VIOLENCE AGAINST ABORIGINAL WOMEN

Aboriginal women have faced historical violence and brutality that still continues today. This abuse affects aboriginal women physically, socially, emotionally and spiritually.

(Researched to Death: B.C. Aboriginal Women and Violence, 2005)

Prevalence

- Aboriginal people are three times more likely than non-Aboriginal people to experience violent victimization (319/1,000 versus 101/1,000 respectively).
- Aboriginal women are 3.5 times more likely than non-Aboriginal women to be victims of violence (343/1,000 versus 96/1,000 respectively).
- This pattern of violent victimization is similar for Aboriginal men, who are almost three times as likely as non-Aboriginal men to be victims of violence (292/1,000 versus 107/1,000 respectively).
- Aboriginal people are nearly twice as likely as non-Aboriginal people to be repeat victims of crime.
- Physical assault is the most frequently reported violent offence by Aboriginal people.

Financial and Social Consequences

- Aboriginal women experience similar profound financial and social impacts as non-Aboriginal women as a result of male violence. Some of these impacts include:
  - Diminished self-esteem and sense of security;
  - Damage to physical and emotional health;
  - Self-blame;
  - Negative impact on children (fear, insecurity, perpetuation of the cycle of violence);
  - Negative impact on financial security;
  - Loss of matrimonial home and consequently relocation resulting in broken community bonds.

Who are the Perpetrators?

- Approximately 56% of violent incidents committed against Aboriginal people are perpetrated by someone who is known to the victim.

Spousal Violence

- Approximately 21% of Aboriginal people, in comparison to 6% of non-Aboriginal people, report experiencing some form of physical or sexual violence by a spouse.
Aboriginal women are approximately 3.5 times more likely to experience some form of spousal violence than non-Aboriginal women.

Aboriginal women (54%) are more likely than non-Aboriginal women (37%) to report the most severe forms of spousal violence, such as being beaten, choked, threatened with a gun or knife, or sexually assaulted.

Emotional abuse by male partners, a major risk factor for spousal violence, is also more frequent for Aboriginal women than non-Aboriginal women.

Sexual Violence

Approximately 75% of survivors of sexual assault in Aboriginal communities are young women under 18 years of age.

Approximately 50% of these girls are under the age of 14 and approximately 25% are under the age of 7.

Homicide Rates

Canadian Aboriginal women between the ages of 25 and 44 are five times more likely than all other Canadian women in the same age group to die as a result of violence.

Between 1997 and 2000, the murder rate for non-Aboriginal women was 0.8/100,000. The murder rate for Aboriginal women during this same time period was 5.4/100,000 - almost 7 times higher than that of non-Aboriginal women!

Table 1: Aboriginal Victims of Homicide, 1997-2004

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Victim/ Victim-offender relationship</th>
<th>Total number of victims</th>
<th>% murdered by a spouse</th>
<th>% murdered by a parent</th>
<th>% murdered by other family members</th>
<th>% murdered by other intimate relationships</th>
<th>% murdered by an acquaintance</th>
<th>% murdered by a stranger</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Aboriginal Female Victims</td>
<td>141</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Aboriginal Male Victims</td>
<td>329</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>53</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Percentages may not add up to 100 due to rounding.