

# Violence Against Aboriginal Persons

Prevalence rates of violence within Aboriginal communities are alarming. The need for further violence prevention and intervention services is significant. Aboriginal people are three times more likely than non-Aboriginal people to experience violence.

*(Measuring Violence Against Women, 2006)*

# Violence Against Aboriginal Persons



## Discrimination and Violence

Historical and systemic discrimination has resulted in social breakdowns within Aboriginal communities that have been tied to high rates of depression, alcoholism, suicide, and violence against Aboriginal persons.

Aboriginal people are three times more likely than non-Aboriginal people to experience violent victimization (319/1,000 versus 101/1,000 respectively) and are nearly twice as likely as non-Aboriginal people to be repeat victims of crime.

## Who are the Perpetrators?

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

## Prevalence and Severity of Violence Against Aboriginal Women

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

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.

Amnesty International reports that Aboriginal women aged 25 - 44 are five times more likely than other Canadian women of the same age to die 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 seven times higher than that of non-Aboriginal women.

## Prevalence of Violence Against Aboriginal Children and Youth

Aboriginal children are one of the most vulnerable populations in Canada.

Prevalence rates of child abuse within Aboriginal communities are significant. The rate of First Nations children under care is three times that of children from the general population.

## Sexual Violence

Up to 75% of victims of sexual assault in Aboriginal communities are young women under 18 years of age. Approximately 50% of these young women are under the age of 14 and approximately 25% are under the age of 7.

## Suicide

Aboriginal youth between the ages of 10 and 29 are five to six times more likely to die as a result of suicide in comparison to their non-Aboriginal peers. Approximately 33% of all deaths amongst Aboriginal youth are attributable to suicide.

---

Amnesty International. (2004). *Stolen Sisters: A Human Rights Response to Discrimination and Violence Against Indigenous Women in Canada*. Ottawa, ON: Amnesty International.

B.C. Government. (2005). *Researched to Death: B.C. Aboriginal Women and Violence*. B.C. Women's Hospital and Health Centre.

Brzozowski, J., Taylor-Butts, A., Johnson, S. (2006). *Victimization and Offending Among the Aboriginal Population in Canada*. Ottawa, ON: Canadian Centre for Justice Statistics.

Canadian Association of Elizabeth Fry Societies. (2009). *Health and Mental Health Fact Sheet*. Ottawa, ON: CAEFS.

George, S. (2007). *What's Wrong for Some*. Toronto, ON: UNICEF Canada.

Johnson, H. (2006). *Measuring Violence Against Women*. Ottawa, ON: Statistics Canada.

Kirmayer, L., Brass, G., Holton, T., Paul, K., Simpson, C., Tait, C. (2007). *Suicide Among Aboriginal People in Canada*. Ottawa, ON: Aboriginal Healing Foundation.

METRAC. (2001). *Statistics Sheet: Sexual Assault*. Toronto, ON: METRAC.

Statistics Canada. (2008). *Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal Victims of Homicide in Canada, by Sex and Accused-victim Relationship, 1997-2004*. Ottawa, ON: Statistics Canada.