

## Gender-Based Violence, Sexual Assault, and Domestic Violence

Gender-based violence (GBV) is violence that is committed against someone based on their gender identity, gender expression, or perceived gender. It can be physical, emotional, psychological, or sexual in nature. GBV disproportionately impacts women and girls, Indigenous peoples, and other diverse populations.

Indigenous women and girls face increased vulnerability to GBV as a result of specific barriers to safety; they report experiencing violent victimizations at a rate 2.7 times higher than that reported by non-Indigenous women and girls.

### Statistics

#### Sexual Assault

- There were more police-reported sexual assaults in Canada in 2017 than in any year since 1998, with the number of reports peaking in October 2017, when the #MeToo social media movement went viral.<sup>1</sup>
- In 2016 and 2017, over half (55%) of sexual assault victims were females under 25 years of age.<sup>1</sup>
- In 2018, almost 1 in 3 women (32%) and just over 1 in 8 men (13%) 15 years of age and older felt unsafe or uncomfortable as a result of unwanted sexual behaviour they experienced.<sup>2</sup>
- The rate of self-reported sexual assault among Indigenous women is almost three times as high as the rate among non-Indigenous women.<sup>3</sup>
- People with disabilities, especially women with mental disabilities, are at a higher risk of being sexually assaulted.<sup>3</sup>

#### Domestic Violence

- In 2018, almost eight in ten victims of police-reported intimate partner violence (IPV) were female.<sup>4</sup>
- IPV is the most common kind of violence experienced by women (45% of all female victims aged 15 to 89).<sup>4</sup>
- Of the 945 intimate partner homicides which occurred between 2008 and 2018, a large majority (79%) involved female victims. Most female victims of intimate partner homicide were killed by a current or former legally married or common-law husband (73%), and boyfriends were responsible for the other quarter (26%) of female victims' deaths.<sup>4</sup>
- Women in rural areas experienced the highest overall rates of IPV (789 victims per 100,000 population), with rates close to four times higher than those for men in these areas (218).<sup>4</sup>
- Indigenous women in Canada experience higher rates of DV compared to non-Indigenous women and disproportionate rates of domestic homicide. Domestic homicide rates among Indigenous people were twice the rate among non-Indigenous population.<sup>5</sup>
- There were 59,236 child and youth victims of police-reported violence in Canada. Females represented over half (56%) of victims in this age group.<sup>6</sup>

## Resources

### Where to Get Help

- [VictimLink BC](#)
- [Youth Against Violence Line](#)
- [SAIL - Seniors Abuse and Information Line](#)
- [Victim Services & Violence Against Women Program Directory](#)
- [Ending Violence Association of BC Program Directory](#)
- [BC Society of Transition Houses Program Directory](#)
- [Police Victim Services of British Columbia Program Directory](#)
- [Indigenous Organizations & Services Directory](#)
- [BC Housing for Women Fleeing Violence](#)
- [Crime Victim Assistance Program](#)
- [Victim Safety Unit](#)

### How to Help

- [What Bystanders Can Do](#)
- [Coming Forward If You Witnessed A Crime](#)
- [Family Member or Friend of a Victim](#)
- [How Can I Help My Friend?](#)
- [Reporting Child Abuse in BC](#)

### Information and Other Resources

- [Am I safe?](#)
- [Are you being abused?](#)
- [Are you experiencing abuse?](#)
- [Creating a Safety Plan](#)
- [Types of Violence and Abuse](#)
- [Dispelling Myths About Sexual Assault](#)
- [Third Party Reporting for Victims of Sexual Offences](#)
- [BC Association of Friendship Centres](#)
- [Moose Hide Campaign](#)
- [Ending Gender Based Violence](#)
- [FREDA Centre for Research on Violence Against Women and Children](#)
- [Canadian Domestic Homicide Prevention Initiative](#)
- [Resources for LGBTQ2S and non-binary survivors of violence](#)
- [Disability Alliance of BC's Anti-Violence Help Sheets to help People with Disabilities](#)
- [Knowledge Exchange Toolkit](#)
- [A Forced Marriage Risk Assessment Framework](#)

## Notes

- <sup>1</sup> Cotter, A. & Rotenberg, C. (2018): [Police-reported sexual assaults in Canada before and after #MeToo, 2016 and 2017](#).
- <sup>2</sup> Cotter, A & Savage, L. (2019): [Gender-based violence and unwanted sexual behaviour in Canada, 2018](#).
- <sup>3</sup> Conroy, S., & Cotter, A. (2017): [Self-reported sexual assault in Canada, 2014](#).
- <sup>4</sup> Burczycka, M. (2018): [Family Violence in Canada – A Statistical Profile 2017. "Section 2: Police-reported intimate partner violence in Canada, 2017"](#).
- <sup>5</sup> Jeffrey, N., Johnson, A., Richardson, C., Dawson, M., Campbell, M., Bader, D., Fairbairn, J., Straatman, A.L., Poon, J., Jaffe, P. (2019). [Domestic Violence and Homicide in Rural, Remote, and Northern Communities: Understanding Risk and Keeping Women Safe. Domestic Homicide \(7\)](#).
- <sup>6</sup> Burczycka, M., Conroy, S. & Savage, L. (2019): [Statistics Canada. Family violence in Canada: A statistical profile, 2018](#).