females presenting alone who were under 25 years old (18%), and the smallest proportion of females alone aged 25 years and older (4%). Table 4.1 of the state and territory supplements that accompany this publication give the median age of clients in each of the states and territories. These tables show that in the Australian Capital Territory the median age of female clients was 23, the lowest of any of the jurisdictions, and lower than for female clients nationally (29 years).

Primary target group

The types of agencies attended by the client groups is shown in Table 5.2. As might be expected, agencies with specific target groups tended to provide services predominantly to that client group. Consequently, 79% of support periods at agencies targeting young people were for people aged under 25 years presenting on their own or with an unrelated person, and agencies targeting single men were overwhelmingly used by unaccompanied males aged 25 years or over (85% of support periods provided by this agency type). Similarly, agencies that targeted women escaping domestic violence were mainly used by females with children (accounting for 56% of support periods in these agencies) and unaccompanied females aged 25 years or over (33%). Agencies primarily targeting families provided most of their support periods to females with children (47%) or to couples with children (24%). Cross-target group agencies were mainly used by unaccompanied males and females aged 25 years and over (41% and 22% of support periods in this type of agency respectively).

Support periods for clients with accompanying children

In at least 40,800 (or 23%) of their support periods, SAAP clients presented with accompanying children (derived from Table 5.3). In the majority (86%) of these, children accompanied a female client, in 10% they accompanied a couple and in 5% a male client. Other family groups with children accounted for less than 1%.

For clients who had children accompanying them, there were, on average, 2 accompanying child support periods per SAAP client support period (Table 5.3). Couples with children had the highest average number of accompanying child support periods per client support period (2.2), followed by females with children (2.0), males with children (1.7) and 'other' groups with children (1.5).

State and territory

The majority of support periods with accompanying children in all the states and territories were for females with children (ranging from 65% in the Australian Capital Territory to 91% in Western Australia). There were, however, some significant variations in the proportion of support periods reported for client groups with accompanying children and the associated accompanying child support periods. For example, the Australian Capital Territory had higher proportions of support periods for couples (18%) and males (16%) with children than the national averages of 10% and 5% respectively, and a smaller proportion for females with children (65% compared with 86% nationally). The proportion of accompanying child support periods reported in the Australian Capital Territory varied from those recorded nationally in a similar way (18% for couples with children, 16% for males with children and 66% for females with children, compared with the national averages of 10% for couples with children, 4% for males with children and 86% for females with children).

Main reason for seeking SAAP assistance

In addition to recording client characteristics, the SAAP Client Collection collects information on the main reasons clients seek assistance from SAAP agencies. Overall, the most common main reasons that clients gave for seeking assistance in 2005–06 were domestic or family violence (in 22% of support periods), relationship or family breakdown (10%) and other financial difficulty (10%) (Figure 5.2).

State and territory

Whilst in general there were only small variations across the states and territories in the proportions for most of the main reasons for seeking assistance, there were some exceptions (Table 5.4). Domestic violence ranged from highs of 34% in the Northern Territory, 33% in Western Australia and 30% in South Australia, through to lows of 12% for Tasmania and the Australian Capital Territory. In New South Wales problematic drug, alcohol, or substance abuse was the main reason for seeking assistance in 15% of support periods, while for the other jurisdictions it was around 3% to 5%. Relationship or family breakdown was given as the main reason for seeking assistance in 17% of support periods in Tasmania and in 16% for the Australian Capital Territory, while for remaining states and territories it was between 7% and 12%.

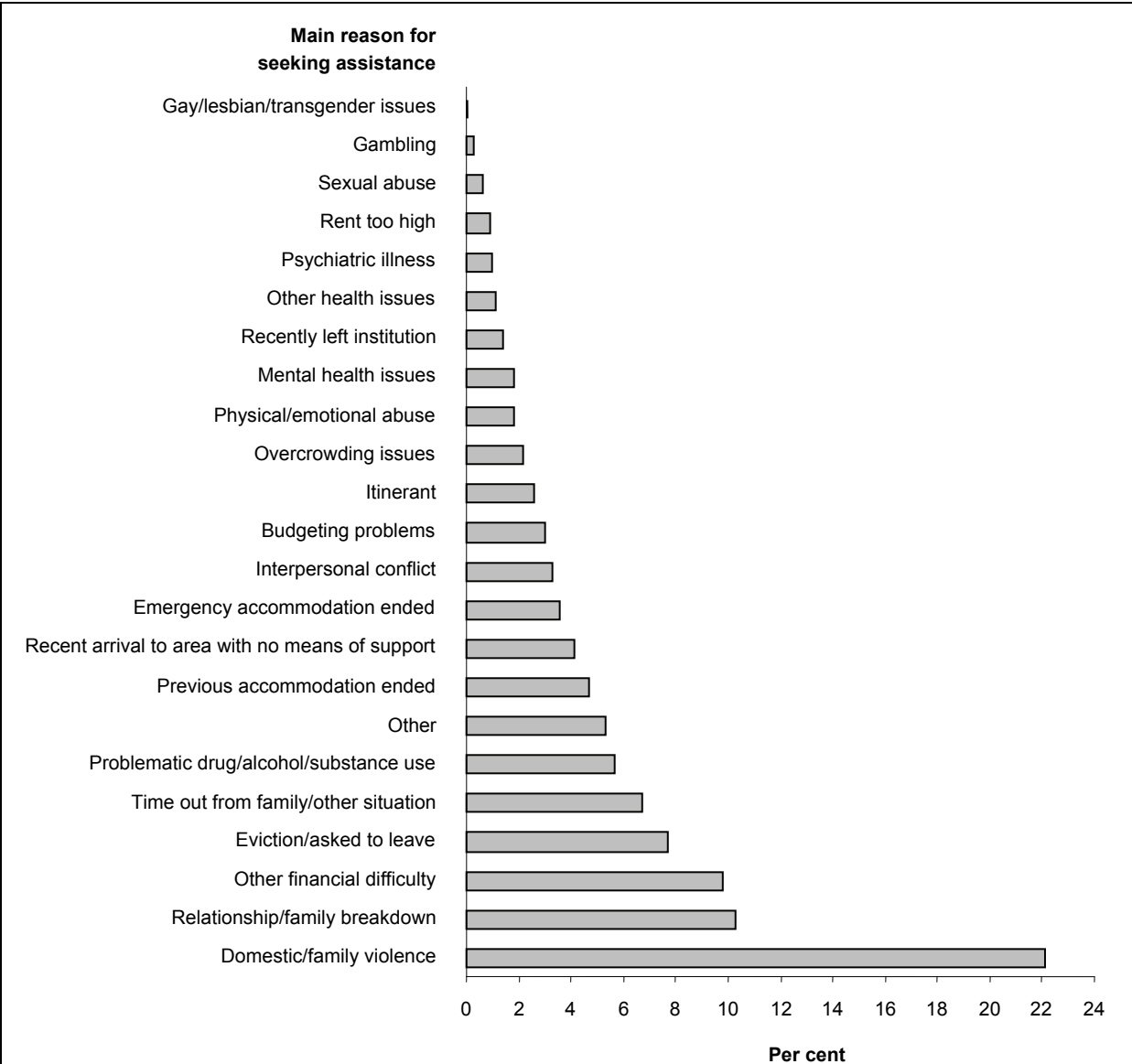
Client group

The main reason given for seeking support varied considerably according to the client group (Table 5.5). The main reason for seeking assistance reported by females with children was most often domestic or family violence (in 54% of support periods) followed by relationship or family breakdown (8%). For males with children, relationship or family breakdown was the main reason given most often (20%), followed by eviction or being asked to leave (in 14% of support periods).

Unaccompanied females aged 25 years and older most commonly gave domestic or family violence as their main reason for seeking assistance (in 37% of support periods), followed by other financial difficulty (13%). In contrast, males aged 25 years and over most commonly reported other financial difficulty as their main reason for seeking assistance (in 15% of their support periods) and drug, alcohol or substance abuse was reported as the main reason for seeking assistance in a far higher proportion for this group than for the other client groups. This was the case in 15% of their support periods, while for the other client groups it was 5% or lower.

Unaccompanied females under 25 years of age most often cited relationship or family breakdown (22%), with domestic or family violence as the second most frequently given reason (in 16% of support periods). For males alone aged under 25 years, relationship or family breakdown (20%) followed by time out from family or other situation (11%) were the most commonly given reasons.

For couples the main reason for seeking assistance was eviction or being asked to leave (in 21% of support periods for couples with children and in 16% of those without children). For both these groups other financial difficulty was the reason given next most frequently (in 10% of support periods for couples with children and in 12% for those without children).



Source: Table 5.4.

Figure 5.2: Main reason for seeking assistance, Australia, 2005-06 (per cent support periods)

5.1 Tables

Table 5.1: SAAP support periods: client group by state and territory, Australia, 2005–06 (per cent)

Client group	NSW	Vic	Qld	WA	SA	Tas	ACT	NT	Total	
									%	Number
Male alone, under 25	13.2	9.0	13.7	11.1	12.2	14.0	14.2	9.3	11.3	19,700
Male alone, 25+	32.7	26.4	30.7	17.3	18.7	27.1	26.8	18.4	27.0	47,000
Female alone, under 25	14.3	11.5	13.2	12.6	13.3	13.6	18.2	14.7	12.9	22,400
Female alone, 25+	13.7	22.3	15.5	19.9	14.5	11.4	4.4	23.4	17.9	31,300
Couple no children	2.0	3.6	2.2	2.1	2.5	4.2	2.8	1.7	2.8	4,900
Couple with children	2.6	4.1	4.3	4.0	6.1	4.9	8.0	3.8	4.0	7,000
Male with children	0.9	1.6	1.2	0.6	1.7	2.5	4.8	1.2	1.4	2,400
Female with children	20.3	20.8	18.8	32.1	30.8	22.2	19.6	27.4	22.3	38,800
Other	0.3	0.7	0.2	0.3	0.2	0.2	1.3	0.1	0.4	800
<i>Total</i>	<i>100.0</i>	<i>100.0</i>	<i>100.0</i>	<i>100.0</i>	<i>100.0</i>	<i>100.0</i>	<i>100.0</i>	<i>100.0</i>	<i>100.0</i>	<i>..</i>
Total (row %)	22.7	40.0	14.1	7.1	8.8	3.5	1.5	2.3	100.0	..
Total (number)	39,600	69,800	24,600	12,400	15,300	6,000	2,600	4,100	..	174,400

Notes

1. Number excluded due to errors and omissions (weighted): 5,595.
2. Figures have been weighted to adjust for agency non-participation and client non-consent.

Source: SAAP Client Collection.

Table 5.2: SAAP support periods: client group by primary target group of agency, Australia, 2005–06 (per cent)

Client group	Young people	Single men only	Single women only	Families	Women escaping DV	Cross-target/multiple/general	Total	
							%	Number
Male alone, under 25	37.2	12.0	0.1	2.0	0.2	7.5	11.3	19,700
Male alone, 25+	1.5	85.2	0.9	4.9	0.5	40.6	27.0	47,000
Female alone, under 25	42.2	0.2	15.5	3.4	8.3	7.0	12.9	22,400
Female alone, 25+	1.2	1.1	56.3	5.8	33.1	21.8	17.9	31,300
Couple no children	3.5	0.5	1.0	4.2	0.6	4.4	2.8	4,900
Couple with children	3.2	0.2	0.9	24.2	0.8	4.4	4.0	7,000
Male with children	0.5	0.3	0.3	7.4	0.1	1.9	1.4	2,400
Female with children	10.1	0.5	24.5	47.4	56.2	11.7	22.3	38,800
Other	0.6	0.1	0.5	0.8	0.2	0.6	0.4	800
<i>Total</i>	<i>100.0</i>	<i>100.0</i>	<i>100.0</i>	<i>100.0</i>	<i>100.0</i>	<i>100.0</i>	<i>100.0</i>	<i>..</i>
Total (row %)	18.1	12.7	3.2	6.4	21.6	38.1	100.0	..
Total (number)	31,600	22,100	5,500	11,100	37,600	66,400	..	174,400

Notes

1. Number excluded due to errors and omissions (weighted): 5,595.
2. Figures have been weighted to adjust for agency non-participation and client non-consent.

Sources: SAAP Client and Administrative Data Collections.

Table 5.3: SAAP support periods for clients with accompanying children and associated accompanying child support periods, client group by state and territory, Australia, 2005–06 (per cent)

Client group	NSW	Vic	Qld	WA	SA	Tas	ACT	NT	Total	
									%	Number
Support periods (%)										
Couple with children	7.1	10.2	11.2	7.6	10.0	11.3	18.4	7.3	9.5	3,900
Male with children	3.3	5.7	5.0	1.6	4.5	8.1	15.8	3.5	4.8	1,900
Female with children	89.4	84.0	83.6	90.7	85.3	80.3	65.1	89.2	85.5	34,900
Other with children	0.2	0.2	0.2	0.1	0.1	0.3	0.7	—	0.2	100
<i>Total</i>	<i>100.0</i>	<i>100.0</i>	<i>100.0</i>	<i>100.0</i>	<i>100.0</i>	<i>100.0</i>	<i>100.0</i>	<i>100.0</i>	<i>100.0</i>	<i>..</i>
Total (row %)	19.9	36.1	12.8	10.1	12.6	3.7	1.9	2.9	100.0	..
Total (number)	8,100	14,700	5,200	4,100	5,100	1,500	800	1,200	..	40,800
Accompanying child support periods (%)										
Couple with children	7.4	10.9	12.4	8.7	11.1	11.3	17.6	8.0	10.3	8,400
Male with children	2.7	4.9	4.1	1.3	4.1	6.2	15.6	3.4	4.1	3,400
Female with children	89.8	84.0	83.4	89.9	84.7	82.3	66.3	88.6	85.5	69,400
Other with children	0.1	0.2	0.1	0.1	0.1	0.2	0.5	—	0.1	100
<i>Total</i>	<i>100.0</i>	<i>100.0</i>	<i>100.0</i>	<i>100.0</i>	<i>100.0</i>	<i>100.0</i>	<i>100.0</i>	<i>100.0</i>	<i>100.0</i>	<i>..</i>
Total (row %)	19.5	36.0	13.4	10.2	12.6	3.6	1.9	2.8	100.0	..
Total (number)	15,800	29,200	10,900	8,300	10,200	2,900	1,600	2,300	..	81,200
Mean number of accompanying child support periods per support period (number)										
Couple with children	2.04	2.13	2.32	2.31	2.20	1.92	1.91	2.10	..	2.15
Male with children	1.59	1.73	1.72	1.66	1.85	1.49	1.96	1.87	..	1.72
Female with children	1.96	1.99	2.09	2.00	1.98	1.97	2.02	1.90	..	1.99
Other with children	1.31	1.74	1.22	1.33	2.00	1.25	1.40	—	..	1.53
Total	1.95	1.99	2.10	2.02	1.99	1.93	1.99	1.91	..	1.99

Notes

1. Number excluded due to errors and omissions (weighted): 260 support periods.
2. Number excluded due to errors and omissions (weighted): 485 accompanying child support periods.
3. Although each member of a couple has an individual support period, in this table a couple presenting with children contributes only 1 support period. The table is therefore not directly comparable with other tables showing the number of support periods by client group.
4. Figures have been weighted to adjust for agency non-participation.

Source: SAAP Client Collection.

Table 5.4: SAAP support periods: main reason for seeking assistance by state and territory, Australia, 2005–06 (per cent)

Main reason for seeking assistance	NSW	Vic	Qld	WA	SA	Tas	ACT	NT	Total	
									%	Number
Interpersonal relationships	43.4	38.9	47.1	59.2	55.3	43.8	41.3	59.6	44.7	73,800
Time out from family/ other situation	6.3	4.9	11.3	9.6	5.9	5.9	4.0	11.7	6.7	11,100
Relationship/ family breakdown	11.0	9.2	9.4	10.4	11.9	17.0	16.2	7.2	10.3	16,900
Interpersonal conflict	3.4	2.8	3.9	2.3	3.7	4.2	6.7	3.4	3.3	5,400
Sexual abuse	0.6	0.3	0.7	0.5	1.0	2.7	0.8	0.6	0.6	1,000
Domestic/family violence	20.4	20.4	20.2	33.0	30.4	12.0	12.2	33.8	22.1	36,500
Physical/emotional abuse	1.7	1.4	1.7	3.3	2.3	2.0	1.5	2.9	1.8	2,900
Financial	10.6	21.1	12.2	6.7	3.5	9.4	8.6	11.9	14.0	23,000
Gambling	0.7	0.2	0.5	0.1	0.2	0.4	0.3	0.1	0.3	600
Budgeting problems	3.4	3.3	3.9	1.4	1.0	2.7	1.6	2.0	3.0	4,900
Rent too high	0.8	1.0	0.9	0.5	0.6	1.2	1.2	1.4	0.9	1,400
Other financial difficulty	5.7	16.5	6.9	4.7	1.7	5.0	5.5	8.4	9.8	16,100
Accommodation	15.4	21.0	17.5	13.0	17.9	25.4	18.7	10.6	18.3	30,100
Overcrowding issues	2.1	2.3	1.8	1.9	2.5	3.3	3.1	2.6	2.2	3,700
Eviction/asked to leave	5.5	9.3	6.1	5.5	9.0	13.2	9.4	3.9	7.7	12,700
Emergency accommodation ended	4.4	3.8	5.5	1.4	1.5	2.4	2.3	0.9	3.6	6,000
Previous accommodation ended	3.3	5.6	4.1	4.3	4.9	6.5	3.9	3.3	4.7	7,700
Health	19.2	6.3	9.3	6.0	5.4	7.0	10.4	5.0	9.6	15,800
Mental health issues	2.5	1.4	2.0	1.2	1.4	2.3	2.7	0.8	1.8	2,900
Problematic drug/alcohol/ substance use	14.6	2.7	4.6	2.9	2.8	3.1	3.7	2.9	5.7	9,400
Psychiatric illness	1.4	1.0	0.9	0.9	0.5	0.6	2.0	0.3	1.0	1,600
Other health issues	0.8	1.2	1.7	1.1	0.7	1.0	1.9	1.1	1.1	1,900
Other reasons	11.5	12.7	14.0	15.1	17.8	14.4	21.0	12.9	13.5	22,200
Gay/lesbian/ transgender issues	0.1	—	—	—	0.1	0.1	—	—	0.1	100
Recently left institution	1.7	0.9	1.3	1.2	2.3	2.2	1.6	1.1	1.4	2,200
Recent arrival to area with no means of support	3.5	2.3	7.1	5.2	7.3	4.8	6.2	5.6	4.1	6,800
Itinerant	2.1	2.0	2.9	2.5	5.0	3.8	2.9	4.2	2.6	4,300
Other	4.1	7.5	2.7	6.2	3.0	3.5	10.3	2.0	5.3	8,800
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	..
Total (row %)	22.6	39.5	13.7	7.3	9.1	3.6	1.6	2.5	100.0	..
Total (number)	37,300	65,100	22,600	12,000	15,100	6,000	2,600	4,100	..	164,900

Notes

1. Number excluded due to errors and omissions (weighted): 15,116.
2. Figures have been weighted to adjust for agency non-participation and client non-consent.

Source: SAAP Client Collection.

Table 5.5: SAAP support periods: main reason for seeking assistance by client group, Australia, 2005–06 (per cent)

Main reason for seeking assistance	Male alone under 25	Male alone 25+	Female alone under 25	Female alone 25+	Couple no children	Couple with children	Male with children	Female with children	Other	Total
Interpersonal relationships	39.1	18.0	57.6	51.1	27.6	22.8	34.8	70.8	41.6	44.5
Time out from family/ other situation	11.0	6.7	10.9	3.8	6.7	5.8	4.5	3.9	4.9	6.5
Relationship/ family breakdown	19.7	6.3	21.8	4.4	10.3	6.3	20.0	7.6	14.1	10.2
Interpersonal conflict	5.0	3.1	5.3	2.6	3.9	3.5	3.1	1.8	3.1	3.2
Sexual abuse	0.3	0.1	1.6	0.8	0.4	0.3	0.2	0.7	0.4	0.6
Domestic/ family violence	2.1	1.2	15.5	37.0	5.5	5.8	5.8	54.1	15.5	22.2
Physical/emotional abuse	1.1	0.6	2.5	2.5	0.9	1.0	1.3	2.7	3.5	1.8
Financial	11.3	21.5	8.4	16.4	18.9	17.2	16.5	7.3	12.6	14.1
Gambling	0.2	0.9	0.1	0.2	0.3	0.1	0.1	0.1	0.4	0.4
Budgeting problems	2.7	4.9	2.0	2.3	5.3	4.3	3.7	1.5	2.1	3.0
Rent too high	0.7	0.6	0.5	0.6	1.9	3.2	2.8	1.0	1.9	0.9
Other financial difficulty	7.6	15.0	5.8	13.3	11.5	9.7	9.9	4.7	8.2	9.9
Accommodation	25.8	18.2	19.0	13.0	28.4	39.7	28.9	13.4	22.1	18.4
Overcrowding issues	2.2	0.8	2.8	1.0	4.0	8.3	6.4	3.0	5.2	2.2
Eviction/asked to leave	10.9	6.3	7.8	5.0	15.7	21.0	14.1	6.5	11.3	7.8
Emergency accommodation ended	5.0	5.6	3.1	3.6	2.5	3.1	2.8	1.5	1.4	3.7
Previous accommodation ended	7.7	5.5	5.4	3.4	6.2	7.2	5.6	2.4	4.3	4.7
Health	7.8	22.3	4.7	8.2	5.8	3.3	3.4	1.9	3.4	9.5
Mental health issues	1.7	3.5	1.3	1.7	0.8	0.7	0.6	0.4	—	1.8
Problematic drug/ alcohol/substance use	4.7	14.7	2.1	3.9	2.6	1.5	1.7	0.8	2.5	5.7
Psychiatric illness	0.8	2.3	0.5	1.1	0.4	0.1	0.2	0.1	0.2	1.0
Other health issues	0.5	1.9	0.7	1.5	2.0	0.9	0.9	0.5	0.7	1.1
Other reasons	16.0	19.9	10.3	11.4	19.3	17.1	16.3	6.7	20.3	13.4
Gay/lesbian/ transgender issues	0.1	—	0.1	0.1	0.1	—	0.2	—	—	0.1
Recently left institution	2.5	2.6	0.7	0.9	1.0	0.4	1.6	0.3	0.2	1.3
Recent arrival to area with no means of support	5.1	7.4	2.2	2.2	5.3	7.4	4.1	1.8	7.5	4.1
Itinerant	3.6	4.1	2.3	1.4	5.0	3.3	3.0	1.2	2.1	2.6
Other	4.8	5.7	5.0	6.9	7.9	5.9	7.4	3.5	10.4	5.3
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
Total (row %)	11.4	25.9	13.2	18.2	2.8	4.0	1.4	22.9	0.4	100.0
Total (number)	18,200	41,500	21,100	29,200	4,500	6,400	2,200	36,700	600	160,300

Notes

1. Number excluded due to errors and omissions (weighted): 19,647.
2. Figures have been weighted to adjust for agency non-participation and client non-consent.

Source: SAAP Client Collection.