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A Statistical Profile 2001

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Family Violence in Canada:

A Statistical Profile 2001

Edited by: Catherine Trainor and Karen Mihorean

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Note of appreciation

Canada owes the success of its statistical system to a long-standing partnership between Statistics Canada, the citizens of Canada, its businesses, governments and other institutions. Accurate and timely statistical information could not be produced without their continued cooperation and goodwill.

SYMBOLS

The following symbols are used in this report:

..	figures not available
…	figures not appropriate or not applicable
-	nil or zero
--	amount too small to be expressed
ns	not significant
†	coefficient of variation between 16.6% and 33.3%

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HIGHLIGHTS

Chapter 1 – The Canadian Incidence Study of Reported Child Abuse and Neglect (CIS)

- An estimated 135,600 child maltreatment investigations were conducted in Canada in 1998. This figure corresponds to an estimated rate of 22 investigations per 1,000 children aged 0 to 15 years in the population. Almost one-half (45%) of these reports were substantiated by the investigating child welfare worker.

- The majority of substantiated investigations of physical abuse involved inappropriate punishment (69%), although more severe forms of abuse accounted for almost one-third. Shaken Baby Syndrome, in contrast, accounted for approximately 1% of the substantiated investigations.

- Touching and fondling of the genitals was the most common form of substantiated child sexual abuse (68%). Attempted and completed intercourse together accounted for approximately 35% of all substantiated investigations, and an adult exposing genitals to a child accounted for 12%.

- According to the CIS, neglect primarily involved failure to supervise the child properly, which led to physical harm (48%).

- Children's exposure to family violence was the most common form of emotional maltreatment, accounting for 58% of substantiated cases. Emotional abuse and emotional neglect were also fairly common (34% and 16% respectively).

- Overall, family members or other persons related to the child victim constituted the vast majority (93%) of alleged perpetrators. Biological mothers were identified as the alleged perpetrator most often (60% of substantiated cases), followed by biological fathers (41%), step-fathers/common-law partners (9%) and step-mothers/common-law partners (3%). This distribution may be somewhat biased by the fact that 40% of investigated families were female-parent families.

- According to the CIS, physically abused children were generally reported as having considerable problems in child functioning. Notably, in over one-half (56%) of substantiated physical abuse cases, the child was described as having some type of child functioning problem. Behaviour problems (39%), negative peer involvement (15%), depression or anxiety (15%), violence to others (11%), and developmental delay (9%) were the most often indicated concerns.

- Child victims of sexual abuse reported difficulties in 58% of substantiated cases. The five most often reported issues were depression or anxiety (29%), age-inappropriate sexual behaviour (17%), behaviour problems (14%), negative peer involvement (13%), and irregular school attendance (10%).

Chapter 2 – Homicide of Children and Youth

- In 1999, the rate of children and youth killed by family members fell to its lowest level in 26 years. Children and youth are most likely to be killed by family members. Of the 1,990 solved homicides of children and youth recorded by police in Canada between 1974 and 1999, family members were responsible for 63% of the deaths.

Chapter 3 – Children Witnessing Family Violence

- According to the 1999 General Social Survey (GSS) on Victimization, children heard or saw one parent assaulting the other in an estimated 461,000 households, which represents 37% of all households with spousal violence in the five-year period preceding the survey.

- In cases where children witnessed spousal violence, they were more likely to witness assaults against their mothers (70%) than against their fathers (30%), and assaults witnessed against mothers tended to be more serious. Over half of the female victims in these cases feared for their lives because of the violence.

- According to the National Longitudinal Survey of Children and Youth, children who are exposed to adults or teenagers physically fighting in the home were more likely to exhibit physical aggression, indirect aggression, emotional disorders, hyperactivity and to commit delinquent acts against property.

Chapter 4 – Spousal Violence

- There was a decline between 1993 and 1999 in rates of spousal violence against women in most provinces. At the same time, there was an upward trend in the use of criminal justice and social services by victims.

- Aboriginal women were more likely than were other Canadians to report violence by a spouse. In addition, rates of spousal homicide among Aboriginal women were more than eight times higher than for non-Aboriginal women (47 per million couples compared to 6 per million). Aboriginal men had rates of spousal homicide 18 times higher than non-Aboriginal men (28 per million couples compared to 2 per million).

- Marital separation does not necessarily mark the end of a violent relationship. According to the 1999 GSS, 37% of women and men with a former violent marriage or common-law relationship reported that the violence continued after the couple separated.

- Marital separation is a factor that elevates the rate of spousal homicide for women but not for men. Between 1991 and 1999, women were killed by estranged husbands at a rate of 39 per million couples compared to a rate of 5 per million killed by current husbands. Risk of spousal homicide was lower on average for men: 2 men per million couples were killed by an ex-partner, and 1 per million couples was killed by a current marital partner.

Chapter 5 – Children in Shelters for Abused Women

Trends in Transition Home Survey Data

- Despite a decline in the number of children admitted to shelters, the proportion of children in shelters for reasons of abuse increased from 1998 to 2000. Snapshot day data indicates that 86% of children in 1998 were residing in shelters for reasons of abuse compared to 91% of children in 2000.

- Children housed in shelters for reasons of abuse tend to be very young. Children under the age of 5 constituted the largest proportion of abused children in shelters in both 1998 and 2000 (45% and 41% respectively) followed by children aged 5 to 9 (32% in both years).

INTRODUCTION

This is the fourth annual *Family Violence in Canada: A Statistical Profile* report released by the Canadian Centre for Justice Statistics under the Federal Family Violence Initiative. This annual report is part of an ongoing initiative to inform the public about family violence issues and provides current data on the nature and extent of family violence incidents in Canada and trends over time.

Each year, the report has a different focus. This year, the focus is on child abuse, including results from Health Canada's Canadian Incidence Study of Reported Child Abuse and Neglect, and information on child homicides, children witnessing violence in the home and children accompanying their mothers to shelters for abused women. The report also provides the most recent police-reported and hospital morbidity data on child abuse as well as data on post-separation spousal violence and spousal violence among Aboriginal people.

1.0 THE CANADIAN INCIDENCE STUDY OF REPORTED CHILD ABUSE AND NEGLECT[1]

by Nico Trocmé and David Wolfe
*edited by Gordon Phaneuf**

The Canadian Incidence Study of Reported Child Abuse and Neglect (CIS) is the first national study on the incidence of child abuse and neglect reported to, and investigated by, child welfare services in Canada. Prior to this study, available data had been largely limited to police-reported incidents of assault and homicide. However, because of the secrecy that often surrounds cases of child abuse, many cases never come to the attention of the police.

The CIS provides comprehensive statistics on children and families investigated because of suspected child abuse and neglect. This study provides a snapshot of those cases reported to, and investigated by, child welfare services during a three-month period, from October to December 1998. The data presented in this report focus on cases of maltreatment that have been substantiated and provide estimates of the scope and characteristics of child abuse and neglect in Canada based on this source.

Incidence and Characteristics of Child Maltreatment

Almost one-half of reported child maltreatment cases substantiated

An estimated 135,573 child maltreatment investigations were conducted in Canada in 1998 by child welfare agencies. This figure corresponds to an estimated rate of 22 investigations per 1,000 children aged 0 to 15 years in the population. Almost one-half (45%) of these reports were substantiated by the investigating child welfare worker. The remaining investigations either had insufficient information to substantiate, but the worker remained suspicious that maltreatment had occurred (22%), or the worker determined on the basis of the investigation that the child had not been maltreated (33%).

Child neglect primary reason for child maltreatment investigations

Child neglect (see box "Defining child neglect" for definition) was the most common reason for investigation (40% of all investigations), followed by physical abuse (31%), emotional maltreatment (19%), and sexual abuse

About the Canadian Incidence Study

The CIS was conducted by the Bell Canada Child Welfare Research Unit at the Faculty of Social Work, University of Toronto, through funding from Health Canada. All provinces and territories participated in the study. British Columbia, Ontario, Quebec, and Newfoundland provided additional funds to increase the size of the sample in their jurisdictions.

When interpreting these results, it is important to recognize that they come from a sample of child maltreatment cases that were investigated by child welfare workers. The study does not include cases investigated only by police, cases known to other professionals but not reported to child welfare, cases of child maltreatment that were known by the larger community and not reported, and unknown cases. Therefore, the CIS estimates represent only a portion of all child maltreatment incidents.

The CIS captured information about children and their families as they came into contact with child welfare services over a three-month sampling period, from October to December 1998. A multi-stage sampling design was used, first to select a sample of child welfare offices across Canada, and then to select cases within these offices. Fifty-one sites, including three agencies providing services primarily to Aboriginal people, were selected from a pool of 327 child welfare services areas in Canada. All but four sites were randomly selected.

Information was gathered on all investigated cases of child maltreatment at the study sites. The CIS included 22 forms of maltreatment under four main categories: physical abuse, sexual abuse, neglect, and emotional maltreatment. The final sample of 7,672 child maltreatment investigations was used to derive national estimates of the annual incidence of investigated child maltreatment in Canada in 1998.

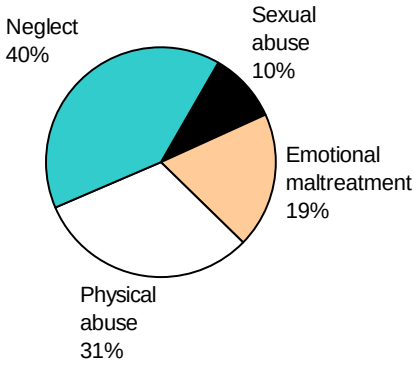
[1] *This section has been extracted from Nico Trocmé and David Wolfe (2001), Child Maltreatment in Canada: Selected Results from the Canadian Incidence Study of Reported Child Abuse and Neglect. Ottawa: Minister of Public Works and Government Services Canada.*

* *Nico Trocmé is with the Faculty of Social Work, University of Toronto, David Wolfe is with the Department of Psychology, University of Western Ontario and Gordon Phaneuf is with the Child Maltreatment Division, Health Canada.*

(10%) (Figure 1.1). While the rate of substantiation was highest for emotional maltreatment as the primary reason for investigation (54% substantiated), the other three categories had similar levels of substantiation (neglect: 43%, sexual abuse: 38%, physical abuse: 34%).

Figure 1.1

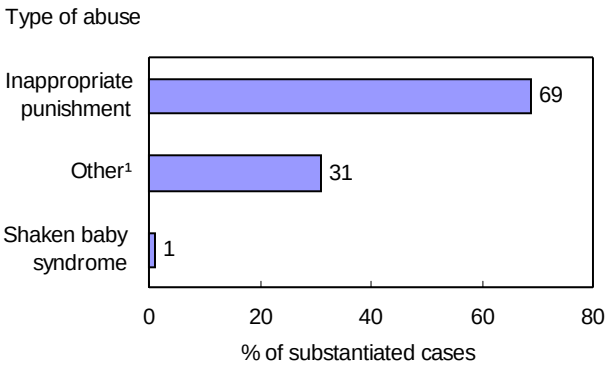
Child neglect most common reason for child maltreatment investigations



Source: *Health Canada, The Canadian Incidence Study of Reported Child Abuse and Neglect, 1998.*

Figure 1.2

Majority of substantiated physical abuse cases involve inappropriate punishment



Total exceeds 100% due to multiple responses.

[1] Other physical abuse includes any other form of physical brutality that is inflicted on a child, such as intentionally burning a child or hitting the child with a fist.

Source: *Health Canada, The Canadian Incidence Study of Reported Child Abuse and Neglect, 1998.*

Defining physical abuse

Physical abuse is the deliberate application of force to any part of a child's body, which results or may result in a non-accidental injury. It may involve hitting a child a single time or it may involve a pattern of incidents. Physical abuse also includes behaviours such as shaking, choking, biting, kicking, burning or poisoning a child, holding a child under water, or any other harmful or dangerous use of force or restraint. Child physical abuse is usually connected to physical punishment or is confused with child discipline.

For the purposes of the CIS, cases of investigated maltreatment were classified as physical abuse if the investigated child was thought to have suffered, or to be at substantial risk of suffering, physical harm at the hands of the alleged perpetrator. The physical abuse category includes three subtypes or forms of abuse:

1) Shaken Baby Syndrome (brain or neck injuries have resulted from the infant being shaken);
2) inappropriate punishment[2] (e.g. hitting with hand or object, that has led to physical harm, or put the child at substantial risk of harm); and
3) other physical abuse (any other form of physical brutality that is inflicted on a child, such as intentionally burning a child or hitting the child with a fist).

[2] The judgment of appropriateness is based on many factors, including the severity of harm or potential harm, the amount of force used, the type of punishment relative to the age of the child, and the frequency of punishment.

Majority of substantiated physical abuse cases involve inappropriate punishment

The majority of substantiated investigations of physical abuse involved inappropriate punishment (69%), although more severe forms of abuse accounted for almost one-third. Shaken Baby Syndrome, in contrast, accounted for approximately 1% of the substantiated investigations (Figure 1.2).

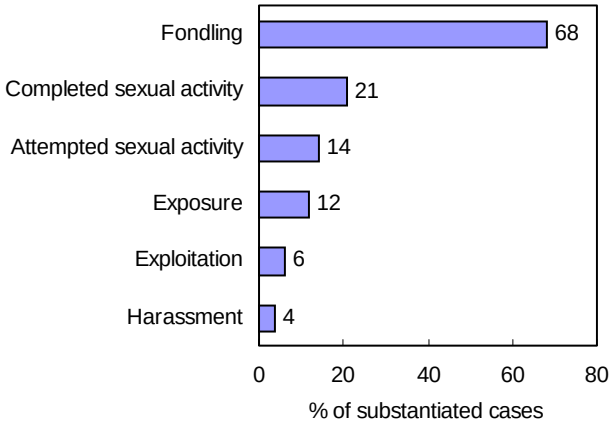
Sexual abuse cases most often involve fondling

Touching and fondling of the genitals was the most common form of substantiated child sexual abuse (68%). Attempted and completed intercourse together accounted for approximately 35% of all substantiated investigations, and an adult exposing genitals to a child accounted for 12% (Figure 1.3).

Sexual exploitation and sexual harassment were less common (6% and 4% respectively), and the number of cases of voyeurism was insufficient to permit reliable estimates of that particular form of sexual abuse.

Figure 1.3

Sexual abuse cases most often involve fondling



Total exceeds 100% due to multiple responses.
Source: *Health Canada, The Canadian Incidence Study of Reported Child Abuse and Neglect, 1998.*

Defining sexual abuse

The CIS examined seven forms or subtypes of sexual abuse, ranging from sexual activity to sexual harassment. If more than one form of sexual abuse was reported for the same incident, workers were asked to identify the most intrusive form. The CIS documented only those cases reported to, and investigated by, child welfare services: many cases of child sexual abuse that do not involve parents or relatives in the home are investigated only by the police. Child welfare services usually become involved in extra-familial sexual abuse cases only if there are concerns about the parents' ability to protect the child.

The seven forms of sexual abuse include the following: sexual activity completed (oral, vaginal, or anal sexual activities); sexual activity attempted (attempts to have oral, vaginal, or anal sex); touching/fondling genitals; adult exposing genitals to child; sexual exploitation (situations in which an adult sexually exploited a child for purposes of financial gain or other profit); sexual harassment (proposition, encouragement, or suggestion of a sexual nature); and voyeurism (activities in which a child was encouraged to exhibit himself/herself for the sexual gratification of the alleged perpetrator).

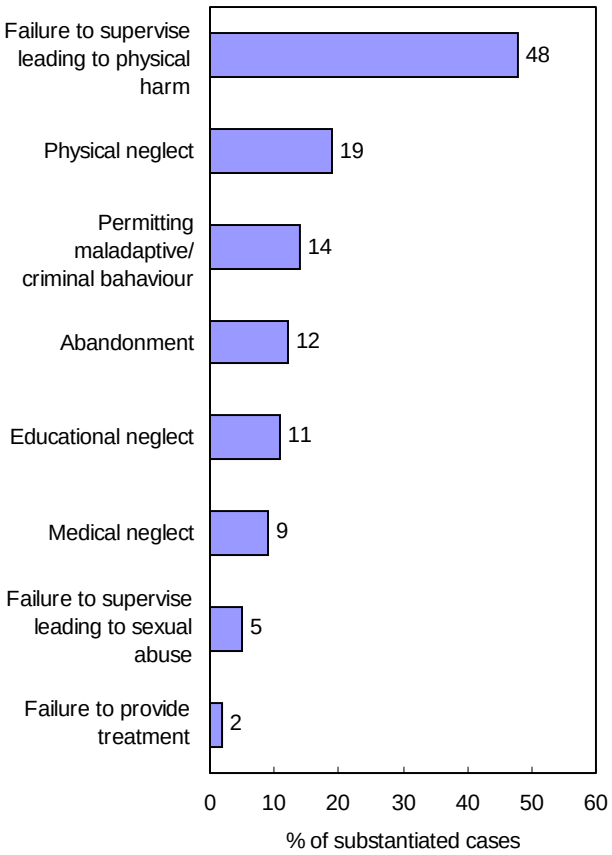
Neglect primarily involves failure to supervise child properly

Unlike physical or sexual abuse, which is usually incident-specific, neglect often involves chronic situations that are not as easily identified as specific incidents. Regardless, all provincial and territorial child welfare statutes include neglect or some type of reference to acts of omission, such as failure to supervise or protect, as grounds for investigating maltreatment.

As previously indicated, child neglect was the most frequently investigated category of maltreatment, and had the second highest rate of substantiation. According to the CIS, neglect primarily involved failure to supervise the child properly, which led to physical harm (48%) (Figure 1.4). Parents' reported failure to adequately meet the physical needs of children (physical neglect) accounted for the next largest percentage of substantiated reports (19%), followed by permitting criminal behaviour (14%), abandonment (12%), and educational neglect (11%). Medical neglect, failure to supervise leading to sexual abuse, and failure to provide necessary treatment for a child were less commonly reported.

Figure 1.4

Failure to supervise children properly leading to physical harm most common form of neglect



Total exceeds 100% due to multiple responses.
Source*: Health Canada, The Canadian Incidence Study of Reported Child Abuse and Neglect, 1998.*

Defining child neglect

Child neglect occurs when a child's parents or other caregivers are not providing the requisites of a child's emotional, psychological, and physical development. Physical neglect occurs when a child's needs for food, clothing, shelter, cleanliness, medical care and protection from harm are not adequately met. Emotional neglect occurs when a child's need to feel loved, wanted, safe, and worthy is not met. Emotional neglect can range from cases in which the caregiver is simply unavailable, to cases in which the caregiver openly rejects the child.

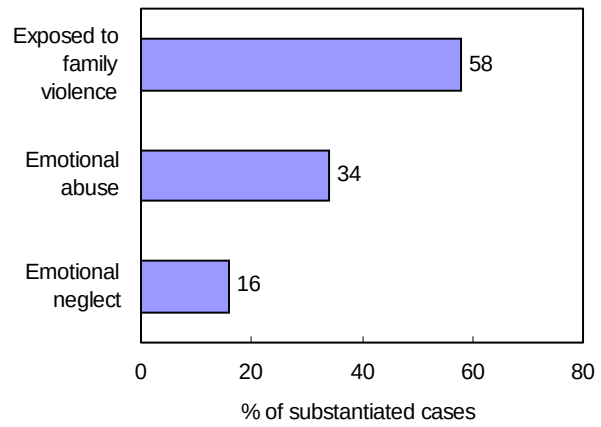
The CIS includes eight types of neglect: failure to supervise or protect leading to physical harm; failure to supervise or protect leading to sexual abuse; physical neglect; medical neglect; failure to provide treatment for mental, emotional or developmental problem; permitting maladaptive/criminal behaviour; abandonment/ refusal of custody; and educational neglect.

Exposure to family violence most common type of emotional maltreatment

Children's exposure to family violence was the most common form of emotional maltreatment, accounting for 58% of substantiated cases (Figure 1.5). Emotional abuse and emotional neglect were also fairly common (34% and 16% respectively). Non-organic failure to thrive occurred too infrequently to be reliably estimated.

Figure 1.5

Children's exposure to family violence the most common form of emotional maltreatment



Total exceeds 100% due to multiple responses.
***Source**: Health Canada, The Canadian Incidence Study of Reported Child Abuse and Neglect, 1998.*

Defining emotional maltreatment

Emotional maltreatment harms a child's sense of self, and involves acts or omissions by the parent or caregiver that have caused, or could cause, serious behavioural, cognitive, emotional, or mental disorders. Examples of emotional maltreatment include verbal threats and put-downs, forcing a child into social isolation, intimidating, exploiting, terrorizing or routinely making unreasonable demands on a child. Four forms of emotional maltreatment were tracked by the CIS: emotional abuse (overtly hostile, punitive treatment, or habitual or extreme verbal abuse); non-organic failure to thrive (a child under 3 years has suffered a marked retardation or cessation of growth for which no organic reason can be identified); emotional neglect (inadequate nurturance/affection); and exposure to family violence.

Fewer than one in five cases of child maltreatment result in physical harm

Across all categories of maltreatment, physical harm was documented in 17% of substantiated cases. About three-quarters of the cases involving physical harm did not require treatment, whereas in the remaining one-quarter (4% of the total number of substantiated cases) the harm was sufficiently severe to require medical treatment. Most of this harm (65%) involved bruises, cuts, and scrapes, although there were other significant injuries and health conditions resulting from maltreatment as well.

Not surprisingly, physical abuse was the most common primary category of maltreatment that resulted in physical harm: almost half (44%) of all substantiated physical abuse cases documented physical harm, and some form of medical treatment was required in 6% of these cases. The vast majority of injuries (86%) involved bruises, cuts and scrapes, and the remaining injuries were evenly distributed over the other types.

Physical harm was also documented in all other primary categories of maltreatment, although to a significantly lesser extent (neglect 9%, sexual abuse 8%, emotional maltreatment 1%). The nature of the physical harm related to sexual abuse and emotional maltreatment was similar, and was fairly evenly split between bruises, cuts and scrapes and other health conditions. In cases of substantiated child neglect, physical harm was generally manifested by other health conditions (67% of injuries), bruises, cuts, and scrapes (16%) or burns and scalds (12%).

Emotional harm most prevalent in cases of sexual abuse

Unlike physical injuries, which can usually be linked to specific incidents of maltreatment, it is more difficult to link emotional harm to specific incidents. To account for this difficulty, investigating workers were asked to rate general child functioning in addition to documenting maltreatment-specific mental/emotional harm. The child functioning ratings are presented later in this chapter.

Emotional harm was noted in one-third (34%) of all substantiated maltreatment investigations. Problems identified as emotional harm were severe enough to warrant treatment in 21% of the cases, and treatment was not deemed necessary in the remaining 13%.

Understandably, emotional harm was noted most often in sexual abuse cases. Nearly one-half (47%) of the substantiated cases of sexual abuse were described as involving emotional harm. Moreover, harm was severe enough in 38% of the sample of sexually abused children to require treatment; in 9%, symptoms were noted, but treatment was not considered to be necessary.

Emotional harm was associated with the other three primary categories of maltreatment as well. About one-third of substantiated cases of physical abuse, neglect and emotional maltreatment involved emotional harm, with treatment required in over one-half of the cases.

Family members identified most often as the alleged perpetrator[3]

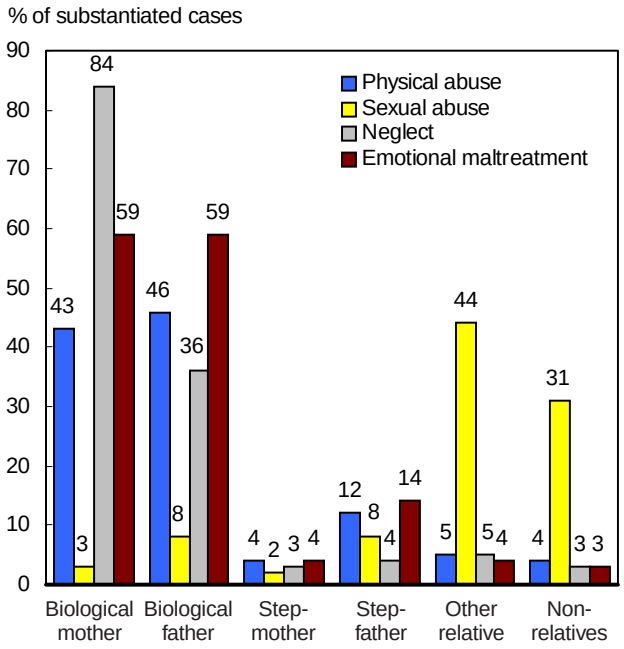
Family members or other persons related to the child victim constituted the vast majority (93%) of alleged perpetrators. Biological mothers were identified as the alleged perpetrator most often (60% of substantiated cases), followed by biological fathers (41%), step-fathers/common-law partners (9%) and step-mothers/common-law partners (3%). Other than these parents or parent figures, other relatives were the most frequently identified alleged perpetrators (9%).

Alleged perpetrators who were non-relatives (7% of substantiated cases) included babysitters, family friends, parental partners, teachers, other professionals, acquaintances, and strangers. Over one-half of these non-related alleged perpetrators (4% of the total) were close to the child and family, such as friends, parent's boy/girlfriend, and babysitters.[4]

According to the CIS, physical abuse was largely committed by biological mothers and fathers. In particular, fathers were the alleged perpetrators in almost one-half (46%) of substantiated cases of physical abuse, closely followed by mothers (43%) (Figure 1.6). This distribution may be somewhat biased by the fact that 40% of investigated families were female-headed lone-parent families. Among non-relatives, perpetrators of substantiated physical abuse were primarily parent's girlfriend/boyfriend (2%) or babysitters (1%). Although there were substantiated cases of physical abuse involving other non-relatives (such as other acquaintances and teachers), these numbers were very small and less reliable.

Figure 1.6

Physical abuse committed largely by biological parents



Figures for foster family/adoptive parents are nil or zero.
Totals exceed 100% due to multiple responses.
***Source**: Health Canada, The Canadian Incidence Study of Reported Child Abuse and Neglect, 1998.*

Sexual abuse, in contrast to the other categories of maltreatment, was committed less often by the child's primary caregiver. Most alleged perpetrators were either other relatives (44% of cases) or non-relatives (31%). Figure 1.6 shows that alleged perpetrators who were related to the child victim were equally likely to be a biological father or step-father and less likely to be the child's biological mother or step-mother. Although a specific breakdown on the particular relationship to the child of "other relatives" is not shown, it is clear from Figure 1.6 that this grouping is the single most significant category of individuals who commit such acts (44%).

[3] *The alleged perpetrator was the person or persons, as determined by the child welfare investigator, to have maltreated the child.*

[4] *It should be noted, however, that in many instances non-familial allegations of abuse are investigated by the police, not by a child welfare authority.*

Child neglect was largely committed by biological mothers (84%). Again, biological mothers may be over-represented in the neglect category because 40% of investigations involved lone-parent families. The findings may reflect the inter-connection between child neglect, poverty, and female-headed lone parent families.

In the case of emotional maltreatment, biological mothers (59%) and fathers (59%) were equally likely to be the alleged perpetrators. Step-fathers were the alleged perpetrators in 14% of cases.

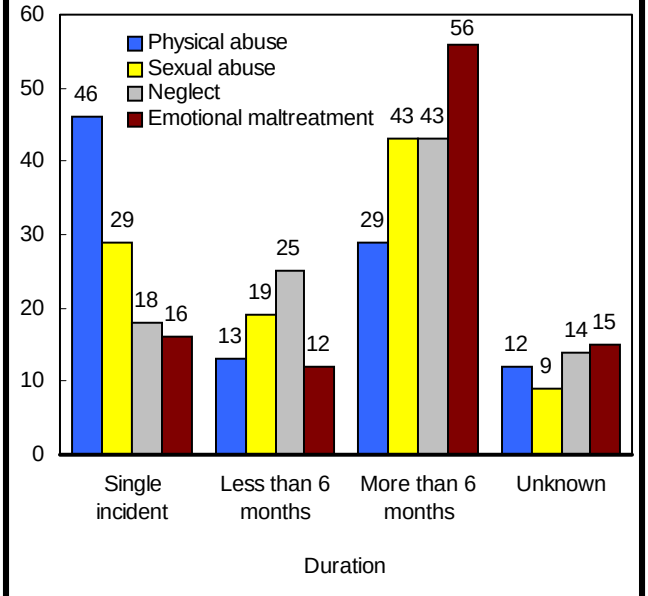
Four in ten cases of child maltreatment continued for more than 6 months

Four in ten (43%) substantiated cases of child maltreatment continued for more than 6 months duration. Single incidents and those continuing for less than 6 months duration accounted for another 44% of cases. In the remaining cases, investigating workers were not able to determine the duration.

Emotional maltreatment was the form of maltreatment most likely to have continued beyond 6 months (56% of substantiated emotional maltreatment cases were over 6 months in duration), followed by sexual abuse (43%), neglect (43%), and physical abuse (29%) (Figure 1.7). Physical abuse and sexual abuse were somewhat more likely to involve single incidents (46% and 29% respectively) than the other two categories of maltreatment. This is understandable, given that both of these categories of maltreatment involve more readily identified acts or behaviours that are reported, whereas neglect and emotional maltreatment are more likely to be considered chronic conditions with less specific incidents.

Figure 1.7

Emotional maltreatment most likely to continue for more than 6 months



***Source**: Health Canada, The Canadian Incidence Study of Reported Child Abuse and Neglect, 1998.*

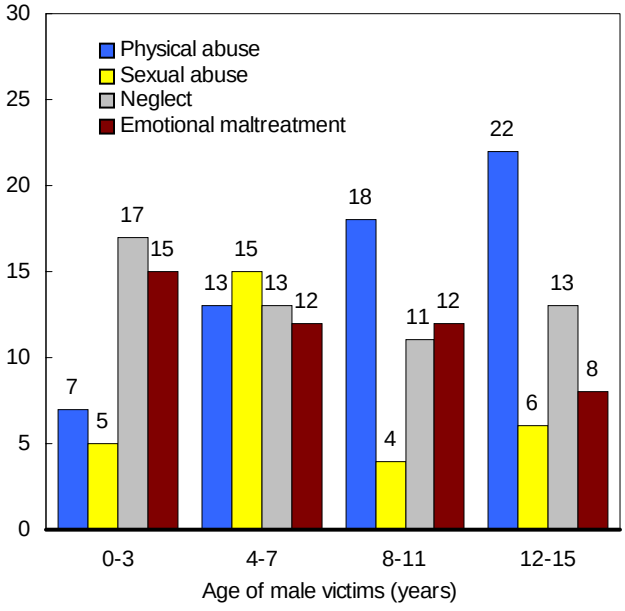
Child Characteristics

Boys and girls equally likely to be victims of child maltreatment

While overall, boys and girls were almost equally likely to be the victim of child maltreatment (51% and 49% of substantiated cases respectively), there was some variation within categories of maltreatment. For example, 60% of substantiated cases of physical abuse involved boys, and 40% involved girls. The age patterns, however, were similar for both sexes, in that the highest proportions of substantiated physical abuse were in the 12 to 15 age group (boys 22% and girls 18%). In fact, physical abuse was generally lower in the youngest age group (0 to 3 years) and increased incrementally among older children (Figures 1.8a and 1.8b). This may be partially explained by the fact that infants, with their relatively limited exposure to others, are either unable to report or to be noticed to the same extent as teens.

Figure 1.8a

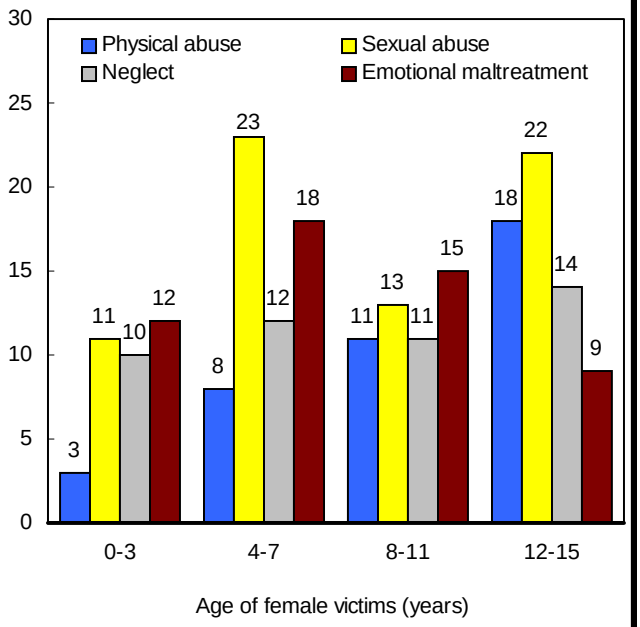
Boys aged 4-7 years account for about three times more cases of sexual abuse than other age groups of boys



***Source**: Health Canada, The Canadian Incidence Study of Reported Child Abuse and Neglect, 1998.*

Figure 1.8b

Girls aged 4-7 and 12-15 were the victim in about twice as many cases of sexual abuse as other age groups of girls



***Source**: Health Canada, The Canadian Incidence Study of Reported Child Abuse and Neglect, 1998.*

Concerning substantiated cases of sexual abuse, girls accounted for twice as many cases as boys (69% versus 31%). In contrast to physical abuse, notable age differences were evident for the sexes. For example, boys aged 4 to 7 years accounted for about three times more cases than other age groups of boys. In the case of girls, those aged 4 to 7 and those aged 12 to 15 were the victim in about twice as many cases of sexual abuse as girls in other age groups.

In cases of substantiated neglect and emotional maltreatment, boys were slightly more likely than girls to be victims of neglect (53% versus 47%), while girls were slightly more likely to experience emotional maltreatment (53% versus 47%). While boys aged 0 to 3 were most likely to be the victims of neglect (17%), girls aged 4 to 7 were the victim in the highest proportion of emotional maltreatment cases (18%).

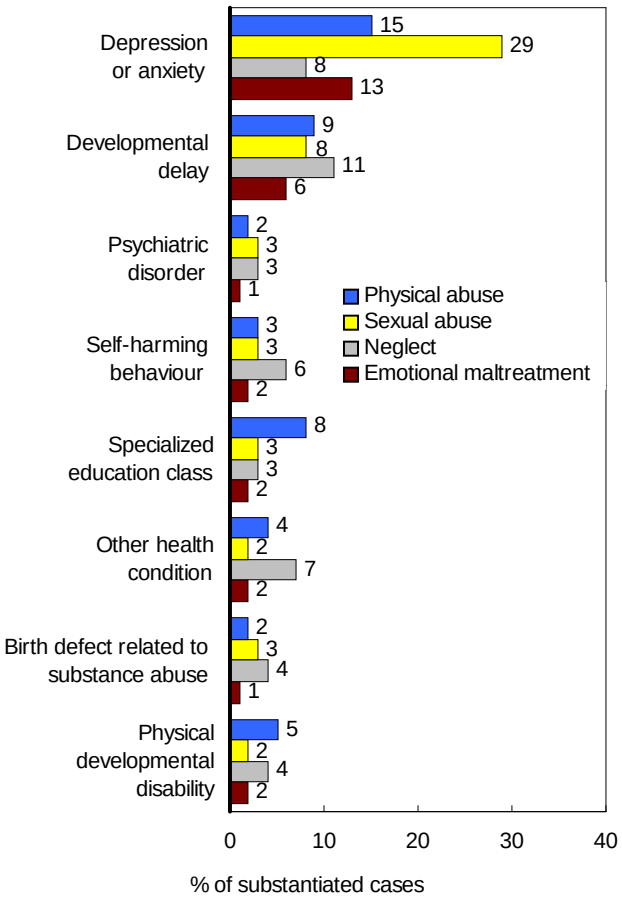
Child Functioning

Child maltreatment affects child functioning

Physically abused children were generally reported as having considerable problems in child functioning. Notably, in over one-half (56%) of substantiated physical abuse cases, the child was described as having some type of child functioning problem. Behaviour problems (39%), negative peer involvement (15%), depression or anxiety (15%), violence to others (11%), and developmental delay (9%) were the most often indicated concerns. Child victims of sexual abuse reported difficulties in 58% of substantiated cases. The five most often reported issues were depression or anxiety (29%), age-inappropriate sexual behaviour (17%), behaviour problems (14%), negative peer involvement (13%), and irregular school attendance (10%) (Figure 1.9a and Figure 1.9b).

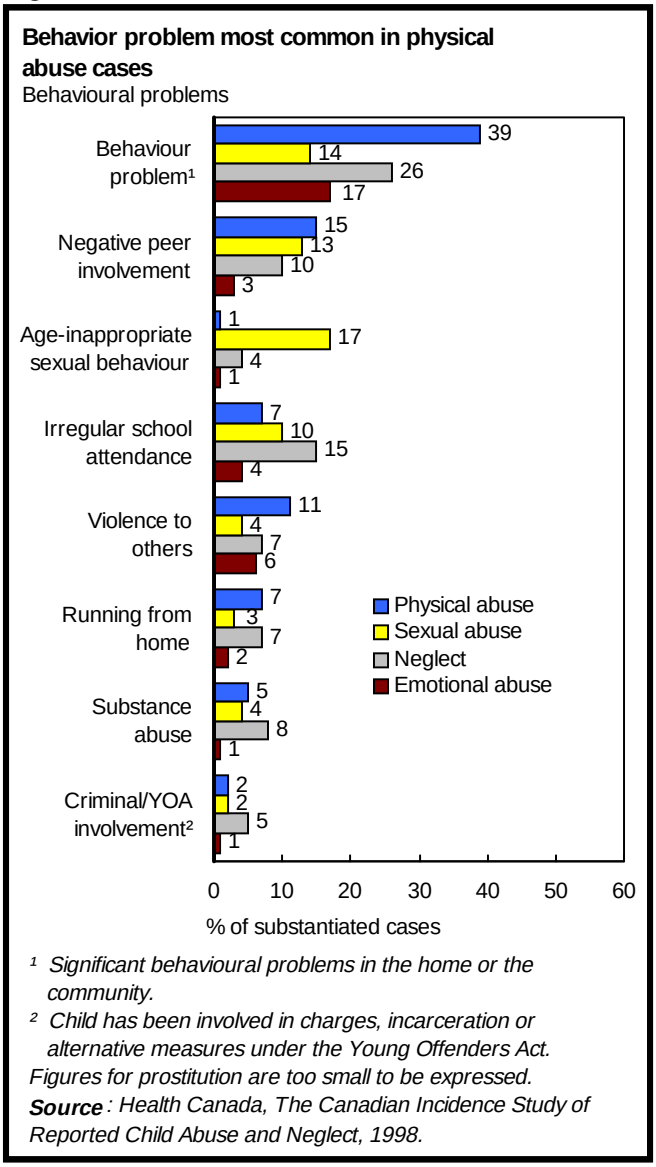
Figure 1.9a

Depression or anxiety most common in sexual abuse cases



***Source**: Health Canada, The Canadian Incidence Study of Reported Child Abuse and Neglect, 1998.*

Figure 1.9b



¹ Significant behavioural problems in the home or the community.

² Child has been involved in charges, incarceration or alternative measures under the Young Offenders Act.

Figures for prostitution are too small to be expressed.

***Source**: Health Canada, The Canadian Incidence Study of Reported Child Abuse and Neglect, 1998.*

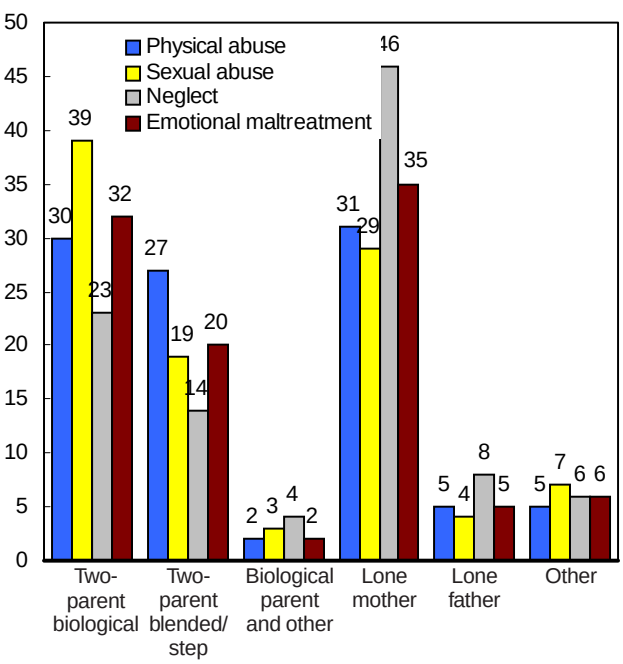
Family Characteristics

Almost one-half of child maltreatment cases involve children living in lone-parent families

Family characteristics provide important information concerning the household structure and context of child maltreatment. Research suggests, for example, that children living with a single parent are at greater risk of both physical abuse and neglect, most likely because of added stress, fewer resources and opportunities to share child-rearing burdens, and lower socio-economic status compared to two-parent homes (National Research Council, 1993).

Across all categories of substantiated maltreatment, almost one-half (44%) of the cases involved children who lived in a family led by a lone parent: the majority (38%) lived alone with their mother, and 6% with their father. Another 28% of cases involved children who lived with their two biological parents and in 19%, the child lived in a two-parent blended family in which one of the caregivers was a step-parent, a common-law partner or an adoptive parent who was not the biological parent of at least one of the children in the family (Figure 1.10). In comparison, census data show that families led by female parents represented 17% of families with children under the age of 17 in 1996; 80% of the families were husband-wife led (Statistics Canada, 1996).

Figure 1.10



***Source:** Health Canada, The Canadian Incidence Study of Reported Child Abuse and Neglect, 1998.*

Caregiver Functioning and Family Stressors

Research shows that maltreating parents often have had little exposure to positive parental models and supports, and their family backgrounds are often difficult and marked by violence, alcoholism, and harsh family circumstances. They find daily living stressful and irritating, and thus prefer to avoid potential sources of

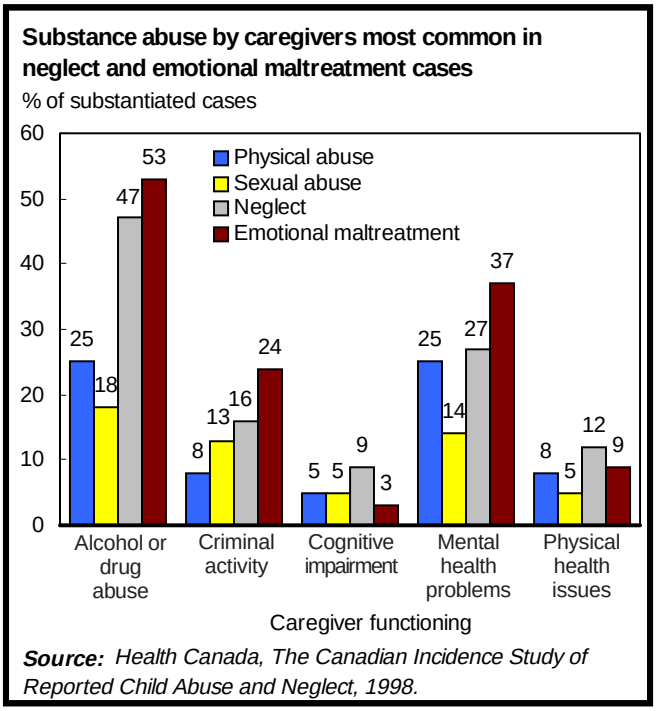
support because additional energy is needed to maintain social relationships. In addition, spouse abuse is more likely to co-occur with child maltreatment. It is estimated that 30% to 60% of families in which there is either child maltreatment or wife abuse, the other form of violence also occurs (Edleson, 1999a).

Problems related to caregiver functioning and family stressors were relatively common across the four categories of substantiated maltreatment. At least one caregiver functioning issue/family stressor was identified in 74% of substantiated investigations. Alcohol/drug abuse and mental health problems affected 40% and 28% of caregivers respectively. Families were also described as having many other major stressors and background factors that may play a role in maltreatment, such as a childhood history of abuse (38%), spousal violence (33%), and custody disputes (9%). Moreover, about 1 in 3 families were described as lacking supports.

The most common concerns in cases of substantiated physical abuse included a history of child abuse[5] (35%), and lack of social supports (28%). Mental health and substance abuse were each present in 25% of cases. Similarly, in the case of sexual abuse, a history of childhood abuse was the most commonly reported concern (22%) (Figure 1.11a and Figure 1.11b).

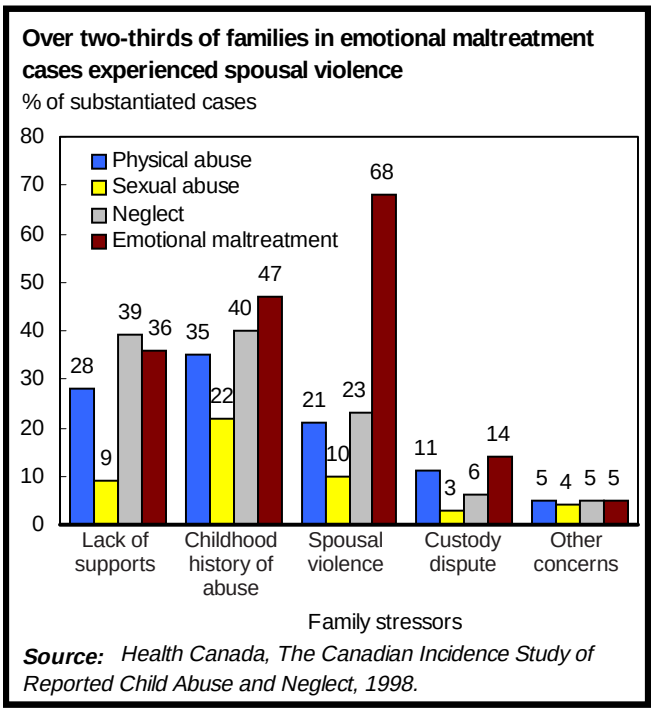
In cases of neglect and emotional maltreatment, alcohol or drug abuse was the family stressor/functioning issue noted (47% and 53% respectively). While spousal violence was noted in about one-quarter of cases of neglect (23%), it was present in over two-thirds of the families where emotional maltreatment was found (68%).

Figure 1.11a



Source: *Health Canada, The Canadian Incidence Study of Reported Child Abuse and Neglect, 1998.*

Figure 1.11b



Source: *Health Canada, The Canadian Incidence Study of Reported Child Abuse and Neglect, 1998.*

[5] *Either caregiver was known or suspected to have a history of childhood maltreatment.*

Violence against children and youth reported to police[6]

Similar to child welfare agencies, not all incidents of child abuse come to the attention of the police. However, police-reported data, like child welfare data, provide another data source to analyze cases of child maltreatment.

In 1999, children and youth under 18 years of age made up 23% of the Canadian population and were the victims in 24% of assaults reported to a sample of police departments. They represented a large majority of all sexual assault victims (60%), and one-fifth of physical assault victims. While the proportion of child sexual assault victims was very high in comparison to adults, there were in fact almost three times as many physical assaults against children and youth as sexual assaults due to the higher prevalence of physical assaults overall.

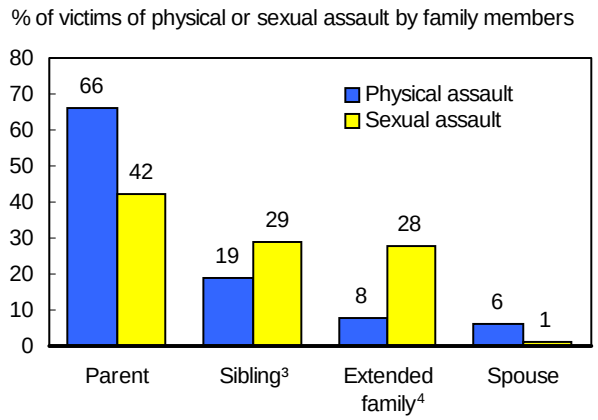
Unlike child welfare data from the CIS indicating that family members were most often the alleged perpetrator in substantiated cases of child maltreatment, police-reported data show that children and youth were most likely to be victimized by acquaintances (52%), followed by family members (24%) and then strangers (19%). Five percent of children and youth were assaulted by persons with whom their relationship was unknown. Children and youth were assaulted by family members in 30% of sexual assaults, and 22% of physical assaults reported to the police in 1999. Male and female child victims were sexually assaulted by family members in roughly similar proportions (31% and 29% respectively). In the case of physical assault, however, 30% of girls and 16% of boys were assaulted by family members. A higher proportion of boys than girls were physically assaulted by strangers (24% and 14% of child victims).

Similar to those cases of child maltreatment substantiated by child welfare agencies in the CIS where biological mothers and fathers were most often the alleged perpetrator in cases of physical assault, police data also reveal that within families, children and youth were assaulted by parents in 66% of cases of physical assault (Figure 1.12). Data differ, however, concerning the perpetrators of sexual assault. Police-reported information indicates that 42% of child and youth victims of sexual assault were victimized by their parents, while the CIS reported information indicates most alleged perpetrators were either other relatives or non-relatives.

Regarding injury resulting from child abuse, according to police statistics, 55% of children and youth physically assaulted by family members suffered minor injuries, 35% reported no injuries, 8% had unknown injuries and 3% had major injuries.[7] In the case of child sexual abuse cases by family members, 71% percent of children and youth reported no injuries, 21% had unknown injuries and 8% had minor injuries. As indicated earlier, while many cases of sexual abuse may not result in physical injury, incidents of child maltreatment often have long lasting effects on children; emotional harm was noted in nearly one-half of sexual abuse cases that came to the attention of child welfare agencies. In many of these cases, the emotional harm was severe enough to require treatment.

Figure 1.12

Parents most frequently accused in assaults against children and youth committed by family members, 1999 [1, 2]



Percentages may not total 100% due to rounding.

[1] Data are not nationally representative. Data are based on a sample of 164 police departments, representing 46% of the national volume of crime in 1999.

[2] Includes victims under the age of 18 years where sex of the victim is known.

[3] Sibling includes natural, step, half, foster or adopted siblings.

[4] Extended family includes others related by blood, marriage, adoption or foster care.

Source: *Statistics Canada, Canadian Centre for Justice Statistics, Incident-based Uniform Crime Reporting (UCR2) Survey.*

[6] *Data are not nationally representative. Data are based on a sample of 164 police departments representing 46% of the national volume of crime in 1999.*

[7] *Minor injury is a physical injury that required no professional medical treatment or only some first aid. No injury is no visible physical injury at the time of the incident though weapons or physical force were used. Unknown injury is when the extent of injuries could not be determined though weapons or physical force were used against the victim. Major injury is a physical injury that required professional medical attention at the scene or transportation to a medical facility.*

Child hospitalizations for assaults and maltreatment in Canada, 1993-1994 to 1998-1999

In addition to information from child welfare agencies and police-reported data, hospitalization records for injuries to children resulting from assaults or other violence are another source of information about child maltreatment and intentional injuries caused by violence. These data provide a national estimate of the number of children who are admitted to hospitals (staying at least one night) and have sustained an injury as a result of one of the forms of violence listed in Table 1.1. These data are limited to the extent that they include only those injuries that come to the attention of a physician and are acknowledged as having resulted from violence, and exclude cases where the child is seen on an outpatient basis.

From 1993-1994 to 1998-1999, overall rates of children treated in hospitals for injuries as a result of violence declined slightly from a rate of 26 to 23 per 100,000 children. This finding was consistent for all age categories with the exception of two. First, the rate for children under the age of one increased from 45 to 58 per 100,000 children in this time period. Second, the rate for those aged 15 to 19 went in the opposite direction, decreasing from 69 to 60 per 100,000 children.

Information from hospitalization records in these six years indicates that the youngest children are at highest risk of child abuse, while older children are most frequently injured as a result of fights (Table 1.1). From 1993-1994 to 1998-1999, 42 per 100,000 children under the age of 1 were reported by doctors to have been injured as a result of child maltreatment. This rate dropped to 1 in 100,000 teenagers aged 15 to 19 years.

Table 1.1
Childhood hospitalizations for assault and maltreatment, Canada, 1993-1994 to 1998-1999[1]

Cause of injury[2]	Victim age																	
	Total			<1			1-4			5-9			10-14			15-19		
	No.	%	Rate	No.	%	Rate	No.	%	Rate	No.	%	Rate	No.	%	Rate	No.	%	Rate
Total	**11,740**	**100**	**25**	**1,037**	**100**	**46**	**958**	**100**	**10**	**476**	**100**	**4**	**1,439**	**100**	**12**	**7,830**	**100**	**65**
Fight, brawl, rape	**5,722**	**49**	**12**	11	1	--	52	5	1	150	32	1	899	62	8	4,610	59	39
Corrosive and caustic substances, poisoning, hanging, strangulation, submersion	**111**	**1**	**--**	8	1	--	23	2	--	10	2	--	25	2	--	45	1	--
Firearm[3]	**127**	**1**	**--**	2	--	--	1	--	--	3	1	--	8	1	--	113	1	1
Cutting, piercing instrument	**1,688**	**14**	**4**	5	--	--	6	1	--	16	3	--	102	7	1	1,559	20	13
Child battering and other maltreatment	**2,158**	**18**	**5**	945	91	42	720	75	8	199	42	2	171	12	1	123	2	1
Other[4]	**1,934**	**16**	**4**	66	6	3	156	16	2	98	21	1	234	16	2	1,380	18	12

-- amount too small to be expressed.
Percentages may not total 100% due to rounding.
[1] Rates are calculated based on 100,000 population. The population estimates are provided by Statistics Canada, Census and Demographic Statistics, Demography Division. Populations as of July 1: preliminary postcensal estimates for 2000.
[2] Based on the International Classification of Diseases 9th revision (ICD-9) codes E960-E969.
[3] Includes codes E965.1-E965.4.
[4] Includes codes E965.5-E965.9, E968-E969.
Source: *Canadian Institute for Health Information, Hospital Morbidity Database.*

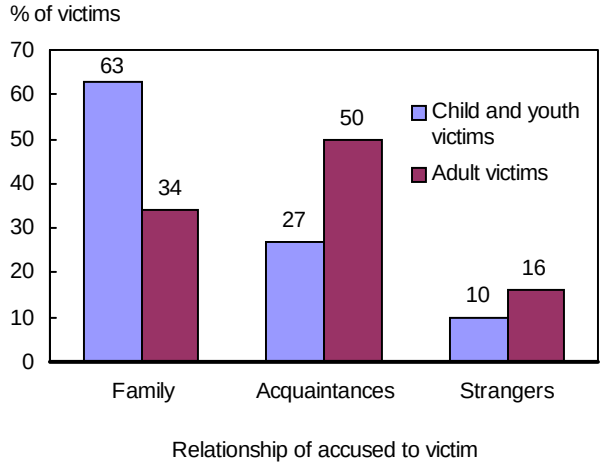
2.0 HOMICIDE OF CHILDREN AND YOUTH

by Daisy Locke, Sara Beattie and Sean Miller

Children and youth are most likely to be killed by family members.[8] Of the 1,990 solved homicides of children and youth recorded by police in Canada between 1974 and 1999, family members were responsible for 63% of the deaths (Figure 2.1). The remaining solved homicides against children and youth were committed by acquaintances and strangers (27% and 10% respectively). In contrast, 50% of adults were killed by acquaintances, followed by family members (34%) and strangers (16%).

Figure 2.1

Children and youth more likely than adults to be killed by family members, 1974-1999



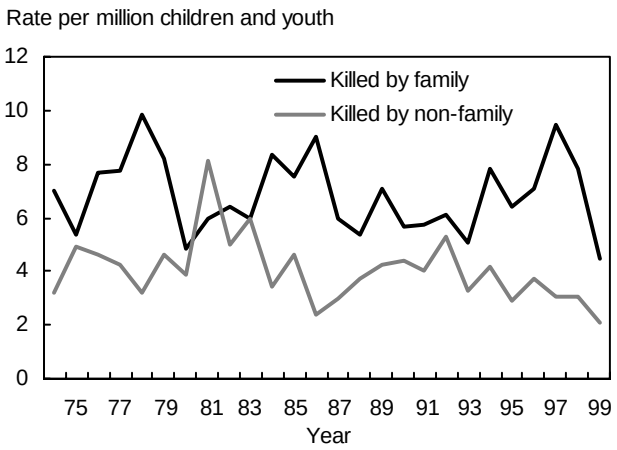
Percentages may not total 100% due to rounding.
Source: *Statistics Canada, Canadian Centre for Justice Statistics, Homicide Survey.*

1999 rate of children and youth killed by family members lowest in 26 years

In 1999, the rate of children and youth killed by family members fell to its lowest level in 26 years, 4 per million children and youth in the population (Figure 2.2). In addition, the rate of 2 per million children and youth killed by non-family members was the lowest over that time period. Between 1974 and 1999, the rate of children and youth killed annually has fluctuated considerably from year to year ranging from a high of 14 per million in 1981 to the previous low of 8 per million in 1993.

Figure 2.2

1999 rate of homicides of children and youth lowest in 26 years



Source: *Statistics Canada, Canadian Centre for Justice Statistics, Homicide Survey.*

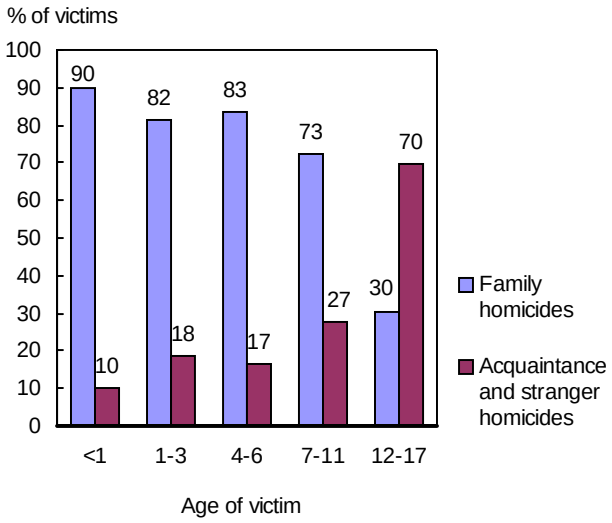
Younger children more likely to be killed by family members, youth more likely to be killed by acquaintances and strangers

Not unlike those cases coming to the attention of child welfare agencies and physical and sexual assaults against children reported to the police, the relationship between accused persons and victims of homicide varies by the age of the victim. According to homicide data, between 1991[9] and 1999, younger children were much more likely to be killed by family members (ranging from 90% of infants to 73% of children between the ages of 7 and 11 years) (Figure 2.3). Conversely, youth aged 12 to 17 were most often killed by acquaintances and strangers (70%).

[8] *Family members are people related through blood, marriage, adoption or foster care.*
[9] *1991 was the earliest year for which the number of infants less than one year old could be identified.*

Figure 2.3

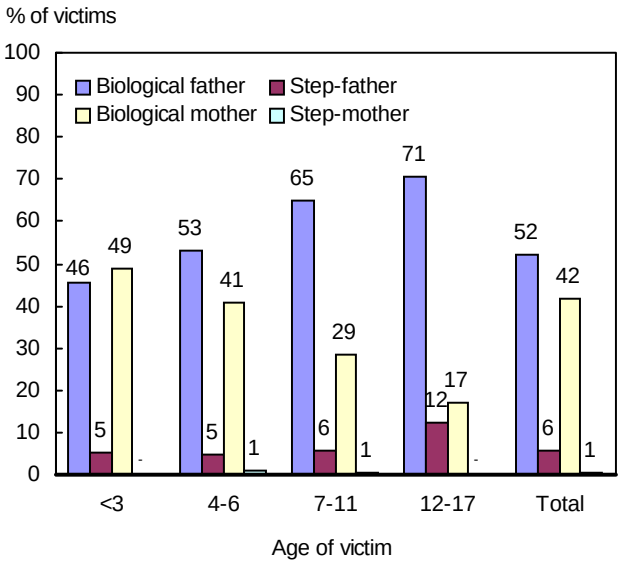
Majority of younger children killed by family members, 1991-1999



Source: *Statistics Canada, Canadian Centre for Justice Statistics, Homicide Survey.*

Figure 2.4

When children and youth are killed by parents, fathers are most often the perpetrators, 1974-1999



- Nil or zero.

Percentages may not total 100% due to rounding.

Source: *Statistics Canada, Canadian Centre for Justice Statistics, Homicide Survey.*

Majority of children and youth killed by parents

Looking more closely at family homicides, it was found that between 1991 and 1999, the majority of child and youth homicides (88%) were committed by parents (Table 2.1). Specifically, more than half of the children and youth were killed by fathers (45% by biological fathers and 8% by step-fathers), over a third were killed by mothers (34% by biological mothers and 1% by step-mothers) and the remaining children and youth were killed by siblings (5%) and other family members (7%).[10]

In large part, this pattern remained when 26 years of data from the Homicide Survey were examined. For example, in the time period, 1974 to 1999, children and youth were more likely to be killed by fathers (52% by biological fathers and 6% by step-fathers) than by mothers (42% by biological mothers and 1% by step-mothers) (Figure 2.4). However, very young children, those 3 years of age and less, were more likely to have been killed by their biological mothers than their biological fathers (49% versus 46% respectively). The opposite was true for all other age groups.

Overwhelmingly, parents were also more often responsible for family homicides against very young children than against youth. For example, 92% of infants (children less than one year old) were killed by parents. In addition, 97% of the family homicides of 1- to 3-year-old children, 93% of the homicides of 4- to 6-year-old children, and 88% of the homicides of 7- to 11-year-old children were committed by parents. In contrast, 58% of homicides against youth 12 to 17 years old were committed by parents. The remaining youth were killed by siblings (17%), husbands (3%) or other family members (22%). These findings may be reflective of the fact that as children mature, their sphere of relationships expands beyond their immediate family.

Infant Homicides

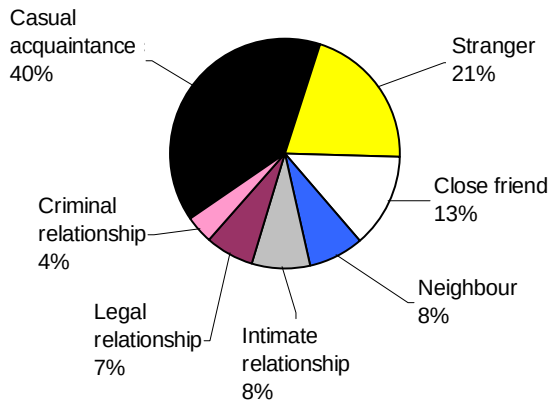
The figure for infant homicides may be under-reported since some claims of accidental childhood deaths such as falls or "sudden infant deaths" could actually be due to child abuse. Since 1995, most provinces have legislated mandatory coroner inquests into deaths of children less than two years of age. This may have resulted in the increased reporting and classification of these cases as homicides in some years. (Fedorowycz, 2000). A review in Ontario of all deaths of children under the age of two suggested that as many as 10% of deaths prior to 1995 that were attributed to causes such as Sudden Infant Death Syndrome (SIDS) may have been due, in fact, to homicide (Trocmé and Brison, 1997).

[10] *Includes all other family members related through blood, marriage, adoption or foster care.*

For those children and youth killed by a non-family member, a casual acquaintance was most often the accused (40%) (Figure 2.5). Strangers (21%), close friends (13%), intimate relationship[11] (8%), neighbours (8%), legal relationship[12] (7%) and criminal relationship[13] (4%) were the remaining accused.

Figure 2.5

Majority of children and youth in non-family homicides killed by casual acquaintances, 1991-1999



Percentages may not total 100% due to rounding.

Source: *Statistics Canada, Canadian Centre for Justice Statistics, Homicide Survey.*

Selected accused and incident characteristics[14]

Almost one quarter of child homicide incidents had a history of domestic violence

Information on whether or not the accused and the victims of a homicide incident had a history of domestic violence[15] that was known to the police is reported through the Homicide Survey. While the majority of those accused of family-related child homicide did not have a history of domestic violence (67%), there were police reports that the accused had been involved in some type of family violence in one-in-four homicides (e.g. spousal violence or child/parent abuse). In 9% of child homicides between 1991 and 1999, the history of domestic violence was unknown. The persons accused of killing older child victims were slightly more likely to have histories of domestic violence (31%).

Most homicides not precipitated by another offence

Frequently a homicide is the culmination of events. In the case of child and youth family homicides, between 1991 and 1999, 41% of child homicides were preceded by an assault, 18% by a sexual assault, 17% by arson, 5% by kidnapping and 3% by other crimes. For 16% of the incidents, it was unknown whether the homicide was precipitated by another crime. Family members and non-family were equally likely to have committed homicides precipitated by another crime.

Children less than 7 years old most likely to die of strangulation; older children and youth most likely to die from shooting

In cases of child and youth homicides, the cause of family-related deaths varies by age. Homicide data between 1991 and 1999 reveal that infants and young children were especially vulnerable to physical force: one-third of children under 7 were strangled (Table 2.2). Younger children were also more likely than older children (7- to 11-year olds) and youth to be beaten to death. Youth aged 12 and older were more often shot to death.

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[11] *Intimate relationship includes boyfriend, girlfriend, estranged lover and other intimate friends.*

[12] *Legal relationship includes caregiver, teacher, doctor, employer, co-worker and other legal relationships.*

[13] *Criminal relationship refers to illegal relationships such as those between a prostitute and client, drug trafficker and drug user, etc.*

[14] *To further examine the characteristics of child homicide incidents, in particular accused characteristics, a subset consisting of only those victims who were killed by one person was created. If more than one person was accused of killing the victim, the incident, the victim and the accused were excluded from the subset amounting to 53 victims excluded, of whom 21 were killed by family.*

[15] *These figures should be interpreted with caution, as it is not clear from police statistics whether the perpetrator of the homicide incident was the perpetrator or the victim of the earlier assaults.*

Table 2.1
Family homicides of children and youth by age group of victim, 1991-1999[1]

Relationship of accused to victim	Age of victim											
	Total		Infant		1-3		4-6		7-11		12-17	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Total family homicides	**428**	**100**	**126**	**100**	**111**	**100**	**60**	**100**	**66**	**100**	**65**	**100**
Parents	**376**	**88**	**116**	**92**	**108**	**97**	**56**	**93**	**58**	**88**	**38**	**58**
Father	192	45	56	44	44	40	22	37	43	65	27	42
Step-father	33	8	4	3	17	15	5	8	3	5	4	6
Mother	146	34	55	44	45	41	28	47	11	17	7	11
Step-mother	5	1	1	1	2	2	1	2	1	2	0	0
Sibling	20	5	2	2	2	2	1	2	4	6	11	17
Other family[2]	30	7	8	6	1	1	3	5	4	6	14	22
Husband	2	--	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	2	3

- nil or zero.
-- amount too small to be expressed.
Percentages may not total 100% due to rounding.
[1] Includes only solved homicide incidents in which there are known suspects. If there was more than one suspect, only the closest relationship to the victim is reflected.
[2] Includes all other family members related through blood, marriage, adoption or foster care.
Source: *Statistics Canada, Canadian Centre for Justice Statistics, Homicide Survey.*

Table 2.2
Cause of death for child and youth homicides committed by family members, 1991-1999[1]

Cause of death	Age of victim											
	Total		Infant		1-3		4-6		7-11		12-17	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Total	**407**	**100**	**119**	**100**	**103**	**100**	**59**	**100**	**64**	**100**	**62**	**100**
Shooting	**68**	**17**	-	-	7	7	10	17	22	34	29	47
Stabbing	**36**	**9**	4	3	7	7	6	10	11	17	8	13
Beating	**81**	**20**	29	24	28	27	12	20	6	9	6	10
Strangulation, suffocation	**111**	**27**	42	35	34	33	20	34	9	14	6	10
Other[2]	**94**	**23**	32	27	23	22	11	19	16	25	12	19
Shaken baby syndrome	**14**	**3**	10	8	4	4	-	-	-	-	-	-
Unknown	**3**	**1**	2	2	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	2

- nil or zero.
Percentages may not total 100% due to rounding.
[1] To further examine the characteristics of child homicide incidents, a subset of only those victims who were killed by one person was created. If more than one person was accused of killing the victim, the incident, the victim and the accused were excluded from the subset amounting to 53 victims excluded, of whom 21 were killed by family members.
[2] Other includes poisoning, smoke inhalation, burns, exposure and other causes.
Source: *Statistics Canada, Canadian Centre for Justice Statistics, Homicide Survey.*

3.0 CHILDREN WITNESSING FAMILY VIOLENCE[16]

by Mia Dauvergne and Holly Johnson

The reactions of children who witness violence by one parent against another can include emotional, social, cognitive, physical and behavioural maladjustment problems (Jaffe, Wolfe and Wilson, 1990). These children tend to show lower levels of social competence, higher rates of depression, worry and frustration, and are more likely than other children to develop stress-related disorders and to show lower levels of empathy (Fantuzzo, et al., 1991; Graham-Bermann and Levendosky, 1998; Moore and Pepler, 1998; Edleson, 1999b).

Some research suggests that certain characteristics of children, such as sex and age, affect how children respond when exposed to violence. Boys more commonly express external reactions, such as hostility and aggression, whereas girls tend to show more internalized behaviours such as depression, fear and physical ailments (Carlson, 1991; Kerig, 1999). Younger children are more likely to express complaints of physical ailments, anxiety and aggressive behaviour, and to regress to earlier stages of developmental functioning. Older children are more likely to use aggression as a means of problem solving, accept excuses for violent behaviour, project blame onto others, and display symptoms of anxiety (Alessi and Hern, 1984). Other factors, such as social or economic disadvantage, repeated moves, or parental separation also influence how children respond to familial conflict (Jaffe, Wolfe and Wilson, 1990).

The National Longitudinal Survey of Children and Youth

The National Longitudinal Survey of Children and Youth is a long-term national survey that collects information on the characteristics and life experiences of the same children and youth in Canada as they grow from infancy to adulthood. The survey began in 1994-95 with a sample of approximately 22,000 children aged from infancy to 11. This sample of children and their parents will be interviewed every two years until the oldest respondents reach approximately 25 years of age. A sample of infants is added each year. Data for this analysis were drawn from the third cycle (1998-99) and focus on children aged 4 to 11 years representing 3,122,000 Canadian children in this age group. The extent of violence witnessed by children in the home was determined by asking the person most knowledgeable about the child (usually the mother) to indicate how often the child sees "adults or teenagers in the home physically fighting, hitting or otherwise trying to hurt others". Of those who reported that their child had seen physical aggression, 31% did not have a teenager living in the home; therefore, a portion of these will reflect incidents where children witnessed assaults on a parent.

Extent of family violence witnessed by children

Estimates of the extent of family violence witnessed by children in Canada are available through the 1999 General Social Survey on Victimization (GSS) and the National Longitudinal Survey of Children and Youth (NLSCY). The GSS estimates that children heard or saw assaults on a parent in an estimated 461,000 cases of spousal violence in the five-year period preceding the survey (Table 3.1). This represents 37% of all spousal violence cases.

In the NLSCY, parent respondents to the 1998-99 cycle were asked how often their children, aged 4 to 11 years, saw adults or teenagers in the home physically fighting, hitting or otherwise trying to hurt others. This is a less precise indicator and could include siblings or parents or other adults (however, in 31% of cases, there were no teenagers in the home). According to this definition, 8% of children in this age group (approximately 247,000) had witnessed violence in their homes. This is similar to the 9% reported in the first cycle and 8% reported in the second cycle of the NLSCY, but lower than estimates produced by the GSS which asked about violence witnessed over the course of a five-year period for an unspecified age group of children.

According to the 1999 GSS, in 70% of spousal violence cases (see Chapter 4 for definition of spousal violence) with child witnesses, the violence was directed at their mothers, and in 30% of cases fathers were the victims (Table 3.1). In addition, the violence children witnessed against their mothers was more serious. In half of all

[16] *For further information, see Dauvergne and Johnson, 2001. "Children Witnessing Family Violence". Juristat.*

Estimates of children witnessing violence: limitations

As each of these data sources were designed for purposes other than estimating the number of children who witness violence in their families, and the questions were constructed somewhat differently, results are not directly comparable between sources. In addition, several issues make it likely that the estimates obtained from the GSS and the NLSCY are underestimates of the true extent of violence witnessed by children.

First, responses to the survey questions are provided by parents who may falsely assume that their children are not aware of the violence and may fail to report that their children were witnesses. Jaffe, Wolfe and Wilson (1990) found that many parents falsely believed that their children were sleeping or playing during a violent episode and therefore unaware of the event. However, these same children were able to provide detailed accounts of the very events that they supposedly did not witness.

Second, parents may intentionally minimize, deny or discount the extent of violence witnessed by children because of embarrassment or fear of the consequences. O'Brien, John, Margolin and Erel (1994) reported that 10% of the children in a community-based sample reported witnessing inter-parental violence when neither parent had acknowledged that any aggression had occurred.

Third, witnessing family violence refers to the multiple ways in which a child is *exposed* to domestic violence. These may include directly seeing the violence, hearing it, being used as a tool of the perpetrator, and/or experiencing the aftermath of violence (e.g. a mother who is injured and in need of help, police intervention to remove the perpetrator, moving to a shelter). Although the GSS asks whether the child ever saw or heard a violent incident, the NLSCY only attempts to measure the amount of violence that a child *sees* directly. Both surveys fail to account for the more covert ways in which children may be exposed to violence.

Fourth, the survey questions only ascertain whether children are witnesses to *physical* assaults and do not measure the extent of children's awareness of emotional abuse (such as verbal insults).

cases of wife assault witnessed by children, the women feared for their lives or were physically injured. In 21% of cases, victims suffered injuries requiring medical attention and in 14% they were hospitalized. Four in ten suffered repercussions serious enough to require them to take time off their daily activities to cope with the violence. The consequences of spousal violence for male victims were less severe though one-in-four male victims were physically injured or took time off daily activities and one-in-eight feared for their lives (Table 3.2).

Family violence crosses all socio-demographic groups. However, there are some circumstances where children witnessed adults or teenagers physically fighting at higher rates than the national average of 8% (Table 3.3). The NLSCY data show that the percentage of children who witnessed physical fights was slightly higher for older children (8 to 11 years of age) and for those with somewhat older parents (35 to 44 years).[17] Rates of children witnessing physical fights are linked to the socio-economic status of the household. Percentages of children who witnessed physical fights among teenagers or adults were highest when both parents were unemployed (12.8%), or in the case of single parents, when the parent was unemployed (14.2%), as well as in households that fell below the low-income cut-off level (11.4%).[18] Higher percentages of children witnessed physical fights if they were living in blended, step and single parent homes as compared to biological or adoptive two-parent families,[19] and if their family structure had undergone change over the previous two-year period, either from two parents to one (13.6%), or from one parent to two (14.4%).[20]

Children victimized during spousal assaults

Victims of spousal violence identified by the GSS were asked whether anyone else was harmed or threatened during the incident and how many were under 15 years of age. In 10% of spousal assaults against women and in 4% against men children under 15 were harmed or threatened. This amounts to 90,000 cases of spousal violence: 70,000 involving women and 20,000 involving men.[21]

Links to family functioning

Parenting Style

Parenting style is also linked to children's exposure to adults or teenagers physically fighting in the home.

[17] *Usually, only one parent (the person most knowledgeable about the child or the PMK) from each household was surveyed. In 88.8% of all cases the PMK was the biological mother and in another 8.7% of cases the PMK was the biological father.*

[18] *Low income cut-offs are derived by considering expenditure-to-income patterns. These values are calculated for different urban-size and family-size categories.*

[19] *A biological or adoptive two-parent family refers to a family (married or common-law couples) where all children are the natural and/or adopted offspring of both members of the couple. A step family refers to a family (married or common-law couples) in which at least one of the children is in a step relationship with at least one of the parents. A blended family refers to a family (married or common-law couples) with two or more children, one of whom does not share the same natural and/or adoptive parents as the other child(ren). This would indicate that the child has half and/or step siblings living in the household. The blended family is a sub-set of the step family.*

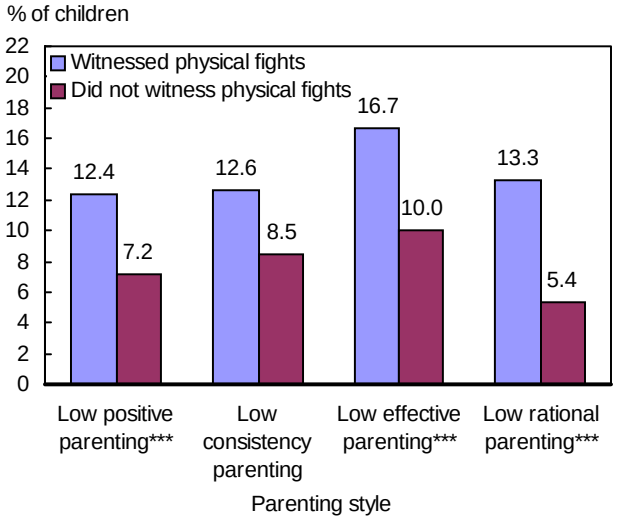
[20] *In the case of single parents, violence could involve ex-partners, dating partners of the parent, and/or sibling violence.*

[21] *This may represent an underestimate of the number of children harmed or threatened during spousal violence incidents for the reasons listed in Box "Estimates of children witnessing violence: limitations".*

Although difficult to measure and quantify, the NLSCY attempts to capture the diversity of parent-child interactions using four different scales: positive interactions, consistency, effective parenting, and rational parenting. Parents (usually mothers) were asked a series of questions pertaining to each type of parenting which were then combined to form global scores on each scale (see Box). Children who witnessed physical fights between adults and teenagers in their homes were more likely to have lower levels of positive, effective or rational interactions with their parents than did children from non-violent homes (Figure 3.1).

Figure 3.1

Parenting styles in homes where children witnessed and did not witness physical fights



**** Chi-square = < .001; df = 1*
Those who fell within the bottom 10% of the scales were considered to have "poor" parent-child interactions.
Source: *Statistics Canada, National Longitudinal Survey of Children and Youth, 1998-1999.*

Family functioning

Whereas the parenting scales assess interactions between parents and their children, the family functioning scale attempts to assess the health of relationships among all family members. Parent respondents to the NLSCY were asked how well the family worked together on six activities: problem solving, communication, roles, emotional responsiveness, emotional involvement and behaviour control. Children who witnessed physical fighting among adults and teenagers were twice as likely (21.5% compared to 10.1%) to be living in low family functioning households (defined as those who fall within the bottom 10%).

Parenting scales

The interactions between children and parents were assessed using four parenting scales: the positive parenting scale, the consistency parenting scale, the ineffective parenting scale and the rational parenting scale. Each scale is comprised of individual questions that were answered by the child's parent. Answers were then coded into numerical responses which were added together to form a global score on each scale. Those who fell within the bottom 10% (or closest thereof) were considered to have "poorer" parent-child interactions.

Five questions comprised the *positive parenting* scale including: "how often do you talk or play with your child"; "how often do you praise your child"; and "how often do you and your child laugh together".

Consistency was measured by asking parents a different set of five questions, such as "if you give your child a command do you make sure he or she follows it"; "when you discipline your child does he or she ignore it"; and "how often do you follow through and punish your child after telling him or her to stop doing something".

When combined, the scores from seven questions composed the *ineffective parenting* scale. Specific questions included: "how often do you get annoyed with your child for saying or doing something he/she is not supposed to"; "of all the times that you talk to your child about his/her behaviour, what proportion is praise"; and "how often do you feel you are having problems managing him/her in general".

Finally, the *rational parenting* scale indicates the extent of punitive interactions between parents and their children. Parents were asked to report the frequency with which they "raise their voice, scold or yell"; "calmly discuss the problem"; "use physical punishment"; and "describe alternative ways of behaving that are acceptable" when their child breaks the rules or does things that he/she is not supposed to do.

Links to child behaviour

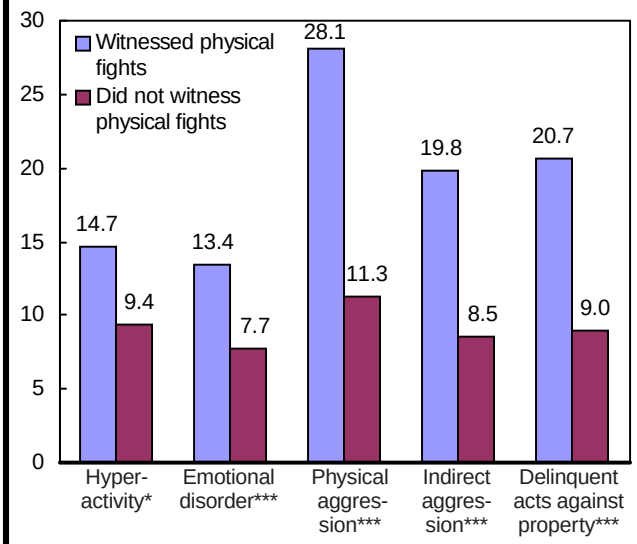
A negative relationship was also found between witnessing family violence and children's behaviour.[22] Children who witnessed violence in their homes were

[22] *The NLSCY does not differentiate between those children who witnessed family violence but were not directly victimized and those who were witnesses and victims of violence in the family. Many child witnesses were also victims which may account, at least in part, for their behavioural outcomes. Failing to separate abused from non-abused witnesses makes it difficult to determine what exactly is associated with children's subsequent behaviour (Hughes, Parkinson and Vargo, 1989). However, questions concerning violence directed at children were not included on the NLSCY and so cannot be explored in this analysis.*

more likely to exhibit difficulties across all five behavioural measures. In particular, they were more than twice as likely to be physically aggressive, to commit delinquent acts against property, and to display indirect aggression (Figure 3.2).

Figure 3.2

Child behaviour in homes where children witnessed and did not witness physical fights



** Chi-square = < .05; df = 1*
**** Chi-square = < .001; df = 1*
Those who fell within the bottom 10% of the scales were considered to have behavioural problems.
Source: *Statistics Canada, National Longitudinal Survey of Children and Youth, 1998-1999.*

Child behaviour

Parent respondents to the NLSCY were asked to assess their children on the following five behaviours: hyperactivity (characterized by inattention, impulsivity and motor activity); emotional/anxiety disorders (characterized by feelings of anxiety, fear and/or depression); physical aggression (fighting, bullying or threatening); indirect aggression (non-physical forms of aggression such as rallying friends against someone, spreading gossip, excluding someone from a group, or setting up another child for punishment); and delinquent acts against property (destroying property, vandalizing, or stealing). Those who scored within the bottom 10% were considered to have a behavioural problem.

Getting help

The presence of children in the household during incidents of spousal violence complicates the situation for victims who must consider both their own safety and the safety and wellbeing of their children. According to the 1999 GSS, the presence of child witnesses to the violence elevated the tendency for spousal violence victims to seek help from criminal justice and social service agencies. Overall, spousal violence cases witnessed by children were more than twice as likely as others to be reported to the police (45% compared to 18%), a situation that may be linked to the relatively more serious nature of these events. This was true for both female victims of spousal violence (51% of cases with child witnesses were reported to police compared to 27% of others) and male victims (30% compared to 10%).

The presence of children in the household who witnessed the violence was also linked to a greater likelihood that social services would be contacted for help. In about one-half (53%) of cases where children witnessed spousal violence, the victim contacted social services compared to about one-quarter without child witnesses.[23] This pattern held true for both male and female victims of spousal violence, although women were more likely to call on social services for assistance (62% of cases with child witnesses compared to 38% of others in the case of women; 33% compared to 11% in the case of men). The results of the NLSCY also showed that children who witnessed adults or teenagers fighting in the home were more likely to have had contact with mental health specialists (19.6% compared to 11.5%).

According to Statistics Canada's Transition Home Survey, during the one-year period ending March 31, 2000, a total of 57,182 women together with 39,177 children were admitted to 448 shelters (Locke and Code, 2001).[24] The majority of children accompanying their mothers to shelters were very young: 41% were under 5 years of age and 32% were 5 to 9 years of age.

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[23] *Social services include crisis centres and crisis lines, counsellors and psychologists, family centres, shelters, men's and women's support groups, and police-based or court-based victim service units.*

[24] *Of the 508 shelters surveyed, 464 responded to the survey. However, not all shelters were able to reply to all questions. Eighty-one percent of women and 91% of children in shelters on snapshot day (April 17, 2000) were there to escape abuse. The remaining women were there for reasons related to housing problems, mental health problems and addictions.*

Quebec report on family violence in children's lives

The 1999 survey on family violence in the lives of Quebec children was the first provincial survey to establish an annual rate of abuse (psychological and physical) against children under the age of 18 by adults living within the family. This telephone survey was conducted during the spring of 1999 and involved 2,469 mothers or women responsible for at least one child. The survey provides population-level data on the various strategies that parents and adults in Quebec say they use in raising their children. The findings also reveal the opinions and attitudes of parents towards physical punishment as a disciplinary measure.

Almost all the mothers questioned in the province of Quebec (98%) said that the adults of the house used non-violent disciplinary measures. Peaceful strategies such as offering the child an explanation, withdrawing privileges and distraction were universally used by the adults. However, disciplinary measures involving more aggressive or violent forms were also used by a substantial number of families. For instance, psychological abuse (for example, yelling at the child, screaming, swearing at the child and calling the child names) was reported by 79% of Quebec mothers in this survey. Minor physical violence (for example, pinching, spanking or shaking the child) was used in 48% of households, and severe violence (for example, shaking a child under the age of two, hitting the child in the face or on the head, punching or kicking, strangling, striking the child with an object, throwing the child to the floor) in 7%.

The study also showed that in many cases, these were not isolated incidents. Forty-four percent of mothers reported episodes of psychological abuse that happened 3 or more times in the year prior to the survey, in addition to 16% of minor physical violence and 1% of cases of severe physical violence that occurred 3 or more times in the same time period.

Overall, mothers felt that parents living in the province are "too soft" with their children. Although a large majority (73%) understood that a child could be hurt by violent disciplinary measures, close to one-half of the mothers maintained it was nonetheless a parent's duty to hit a child if necessary. The study revealed that rates for all forms of violence, including severe violence, are higher among children whose maternal and paternal grandparents were described as violent or strict: their parents may have been the direct targets of such violence or may have witnessed it.

Findings from this survey showed that rates of violence were higher among boys, irrespective of the type of violence. Mothers and fathers between the ages of 35 and 44 were the most likely to resort to forms of psychological abuse. Children of parents over 45 years of age were less often subject to minor violence than other age groups.

The presence of several children in the family was associated with a higher rate of psychological abuse. Physical violence remained the same regardless of the number of children in the household. Children whose mothers say they were in a difficult or abusive conjugal relationship (6% of couples) experienced violence in higher proportions (19%), and particularly severe physical violence (5%).

Severe physical violence against a child was reported twice as frequently among women who perceive themselves as poor or very poor as compared with those who consider themselves financially comfortable (12% as compared with 6%).

Rates of minor physical violence and severe physical violence were much lower in families in which the adults did not use psychological abuse against the children. Similarly, the rate of psychological abuse was higher among children who were also the victims of severe physical violence (99% compared to 77% of those without severe physical violence).

Table 3.1
Estimated number of spousal violence cases and the proportion witnessed by children

	Total		Violence against women		Violence against men	
	No. (000s)	%	No. (000s)	%	No. (000s)	%
Total violence by a spouse	**1,239**	**100**	**690**	**56**	**549**	**44**
Children witnessed violence	461	37	321	70	140	30
Children did not witness violence/no children at the time	737	60	354	48	384	52
Not stated/Don't know	40	3†	14	35†	26	65†

† Coefficient of variation between 16.6% and 33.3%.
Figures may not add to total due to rounding.
Source: *Statistics Canada, General Social Survey, 1999.*

Table 3.2
Severity of spousal violence cases where children witnessed the violence

	Total		Violence against women		Violence against men	
	Children witnessed violence	Children did not witness violence [1]	Children witnessed violence	Children did not witness violence [1]	Children witnessed violence	Children did not witness violence [1]
	No. (000s)					
Total	**461**	**738**	**321**	**354**	**140**	**384**
	Percent					
Adult victim was physically injured						
Yes	45	20	53	30	24†	--
No	55	80	46	70	75	90
Adult victim received medical attention for injuries						
Yes	15	6	21†	11	--	-
No	85	94	79	89	96	98
Adult victim was hospitalized for injuries						
Yes	11†	5	14†	8	--	--
No	89	95	86	92	97	98
Adult victim feared for their lives						
Yes	41	15	53	25	12 †	--
No	59	85	46	75	88	94
Adult victim took time off daily activities due to violence						
Yes	33	16	39	27	20 †	—
No	66	83	60	73	80	93

- nil or zero.
-- amount too small to be expressed.
† Coefficient of variation between 16.6% and 33.3%.
Figures may not add to total due to rounding.
[1] Combines "children did not witness violence" and "no children at the time".
Source: *Statistics Canada, General Social Survey, 1999.*

Table 3.3
Percentage of children (4 to 11 years) who witnessed physical fights among teenagers or adults in their homes by selected socio-demographic characteristics, 1998-1999

Socio-demographic characteristics	Children who witnessed physical fighting	
	No. (000s)	%
Total	**247**	**8.5**
Sex		
Males	125	8.3
Females	122	8.6
ns		
Age (years)		
4-7	117	8.1
8-11	130	8.8
p<.001		
Age of parent (years)		
15-24	--	--
25-34	78	7.5
35-44	149	9.3
45+	14	6.2†
p<.001		
Parent's highest level of education		
Less than high school	36	10.5
High school graduate	39	7.5
Some post-secondary	84	10.3
Post-secondary graduate	88	7.2
p<.001		
Parents' employment patterns		
Both parents unemployed or worked less than half the year	13	12.8†
One parent worked full year, the other worked part year or unemployed	66	8.4
Both parents worked full year or most of the year	116	7.6
Parent employed - no spouse	21	7.7†
Parent unemployed – no spouse	26	14.2†
p < .001		
Level of income adequacy		
Below LICO	59	11.4
Above LICO	173	7.4
p < .001		
Family structure		
Two-parent family	162	7.4
Step or blended family	38	14.7†
Single parent family	47	10.3
p < .001		
Change in family structure		
No change – two parents	168	7.6
No change – one parent	23	8.4
From two parents to one parent	17	13.6
From one parent to two parents	12	14.4†
p < .001		

-- amount too small to be expressed.
ns not significant
† Coefficient of variation between 16.6% and 33.3%.
Figures may not add to total due to rounding and due to missing values.
Statistics Canada's Low Income Cut-offs are derived by considering expenditure-to-income patterns. Families or individuals are classified as "low income" if they spend, on average, at least 20 percentage points more of their pre-tax income than the Canadian average on food, shelter, and clothing. Family size and the size of the urban or rural area where the family resides are also taken into consideration.
***Source:** Statistics Canada, National Longitudinal Survey of Children and Youth, 1998-1999.*

4.0 SPOUSAL VIOLENCE

by Holly Johnson and Tina Hotton

4.1 Recent declines in rates of wife assault in Canada

The 1999 General Social Survey (GSS) was the first attempt by Statistics Canada to measure spousal violence in a comprehensive way on a traditional victimization survey. Both women and men were asked a module of ten questions concerning violence by their current and/or previous spouses and common-law partners. The nature of the violence under study ranged in seriousness from threats to sexual assault and concerned acts that happened in the 12-month and 5-year periods preceding the survey interview.

Rates of spousal violence for women can be compared over two points in time: the five-year period prior to the 1999 GSS and five years prior to the 1993 Violence Against Women Survey (VAWS). The methodology of these two surveys differ somewhat; a dedicated survey was used in 1993, while in 1999 a special module of questions modeled on the VAWS was added to a general crime victim survey. Although attempts were made to make these surveys as similar as possible, comparisons should be made with this caveat in mind.

Although both surveys estimate one-year rates of wife assault of 3%, five-year rates declined from 12% in 1993 to 8% in 1999, a statistically significant drop. The percentage of men who reported spousal violence over the five-year period prior to 1999 was 7% and the one-year rate for men was 2%. Data for men were not available for 1993.

Measuring spousal violence

Violence by a spouse or common-law partner is measured on the 1999 General Social Survey on Victimization (GSS) and the 1993 Violence Against Women Survey (VAWS) by a module of 10 questions. This approach consists of asking respondents about specific actions instead of simply asking about "violence" or "assaults" in order to minimize differing interpretations about what constitutes violent behaviour. Respondents who had contact with a spouse in the five years prior to the interview were asked the following questions.[25]

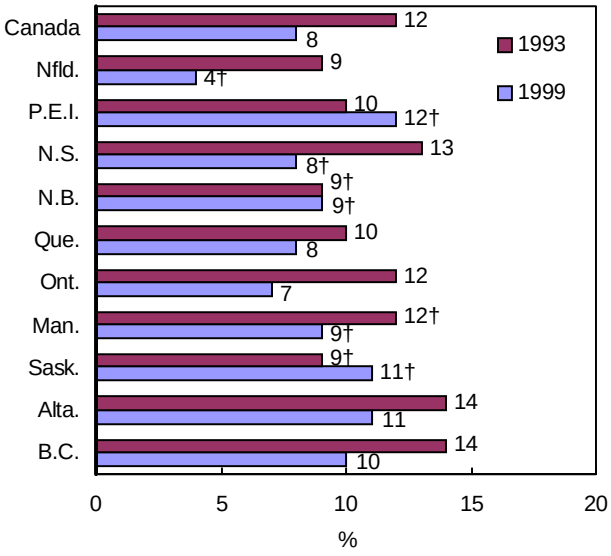
During the past five years, has your partner:

1. Threatened you with his/her fist or anything else that could have hurt you?
2. Thrown anything at you that could have hurt you?
3. Pushed, grabbed or shoved you in a way that could have hurt you?
4. Slapped you?
5. Kicked, bit, or hit you with his/her fist?
6. Hit you with something that could have hurt you?
7. Beaten you?
8. Choked you?
9. Used or threatened to use a gun or knife on you?
10. Forced you into any unwanted sexual activity by threatening you, holding you down, or hurting you in some way?

[25] *In the VAWS, these ten questions were asked in order. In the GSS, the first two questions were given in sequence to all respondents and the remaining eight questions were asked in random order.*

Figure 4.1

Changes in spousal assaults rates for women, past 5 years



† Coefficient of variation is high (16.6% to 33.3%).
Results are statistically significant for all provinces except Prince Edward Island, New Brunswick, Manitoba and Saskatchewan.
Source: *Statistics Canada, General Social Survey, 1999, Violence Against Women Survey, 1993.*

The decline in the five-year rate of wife assault between 1993 and 1999 is statistically significant in every province with the exception of Prince Edward Island, New Brunswick, Manitoba and Saskatchewan (Figure 4.1).

This overall decline in the incidence of wife assault may have been influenced by a variety of factors including the increased availability of shelters and other services for abused women, increased use of services and increased reporting to police by abused women (as shown in Figures 4.2 and 4.3), mandatory arrest policies for men who assault their spouses, improved training for police officers and crown attorneys, and coordinated interagency referrals in many jurisdictions. Other factors that may also have played a role include recent growth in the number of treatment programs for violent men, positive changes in women's social and economic status that may enable them to more easily leave abusive relationships, violence prevention programs, and changes in societal attitudes that recognize wife assault as a crime.

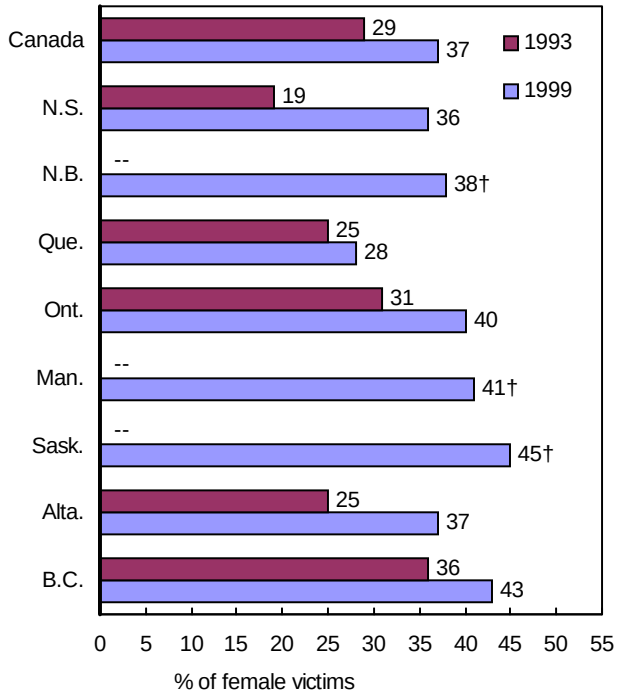
4.2 Increases in reporting to the police and use of social services

Along with the decline in the rates of wife assault in most provinces, there were significant increases in the percentage of female spousal violence victims who reported the violence to the police, and in the percentage who contacted a social service for help (Figure 4.2 and Figure 4.3).

The upward trend in the use of criminal justice and social services on the part of women may be due to a number of factors including a reduction in the social stigma associated with being a victim of spousal violence and seeking help, increased public awareness, improved training of police and other criminal justice personnel, increased availability of police- and court-related victim support services to assist women whose spouses are charged with assault, and, consequently, increased public confidence in the ability of the criminal justice system to deal effectively with spousal violence cases.

Figure 4.2

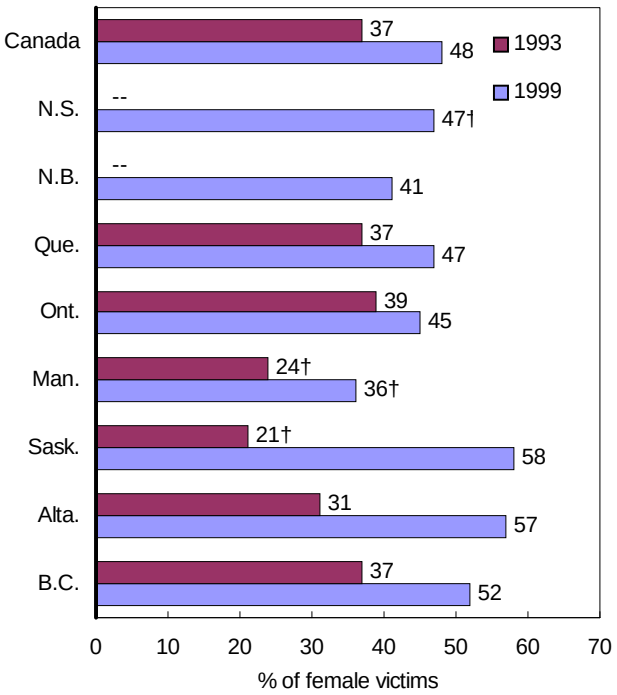
Increased reporting to police by female spousal violence victims, past 5 years



-- Amount too small to be expressed.
† Coefficient of variation is high (16.6% to 33.3%).
Figures for Prince Edward Island and Newfoundland are too small to be expressed.
Source: *Statistics Canada, General Social Survey, 1999, Violence Against Women Survey, 1993.*

Figure 4.3

Increased use of social services by female spousal violence victims, past 5 years



-- Amount too small to be expressed.
† Coefficient of variation is high (16.6% to 33.3%).
Figures for Prince Edward Island and Newfoundland are too small to be expressed.
Source: *Statistics Canada, General Social Survey, 1999, Violence Against Women Survey, 1993.*

However, it must also be noted that victims' use of services in each province will be affected in part by the availability of appropriate services, which in turn is affected by funding made available through governments and communities. Isolation in remote communities will also affect the extent to which victims of violence are able to access services.

There were dramatic increases in the use of criminal justice and social services in some provinces. The Western provinces saw substantial increases in both police reporting and use of social services. For example, between 1993 and 1999, there was almost a three-fold increase in the percentage of female spousal violence victims in Saskatchewan who called on the support of social services to help cope with the consequences of the violence, from 21% to 58%. British Columbia saw an increase from 37% to 52%, and Alberta from 31% to 57%.

The percentage of women who reported spousal assaults to the police doubled in Nova Scotia between 1993 and 1999 while the percentage in Alberta rose from 25% to 37%, and in Ontario from 31% to 40%.

4.3 Spousal violence within the Aboriginal population

Although spousal violence can be found in all cultural groups, research shows that Aboriginal peoples report higher than average rates. There are many factors that contribute to spousal violence. Ideally the following analysis examining spousal violence among Aboriginal peoples would be conducted by comparing groups within the Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal populations with similar socio-economic conditions. However, the sample size of the GSS is too small to support such detailed analysis. As a result, the analysis in this section of the report compares the aggregate Aboriginal population to the aggregate non-Aboriginal population.

There are different ways to represent the Aboriginal population of Canada. The Aboriginal identity population (799,010) from the 1996 Census was used to obtain information for those who identified with one or more Aboriginal groups (North American Indian, Métis or Inuit). The 1996 Census also provides information on those reporting at least one Aboriginal origin or ancestry (1,101,960). Depending on the application, data using either concept may be appropriate for defining the Aboriginal population. This report uses the Aboriginal identity concept as the definition for the Aboriginal population.

Information on Aboriginal peoples in the General Social Survey on Victimization

Respondents to the 1999 GSS were asked to self-identify their cultural or racial background which included whether or not they identified with an Aboriginal group, including North American Indian, Inuit, and Métis. The following question was used:

Canadians come from many cultural or racial backgrounds. I'm going to read you a list. Are you …

1. White
2. Chinese
3. Aboriginal, that is North American Indian, Métis or Inuit
4. South Asian (eg. East Indian, Pakistani, Punjabi, Sri Lankan)
5. Black (eg. African, Haitian, Jamaican, Somali)
6. Filipino
7. Latin American
8. Southeast Asian (eg. Cambodian, Indonesian, Laotian, Vietnamese)
9. Arab (eg. Egyptian, Lebanese, Moroccan)
10. Central or West Asian (eg. Afghan, Iranian, Turk)
11. Japanese
12. Korean
13. Other

Based on responses to this question, a variable was derived which distinguishes between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal respondents. Although it is recognized that Aboriginal culture is diverse, small numbers in the survey sample prohibit a more detailed breakdown of Aboriginal groups or on/off reserve populations. Those who refused to provide their cultural background were excluded from the current analysis.

The reader is cautioned that these GSS results exclude data from the Northwest Territories, Yukon, and Nunavut in which high concentrations of Aboriginal peoples reside. Furthermore, the GSS uses random digit dialing, a telephone sampling method which includes both on/reserve and off/reserve Aboriginal populations, yet does not distinguish between them. This method also excludes those without their own telephones. In the 1999 GSS, Aboriginal peoples represented 2% of the population aged 15 and over in the 10 provinces, a proportion that is similar to that of the 1996 Census.

Readers are also cautioned that the results of this survey describe rates of violence committed against Aboriginal people but that the identity of perpetrators is unknown. Assumptions should not be made about the cultural identity of perpetrators based on the identity of victims.

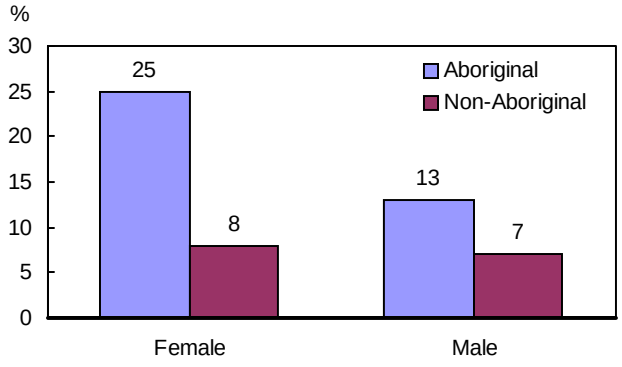
According to the 1999 General Social Survey, Aboriginal peoples were more likely than other Canadians to report being assaulted by a spouse in a five-year period. Approximately 20% of Aboriginal peoples reported being assaulted by a spouse as compared with 7% of the non-Aboriginal population (Table 4.1).

When violence by current and ex-partners are examined separately, a similar pattern emerges. Eleven percent of Aboriginal persons were assaulted by a current spouse compared to 4% of non-Aboriginal women and men. Among those in contact with former spouses, 45% of Aboriginals and 25% of non-Aboriginals were assaulted by that ex-partner during the five-year reference period.

Aboriginal women in particular stand out as being at higher risk of spousal violence. Twenty-five percent of Aboriginal women were assaulted by a current or former spouse during the five-year period, twice the rate for Aboriginal men (13%) and three times the rate for non-Aboriginal women and men (Figure 4.4).

Figure 4.4

Aboriginal women report higher rates of spousal violence



The difference in rates for Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal men is not statistically significant.

Source: *Statistics Canada, General Social Survey, 1999.*

Aboriginal victims experience more severe forms of spousal violence

Experiencing severe, potentially life-threatening types of violence (being beaten, choked, threatened with a gun or knife, or sexually assaulted) was more common among Aboriginal victims. Almost one-half of Aboriginal victims of spousal violence (48%) experienced potentially life-threatening violence at the hands of a current or ex-partner compared with 31% of non-Aboriginal victims.

Consistent with this fact, survey data suggest that Aboriginal victims were also more likely to report serious physical and emotional consequences from the violence, although the differences are not statistically significant. Approximately 41% of Aboriginal victims reported physical injury, 18% received medical attention for their injuries and 32% feared for their lives because of the violence (Table 4.2). In comparison, 28% of non-Aboriginal victims reported being physically injured, 9% received medical attention and 24% feared their lives were in danger.

Child witnesses of violence

As indicated in Chapter 3, children are often the unintended observers of violence between spouses. In Aboriginal families, it is more common than in non-Aboriginal families for children to have witnessed spousal violence. Approximately one-half of Aboriginal people who were assaulted by a spouse reported that a child had witnessed the violence, and the majority of these were female victims. The percentage of Aboriginal women who reported that their children had witnessed the assaults against them (57%) was slightly higher than that of non-Aboriginal women, where 46% reported that their child had observed violence (Table 4.3). This difference may be attributable to the fact that Aboriginal families tend to be larger on average.

The prevalence of emotional abuse

Emotionally abusive behaviour can take many forms including insults, jealousy, and the regular attempt to control and limit the activities and social relationships of one's partner. Case-study interviews with abused women have found that for many women the cumulative impact of emotional abuse over a long period of time can be equally damaging as the physical violence (Follingstad et al., 1990; MacLeod, 1987; Walker, 1984).

Measuring emotional and financial abuse

Emotional abuse was measured on the 1999 GSS with the following set of questions:

I'm going to read you a list of statements that some people have used to describe their spouse/partner. I'd like you to tell me whether or not each statement describes your spouse/partner.

1. He/she tries to limit contact with family or friends.
2. He/she puts you down or calls you names to make you feel bad.
3. He/she is jealous and doesn't want you to talk to other men/women.
4. He/she harms, or threatens to harm, someone close to you.
5. He/she demands to know who you are with and where you are at all times.
6. He/she damages or destroys your possessions or property.
7. He/she prevents you from knowing about or having access to the family income, even if you ask.

The percentages of Aboriginal women and men who experienced emotional abuse were 37% and 30% over a five-year period. In comparison, approximately 18% of non-Aboriginal women and men reported some form of emotional abuse. Among those who suffered emotional abuse, 52% of Aboriginal people and 32% of non-Aboriginal people also experienced physical violence.

Reporting spousal violence to the police

When questioned about their perceptions of the police on the 1999 GSS, Aboriginal people expressed higher levels of dissatisfaction with police performance. Despite this, Aboriginal people were more likely than were non-Aboriginal people to have had contact with the police as a result of domestic violence. Approximately 40% of Aboriginal victims of spousal violence had police contact as compared with 27% of non-Aboriginal victims (Table 4.4).

The contrast was even greater for female victims of spousal violence. Approximately 54% of Aboriginal women, compared to 37% of non-Aboriginal women, had contact with the police as a result of spousal violence. The greater reliance on police services by Aboriginal women may be attributed in part to the greater severity of violence they experienced (in terms of types of violence and prevalence of injury).

Use of community services

Aboriginal victims of spousal violence were equally likely to call on social services for support. Approximately one-half of Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal women assaulted by a spouse during the five-year period used some form of community-based service to help them cope with their partner's violence.[26] The services most commonly used by Aboriginal women were counsellors or psychologists (40%) and crisis centres or lines (29%).

According to the Transition Home Survey, 63% of shelters in Canada provided culturally sensitive services for Aboriginal women residents in 1999-2000 (up slightly from 59% in 1997-1998). Culturally sensitive services for Aboriginal women were such services as recognition of traditional healing methods, use of spiritual elders and teachers, accessibility to language interpreters and Aboriginal language materials, and recognition and understanding of Aboriginal cultural norms and beliefs.

Spousal homicide among Aboriginal peoples

From 1991 to 1999, according to the Homicide Survey, Aboriginal women and men suffered disproportionately from spousal homicide. In this time period, spouses were responsible for the killing of 62 Aboriginal women and 32 Aboriginal men. This constituted 14% and 22% of all spousal killings committed against women and men in Canada respectively. When these numbers are translated into rates per million married populations in order to standardize for the number of Aboriginal people in the population,[27] the magnitude of the differences becomes clearer.

Information on Aboriginal peoples in the Homicide Survey

The Homicide Survey has collected police-reported data on homicide incidents, victims and accused persons since 1961. For every homicide that comes to the attention of police, the investigating police department completes a survey questionnaire. Among the many data elements included on this survey, police are asked to identify if the homicide victims are Aboriginal.

There are a number of obvious limitations to identifying the cultural background of homicide victims. The victim is deceased and is therefore unable to self-report his or her cultural identity. Instead the police are left using their own judgement, and in some cases, the knowledge of whether or not the victim lives on a reserve or is registered under the *Indian Act*.

In addition, prior to 1997 the survey question on Aboriginal status was completed only if the victim was identified as an Aboriginal person. This may have resulted in an undercounting of Aboriginal victims because some police jurisdictions routinely left this question blank not because the victim was non-Aboriginal but because the force does not collect data on race and ethnicity. The possible undercounting prior to 1997 should be kept in mind when interpreting these homicide rates.

Overall, rates of spousal homicide among Aboriginal women were more than eight times higher than for non-Aboriginal women (47.2 per million compared with 5.8 per million). For men, the differences were even more pronounced. Aboriginal men had rates of spousal

[26] *Small numbers prohibit the release of data on use of community services among Aboriginal men.*

[27] *The population figures for the homicide rates were taken from the 1991 post-census Aboriginal Peoples Survey (APS), and the 1996 Census of the Population. To be included in the Aboriginal population, respondents must have indicated that they identify with at least one Aboriginal group (i.e., North American Indian, Métis, Inuit or other Aboriginal group such as Cree or Inuvialuit), and/or reported being registered under the Indian Act. Although the Census is estimated to include over 97% of the total Canadian population, there are a number of data quality issues that are related to census data on the Aboriginal population. The Aboriginal population estimates using the 1991 APS and the 1996 Census were adjusted by 15.2% and 13.2% respectively to account for incomplete enumeration of reserves and Aboriginal communities and for undercoverage of the Aboriginal population residing on participating reserves or in non-reserve areas. (For more information on Aboriginal population adjustments see Norris et. al., 1995, and Statistics Canada, 1999).*

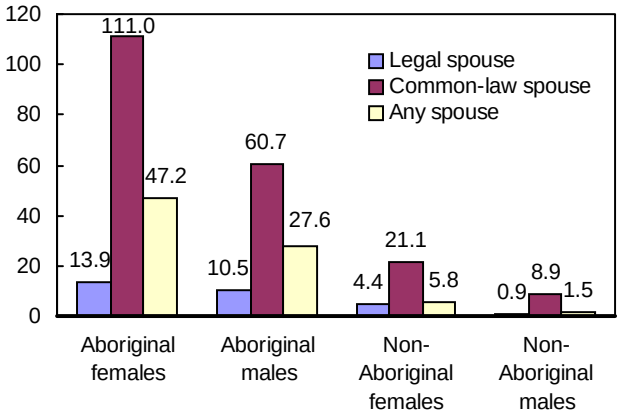
homicide 18 times greater than non-Aboriginal men (27.6 per million compared with 1.5 per million), and more than four times greater than non-Aboriginal women (Figure 4.5).

Persons in common-law relationships are at greater risk of lethal and non-lethal spousal violence than those legally married (Hotton, 2001). This is true for both the Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal populations. Homicide rates were almost eight times higher for Aboriginal women in common-law relationships than those in legal marriages (111.0 per million compared with 13.9 per million) (Figure 4.5). Aboriginal men living common-law had rates of spousal homicide six times greater than did those living with legal spouses (60.7 per million compared with 10.5 per million).

Figure 4.5

Aboriginal women in common-law relationships have highest rates of spousal homicide

Rate per million couples



The 1991 Aboriginal Peoples Survey, and the 1991 and 1996 Census were used to estimate the number of Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal women and men aged 15 and older who were married or in a common-law union. The denominators used for inter-censal years were estimated by averaging the difference from the known population figures in 1991 and 1996. Cases where the Aboriginal status of the victim was unknown were included in the non-Aboriginal rates.

Source: *Statistics Canada, Canadian Centre for Justice Statistics, Homicide Survey, 1991-1999.*

There are many complex and interconnected factors that contribute to the higher levels of violence experienced by Aboriginal women and men. The Report of the Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples (RCAP, 1996) identified a number of factors that are linked to violence in Aboriginal communities including economic and social deprivation, alcohol and substance abuse and the inter-generational cycle of violence. According to RCAP hearings, other contributing factors include the breakdown of healthy family life from residential school upbringing, loss of traditional values, and overcrowded and substandard housing among Aboriginal women and men.

4.4 Spousal Violence after Marital Separation[28]

According to the 1999 GSS, 2.8 million Canadians had some form of contact[29] with an ex-marital or common-law partner in the five-year period prior to being surveyed. Within this population, approximately 437,000 women (28%) and 259,000 men (22%) reported some type of violence perpetrated by an ex-partner, either while the couple were still living together or after they had separated.[30] While in the majority of cases (63%) the violence ends at separation, assaults occurred after separation in slightly more than one-third of previous violent relationships (Table 4.5). Of those who had previous violent relationships, women (39%) were more likely than men (32%) to report that they were assaulted after the relationship ended.

Those who reported violence after separation were asked if they thought the frequency or severity of violence increased at that point. Approximately 61,000 (24%) reported that the violence continued and became more serious, and 95,000 (37%) reported that while the violence continued it did not increase in severity. A further 98,000 (39%) indicated that the violence first started after separation.

Severity and frequency of post-separation violence

Women and men who were assaulted after separation more frequently described severe forms of violence compared with those assaulted during a current relationship (Table 4.6). Among those assaulted following separation, 40% of women and 20% of men reported being beaten, 34% of women reported being choked,[31] and 27% of women and 19% of men were threatened with or had a gun or knife used against them. Over one-third (35%) of women reported an incident of sexual assault on at least one occasion.[32]

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[28] *For further information, see Hotton (2001) "Spousal Violence After Marital Separation"* Juristat

[29] *Only those people who had contact with their ex-partners over the previous five years were asked if they had experienced violence. Therefore, the GSS does not capture those individuals who have purposely not had contact with ex-partners in order to escape violence.*

[30] *A small number of same sex couples are included in the figures presented in this report, but the number of these cases is too small to release separately.*

[31] *Numbers are too small to release for men.*

[32] *One limitation of this survey is that it cannot be determined whether these incidents by ex-partners occurred prior to or following the separation, except for those incidents that began after separation.*

When there was violence in a previous marriage, multiple occurrences were common and were particularly common in cases where violence occurred after separation. Approximately 85% of women and 76% of men assaulted by an estranged partner experienced more than one incident of violence (Table 4.7). About 50% of women and 40% of men who suffered assaults after separation experienced 10 or more incidents of violence.

Just as women experienced more severe types of violence, female victims were more likely to be physically injured during violent encounters. Nearly 60% of women assaulted after separation reported injury, approximately 25% received medical attention for their injuries, and 59% reported fearing for their lives. In comparison, 20% of male victims of post-separation violence were injured and 17% feared for their lives.[33]

Violence that began after separation

It is a common assumption that the breakdown of a marital union ends the risk of spousal violence. However, not only can violence sometimes continue after separation, in many cases the first assault occurs after the couple is separated. According to the 1999 GSS, approximately 63,000 women and 35,000 men were assaulted for the first time after marriage breakdown. Among women who experienced violence after separation, 37% were victimized for the first time after one of the parties had left the shared residence. For men, the proportion was 42% (see Table 4.8).

The types of violence first experienced after separation can be quite severe, particularly for women. The majority of women (57%) who first experienced violence after separation were beaten, choked, threatened with a gun or knife, or sexually assaulted. Men more frequently reported being kicked, bit or hit (58%). Approximately 41% of women who first experienced violence after separation feared for their lives as a result of the violence. Multiple victimization incidents were also common with 60% of women and 49% of men in this group being assaulted more than once.

Police not aware of the majority of violent relationships

The majority of spousal assault victims do not contact the police for assistance. Incidents of spousal violence in current relationships were brought to the attention of the police in only 26% of cases involving female victims and 6% of cases with male victims over the five-year period (Table 4.9). Although seeking police assistance was more common among women and men assaulted by a previous partner (44% and 25% respectively), those who contacted the police remain a minority.

The police were more likely to become aware of violent incidents when women experienced abuse after separation, a situation which is linked to the severity of these incidents. In relationships with violence that continued or first occurred after separation, 55% of women reported having contact with the police compared with 37% if the violence ceased prior to separation. For men, the proportions with police contact were 30% and 23%, respectively.

Respondents who had police contact were asked if they thought the violence had increased in severity, decreased/stopped or stayed the same after police intervention. Both women and men were likely to report that the violence stopped after police contact (44% and 50%, respectively). Approximately 33% of women and 39% of men reported no change, and a minority (19% of women and 11% of men) reported an increase in violence. However, without accurate information about the outcome of police intervention (i.e. whether or not formal charges were laid, if the case was taken to court and prosecuted), it is difficult to assess whether it was simply police presence or a combination of factors that had an impact on subsequent violence.

Criminal harassment

Criminal harassment, which includes “stalking”, has been a criminal offence since the passing of Bill C-126 in Canada in 1993. Although criminal harassment law is not gender specific, this legislation was introduced mainly as a response to violence against women, and in particular, to domestic violence (Department of Justice, 1999). Several highly publicized cases of women being stalked and killed by estranged partners in the early 1990s were the impetus for legislation that would better protect peoples from criminally harassing behaviour before it escalates to physical violence.

Prior to 1993, persons engaging in criminal harassment might have been charged with offences such as uttering threats, mischief, harassing phone calls or trespassing at night. But existing laws did not adequately address all of the types of behaviour associated with “stalking” including repeatedly following someone or continually watching someone’s home or workplace. Section 264 of the *Criminal Code* created a new offence of “criminal harassment” to better respond to all of these behaviours and to provide for a more serious penalty.[34]

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[33] *The number of men who received medical attention for their injuries is too small to produce a statistically reliable estimate.*

[34] *Refer to Hackett (2000) for more information about criminal harassment in Canada.*

Criminal Harassment

Criminal Code of Canada, s. 264

(1) No person shall, without lawful authority and knowing that another person is harassed or recklessly as to whether the other person is harassed, engage in conduct referred to in subsection (2) that causes that other person reasonably, in all the circumstances, to fear for their safety or the safety of anyone known to them.

(2) The conduct mentioned in subsection (1) consists of:

a) repeatedly following from place to place the other person or anyone known to them;
b) repeatedly communicating with, either directly or indirectly, the other person or anyone known to them;
c) besetting or watching the dwelling-house, or place where the other person, or anyone known to them, resides, works, carries on business or happens to be; or
d) engaging in threatening conduct directed at the other person or any member of their family.

(3) Every person who contravenes this section is guilty of:

a) an indictable offence and is liable to imprisonment for a term not exceeding five years; or
b) an offence punishable on summary conviction.

According to the Incident-based Uniform Crime Reporting (UCR2) Survey,[35] women were the victims in 77% of criminal harassment incidents reported to police in 1999. Ex-husbands were the accused in 36% of incidents reported by women and ex-wives were the perpetrators in 11% of criminal harassment incidents reported by men. Men were more likely to report being stalked by casual acquaintances than intimate partners.

While most incidents of criminal harassment do not culminate in homicide, between 1997 and 1999, stalking behaviour was a precipitating factor in 12% (6 cases) of all homicides committed by male ex-partners.

4.5 Killings by ex-spouses

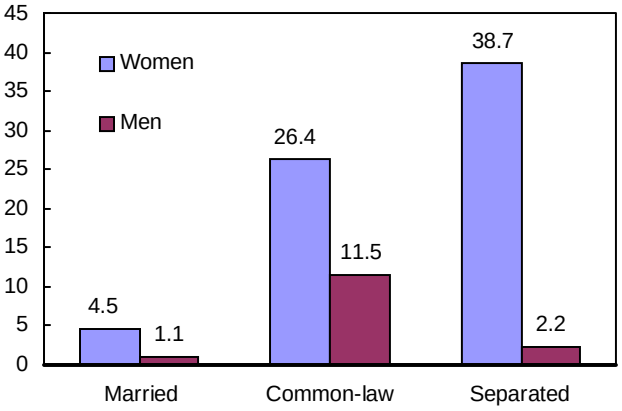
Women have a heightened risk of homicide after marital separation

Marital separation is a factor that elevates the rate of spousal homicide for women. Ex-marital partners were responsible for 28% of all homicides perpetrated against women, and 10% of homicides committed against men (Table 4.10). Although spousal killings that occur after separation are fewer in number than those that occur in intact unions, when calculated as a rate per million couples, the rates for separated women are higher. Between 1991 and 1999, women were killed by estranged husbands at a rate of 38.7 per million. In comparison, an average of 26.4 per million women were killed by current common-law partners, and 4.5 per million were killed by current husbands (Figure 4.6).

Figure 4.6

Estranged women at greatest risk of spousal homicide, 1991-1999

Rate per million couples



The 1991 and 1996 Census was used to estimate the number of women and men aged 15 and older who were married, in a common-law union, and separated from legal marital partners during the reference period. Spousal homicide rates were not calculated for those separated from common-law partners, as there are no reliable estimates for this sub-population available from the Census. All known cases of homicide perpetrated by an ex-common law partner (as identified from police narratives) have been omitted from the separated rates. The denominators used for inter-censal years were estimated by averaging the difference from the known population figures in 1991 and 1996.

Source: *Statistics Canada, Canadian Centre for Justice Statistics, Homicide Survey, 1991-1999.*

This heightened risk of homicide victimization following separation is not found for men. Instead, men are at greater risk of homicide by a current common-law spouse than an ex-spouse. An average of 11.5 men per million were killed by a current common-law partner between 1991 and 1999, about five times the rate for separated men.

Approximately one-half of homicides committed by ex-spouses (49%) occurred within two months of separation, another 32% occurred after two to twelve months of separation, and 19% of homicides were committed

[35] *For the purposes of this analysis, a subset of 106 police forces that have been consistently reporting to the UCR2 from 1995 to 1999, (representing 41% of the national volume of crime), will be examined.*

more than one year after the dissolution of the relationship.[36]

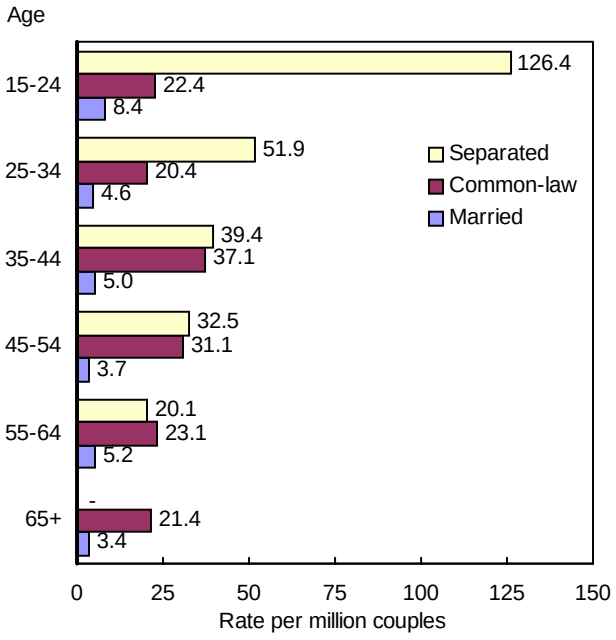
Among male ex-partners, 39% committed suicide and 6% attempted suicide following the homicide. No incidents of murder-suicide were found among women who killed their ex-partners.

Younger women at greater risk of post-separation homicide

The young age of both the victim and offender is commonly cited as a risk factor for lethal and non-lethal violence by spouses. However, this risk of spousal homicide among the young varies by the victim's sex and type of marital union. Women killed by estranged spouses are at greatest risk when they are young (aged 15-24), and risk clearly declines with age for separated women. The same cannot be said for women living with legal spouses or common-law partners at the time of the homicide. Rates of homicide were relatively comparable for married women across age groups, and for women in common-law relationships spousal homicide rates were at the highest for those 35 to 44 years of age (Figure 4.7). Although homicide rates were higher for men living in common-law relationships, there was no clear age-related pattern for men (Figure 4.8).[37]

Figure 4.7

Young estranged women at highest risk of spousal homicide, 1991-1999

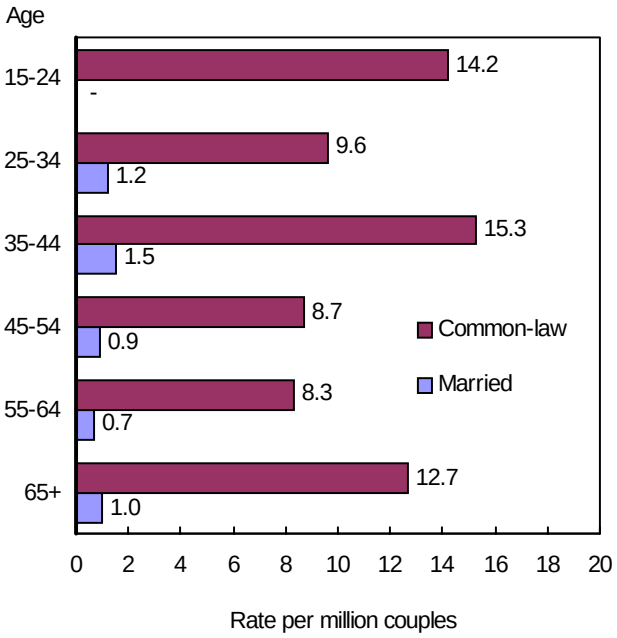


- Nil or zero.

Source: *Statistics Canada, Canadian Centre for Justice Statistics, Homicide Survey, 1991-1999.*

Figure 4.8

Homicide rates for men highest among common-law spouses,[1] 1991-1999



- Nil or zero.

[1] The number of men killed by ex-marital partners was too small to analyse by age of victims.

Source: *Statistics Canada, Canadian Centre for Justice Statistics, Homicide Survey, 1991-1999.*

Estranged male partners most often motivated by jealousy

In the written descriptions of ex-partner homicides completed by investigating police officers, fear of infidelity stood as a central theme for male perpetrators. As determined by police, the most common motive among men for killing an ex-partner was jealousy (41%). In contrast, men who killed current partners were more often identified as being motivated by the escalation of an argument or quarrel (56%). Similarly, the most common motive among women who killed either previous or current marital partners was an argument or quarrel (41% and 79% respectively).

Previous history of domestic violence common in spousal homicides

In the majority of spousal killings, the lethal assault marked the end of a pattern of violence in the relationship. Between 1991 and 1999, police were aware of previous

[36] *These proportions should be interpreted with caution because of the high rate of missing information.*

[37] *Numbers were too small to calculate age-specific rates of homicide perpetrated by estranged spouses for men.*

domestic violence in 74% of homicides perpetrated by ex-husbands, 57% of homicides perpetrated by common-law husbands and 41% perpetrated by husbands in legal marriages. Women under the age of 30 killed by ex-spouses had the highest homicide rate and were most likely to have a history of domestic violence: 80% of these cases had known histories of domestic violence. In contrast, police were more likely to be aware of previous violence when men were killed by their common-law wives (66%) than by ex-partners (59%) or legal spouses (56%). However, these figures should be interpreted with caution, as it is not clear from police statistics who was responsible for the domestic assaults, the victim or the perpetrator of the homicide. Some homicide offenders are acting in self-defence when the homicides occur and it is the victims who are responsible for a history of domestic assaults (Browne, 1986).

Of the police narratives reviewed, at least 8% of male ex-partners accused of killing their former partners had a non-association or restraining order against them at the time of the homicide.[38] In 1999, 65% (13) of men who killed their former spouses had a previous criminal record, of which 45% (9) had a record for violent offences.[39] However, it is not known how many of these convictions involved domestic violence.

4.6 Spousal homicide rates over time

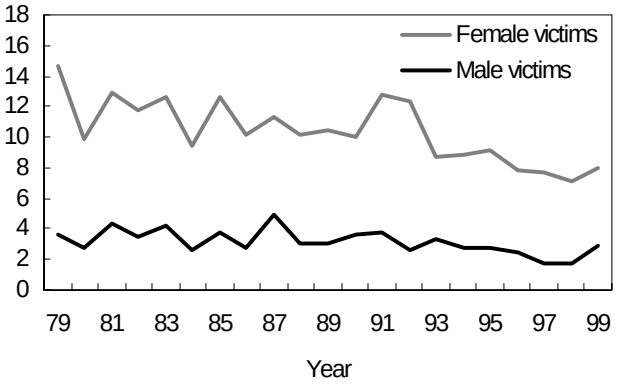
Spousal homicide rates for both women and men have fluctuated over the past two decades and have generally declined in recent years, although it increased slightly over the last year (Figure 4.9). The homicide rate for women declined by approximately 37% between 1991 and 1999, from 12.8 to 8.0 per million couples. The rate for men decreased 24% from 3.8 to 2.9 per million couples.[40]

The decline in the spousal homicide rate since the early 1990s mirrors the overall decline in spousal assaults over this same time period. This also parallels the decrease in the more severe forms of wife assault, which may be due to the increasing availability of emergency shelters that are designed to help women escape dangerous situations, and to mandatory charging policies and improved training of police officers.

Figure 4.9

Recent decline in rates of spousal homicide, 1978-1999

Rate per million couples



Source: *Statistics Canada, Canadian Centre for Justice Statistics, Homicide Survey.*

Provincial spousal homicide rates over time

On average, provincial spousal homicide rates for the period from 1976 to 1999 were highest in the Western provinces for both women and men. This is similar to patterns for overall violent crime and homicide. Newfoundland and Prince Edward Island had the lowest rates; Prince Edward Island had no men killed by spouses

[38] *There was no mention in incident narratives of restraining orders against women who killed ex-partners.*

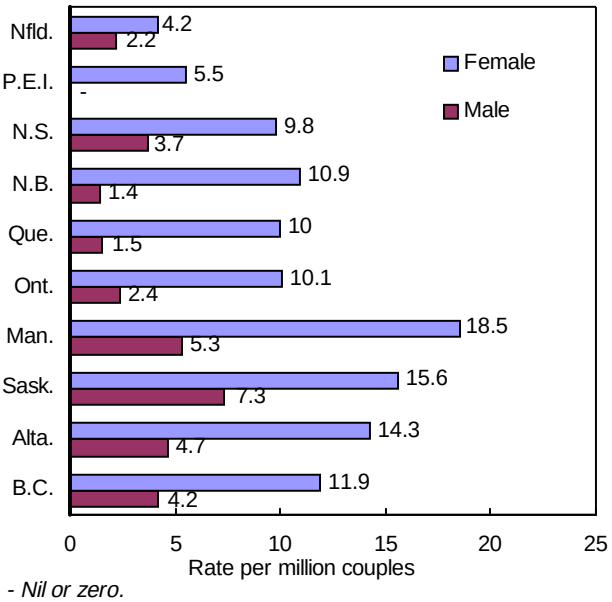
[39] *The proportion of perpetrators with a criminal record was higher for men who killed current common-law partners (94%), and lower for perpetrators in registered marriages (20%). There were too few cases of husband killings in 1999 to analyze the criminal history of the accused.*

[40] *It is not clear from police statistics whether the person accused of spousal homicide was acting in self-defence when the homicide occurred. Police were asked to indicate whether the victim was the first to use violence and a large proportion were unknown (41%). However, male spousal homicide victims were more likely than female victims to have been the first to use violence: 22% compared to only 3% of wife killings. The Battered Woman's Syndrome has been accepted by Canadian courts in establishing a claim of self defence in the context of spousal homicide, thereby recognizing that some battered women kill abusive husbands following escalating violence in order to protect themselves from perceived imminent death.*

during this period. In all provinces and territories, killings of wives outnumbered killings of husbands by a ratio of at least 2 to 1 (Figure 4.10). Rates for the Yukon and the Northwest Territories are extremely high: 49.2 women and 13.3 men per million couples in the Yukon and 94.0 women and 34.8 men per million couples in the Northwest Territories (not shown due to scale). There was one woman killed by her spouse in Nunavut in 1999.

Figure 4.10

Average spousal homicide rates highest in Western provinces, 1976-1999



- Nil or zero.

Source: *Statistics Canada, Canadian Centre for Justice Statistics, Homicide Survey.*

Table 4.1

Number and percentage of women and men aged 15 years and over who reported violence by a spouse[1,2], by Aboriginal status and sex of the victim, past 5 years

	Aboriginal population						Non-Aboriginal population					
	Total		Female		Male		Total		Female		Male	
	No. (000s)	%	No. (000's)	%	No. (000s)	%	No. (000s)	%	No. (000s)	%	No. (000s)	%
Violence by current spouse	**28**	**11†**	**17**	**12†**	**--**	**--**	**523**	**4**	**236**	**4**	**287**	**4**
No violence in the past 5 years	218	86	116	84	--	--	13,185	94	6,520	95	6,665	94
Refused	--	--	--	--	--	--	297	2	144	2	153	2
Total with current spouse	255	100	139	100	116	100	14,005	100	6,900	100	7,105	100
Violence by previous spouse	**33**	**45**	**28**	**54**	**--**	**--**	**650**	**25**	**402**	**27**	**248**	**21**
No violence in the past 5 years	37	51	24	46†	--	--	1,972	75	1,072	72	900	77
Refused	--	--	--	--	--	--	26	1†	--	--	15	1†
Total with previous spouse [3]	73	100	51	100	22	100	2,647	100	1,483	100	1,164	100
Violence by any spouse	**60**	**20**	**44**	**25**	**17**	**13†**	**1,156**	**7**	**632**	**8**	**524**	**7**
No violence in the past 5 years	236	76	127	72	109	82	14,170	90	7,066	90	7,104	90
Refused	--	--	--	--	--	--	428	3	195	3	233	3
Total with current or previous spouse	308	100	176	100	132	100	15,754	100	7,893	100	7,861	100

-- amount too small to be expressed.
† Coefficient of variation is high (16.6% to 33.3%).
Percentages may not total 100 due to rounding.
[1] Includes common-law partners.
[2] Excludes those who refused to state their marital status.
[3] Includes those who had contact with a previous partner within the five year period.
Source: *Statistics Canada, General Social Survey, 1999.*

Table 4.2
Severity of spousal violence by Aboriginal status and sex of the victim, past 5 years

	Aboriginal victims of spousal violence						Non-Aboriginal victims of spousal violence					
	Total		Female		Male		Total		Female		Male	
	No. (000s)	%	No. (000's)	%	No. (000s)	%	No. (000s)	%	No. (000s)	%	No. (000s)	%
Total violence by any spouse	**60**	**100**	**44**	**100**	**17**	**100**	**1,156**	**100**	**632**	**100**	**524**	**100**
Physical injury	25	41†	21	49 †	--	--	324	28	255	40	69	13
No physical injury	36	59	22	51 †	14	81	815	71	368	58	447	85
Not stated/Don't know	--	--	--	--	--	--	17	1†	--	--	--	--
Received medical attention	11	18†	10	23 †	--	--	108	9	94	15	14	3†
Did not receive medical attention	14	23†	11	26 †	--	--	215	19	160	25	55	11
No physical injury	36	59	22	51 †	--	--	815	71	368	58	447	85
Not stated/Don't know	--	--	--	--	--	--	18	2†	--	--	--	--
Feared their lives were in danger	19	32†	17	39 †	--	--	277	24	239	38	38	7†
Did not fear their lives were in danger	40	66	26	59	14	84	858	74	383	61	475	91
Not stated/Don't know	--	--	--	--	--	--	21	2†	--	--	--	--

-- amount too small to be expressed.
† Coefficient of variation is high (16.6% to 33.3%).
Percentages may not total 100 due to rounding.
Source: *Statistics Canada, General Social Survey, 1999.*

Table 4.3
Violence witnessed or heard by children by Aboriginal status and sex of the victim, past 5 years

	Aboriginal victims of spousal violence						Non-Aboriginal victims of spousal violence					
	Total		Female		Male		Total		Female		Male	
	No. (000s)	%	No. (000's)	%	No. (000s)	%	No. (000s)	%	No. (000s)	%	No. (000s)	%
Total violence by any spouse	**60**	**100**	**44**	**100**	**17**	**100**	**1,156**	**100**	**632**	**100**	**524**	**100**
Children saw or heard violence	28	47	25	57	--	--	429	37	293	46	135	26
Children did not see or hear violence/ No children at the time	31	52	19	43 †	--	--	701	61	330	52	371	71
Not stated/Don't know	--	--	--	--	--	--	26	2†	--	--	18	4†

-- amount too small to be expressed.
† Coefficient of variation is high (16.6% to 33.3%).
Percentages may not total 100 due to rounding.
Source: *Statistics Canada, General Social Survey, 1999.*

Table 4.4
Violence reported to the police and use of social services by Aboriginal status and sex of the victim, past 5 years

	Aboriginal victims of spousal violence						Non-Aboriginal victims of spousal violence					
	Total		Female		Male		Total		Female		Male	
	No. (000s)	%	No. (000's)	%	No. (000s)	%	No. (000s)	%	No. (000s)	%	No. (000s)	%
Total violence by any spouse	**60**	**100**	**44**	**100**	**17**	**100**	**1,156**	**7**	**632**	**8**	**524**	**7**
Reported to police	24	40†	23	54	--	--	312	27	231	37	81	15
Not reported to police	36	60	20	47 †	--	--	821	71	387	61	433	83
Not stated/Don't know	--	--	--	--	--	--	24	2†	14	2†	--	--
Used a social service	26	43†	23	52†	--	--	398	35	310	49	89	17†
Did not use a social service	32	54	21	48†	--	--	737	64	310	49	427	82
Not stated/Don't know	--	--	--	--	--	--	21	2†	12	2†	--	--

-- amount too small to be expressed.
† Coefficient of variation is high (16.6% to 33.3%).
Percentages may not total 100 due to rounding.
Source: *Statistics Canada, General Social Survey, 1999.*

Table 4.5
Number and percentage of women and men who reported violence by a spouse, previous five years

	Total		Female victims		Male victims	
	No. (000's)	%	No. (000's)	%	No. (000's)	%
Violence by any spouse	**1,239**	**7**	**690**	**8**	**549**	**7**
No violence in the past 5 years	14,505	87	7,234	87	7,271	87
Refused	959	6	433	5	526	6
Total with current or previous spouse	16,702	100	8,356	100	8,346	100
Total violence by current spouse	**562**	**4**	**259**	**4**	**303**	**4**
No violence in the past 5 years	13,501	91	6,678	91	6,823	90
Refused	806	5	373	5	433	6
Total with current spouse	14,869	100	7,310	100	7,558	100
Violence by previous spouse	**697**	**25**	**437**	**28**	**259**	**22**
No violence in the past 5 years	2,022	73	1,100	71	922	76
Refused	41	2†	17	1†	24	2†
Total with previous spouse	2,759	100	1,554	100	1,205	100
Total violence by previous spouse	**697**	**100**	**437**	**100**	**259**	**100**
Violence ceased at separation	437	63	264	60	173	67
Violence after separation	255	37	172	39	83	32
Don't know/refused	--	--	--	--	--	--
Violence after separation	**255**	**100**	**172**	**100**	**83**	**100**
Increased in severity	61	24	39	22	23	28
Did not increase in severity	95	37	69	40	25	30
Began after separation	98	39	63	37	35	42

-- amount too small to be expressed.
† Coefficient of variation is high (16.6% to 33.3%).
Percentages may not total 100 due to rounding.
***Source:** Statistics Canada, General Social Survey, 1999.*

Table 4.6
Types of violence in previous and current marital unions by sex of victim

	Violence by previous spouse						Violence by current spouse	
	Total		Violence ended at separation		Violence occurred after separation		Total	
	No. (000's)	%	No. (000's)	%	No. (000's)	%	No. (000's)	%
Total violence female victims	**437**	**100**	**264**	**100**	**172**	**100**	**259**	**100**
Threatened to hit	307	70	168	64	137	80	145	56
Threw something	211	48	122	46	88	51	90	35
Pushed, grabbed	378	87	228	87	150	87	187	72
Slapped	203	46	113	43	89	52	77	30
Kicked, bit or hit	177	41	102	39	75	44	50	19
Hit with something	127	29	65	25	61	35	28†	11†
Beat	139	32	71	27	68	40	33†	13†
Choked	114	26	56	21	58	34	26†	10†
Used or threatened to use gun or knife	86	20	40	15	46	27	--	--
Sexual assault	117	27	57	22	60	35	21†	8†
Total violence male victims	**259**	**100**	**173**	**100**	**83**	**100**	**303**	**100**
Threatened to hit	173	67	107	62	66	79	162	53
Threw something	147	57	99	57	46	55	163	54
Pushed, grabbed	135	52	84	48	51	61	103	34
Slapped	162	63	109	63	53	64	153	51
Kicked, bit or hit	161	62	102	59	59	71	124	41
Hit with something	93	36	60	35	33	40	53	17
Beat	41	16	25†	14†	16†	20†	13†	4†
Choked	18†	7†	--	--	--	--	--	--
Used or threatened to use gun or knife	35†	14†	20	12	15	19	--	--
Sexual assault	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--

-- amount too small to be expressed.
† Coefficient of variation is high (16.6% to 33.3%).
Percentages may not total 100 due to rounding.
Source: *Statistics Canada, General Social Survey, 1999.*

Table 4.7
Severity of ex-partner abuse, past five years

	Violence by previous spouse						Violence by current spouse	
	Total		Violence ended at separation		Violence occurred after separation		Total	
	No. (000's)	%	No. (000's)	%	No. (000's)	%	No. (000's)	%
Total violence female victims	**437**	**100**	**264**	**100**	**172**	**100**	**259**	**100**
Occurred once	104	24	79	30	25	15	126	49
2-9 times	163	38	105	40	58	34	81	31
10 or more times	163	37	76	29	87	51	42	16
Not stated/don't know	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--
Physical injury	213	49	112	42	101	59	67	26
No physical injury	217	50	146	55	70	41	186	72
Not stated/don't know	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--
Received medical attention	80	19	37	14	43	25	25	10
Did not receive medical attention	133	31	75	29	59	34	42	16
No physical injury	217	50	146	55	70	41	186	72
Not stated/don't know	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--
Feared for her life	208	48	106	40	102	59	53	20
Did not fear for her life	220	50	153	58	68	39	201	77
Not stated/don't know	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--
Total violence male victims	**259**	**100**	**173**	**100**	**83**	**100**	**303**	**100**
Occurred once	76	29	57	33	18†	21†	163	54
2-9 times	107	41	74	43	32	38	113	37
10 or more times	66	26	35	20	31	38	20†	7†
Not stated/don't know	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--
Physical injury	54	21	38	22	16†	20†	18†	6†
No physical injury	199	77	134	77	65	78	279	92
Not stated/don't know	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--
Received medical attention	13†	5†	--	--	--	--	--	--
Did not receive medical attention	41†	16†	30	17	11†	14†	--	--
No physical injury	199	77	134	77	65	78	279	92
Not stated/don't know	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--
Feared for his life	34	13†	19	11	15†	17†	--	--
Did not fear for his life	219	84	152	88	66	80	--	--
Not stated/don't know	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--

-- amount too small to be expressed.
† Coefficient of variation is high (16.6% to 33.3%).
Percentages may not total 100 due to rounding.
Source: *Statistics Canada, General Social Survey, 1999.*

Table 4.8
Types of violence in relationships where the first incident occurred after separation by sex of victim

Type of violence	Female victims		Male victims	
	No. (000's)	%	No. (000's)	%
Total violence	**63**	**100**	**35**	**100**
Threatened to hit	42	67	26	75
Threw something	22†	35†	12†	34†
Pushed, grabbed	46	73	17†	48†
Slapped	15†	24†	17†	48†
Kicked, bit or hit	14†	21†	20†	58†
Hit with something	--	--	--	--
Beat	13†	21†	--	--
Choked	11†	17†	--	--
Used or threatened to use gun or knife	12†	19†	--	--
Sexual assault	14†	22†	--	--

-- amount too small to be expressed.
† Coefficient of variation is high (16.6% to 33.3%).
Percentages do not total 100 due to multiple responses.
Source: *Statistics Canada, General Social Survey, 1999.*

Table 4.9
Number and percentage of spousal violence incidents reported to police, past five years

	Violence by previous spouse						Violence by current spouse	
	Total		Violence ended at separation		Violence occurred after separation		Total	
	No. (000's)	%	No. (000's)	%	No. (000's)	%	No. (000's)	%
Total violence experienced by female victims	**437**	**100**	**264**	**100**	**172**	**100**	**259**	**100**
Reported to the police								
Yes	191	44	100	37	94	55	66	26
No	237	54	161	61	75	44	185	71
Refused/don't know	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--
Total violence experienced by male victims	**259**	**100**	**173**	**100**	**83**	**100**	**303**	**100**
Reported to the police								
Yes	65	25	40	23	25†	30 †	19†	6†
No	186	72	130	75	55	66	276	91
Refused/don't know	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--

-- amount too small to be expressed.
† Coefficient of variation is high (16.6% to 33.3%).
Percentages may not total 100 due to rounding.
Source: *Statistics Canada, General Social Survey, 1999.*

Table 4.10
Homicides perpetrated by previous and current spouses by sex of victim, 1991-1999

	Female victims		Male victims	
	No.	%	No.	%
Current spouse	447	72	148	90
Ex-spouse	170	28	17	10
Total	**617**	**100**	**165**	**100**

Percentages do not total 100 due to multiple responses.
Source: *Statistics Canada, Canadian Centre for Justice Statistics, Homicide Survey.*

5.0 CHILDREN IN SHELTERS FOR ABUSED WOMEN[41]

by Ruth Code

One measure taken to assist abused women and their children leaving violent situations has been the development of a substantial system of shelters. Currently, shelters exist in every province and territory and provide services to women and children victims of various types of abuse. Shelters are intended to offer abused women and their children a temporary and safe place to live.

There are no shelters in Canada that provide residential services exclusively to adult male victims of family abuse. However, some shelters do provide some services to men abused by their family.

Since its inception in 1991-1992, the Transition Home Survey has gathered data on the characteristics of residential agencies serving women victims of abuse in each province and territory. Information is gathered from all residential facilities (shelters) for abused women in each province and territory on the characteristics of the facilities and the services provided during the previous 12 months, as well as a one-day snapshot of the characteristics of women and children residents. Between 1992 and 2000, the number of shelters in Canada grew from 376 to 508.

5.1 Changes in shelters and residents over time[42]

An admission is the official acceptance of a woman or child into a shelter with the allocation of a bed. A person may be admitted more than once during the year. From April 1, 1997 to March 31, 1998, there were 90,792 admissions to 413 shelters: 47,962 women and 42,830 children. In the year ending March 31, 2000, there were 96,359 admissions reported by 448 shelters: 57,182 women and 39,177 children.

In a snapshot taken on April 20, 1998, the 422 shelters that provided data had 6,115 residents: 2,918 women and 3,197 accompanying children. Nearly 80% of the women and children living in shelters that day were there to escape abuse. In comparison, in a snapshot taken on April 17, 2000, the 464 shelters that supplied data had 5,351 residents: 2,826 women and 2,525 accompanying children. Eighty-one percent of the women and 91% of the children living in shelters that day were there for reasons of abuse.

Types of shelters

The term shelter is used broadly to refer to all residential facilities for abused women and their dependent children. The types of shelters are defined by the Transition Home Survey as:

Transition Home **-** Short or moderate term (1 day to 11 weeks) first stage emergency housing.

Second Stage Housing - Long-term (3-12 months) secure housing with support and referral services designed to assist women while they search for permanent housing.

Safe Home Network **–** A network of private homes in rural or remote areas where there is no full-fledged operating shelter. It offers subsidiary very short-term (1-3 days) emergency housing.

Women's Emergency Centre/Shelter **-** Short-term (1-21 days) respite (temporary relief) for women and their dependent children.

Emergency Shelter **-** Short-term (1-3 days) respite for a wide population range, not exclusively abused women. Some facilities may provide accommodation for men as well as women. This type of facility may accommodate residents who are not associated with family abuse but are without a home due to an emergency situation (e.g., eviction for non-payment of rent). Other than residential (room and board) services, these shelters offer few additional client services.

Family Resource Centre **-** An Ontario government initiative that serves a wide range of clients and provides clients with an extensive array of information and referrals as well as residential services.

Other **-** All other facilities/shelters not otherwise classified. This category may include Rural Family Violence Prevention Centres in Alberta, Interim Housing in Manitoba, and other types of emergency shelters. These services may not be exclusive to abused women.

[41] For ease of presentation, the 1997-1998 and 1999-2000 Transition Home Survey will be referred to as if they pertained solely to the year in which they were conducted. In reality, annual information for the 1997-1998 Transition Home Survey covered the period April 1, 1997-March 31, 1998 while the snapshot day was April 20, 1998. The 1999-2000 cycle covered the period April 1, 1999-March 31, 2000 for annual information and the snapshot day was April 17, 2000.

[42] For further information on the results of the 1999-2000 Transition Home Survey, see Locke and Code (2001) "Canada's Shelters for Abused Women, 1999-2000". Juristat. Vol.21, No.1.

5.2 Trends in Transition Home Survey Data

Since the characteristics of shelters and women and children residents may change over time and the number of shelters continue to change (primarily through the development of new shelters, but also through shelter closures and changes in designations), one way to measure change over time is to compare the results of survey cycles by holding constant the shelters studied. For the purpose of this analysis, a trend data file was created that contained only those facilities that responded to both the 1998 and 2000 cycles of the survey. Shelters that did not respond to both cycles were excluded. Information presented in this section is representative of the trends of a subset made up of 388 shelters that met these requirements.

Trend data show that from April 1, 1997 to March 31, 1998, 78,207 women and dependant children were admitted to the 364 shelters that responded to the question in both survey cycles (40,643 women and 37,564 children). In comparison, 71,460 women and children were admitted to these same facilities from April 1, 1999 to March 31, 2000 (38,468 women and 32,992 children) (Table 5.1). This is a 12% decrease in the number of children accompanying their mothers to shelters and a 5% decrease in the number of women residing in shelters.

These results are also reflected in the one-day snapshot data, whereby on April 20, 1998, there were 4,960 women and children residing in the 382 shelters that responded to the survey question compared to 4,277 women and children on April 17, 2000. The decrease in the number of children accompanying their mothers to shelters contributed the most to the overall decline from 1998 to 2000 (2,552 compared to 2,085 children), while the number of women declined only slightly (2,408 versus 2,192 women).

While the data show a decrease in the number of women and children residing in shelters, it is important to note that this decline is only representative of annual and snapshot day admissions to shelters within the trend data file and may not be representative of all shelters.

Slight decrease in the percentage of transition homes

While the results from the Transition Home Survey trend data file showed a decrease in the number of women and children residing in shelters, the types of shelters has also changed over time. Of the 388 shelters that responded to both the 1998 and 2000 survey cycles, 253 were transition homes in 1998 compared to 237 in 2000. At the same time, there was a slight increase in the number of second stage housing facilities from 53 in 1998 to 55 in 2000. In addition, there was an increase in the number of women's emergency centres and general emergency shelters. The number of women's emergency centres rose from 21 in 1998 to 27 in 2000, while general emergency shelters rose from 23 in 1998 to 31 in 2000 (Table 5.2).

The change or shift in shelter types over the two survey cycles may explain the decrease in admissions as shelter type affects length of stay. While the average length of stay in transition homes is from one day to 11 weeks, the corresponding length of stay for second stage housing is 3 to 12 months. General emergency shelters and safe homes provide very short-term housing (1 to 3 days) while women's emergency centres provide 1 to 21 days of temporary shelter. In addition, general emergency shelters provide shelter to a wide population range, not exclusively abused women. This type of facility may also accommodate residents who are not associated with family violence but are without a home due to an emergency situation (e.g., eviction for non-payment of rent). Thus, the number of women and children residing in these shelters is subject to greater fluctuation.

A profile of children in shelters for reasons of abuse on snapshot day[43]

Proportion of children in shelters for reasons of abuse increases

Despite the decline in the number of children admitted to shelters, the proportion of children in shelters for reasons of abuse increased from 1998 to 2000. Snapshot day data indicates that 86% of children in 1998 were residing in shelters for reasons of abuse compared to 91% of children in 2000. The proportion of women residing in shelters for reasons of abuse on snapshot day was the same in both 1998 and 2000 at 83%.

Slight decrease in percentage of children under the age of 5 in shelters

Children in shelters for reasons of abuse are very young. Children under the age of 5 constituted the largest proportion of abused children in shelters in both 1998 and 2000 (45% and 41% respectively) followed by children aged 5 to 9 (32% in both years). Children aged 10 to 15 made up the next largest group (18% in 1998 and 22% in 2000). The smallest group of children was those aged 16 and over (3% in 1998 and 2000). For 2% of children, the age was not known.

[43] *A total of 382 shelters responded to the survey question in both 1998 and 2000.*

Services provided to children in shelters

Types of services offered by shelters remains constant

In addition to providing refuge, the majority of shelters offer a variety of services to women and children residents. Overall, the types of services provided by shelters remained stable between 1998 and 2000. Where there was a slight increase or decrease in the various types of services offered, the change may be partially explained by a shift in the types of shelters responding to both cycles of the survey. Eight-in-ten facilities provided outdoor and indoor recreation spaces for children residents in both 1998 and 2000. Seventy-five percent of shelters provided individual counselling in 1998, while 72% provided the same service in 2000. In addition, 53% of facilities in 1998 provided group counselling compared to 56% in 2000. Similar percentages of shelters in both reporting periods also offered counselling specific to children witnesses and victims of abuse (54% in 1998 and 53% in 2000).

A profile of women residents in shelters on snapshot day

Women living in shelters for reasons of abuse were also there to protect their children from abuse. A woman's decision to leave an abusive partner is often motivated by numerous factors including the severity of the abuse, reporting to police and having children who witness the violence. Many women make the decision to leave when the violence begins to affect their children.

Of those women with parenting responsibilities[44] on snapshot day in 2000, half (50%) were protecting their children from witnessing the abuse of their mother, 39% were protecting them from psychological abuse, 18% from physical abuse and 5% from sexual abuse (Table 5.3).[45]

Women aged 24-35 continue to make up majority of women in shelters

Women within the age group of 25 to 34 made up the largest share of those residing in the shelters in both 1998 (38%) and 2000 (36%), while those aged 35 to 44 made up 27% in 1998 and 28% in 2000. Despite the fact that, as indicated in Chapter 4, women aged 15 to 24 have the highest rates of spousal violence, they continue to represent a small proportion of abused women residing in shelters, at 20% in both 1998 and 2000.[46] Finally, the smallest proportion of women residing in shelters continues to be those aged 45 and over (12% in 1998 and 14% in 2000). This is not surprising given the low rates of spousal violence for this age group.

Majority of women seeking shelter from abusive spouse or common-law partner

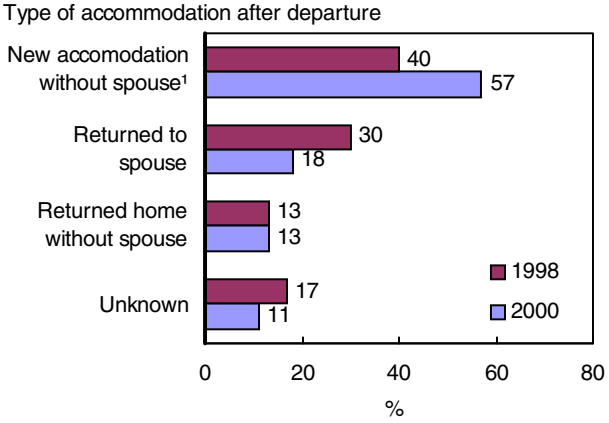
The relationship of the abuser to the victim has also remained unchanged between 1998 and 2000. The majority of abused women residing in shelters in 1998 (69%) and 2000 (70%) were victimized by a spouse or common-law partner. Twelve percent in 1998 and 2000 were victimized by an ex-spouse or an ex-partner. There was a slight increase in the percentage of women victimized by a relative from 5% in 1998 to 7% in 2000. In addition, 5% were victimized by a date or an ex-date in 2000, a slight increase from 3% in 1998.[47]

Safe housing upon departures from shelters

On snapshot day 2000, 105 women and 48 children departed from shelters (384 shelters responded to this question in both 1998 and 2000) compared to 47 women and 38 children on snapshot day 1998. Thirty percent of these women returned to their spouse in 1998 compared to just 18% in 2000 (Figure 5.1). This decrease may be a result of the work done by shelters, community-based organizations and governments to provide long-term support for women and children victims of

Figure 5.1

Women's accommodations after leaving shelters, snapshot day



¹ New accommodation without spouse include second stage housing, another emergency shelter and other new accommodations without spouse.
Source: Statistics Canada, Canadian Centre for Justice Statistics, Transition Home Survey Trend Data File, 1998-2000.

[44] *A total of 370 shelters responded to the survey question in both 1998 and 2000.*
[45] *Percentage will not add to 100% due to multiple responses.*
[46] *Women in the age group 15-24 may be under-represented in some shelters due to admission criteria regarding age limits.*
[47] *A total of 384 shelters provided responses to this question in 1998 and 2000.*

violence. The percentage of women that returned home without their spouse remained unchanged (13% in 1998 and 2000). Forty percent of women left the shelter for alternate housing without their spouse in 1998 compared to 57% in 2000. These alternate accommodations included second stage housing, another emergency shelter and other new accommodations. For 17% of women in 1998 and 11% of women in 2000, it was not known where they intended to reside.[48]

Trends in criminal justice involvement

Chapter 4 indicates that there was an increase in police reporting by victims of wife assault. However, results from the Transition Home Survey Trend Data File indicate that the number of women reporting the *most recent* incident of abuse to the police decreased slightly from 31% in 1998 to 27% in 2000. It is not known, however, whether earlier incidents of abuse were reported to the police. The proportion of cases in which charges were laid remains unchanged between the two reporting periods (63% in 1998 and 62% in 2000 of cases reported to the police).[49]

[48] *A total of 389 shelters provided responses to this question in 1998 and 2000.*
[49] *A total of 381 shelters provided responses to this question in 1998 and 2000.*

Table 5.1
Annual admission[1] to shelters by province, 1998-2000[2]

	Year					
	Total		Women		Children	
	1998	2000	1998	2000	1998	2000
Canada	**78,207**	**71,460**	**40,643**	**38,468**	**37,564**	**32,992**
Newfoundland	1,095	868	669	547	426	321
Prince Edward Island	220	251	93	107	127	144
Nova Scotia	2,047	1,711	1,066	908	981	803
New Brunswick	2,104	1,878	1,136	1,038	968	840
Quebec	14,865	14,617	8,308	8,398	6,557	6,219
Ontario	23,965	21,665	12,607	11,847	11,358	9,818
Manitoba	4,190	4,218	1,717	1,857	2,473	2,361
Saskatchewan	3,781	3,243	1,552	1,375	2,229	1,868
Alberta	7,493	7,984	3,548	3,707	3,945	4,277
British Columbia	16,177	13,010	8,851	7,635	7,326	5,375
Yukon	602	795	330	425	272	370
Northwest Territories	641	515	286	258	355	257
Nunavut	1,027	705	480	366	547	339

[1] *A person may be admitted more than once during the reporting period.*
[2] *Figures relate only to the 364 shelters that responded to this question in both the 1998 and 2000 cycles of the survey.*
Source: *Statistics Canada, Canadian Centre for Justice Statistics, Transition Home Survey Trend Data File, 1998-2000.*

Table 5.2
Changes in shelter type over time, 1998-2000

Shelter Type[1]	Year			
	1998		2000	
	No.	%	No.	%
Total	**388**	**100**	**388**	**100**
Transition Home	253	65	237	61
Second Stage Housing	53	14	55	14
Safe Home Network	15	4	13	3
Women's Emergency Centre	21	5	27	7
Emergency Shelter	23	6	31	8
Family Resource Centre	12	3	12	3
Other	11	3	13	3

Percentages may not total 100% due to rounding.
[1] *Figures relate only to the 388 shelters that responded to this question in both the 1998 and 2000 cycles of the survey.*
Source: *Statistics Canada, Canadian Centre for Justice Statistics, Transition Home Survey Trend Data File, 1998-2000.*

Table 5.3
Women in shelters protecting their children from abuse, snapshot day, 1998-2000

	Year			
	1998		2000	
	No.	%	No.	%
Total women with parenting responsibilities	**1,545**	**100**	**1,438**	**100**
Protection of children from:				
Physical abuse	298	19	266	18
Sexual abuse	87	6	76	5
Threats	276	18	251	17
Psychological abuse	585	38	558	39
Neglect	185	12	150	10
Witnessing abuse of mother	..	..	721	50

.. Figures not available.
Total exceeds 100% due to multiple responses.
Source: *Statistics Canada, Canadian Centre for Justice Statistics, Transition Home Survey Trend Data File, 1998-2000.*

Data sources

Canadian Incidence Study of Reported Child Abuse and Neglect (CIS)

The CIS was conducted by the Bell Canada Child Welfare Research Unit at the Faculty of Social Work, University of Toronto, through funding from Health Canada. All provinces and territories participated in the study. British Columbia, Ontario, Quebec, and Newfoundland provided additional funds to increase the size of the sample in their jurisdictions.

The CIS captured information about children and their families as they came into contact with child welfare services over a three-month sampling period, from October to December 1998. A multi-stage sampling design was used, first to select a sample of child welfare offices across Canada, and then to select cases within these offices. Fifty-one sites, including three agencies providing services primarily to Aboriginal people, were selected from a pool of 327 child welfare services areas in Canada. All but four sites were randomly selected.

Information was gathered on all investigated cases of child maltreatment at the study sites. The CIS included 22 forms of maltreatment under four main categories: physical abuse, sexual abuse, neglect, and emotional maltreatment. The final sample of 7,672 child maltreatment investigations was used to derive national estimates of the annual incidence of investigated child maltreatment in Canada in 1998.

Homicide Survey

The Homicide Survey provides police-reported data on the characteristic of all murder incidents, victims and accused persons since 1961, and all homicides (including murder, manslaugther and infanticide) since 1974. When a homicide becomes known to the police, a survey questionnaire is completed. The count for a particular year represents all homicides reported in that year, regardless of when the death actually occurred. The survey remained unchanged from 1961 to 1974 at which time more detailed information was collected. A question regarding the history of domestic violence between the accused and victim was added to the survey in 1991. Data on Shaken Baby Syndrome as a cause of death was captured beginning in 1997.

Hospital Morbidity Database

The Hospital Morbidity Database provides a count of inpatient cases separated (discharge or death) during the data year from general and allied special hospitals in Canada, including acute care, convalescence and chronic facilities (with the exception of Ontario), by primary diagnosis. Data do not include outpatients or patients treated in psychiatric hospitals. The collection and publication of national hospital morbidity statistics began in 1960. As of the 1994-95 data year, the Canadian Institute for Health Information has taken over from Statistics Canada the responsibility of collection, production and custody of the Hospital Morbidity Database.

Incident-based Uniform Crime Reporting (UCR2) Survey

The Uniform Crime Reporting (UCR) Survey was developed by Statistics Canada with the co-operation and assistance of the Canadian Association of Chiefs of Police. The aggregate UCR Survey, which became operational in 1962, collects crime and traffic statistics reported by all police agencies in Canada. UCR survey data reflect reported crime that has been substantiated through police investigation.

The Canadian Centre for Justice Statistics (CCJS), in co-operation with the policing community, collects police-reported incident-based crime statistics through the UCR2 Survey. The survey allows detailed examination of accused and victim characteristics, and characteristics of the incident itself. Collection began in 1988; by 1999, 164 police agencies in 7 provinces, representing 46% of the national volume of reported crime were responding to the UCR2 Survey. The sample of police forces is not nationally representative and therefore it is not possible to calculate rates of occurrence. The largest proportion of cases originates in Ontario and Quebec.

National Longitudinal Survey of Children and Youth (NLSCY)

The NLSCY is a longitudinal survey designed to measure child development and wellbeing, by surveying the same group of children over a period of years. Statistics Canada (on behalf of Human Resources Development Canada) conducted the first cycle of the survey in 1994-95, the second in 1996-97, and the third in 1998-99 and is currently in the process of collection for the fourth cycle. The primary objectives of the survey are to determine the prevalence of various biological, social and economic characteristics and risk factors among children and youth in Canada, and to monitor the impact of such factors on the development of these children. Information is collected directly from children aged 10 and older, parents, teachers and principals.

Transition Home Survey

The Transition Home Survey was developed under the federal government's Family Violence Initiative in consultation with provincial/territorial governments and transition home associations. The objectives of the survey are to collect information on residential services for abused women and their children during the previous twelve months of operation as well as to provide a one-day snapshot of the clients being served on a specific day. In 1991-1992, Statistics Canada began collecting basic information on transition home services and clientele. The survey was repeated with some changes in 1992-1993, 1994-1995, 1997-1998 and 1999-2000.

The Transition Home Survey is a mail-out/mail-back census survey of all residential facilities providing services to abused women and their children. In 1999-2000, of the 508 residential facilities providing services to abused women and their children, 467 returned their questionnaires for a response rate of 92%. Separate questionnaires were completed for facilities that had two or more residences under the same name or address.

Victimization surveys

Criminal victimization surveys are undertaken by Statistics Canada on a cyclical basis. Statistics Canada conducted a victimization survey as part of the General Social Survey in 1988. The survey was repeated in 1993 and 1999. Individuals 15 years and older were asked about their experiences with crime and their opinions concerning the justice system. The GSS measures victimization for 8 types of crime, according to *Criminal Code* definitions. The 1999 survey included special modules to measure spousal violence and violence against older adults by family members.

Households in the 10 provinces were selected using random digit dialing techniques. Once a household was chosen, any individual 15 years or older was randomly selected to respond to the survey. Households were excluded from the survey when they had no telephone or when the chosen respondent could not speak English or French. Also excluded were individuals living in institutions.

The sample size in 1999 was 25,876 persons, up significantly from 10,000 for the previous two cycles.

The Violence Against Women Survey (1993) provided detailed national data on all forms of sexual and physical violence perpetrated by men against women. Households in the 10 provinces were selected using random digit dialing techniques. Once a household was chosen, a female 18 years or older was randomly selected to respond to the survey. Households were excluded from the survey when they had no telephone or when the chosen respondent could not speak English or French. Also excluded were individuals living in institutions. A total of 12,300 women 18 years of age and older were interviewed about their experiences of physical and sexual violence since the age of 16.

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