

Statistics: Domestic Violence

Did You Know...

Domestic violence is a gendered crime...

- Spousal violence has been consistently identified as one of the most common forms of violence against women in Canada.¹
- The majority of spousal violence victims are women, representing 83% of all victims (2007).²
- Women are almost four times more likely than men to be victims of spousal violence (2011).³
- More than 6% of married, common-law, same-sex, separated and divorced female spouses in Ontario report experiencing physical/sexual assault by a spousal partner (2009).⁴

Women experience more serious forms of spousal assault than men...

- 4 in 10 women victimized by their spouse report being physically injured (42%), more than twice the proportion of male victims (18%) (2009).⁵
- Women are three times more likely to report being beaten, choked, sexually assaulted, or threatened with a gun or knife by their partner or ex-partner (2009).⁶
- Women are more likely to experience multiple victimizations, according to self-reported data (2009).⁷

Most victims of domestic homicide are female, while most perpetrators are male...

- 95% of spousal homicide victims in Ontario are female (2011).⁸
- There were 59 female spousal homicide victims in Canada in 2011, in comparison to 7 male victims.⁹
- Of the homicide cases with domestic violence involvement which occurred in Ontario from 2002 to 2009, 80% of victims were women, 12% were children and 8% were men.¹⁰
- Of the cases reviewed in Ontario's 2011 Domestic Violence Death Review Committee Report, 88% of spousal homicide perpetrators were male while 89% of victims were female.¹¹

The rate of domestic homicides against women has dropped in Canada...

- The rate of homicides against female spouses dropped 46% from 1991 to 2011.¹²

Domestic homicides are more common in certain relationships...

- Women are six times more likely to be killed by an ex-spouse than a current legally married spouse.¹³ In fact, the period immediately after a separation is the most dangerous for abuse victims.¹⁴
- About 6 in 10 spousal homicides of women have a history of family violence involving the victim and the accused (2001-2011).¹⁵

Many incidents of domestic violence are not reported to police...

- Less than one-third (30%) of female spousal violence victims state that the incident was reported to police (2009), down from 36% in 2004.¹⁶

Women choose not to report to police for a number of reasons...

- Women are six times more likely than men to say the incident was not reported out of fear of their spouse (19% versus 3%) and they are almost twice as likely to say they did not want anyone to find out (44% versus 26%) (2009).¹⁷
- 79% of women who do report claim they are dealing with the situation in another way, while 74% do not report because they consider it a personal matter (2009).¹⁸

Certain types of spousal violence are more likely to be reported to police...¹⁹

- 53% of incidents where women are sexually assaulted, and 60% of incidents where women are beaten, choked or have a weapon used against them are reported to police (2009).²⁰
- Many victims are victimized multiple times before they report to police (2009).²¹

A small proportion of female victims obtain a restraining or protection order...

- 15% of female victims obtain a restraining or protection order; but according to 32% of these women, the terms of the order are breached (2009).²²

Age is a risk factor in experiencing domestic violence...

- Women aged 15 to 34 with a current or former spouse are about two to three times as likely as their older counterparts to report experiencing spousal victimization (2009).²³
- Women aged 15 to 24 are most at risk for spousal homicide. From 2001 to 2011, there were 18.8 spousal homicides for every million women aged 15 to 24, 10.3 spousal homicides per million women aged 25 to 34, and 7.5 homicides per million women aged 35 to 44.²⁴

Aboriginal women are at increased risk of experiencing domestic violence...

- Aboriginal women are 2.5 times more likely to experience spousal violence than non-Aboriginal women, according to self-reported data (2009).²⁵
- Nearly 6 in 10 Aboriginal female spousal violence victims report injury (59%), while just over 4 in 10 non-Aboriginal female victims are injured (41%) (2009).²⁶

- At least 4% of female spousal homicide victims are Aboriginal (2001-2011).²⁷

Lesbian and bisexual women are at increased risk of experiencing domestic violence...

- Women who self-identify as lesbian or bisexual report violence by a current or previous spouse at three times the rate of heterosexual women (2009).²⁸

Women with an activity limitation are at increased risk of experiencing domestic violence...

- Women with an activity limitation, such as a physical or mental condition, report nearly double the rate of spousal violence as those without limitations (2009).²⁹

Education and income levels do not affect the level of risk...

- Educational attainment has no bearing on women's risk of spousal violence (2009).³⁰
- Income also has no effect on women's risk of spousal violence (2009).³¹

Children are affected by domestic violence...

- Children are more likely to witness violence when the spousal victim is female.³²
- Almost 6 in 10 women with children who were assaulted by spouses said their children heard or saw the violent episode (59%) (2009).³³

Many domestic violence victims experience abuse while pregnant...

- Over 1 in 10 women report experiencing spousal violence while pregnant (2009). Abuse during pregnancy can negatively impact both maternal health and birth outcomes.³⁴

Women turn to many different sources for support...

- 8 in 10 women tell family, friends or another source of informal support (2009).³⁵
- 38% of female victims use social services, such as counsellors, crisis lines, community centres, shelters, women's centres, and support groups (2009).³⁶

Many women rely on women's shelters to escape domestic violence...

- More than two-thirds of violent incidents against women are committed in private residences, such as the victim and/or offender's home (69%) (2011).³⁷
- In 2009/2010, there were almost 31,000 admissions of women and children to the 171 shelters in Ontario that provided services for abused women.³⁸
- A one-day snapshot survey found 3,459 residents in Ontario shelters offering services to abused women. 54% of these residents were women, while 46% were dependent children. 74% of women were there primarily because of abuse (2010).³⁹

Women attempt to leave an abusive relationship a number of times, before finally severing ties...

- The average woman will make up to five attempts to leave her abuser before ending the relationship permanently.⁴⁰

The social and economic costs of domestic violence against women are high...

- Spousal violence has psychological, physical, social and economic impacts for victims, their families and society.⁴¹
- Female victims of spousal violence are seven times more likely than male victims to be fearful, three times more likely to be depressed or anxious, and twice as likely to be angry (2009).⁴²
- The financial and economic costs of spousal violence for society are higher for women in all categories. This includes both tangible and intangible costs (such as the impact on work productivity).⁴³
- It is estimated that the total cost of spousal violence against women in Canada is \$4.8 billion over a one year period (2009).⁴⁴

¹ Status of Women Canada. (2013). Measuring Violence Against Women: Statistical Trends – Key Findings – Intimate Partner Violence and Spousal Violence. Federal-Provincial-Territorial (FPT) Forum of Ministers Responsible for the Status of Women. Retrieved on October 23, 2013.

² Statistics Canada. (2009). Family Violence in Canada: A Statistical Profile. Ottawa, ON: Minister of Industry. Pg. 5.

³ Statistics Canada. (2013). Measuring violence against women: Statistical trends. Ottawa, ON: Minister of Industry. Pg. 20.

⁴ Statistics Canada. (2011). Family Violence in Canada: A Statistical Profile. Ottawa, ON: Minister of Industry. Pg. 9.

⁵ Statistics Canada. (2013). Measuring violence against women: Statistical trends. Ottawa, ON: Minister of Industry. Pg. 82.

⁶ Statistics Canada. (2013). Measuring violence against women: Statistical trends. Ottawa, ON: Minister of Industry. Pg. 26.

⁷ Statistics Canada. (2013). Measuring violence against women: Statistical trends. Ottawa, ON: Minister of Industry. Pg. 8.

⁸ Statistics Canada. (2011). Table 1: Victims of spousal homicide, by gender of victim and province/territory, 2002-2011. Retrieved on July 11, 2013. Retrieved on request from Statistics Canada.

⁹ Statistics Canada. (2011). Table 1: Victims of spousal homicide, by gender of victim and province/territory, 2002-2011. Retrieved on July 11, 2013. Retrieved on request from Statistics Canada.

¹⁰ Domestic Violence Death Review Committee. (2012). 2011 Annual Report of the Domestic Violence Death Review Committee. Toronto, ON: Office of the Chief Coroner, Pg. 5.

¹¹ Domestic Violence Death Review Committee. (2012). 2011 Annual Report of the Domestic Violence Death Review Committee. Toronto, ON: Office of the Chief Coroner, Pg. iii.

¹² Statistics Canada. (2013). Measuring violence against women: Statistical trends. Ottawa, ON: Minister of Industry. Pg. 20.

¹³ Statistics Canada. (2013). Measuring violence against women: Statistical trends. Ottawa, ON: Minister of Industry. Pg. 57.

¹⁴ Domestic Violence Death Review Committee. (2008). Sixth Annual Report of the Domestic Violence Death Review Committee. Toronto, ON: Office of the Chief Coroner, Pg. 29.

¹⁵ Statistics Canada. (2013). Measuring violence against women: Statistical trends. Ottawa, ON: Minister of Industry. Pg. 21.

¹⁶ Statistics Canada. (2013). Measuring violence against women: Statistical trends. Ottawa, ON: Minister of Industry. Pg. 10.

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- ³⁸ Statistics Canada. (2011). Transition Homes in Canada: National, Provincial and Territorial Fact Sheets 2009/2010. Pg. 17.
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⁴¹ Statistics Canada. (2006). Measuring violence against women: Statistical trends. Ottawa, ON: Minister of Industry. Pg. 13.

⁴² Statistics Canada. (2013). Measuring violence against women: Statistical trends. Ottawa, ON: Minister of Industry. Pg. 80.

⁴³ Status of Women Canada. (2013). Measuring violence against women: Statistical trends. – Key Findings – Intimate Partner Violence and Spousal Violence. Federal-Provincial-Territorial (FPT) Forum of Ministers Responsible for the Status of Women. Retrieved on October 23, 2013.

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