

Violence Against Women

How violence affects victims depends on other aspects of their lives, such as their age, ethnicity, background, level of ability and sexual orientation, to name only a few. These multiple dimensions are woven into all life experiences. For women, the impact and severity of violence can depend on many physical, social, and economic factors.

(Measuring Violence Against Women, 2006)

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Severity

Women experience higher rates than men of sexual assault, stalking, serious spousal assaults and spousal homicide.

Prevalence

Of the 217,900 women over the age of 15 residing in Newfoundland and Labrador, approximately 108,950 (1 in 2) will experience at least one incident of sexual or physical violence throughout their lifetime. It is estimated that only 10% of these women will actually report this victimization to police.

Who are the Perpetrators?

70% of women in Newfoundland and Labrador who experience violence are most likely to experience victimization by a spouse or partner, 9% by an ex-spouse or ex-common-law spouse, and 7% by a relative.

Between 1999 and 2004, the overall rate of spousal violence against women in Canada declined (a 1% decrease). Newfoundland and Labrador was the **only** jurisdiction during this five year period to show **an increase** in spousal violence against women (a 2% increase).

Admission to Shelters

During 2005-2006, there were 1,125 admissions of women and dependent children to shelters in Newfoundland and Labrador. Of those admitted for violence and abuse, 97% were fleeing psychological violence, 73% physical violence, 45% harassment, 44% threats, 42% sexual violence, and 36% financial abuse.

Danger of Leaving a Violent Relationship

National data indicate that marital separation is a particularly dangerous time for women. Although more married women are killed by their spouses, the rate of homicide is greatest for women after separation. Nationally, almost half of the murders committed by ex-spouses happen in the first two months of separation and 80% of murders by ex-spouses happen within one year of separating.

The Costs

In one single year, the estimated economic costs of violence on victims and Canadian society, including costs relating to health, criminal justice, social services and lost productivity, can range in the billions of dollars.

Economic Barriers

Families led by single mothers, unattached individuals, older persons, persons with work-limiting disabilities, Aboriginal peoples and recent immigrants are most vulnerable to long-term poverty. Women who fall into more than one of these categories are at even greater risk of experiencing violence.

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