



Violence Against Children

Reported in the Media for November 2024

The November media analysis highlights the ongoing and serious challenges children face due to violence and exploitation, revealing the harsh realities of trauma, neglect, and abuse. Although there was a slight decrease in reported incidents, the data indicates a troubling pattern of violence affecting children in various ways, emphasising the urgent need for targeted protective measures. The recurring nature of these cases underscores the importance of immediate intervention and constant vigilance. Monthly reports raise public awareness about the prevalence and emerging trends of child abuse, enabling more effective interventions. Our Media Monitoring team is committed to spotlighting these critical issues, capturing the broader narrative across media platforms to drive meaningful change for vulnerable children.

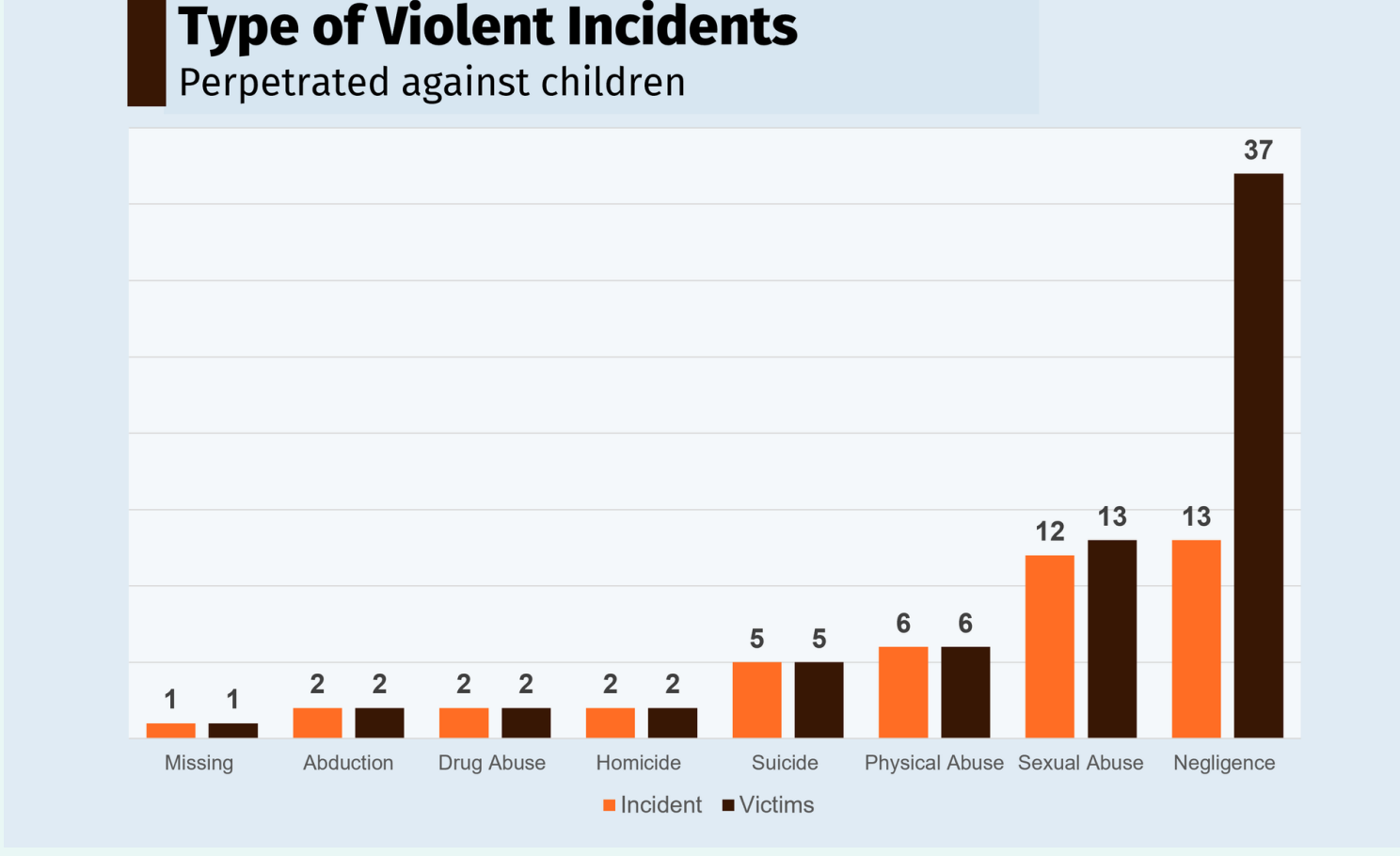


Mothers play a crucial role in the movement to create a safe environment for children in Sri Lanka through their involvement with ECPAT Sri Lanka. By joining forces with this organisation, they actively work to protect their children from sexual exploitation and abuse, fostering a community that prioritises the well-being of the young and vulnerable. These mothers advocate for children's rights, raising awareness about the dangers of exploitation and promoting safe practices within their families and communities. Their collective efforts empower them as guardians and create a supportive network, ensuring that all children can grow up in a nurturing environment free from fear and harm. Through education, support, and advocacy, these mothers are vital in building a safer future for the next generation.

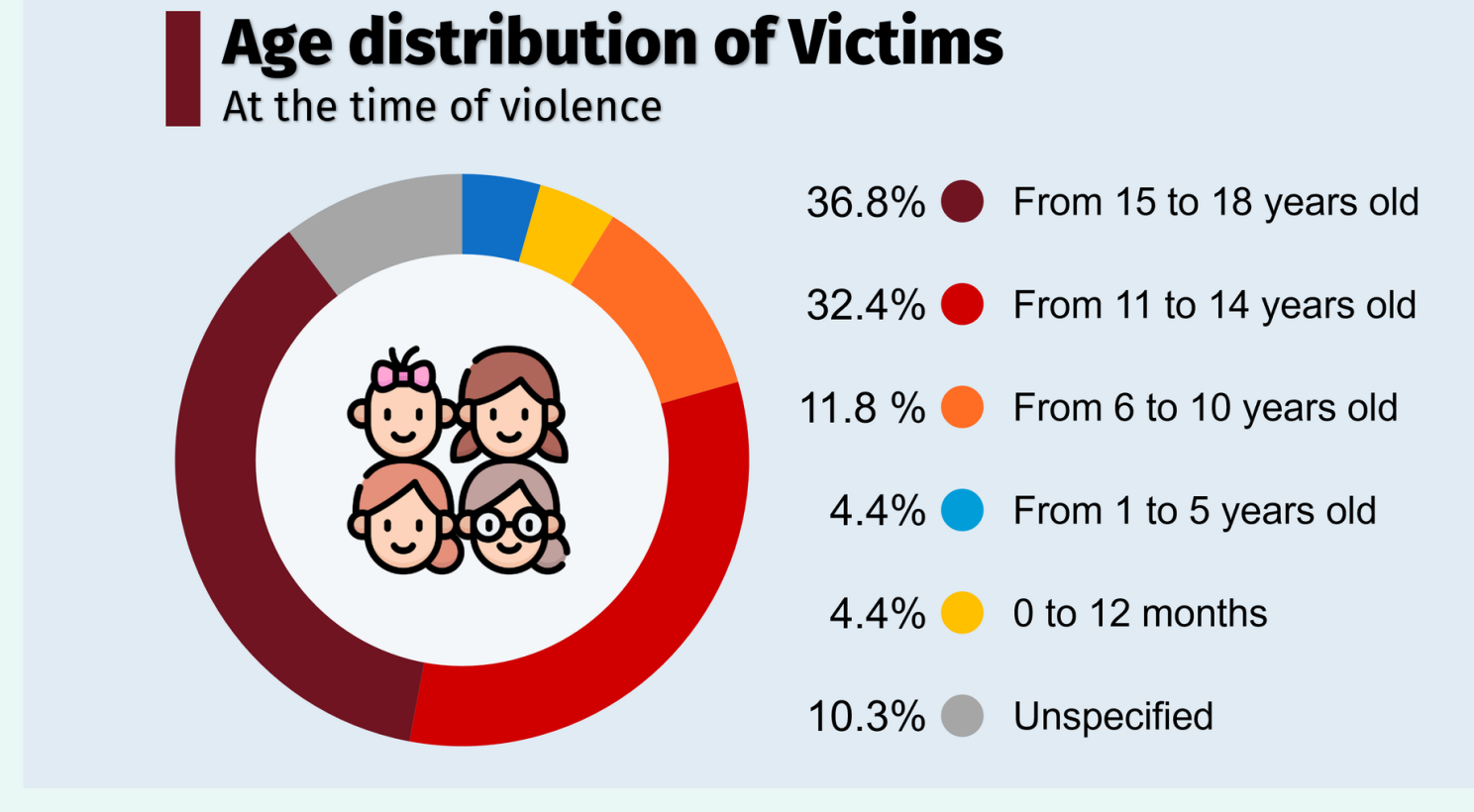
The Analysis:

- There has been a slight decrease in incidents of violence against children, with 95 fewer victims and 35 fewer incidents reported in November compared to October.
- Neglect remains the most common form of abuse, followed by sexual and physical abuse, highlighting the severity and complexity of the issue.
- Family members and authority figures are the primary perpetrators of violence, accounting for over 60% of cases.
- Educational, vocational, and community settings have been identified as high-risk environments requiring targeted safety measures for children.
- Older children and adolescents, primarily those aged 11 to 18, are the most affected, with the Kegalle and Kandy districts exhibiting the highest number of incidents.

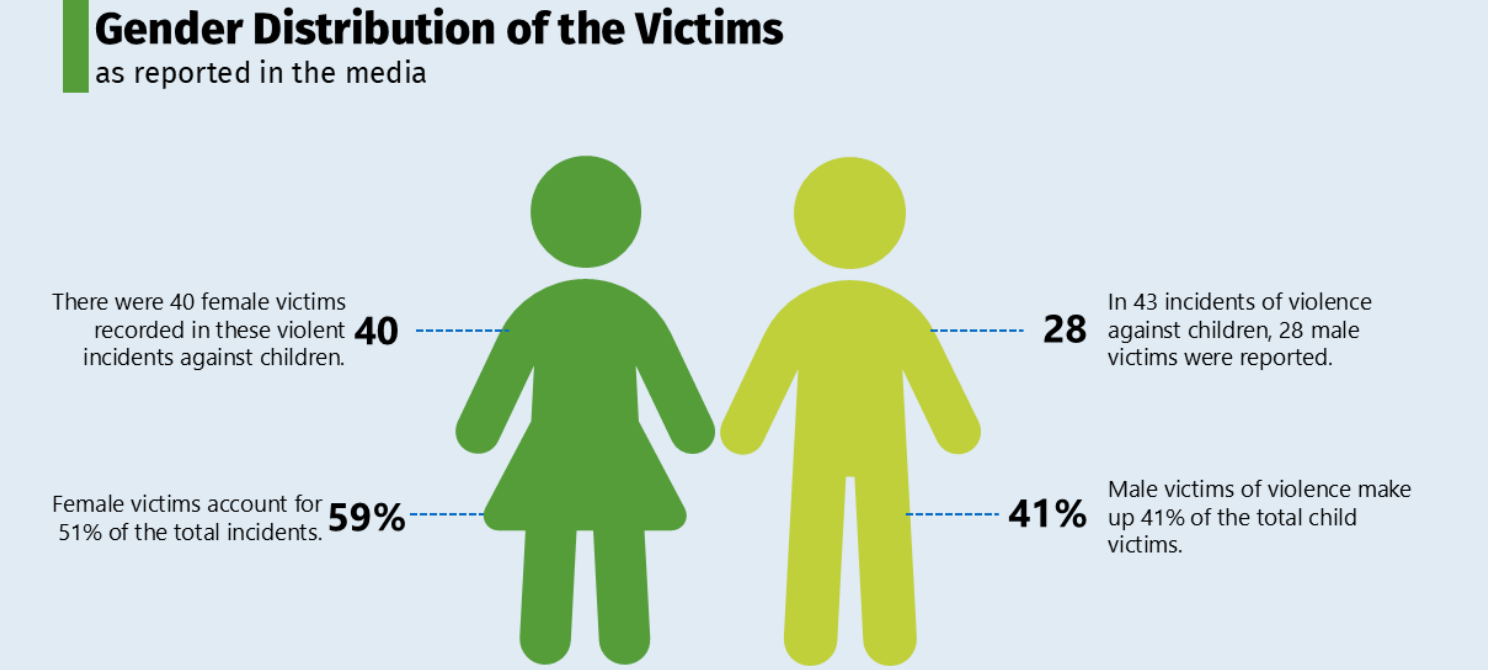
The data for November 2024 shows a decrease in violence against children, with victims dropping by 95 (from 163 in October to 68) and incidents by 35 (from 78 to 43). Despite this decline, forms of abuse like neglect, sexual abuse, and physical abuse persist, signalling ongoing systemic issues. Perpetrator analysis highlights that family members and authority figures remain the primary sources of harm, with educational and community settings identified as high-risk areas. This analysis aims to examine these trends and their underlying factors further.



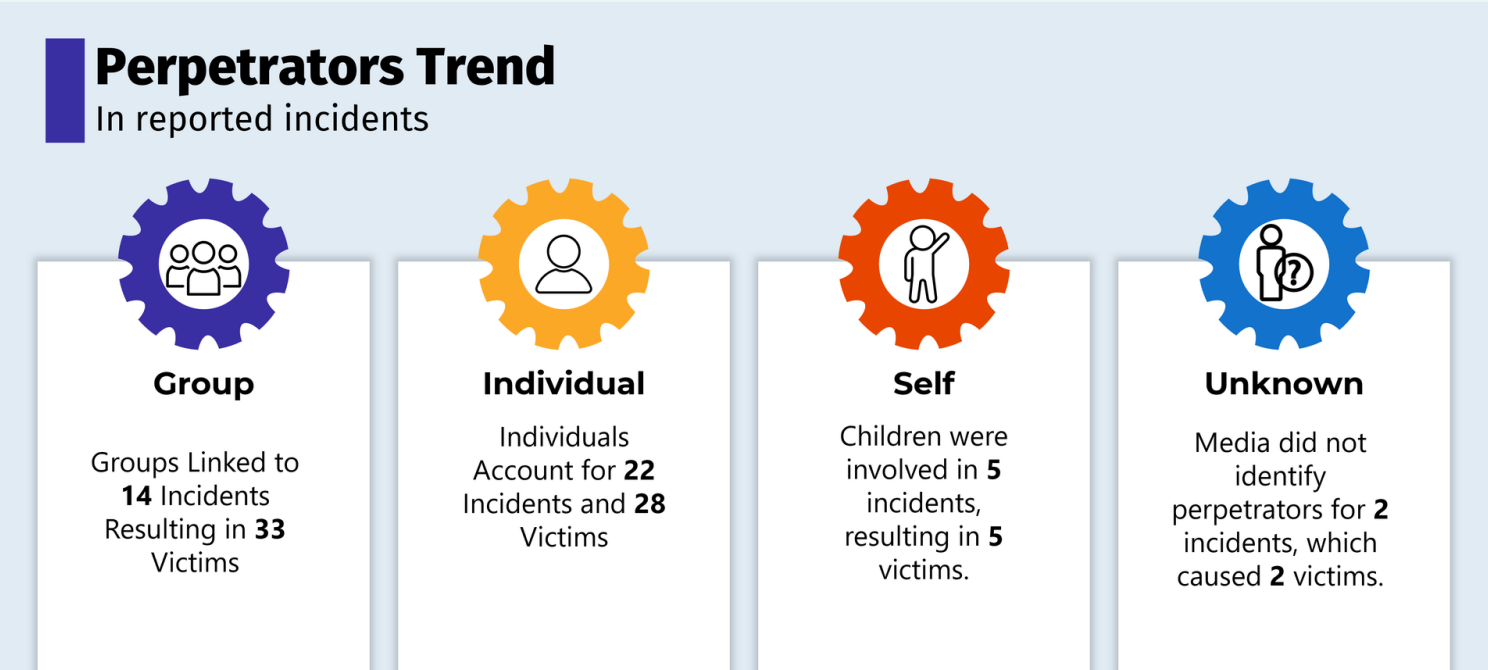
Negligence, sexual abuse, physical abuse, and suicide have been reported in that order, with the highest number of incidents appearing in the media during November. These figures have remained constant since September 2024. The November data reveals a concerning level of violence against children, with negligence continuing to be the most common form, accounting for 13 incidents (30.23%) affecting 37 victims (54.41%). This underscores a grave concern regarding social responsibility, accountability, and the care provided by caregivers and those in positions of authority. Sexual abuse remains a significant issue, with 12 incidents (27.91%) impacting 13 victims (19.12%). The next highest reported form of violence against children is physical abuse, with 6 incidents (13.95%) affecting 6 victims (8.82%). It is also important to note that 5 children have committed suicide, which reveals deep psychological issues and the urgent need for support for these individuals. Additionally, abduction, and drug abuse were each reported with 2 incidents and 2 victims, demonstrating the wide range of dangers faced by children. Emotional abuse is notably absent from reported incidents (0%), which may reflect under reporting or a lack of awareness regarding the signs and consequences of this form of violence.



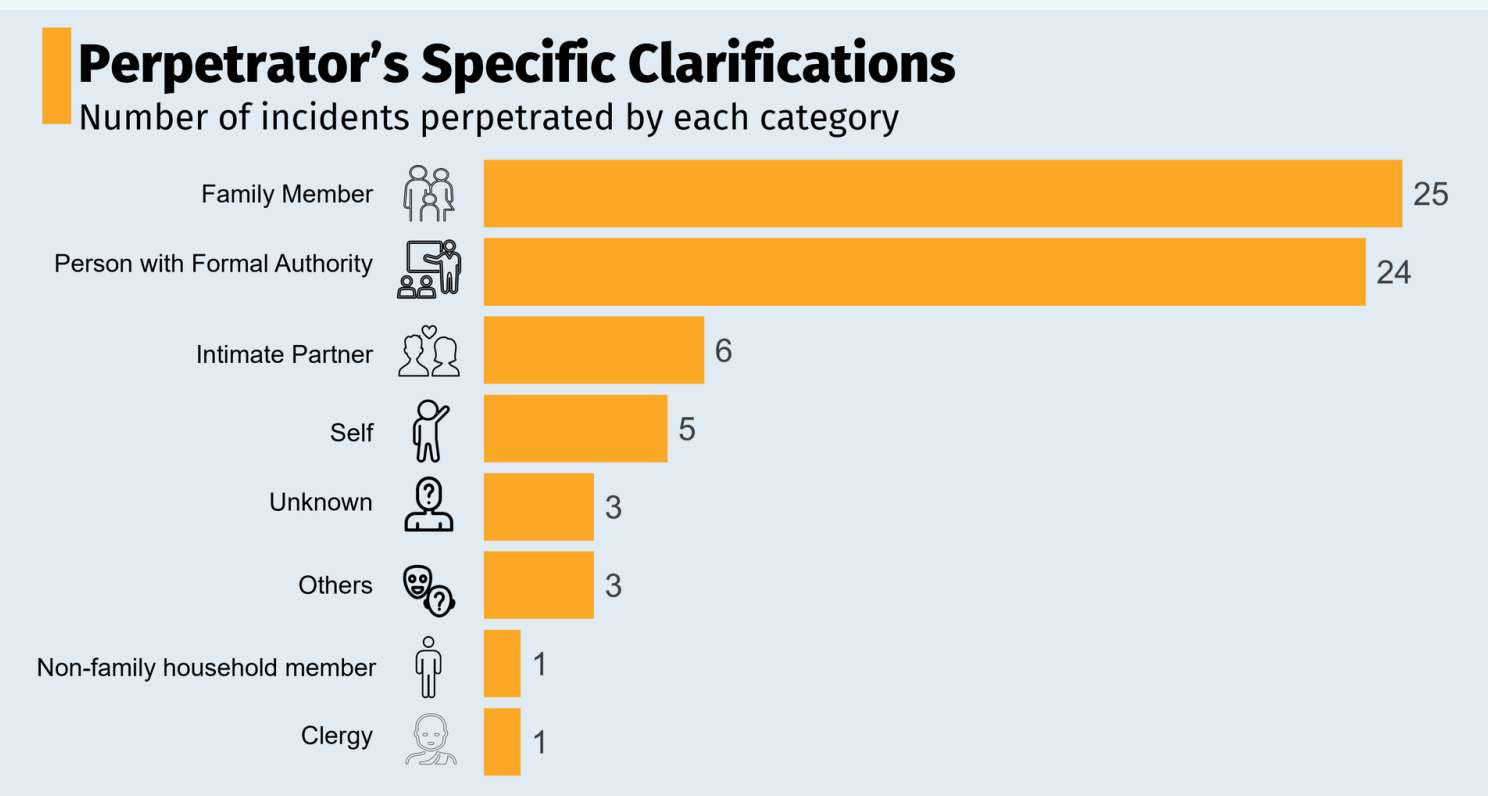
The Age Distribution of Victims reveals a notable concentration in older childhood and adolescence, particularly within the 15–18 (36.76%) and 11–14 (32.35%) age groups. These two categories account for nearly 70% of the victims, a trend that has remained consistent since October. In November, the 6–10 age group comprised 11.67% of the total victims, making it the third most affected demographic. This status as the third most impacted group has persisted since September and October, underscoring the ongoing vulnerability of children in this age range, irrespective of the percentage variations reported. It is particularly disheartening to note that following a period of silence in October, reports of victims in the 0–12 months age group resurfaced in November, constituting 4.41% of cases. Additionally, a significant proportion of incidents reported in the media, totalling 10.29%, did not specify the age groups of those affected.



The gender analysis of the affected children indicated that females constituted the predominant group among the victims, totalling 40. In contrast, 28 of the affected children were male. Although there appears to be a pattern of higher reports regarding female children in the media, this may also reflect social and cultural gender perceptions, a lack of sensitivity, and the importance placed on male children, along with related factors.



The November 2024 data reveals troubling trends in violence against children, highlighting the roles played by both individuals and groups as perpetrators. Individuals were responsible for many incidents, accounting for 22 cases and affecting 28 victims. Additionally, groups were involved in 14 incidents, resulting in 33 children being subjected to violence. Furthermore, there were 5 incidents of self-inflicted harm leading to 5 victims, and 2 incidents involved unidentified perpetrators, resulting in 2 victims. These figures underscore the diverse and complex nature of the perpetrators involved in child abuse, reinforcing the necessity for targeted intervention and protection strategies.



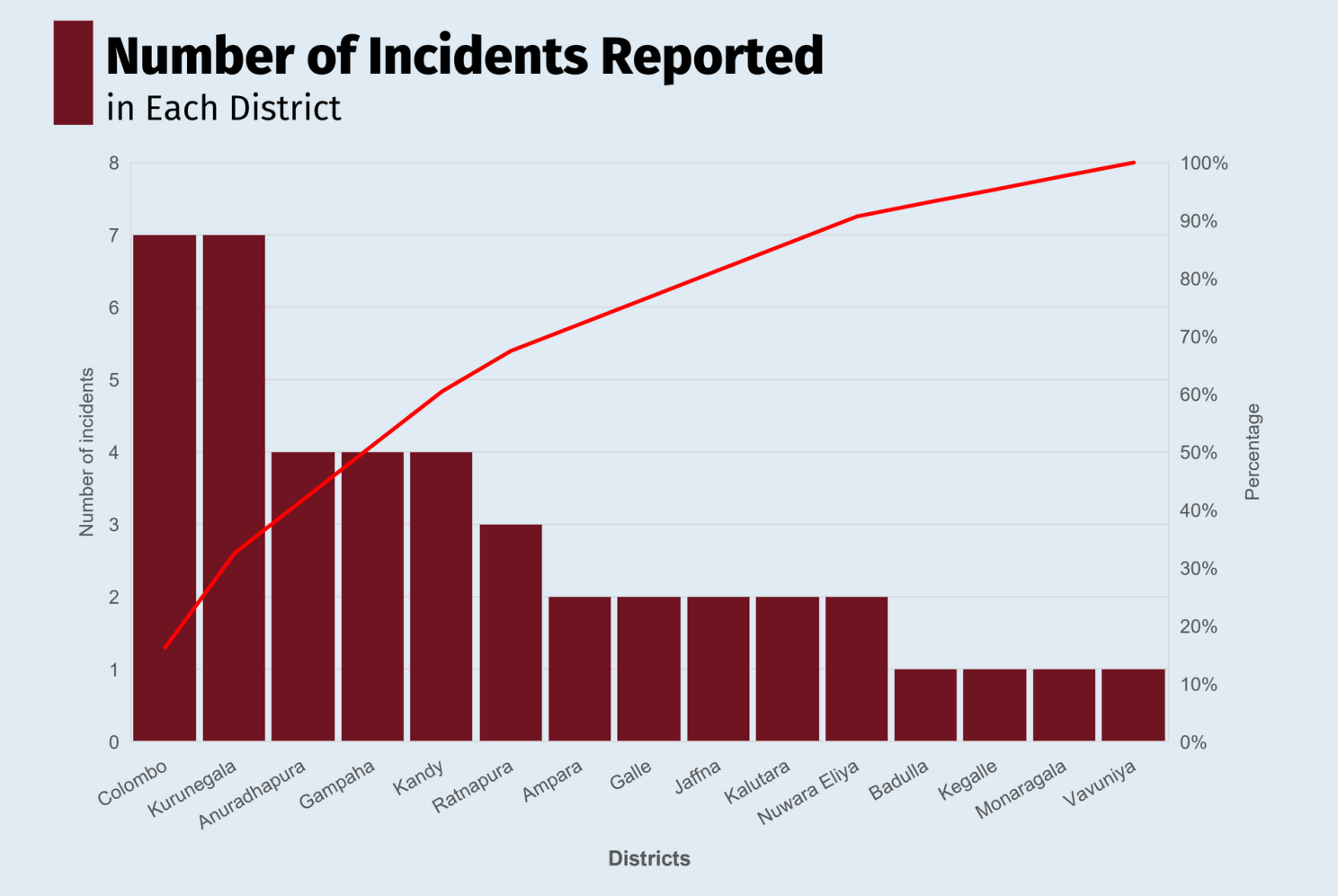
In November, data analysis indicated that family members were responsible for 36.76% of victims, while individuals with formal authority accounted for 24.35% of child victimisation. Our analysis reveals that these two groups have been the most prevalent perpetrators for several months in 2024. The high incidence of incidents involving family members raises alarm bells regarding the nature of familial relationships and the emerging harmful patterns towards children while also casting doubt on the accountability and responsibility of those in formal authority roles concerning children. The data further indicates that intimate partners have victimised 8% of children, and 7.35% of children have suffered self-inflicted harm. Additionally, over 8% of cases were perpetrated by individuals classified as 'others' or 'unknown'.

Settings

Where the violence occurred

Settings	Incident	Percentage	Victims	Percentage
Perpetrator's Home	1	2%	1	1%
Medical, Rehabilitation and Care Facility	1	2%	1	1%
Place of Work	1	2%	1	1%
Place of Detention	1	2%	9	13%
Other home settings	2	5%	2	3%
Education or Vocational Training Facility	5	12%	18	26%
Unknown	10	23%	10	15%
Community	11	26%	15	22%
Home of Victim	11	26%	11	16%
Total	43	100%	68	100%

Educational and vocational training facilities have recorded the highest number of child abuse victims, totalling 18 individuals (26.47%) across five incidents. This trend has also been observed in both October and September. This situation is deeply concerning, as these establishments are legally responsible for protecting and safeguarding children. The second-highest number of victims, accounting for 22%, occurred in community settings, where 15 children were affected across 11 cases. It is troubling to note that numerous cases continue to be reported within home environments, with 11 incidents involving 11 children, contributing 16.8% to the total in November. This pattern has remained consistent over recent months. Notably, November saw an incident that affected nine children (13.24%) at a detention facility, while no incidents were recorded in the two preceding months. Equally concerning is the 'unknown' category, which accounted for 10 incidents and 10 victims, making it the second-highest number of incidents this month. In contrast to September and October, the number of affected children in medical and care facilities was minimal, with only one incident involving one child. No incidents were reported on digital platforms in either October or November this year.



Media analysis reveals incidents from 15 of the 25 districts in the country. Kegalle recorded the highest number of victims, with 13 reported across 1 incident. Kandy followed closely, documenting 12 victims over 4 cases. Kurunegala, Ampara, and Colombo each reported 7 victims. However, Kurunegala and Colombo also had 7 cases, representing the highest number of incidents, while Ampara recorded 7 children affected across 2 cases. Anuradhapura and Gampaha reported 2 incidents and 2 victims each. Rathnapura noted 3 incidents, which similarly resulted in 3 victims. Nuwara Eliya reported 2 incidents with 2 victims. Galle reported 2 incidents, which similarly resulted in 3 victims.