

# Family Violence in Canada: A Statistical Profile 2008

Canadian Centre for Justice Statistics



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# Family Violence in Canada: A Statistical Profile 2008

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- . not available for any reference period
- .. not available for a specific reference period
- ... not applicable
- 0 true zero or a value rounded to zero
- 0<sup>s</sup> value rounded to 0 (zero) where there is a meaningful distinction between true zero and the value that was rounded
- <sup>p</sup> preliminary
- <sup>r</sup> revised
- x suppressed to meet the confidentiality requirements of the *Statistics Act*
- E use with caution
- F too unreliable to be published

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## Highlights

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### Spousal violence in Canada's provinces and territories

- In 2006, over 38,000 incidents of spousal violence were reported to police across Canada. This represents approximately 15% of all police-reported violent incidents.
- There has been a steady decline in police-reported spousal violence over the most recent 9-year period (1998 to 2006).
- As a proportion of all violent incidents, spousal violence reported to police was more prevalent in Nunavut and Quebec (20% each), and lowest in British Columbia, Nova Scotia and New Brunswick (8% each).
- Females continue to be the most likely victims of police-reported spousal violence, accounting for 83% of victims compared to 17% males. This holds true for every province and territory across Canada.
- Incidents of spousal violence were more common between current partners than former partners (69% vs. 31%).
- Common assault (61%) was the most frequently reported violent offence committed by a current or ex-spouse, followed by major assault (14%), uttering threats (11%) and criminal harassment (8%). Assaults accounted for a large proportion of spousal violence in the western provinces and territories, while criminal harassment and uttering threats were most prevalent in Quebec.
- Male victims of spousal abuse were nearly twice as likely as female victims to report incidents of major assault (23% of male victims vs. 13% of female victims). One possible explanation may be that while male spousal abusers are more likely to use physical force, female abusers tend to rely on weapons.
- Charges were laid by police in three-quarters (77%) of all police-reported incidents of spousal violence in 2006. Incidents involving female victims were more likely to result in a charge being laid than those involving male victims. The percentage of spousal violence incidents that have resulted in police charging has remained fairly stable over the 9-year period from 1998 to 2006. Police charging for spousal abuse was highest in Manitoba (92%) and Ontario (90%), and lowest in Newfoundland and Labrador (56%) and New Brunswick (57%).
- Injuries were more likely to be sustained by current spouses than former spouses (59% vs. 27%), as well as by victims living in the territories and western provinces. Injuries resulting from the use of a weapon (7%), though not common, were more likely among male victims than females (15% vs. 5%), and more likely among victims of spousal abuse living in Manitoba (13%) and Saskatchewan (10%).

### Family violence against children and youth

- Police-reported data in 2006 indicate that children and youth under 18 years of age are most likely to be physically or sexually assaulted by someone they know.
- For every 100,000 young persons, 334 were victims of physical or sexual violence by a friend or an acquaintance, 187 experienced violence by a family member, and 101 were victimized by a stranger.
- When children and youth are victims of family violence, parents are the most commonly identified perpetrators. In 2006, 107 per 100,000 children and youth were physically or sexually assaulted by a parent.

- The rate of physical assault by a parent was more than 3 times higher than the rate of sexual assault (83 compared to 24 victims per 100,000 children and youth).
- Girls (under the age of 18) experienced somewhat higher rates of physical assault by family members than boys (133 compared with 116 incidents per 100,000 population). The rate of sexual assault committed by family members was 4 times higher for girls compared to boys (102 vs. 25 incidents per 100,000 population).
- About 4 in 10 child and youth victims of family violence sustained a physical injury in 2006, compared to 5 in 10 when the perpetrator was a non-family member. The majority of injuries sustained were considered to be minor injuries requiring no professional medical treatment or only some first aid.
- Boys were more likely than girls to sustain physical injuries resulting from family violence (46% compared to 35%).

## Family violence against older adults

- Police-reported data consistently show that seniors (aged 65 years of age and over) are the least likely age group to be victimized. In 2006, the rate of violent crime committed against seniors was 16 times lower (149 per 100,000) than the rate committed against 15 to 24 year olds, the age group at highest risk (2,395 per 100,000).
- Similar to all victims of crime, senior victims were more likely to report being victimized by someone they knew (83 per 100,000) than by a stranger (40 per 100,000). Among perpetrators known to senior victims, friends or acquaintances were the most common (34 per 100,000).
- The rate of police-reported family violence against seniors was 43 incidents for every 100,000 persons aged 65 years and over. While the overall rates of violence against seniors were higher for senior men (150 vs. 103 for senior women), rates of family violence were higher for senior women (47 vs. 37 per 100,000).
- Senior victims of family violence were most likely to report being victimized by an adult child (14 per 100,000) or current or former spouse (13 per 100,000).
- Police-reported data show that over half of violent incidents committed against seniors do not result in physical injury to the victim, whether perpetrated by a family (54%) or non-family member (60%). When physical injuries are sustained, they are generally minor in nature.

## Family homicides

### Spousal homicides

- According to the Homicide survey, spousal homicides represented 17% of all solved homicides in Canada, and nearly half (47%) of all family homicides in 2006.
- Overall, rates of spousal homicides for both male and female victims have been declining over the last 30 years (1977 to 2006). The rate of spousal homicide against females has been between 3 and 5 times higher than the rate for males.
- Over the past decade (1997 to 2006), the largest proportion of spousal homicides involved victims living in common-law relationships (39%). Another one-third (36%) of spousal homicides occurred between married persons, followed by those who were separated (23%) or divorced (2%).
- Spousal homicide rates were highest for young adults. Between 1997 and 2006, young women (aged 15 to 24) were killed at a rate that was nearly 3 times higher than for all female victims of spousal homicide. Similarly, the rate of young males (aged 15 to 24) killed by their spouse was more than 4 times that of all male spouses.
- Over the past decade (1997 to 2006), the rate of firearm-related spousal homicides decreased by nearly 50%.

### **Family homicides against children and youth**

- Six in 10 homicides against children and youth were committed by family members in 2006.
- Over the past three decades (1977 to 2006), the majority of family perpetrated homicides against children under 18 years of age were committed by a parent (90%). Fathers are more likely than mothers to be the perpetrators.
- Infants (less than 1 year of age) experienced higher rates of family-related homicide compared to older children. During the most recent 10-year period (1997 to 2006), about one-quarter of children and youth killed by a family member were infants. Baby boys tend to be at somewhat greater risk than baby girls.

### **Family homicides against older persons**

- The rate of homicide is lower among seniors (aged 65 years and older) compared to those under 65 years of age. This is consistent with overall police-reported crime rates which show that older Canadians are the least likely age group to be victimized.
- Family-perpetrated homicides against seniors represented a relatively small proportion (2.5%) of all homicides in Canada in 2006. With few exceptions, over the past three decades (1977 to 2006), the rate of family-related homicide against seniors has been lower than that of non-family perpetrated homicides.
- Senior female victims killed by a family member were most likely to be killed by their spouse (40%) or adult son (34%). Senior male homicide victims were most likely to be killed by their adult son or step-son (61%).



## Introduction

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This is the eleventh annual *Family Violence in Canada* report produced by the Canadian Centre for Justice Statistics under the Federal Family Violence Initiative. This annual report provides the most current data on the nature and extent of family violence in Canada, as well as trends over time, as part of the ongoing initiative to inform policy makers and the public about family violence issues.

Each year the report has a different focus. This year, for the first time, the focus of the report is spousal violence in the provinces and territories. The data used to examine spousal violence, the Incident-based Uniform Crime Reporting (UCR2) survey is more nationally representative than ever before. National coverage of the UCR2 survey reached 90% in 2006.

In addition, the report also presents fact sheets, data tables and figures examining family violence against children and youth, family violence against seniors (aged 65 years and older), and family-related homicides.

## Spousal violence in Canada's provinces and territories

by Angela Bressan

Spousal violence generally encompasses violent behaviour that causes physical, psychological or sexual harm between persons in an intimate relationship.<sup>1</sup> It is unique in that, unlike violence committed by an acquaintance or a stranger, the parties may share children and economic ties in addition to emotional attachment. Spousal violence represents a reality for many couples around the globe, irrespective of social, economic, religious or cultural practice; however, it is often experienced differently by women and men, younger and older couples, and current and former partners. While previous studies have examined the nature and extent of police-reported partner violence in Canada, we know less about how it might vary across the provinces and territories. For the first time, the Canadian Centre for Justice Statistics examines variations in police-reported spousal violence across the provinces and territories. As well, the data used to examine spousal violence are more nationally representative this year than ever before. National coverage of the Incident-based Uniform Crime Reporting (UCR2) survey reached 90% in 2006.

This section examines police-reported spousal violence in Canada, the provinces and territories in 2006, as well as trends since 1998. The following research questions are examined:

- Are there differences in the prevalence of police-reported spousal violence across the provinces and territories?
- Are there provincial/territorial variations in the distribution of spousal violence between females and males, younger and older victims, and current and former spouses?
- Do victims of spousal violence experience different types of violence (e.g., major assault, stalking) and levels of injury depending on their province or territory of residence?
- Are there provincial/territorial variations in the percentage of spousal violence that is charged by police?
- Have the overall trends of police-reported spousal violence changed over time?

By presenting the most recent police-reported data on spousal violence, and the circumstances surrounding these incidents, this report will help inform policy decisions and the development of effective programs for the prevention and intervention of spousal abuse.

The data presented in this section are collected through the Incident-based Uniform Crime Reporting (UCR2) survey. This survey is administered by the Canadian Centre for Justice Statistics to 149 police services across Canada, representing approximately 90% of Canada's population in 2006.<sup>2</sup> The UCR2 survey collects detailed police-reported information about incidents of spousal violence as well as its victims and offenders. Trends in police-reported spousal violence are examined over a 9-year period (1998 to 2006) using the UCR2 Trend Database.<sup>3</sup>

Not all incidents of spousal violence are reported to the police. Disclosing spousal violence is difficult for many victims. The 2004 General Social Survey (GSS)<sup>4</sup> on victimization found that less than one-third (28%) of spousal violence victims reported the incident to the police, and that, before doing so, almost two-thirds (61%) had experienced more than one violent incident (Mihorean, 2005). As well, the survey found that male victims of spousal violence were less likely than female victims to contact the police (17% versus 36%) (Mihorean, 2005).

Caution must be used in making comparisons across provinces and territories, particularly due to jurisdictional variations in police charging and prosecution practices, resource and service availability and victim-oriented policies. For example, while some jurisdictions include pre-charge screening by prosecutors in their police charging policies, others do not.

### Prevalence of police-reported spousal violence

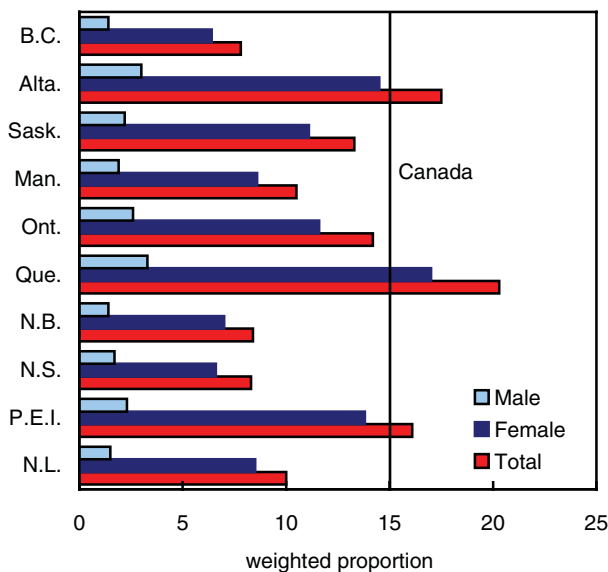
In 2006, over 320,000 incidents of violent crime were reported to police in Canada (161,442 female victims and 158,656 male victims). The largest percent of violent incidents were committed by friends or acquaintances (35%), while 1 in 5 (22%) were committed by a family member (Table 1.1).

More than half (55%) of all victims of family violence were victimized at the hands of a spouse. Female victims of family violence were nearly twice as likely as their male counterparts to be victimized by a current or ex-spouse (63% compared with 34%). Male victims of family violence were more likely to have been victimized by a parent, child, sibling or someone in their extended family.

## Spousal violence highest in Nunavut and Quebec

In 2006, over 38,000 incidents of spousal violence were reported to police across Canada, indicating that spousal violence makes up approximately 15% of all violent incidents. As a proportion<sup>5</sup> of all violent incidents, spousal violence was highest in Nunavut (20%), Quebec (20%), Alberta (18%), Prince Edward Island (16%) and the Northwest Territories (16%). The lowest proportions of spousal violence were recorded in British Columbia (8%) and the remaining Atlantic provinces (8% to 10%) (Table 1.2, Chart 1.1).

**Chart 1.1**  
**Quebec, Alberta and Prince Edward Island report highest proportion of spousal violence, 2006**



**Notes:** Data are not nationally representative. Counts are based on data from 149 police services representing approximately 90% of the population of Canada in 2006. To ensure that data are comparable across the provinces and territories, proportions have been adjusted for incidents where the relationship between the victim and the accused was unknown. Hamilton Police Service is excluded from the analysis due to data quality of the relationship variable. Excludes incidents where the sex and/or age of the victim was unknown. Includes victims aged 15 to 98.

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

In general, the police-reported provincial/territorial variations in spousal violence are consistent with results from the General Social Survey (GSS) on victimization, as well as the distribution of overall police-reported crime rates. According to the 2004 GSS, levels of spousal violence were higher in the territories than in the provinces (de Léséleuc and Brzozowski, 2006), and were higher in the western provinces compared to other provinces<sup>6</sup> (Mihorean, 2005). Furthermore, like the provincial/territorial patterns in spousal violence, the overall rates of police-reported crime in 2006

### Text box 1

#### How this study measures spousal violence

The primary data source for this section is police-reported crime data collected through the Incident-based Uniform Crime Reporting (UCR2) survey. The UCR2 survey is a non-nationally representative survey that captures detailed information on individual criminal incidents reported to or detected by police, and includes details about the victim and accused including age, sex and relationship.

The Canadian *Criminal Code* has no specific offence of spousal violence. Provisions that most commonly apply to cases of spousal violence include offences such as assault, sexual assault, criminal harassment or stalking, threats of violence, forcible confinement and homicide. The UCR2 survey collects data on a number of violent crimes, including: homicide, sexual assault, robbery, major assault (aggravated assault (level 3) and assault with a weapon or causing bodily harm (level 2)), common assault (level 1), criminal harassment, uttering threats, extortion, kidnapping, abduction and other violent offences. Other forms of spousal abuse, such as emotional, psychological or financial abuse are not offences chargeable under the Canadian *Criminal Code*, and are therefore not included in this analysis.

Many factors can influence rates of police-reported crime including the willingness of victims to report crimes to police, and changes in legislation, policies or enforcement practices.

Another method used to estimate the extent of spousal violence is through self-reported victimization surveys. The General Social Survey (GSS) asks a sample of the population about their personal victimization experiences, whether or not they have been reported to police. In 2004, the GSS reported that less than one-third, or 28% of incidents of spousal abuse were reported to the police. As a result, victimization surveys usually produce much higher rates of victimization than police-reported crime statistics.

Unlike the array of violent crimes collected by the UCR2 survey, the GSS collects data on three violent crimes based on *Criminal Code* definitions including sexual assault, robbery and physical assault. In addition, the GSS collects information about emotional and financial abuse. For additional information on this topic, refer to D. Beauchamp, "Emotional and financial abuse by spouses". In Ogradnik, L. (ed.) *Family Violence in Canada: A Statistical Profile, 2007*. Catalogue no. 85-224-XPE.

Despite the benefits of victimization surveys, they do have limitations. For example, they are unable to reach households without telephones or those using only cellular telephones, persons who may be isolated (including remote communities, persons living in shelters) and those who do not speak English or French. For these reasons, general household surveys may also under-estimate the extent of spousal violence in Canada.

were higher in the territories and in the western provinces and lower in the eastern provinces (Silver, 2007). Quebec, however, differs from these general trends. In 2006, Quebec registered the lowest overall crime rate among the provinces and, at the same time, the highest proportion of spousal violence.

Researchers point to a number of demographic, social and economic factors which may elevate the risk of victimization and offending, as well as influence the prevalence of police-reported spousal violence across the provinces and territories. Factors that could account for provincial and territorial variations include higher levels of unemployment (Raphael and Winter-Ebmer, 2001), social isolation (Baumgartner, 1993), alcohol consumption (Vanderburg, Weckes and Millson, 1995), and populations composed of high concentrations of Aboriginal peoples (Brzozowski, Taylor-Butts and Johnson, 2006), younger couples (Lochner, 2004) and common-law unions (Mihorean, 2005). These risk factors are all found to be more prevalent in the North (de Léséleuc and Brzozowski, 2006; Milan, Vézina and Wells, 2007). Quebec, however, is not characterized by a similar profile, aside from a higher than average representation of common-law couples (35% of all couples compared to 13% in the rest of Canada) (Milan et al., 2007). The higher than average proportion of spousal violence in certain provinces and territories may be explained by other factors such as greater societal awareness and intolerance concerning spousal abuse which may correspond to increased police reporting (Pottie Bunge, Johnson and Baldé, 2005; Silver, 2007).

The 2004 GSS found that victims of spousal violence in the territories reported to the police at a higher rate than victims in the provinces (37% compared to 28%), perhaps due to a combination of increased police presence and limited accessibility to victim services and shelters (Johnson, 2006). In 2006, the rate of police officers per 100,000 population was approximately 400 in the three territories and 200 or less in each of the provinces (Reitano, 2006).

### **Spousal violence more likely to occur between current spouses**

Overall, victims of spousal abuse were most likely to be victimized by their current spouse or common-law partner (69%), although nearly one third (31%) were victimized by an ex-spouse<sup>7</sup> (Table 1.1). As has been noted in previous research, spousal violence often continues, or may even begin, after marital separation (Hotton, 2001; Johnson, 1996).

In almost every province and territory, victims of spousal violence were much more likely to be victimized by a current spouse than a former spouse. However, in Quebec the percentage of spousal violence incidents involving current spouses (51%) was much lower than in the rest of Canada (where it ranged from 72% in Newfoundland and

Labrador, New Brunswick and Prince Edward Island to 97% in Nunavut). Victims of spousal violence in Quebec were almost equally likely to be abused by a former spouse (49%) as a current spouse. This may reflect Quebec's high divorce rate (Statistics Canada. *The Daily*, March 9, 2005) as well as the popularity of common-law relationships in Quebec (Milan et al., 2007) and the higher probability of break-ups among common-law unions compared to marriages (Beaupré and Cloutier, 2007).

### **Females most likely victims of spousal violence**

Females continue to be the more likely victims of police-reported spousal violence, accounting for 83% of all victims compared to 17% for males. In every province and territory, about 8 in 10 victims of spousal violence were female. The percentage of female victims of violent crime who experienced violence at the hands of a spouse (20%) was 5 times the percentage of their male counterparts (4%). Male victims of violent crime were more likely than their female counterparts to be victimized by an acquaintance or stranger (Table 1.1).

Across Canada, almost two-thirds (63%) of spousal violence victims were between the ages of 25 and 44 years (Table 1.3). For females, the proportion of police-reported spousal violence was highest for females aged 25-to-34 years (28%), followed closely by those aged 35-to-44 years (26%), while the proportion of spousal violence for male victims were highest for those aged 35-to-44 years (6%) (Table 1.3). The proportions of spousal violence were relatively low for both females and males in the older age groups.

### **Spousal assault highest in the West and North, stalking highest in Quebec**

In 2006, the most frequently reported type of violent offence committed by a spouse, common-law partner or ex-spouse was assault level 1 or common assault (61%) (Table 1.5). Common assault includes behaviours such as pushing, slapping and punching, but does not involve a weapon or any serious injury. The next most frequently reported offence was major assault (14%) which involves a weapon or causes bodily harm (assault levels 2 and 3), followed by uttering threats (11%) and criminal harassment or stalking (8%). Together, these four offences accounted for close to 95% of all violent offences committed against current or former spouses in 2006.

Of all violent offences committed against current or ex-spouses, assaults (levels 1, 2 and 3) were generally higher in the western provinces and in the territories (Table 1.6). Common assault made up a notably large percentage of spousal violence incidents in the North, ranging from 77% in the Yukon to 83% in the Northwest Territories, while the percentage of incidents of major assault was particularly high in Manitoba (22%), the Yukon (21%) and Saskatchewan (19%). Criminal harassment (12%) and



uttering threats (16%), on the other hand, were notably higher in Quebec than elsewhere.

These patterns in the distribution of spousal violence offences across Canada are inline with overall trends in violent crime which show that major assaults are more prevalent in the western provinces and in the North (Dauvergne and De Socio, 2008), while offences such as stalking and uttering threats make up a larger percentage of crime in Quebec.

### Major assault twice as common among male victims of spousal violence

One major difference between female and male victims of police-reported spousal violence was that male victims were nearly twice as likely to report incidents of major assault (23%) compared to female victims (13%) (Table 1.5). This was true across most provinces and territories. However, it is important to note that these percentages represent nearly 3 times as many female victims as male victims (4,047 compared to 1,508). One possible explanation for this difference is that while male perpetrators are more likely to use physical force in cases of spousal violence, females tend to rely on weapons (Brzozowski, 2004).

Differences were also evident between the types of offences committed against current spouses compared with former spouses. Current spouses were nearly twice as likely as ex-spouses to report common and major assault, while ex-spouses were much more likely to report stalking and uttering threats (Chart 1.2). This pattern was consistent across most of the provinces and territories. No differences were found in the types of offences committed against spouses between younger and older age groups.

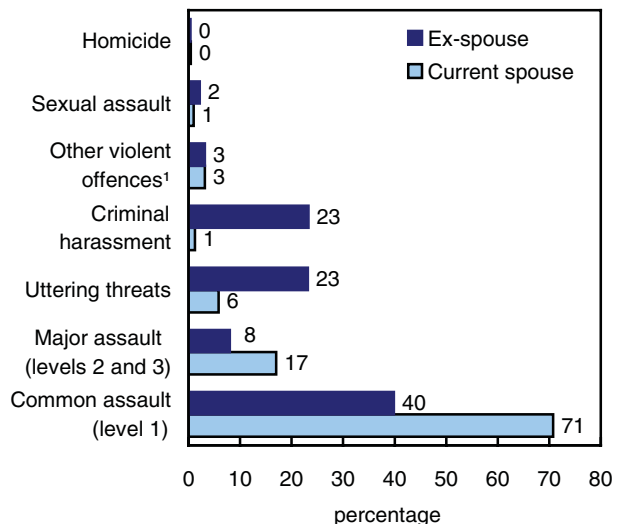
### Stalking most commonly committed by males and ex-spouses

Criminal harassment or stalking includes being followed, receiving threatening voice messages, receiving unwanted gifts or being repeatedly contacted. It typically occurs repeatedly, and gives the victim reasonable grounds to worry about his or her personal safety or that of someone close to them (Justice Canada, 2003). Several risk factors are shown to be associated with being the victim of stalking including being female, young and Aboriginal (AuCoin, 2005).

In 2006, nearly 16,000 incidents of criminal harassment were reported to police, with 76% involving female victims and 24% male victims (Table 1.7). According to the 2004 GSS, the majority (63%) of stalking victims chose not to report incidents of stalking to police (AuCoin, 2005).

Most victims who reported the incident to police knew their stalker, with 7-in-10 victims reporting some relationship with their harasser, most likely as a spouse, friend or acquaintance. Overall, nearly 20% of victims of criminal

**Chart 1.2**  
**Assault level 1 most common offence against current and former spouses, stalking more commonly committed against ex-spouses, 2006**



0 true zero or a value rounded to zero

1. Other violent offences include robbery, unlawfully causing bodily harm, discharge firearm with intent, assault against peace-public officer, criminal negligence causing bodily harm, other assaults, kidnapping, hostage-taking, explosives causing death/bodily harm, arson, and other violent violations.

**Notes:** Percentages may not total 100% due to rounding. Data are not nationally representative. Counts are based on data from 149 police services representing approximately 90% of the population of Canada in 2006. Hamilton Police Service is excluded from the analysis due to data quality of the relationship variable. Excludes incidents where the sex and/or age of the victim was unknown. Includes victims aged 15 to 98. Current spouse includes legally married and common-law partners. Ex-spouse includes separated and divorced partners.

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

harassment were stalked by their current or former spouse. Females accounted for about 9-in-10 victims of spousal-perpetrated criminal harassment in almost every province.

The percentage of female victims who were stalked by their spouse (22%) was more than twice that of male victims (9%). A larger percentage of male victims were stalked by a casual acquaintance (32%). Most female and male victims of spousal-perpetrated criminal harassment were victimized by an ex-spouse rather than a current spouse (89% and 97%, respectively). This was true in every province and territory, particularly in Quebec where 96% of victims were stalked by their former spouse. The fact that stalking (as well as uttering threats) occurred more frequently among ex-spouses is not surprising given that the behaviours associated with such offences, including repeated phone calls, being followed and leaving threatening voice messages, are more likely to transpire between estranged spouses rather than those who live together. According to

the 2004 GSS, a higher proportion of victims who were stalked by an ex-partner reported the stalking to police compared to victims stalked by an acquaintance or a stranger (AuCoin, 2005).

### **Female victims of spousal violence more likely to see charges laid by police**

Three-quarters (77%) of all reported incidents of spousal violence resulted in a charge being laid by police (Table 1.8). Incidents involving female victims (79%) were more likely to result in a charge being laid than those involving male victims (67%). A greater percentage of male victims compared to female victims called police to stop the abuse, but did not wish to take further criminal action against their abusive spouse. For 25% of male victims, incidents of spousal violence were “cleared otherwise”<sup>8</sup> compared to 15% of incidents involving female victims. The most common reason for an incident being cleared otherwise was that the complainant declined to lay charges (11% of male victims and 7% of female victims).

### **Police charging for spousal violence highest in Manitoba and Ontario**

The percentage of spousal violence incidents that were cleared by charge was highest in Manitoba, Ontario, Nunavut and the Yukon where about 9-in-10 reported incidents resulted in a charge being laid by police (Table 1.9). Conversely, the percentage of spousal violence incidents that resulted in a charge being laid by police was lowest in Newfoundland and Labrador (56%) and New Brunswick (57%).

Differences in charging practices across the country may be attributed to variations in the application of pro-charging and pro-prosecution policies as well as police resources. Manitoba, Ontario and the Yukon, for example, have implemented specialized domestic violence courts<sup>9</sup> which have been linked to increases in arrest rates and court case volume, and more effective intervention compared to general courts (Ursel, 2008). Moreover, provincial/territorial variations in the percentage of spousal violence incidents resulting in police charging may also be attributed to the distribution of offence types across the provinces and territories. For example, Manitoba, the Yukon and Nunavut were characterized by a relatively high percentage of incidents of major assault; an offence more likely to result in charges.

### **Current spouses more likely to be injured as a result of spousal violence**

Overall, half of the victims of spousal violence sustained injuries (49%). There were variations between current and ex-spouses with respect to the level of injury sustained. Current spouses were more than twice as likely as ex-spouses to have sustained minor injuries resulting from the violence (57% compared to 27%). This difference

may be related to the fact that current spouses were about twice as likely as ex-spouses to report incidents of assault; offences which are more likely to result in injury. A very small percentage of current and ex-spouses suffered major injuries as a result of spousal violence (2% and 1%, respectively). Similar percentages of female and male victims sustained injuries.

The percentage of victims who were injured due to spousal violence also varied a great deal across the provinces and territories, with about double the percentage of victims in Nunavut (74%) sustaining minor injuries as in Newfoundland and Labrador (36%), Quebec (37%) and Nova Scotia (38%). Victims living in the territories and the western provinces were more likely to suffer minor injuries than those in the rest of Canada. Victims living in the western provinces were also more likely to suffer major injuries due to spousal violence than were victims in other provinces, although the proportions were low (e.g., 3% in Manitoba and Alberta).

Provincial/territorial differences in the percentage of spousal violence victims sustaining injuries may be related to variations in the types of offences committed against spouses across the provinces and territories. For example, the percentage of spousal assaults (offences more likely to cause injury) was generally higher in the western provinces and in the territories than elsewhere, while stalking and uttering threats (offences less likely to result in injury) were higher in Quebec.

### **Weapons not commonly used during incidents of spousal violence**

Similar to violent crimes in general, incidents of spousal violence typically do not involve the use of a weapon. When injuries were sustained as a result of spousal violence, they were most often the result of physical force (45%) rather than a weapon (7%) (Table 1.10). When a weapon was used against a current or former spouse, weapons other than firearms were typically involved.

Male victims of spousal violence were 3 times more likely to be injured by a weapon compared to female victims (15% versus 5%), while female victims were more likely to report that physical force was used against them (46% versus 38%). This may be related to differences in physical strength between the sexes, and a greater tendency for females to rely on weapons to inflict harm against their spouse, rather than on their own physical strength (Brzozowski, 2004).

### **Weapon use against a spouse more common in Manitoba and Saskatchewan**

Overall, physical force was the most common method used to inflict harm against a spouse across every province and territory. The percentage of spousal violence incidents that involved physical force varied widely across the provinces

and territories, from a low of 32% in Quebec, to a high of 77% in Nunavut (Table 1.11).

Although weapons were not commonly used during incidents of spousal violence, the percentage of incidents involving weapons varied widely across the provinces and territories from a low of 3% in Quebec to 13% in Manitoba, followed by 10% in Saskatchewan (Table 1.11). Percentages of police-reported weapon use were generally higher in the western provinces and territories than in the rest of Canada. These findings are consistent with 2006 police-reported rates of firearm-related violent crime which were found to be highest in Saskatchewan and Manitoba (Dauvergne and De Socio, 2008).

## Trends in police-reported spousal violence, 1998 to 2006<sup>10</sup>

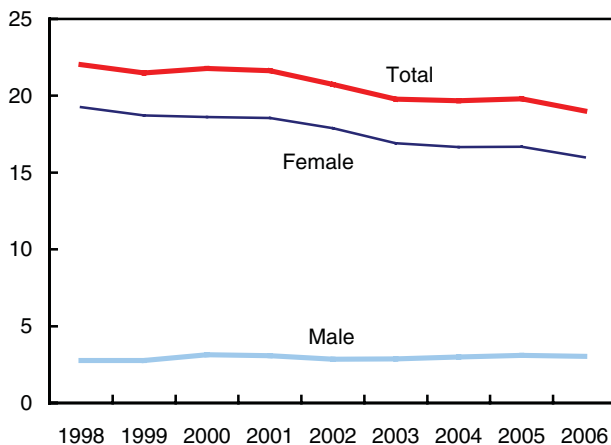
### Steady decline in police-reported spousal violence

Police-reported spousal violence has steadily declined over the 9-year period from 1998 to 2006 (Chart 1.3). The proportion<sup>11</sup> of spousal violence reported to police dropped from 22% of all violent incidents to 19%. This decline was primarily the result of the drop in police-reported spousal violence committed against females which decreased from 19% to 16%. In comparison, the proportion of spousal violence against males that was reported to police has remained steady at 3% during the same time period.

Chart 1.3

### Steady decline in police-reported spousal violence, 1998 to 2006

weighted proportion



**Notes:** Excludes incidents where the sex and/or age of the victim was unknown. Includes victims aged 15 to 89. Weighted proportions are calculated on the basis of total violent incidents reported to police. Proportions have been adjusted for incidents where the relationship between the victim and the accused was unknown. Data are not nationally representative. Based on data from 63 police services across Canada, representing 53% of the national volume of crime in 2006.

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

### Text box 2

#### Victims of spousal violence and their use of victim services and shelters

According to the most recent Victim Services Survey (VSS), there were over 400,000 victims of crime who sought assistance from 589 victim service agencies between April 1, 2005 and March 31, 2006. Over two-thirds (68%) of victims who sought assistance on snapshot day (April 19, 2006) were female, 20% were male and the gender for the remaining victims was unreported.

On snapshot day, nearly 5,300 victims of sexual assaults or other violent offences<sup>1</sup> requested assistance from victim service agencies across Canada. Of these victims, 2,488 (47%) were victimized by a spouse, an ex-spouse or an intimate partner, 9 in 10 of which were females.

Among the provinces and territories, Manitoba (67%), Saskatchewan (64%) and Nova Scotia (57%), reported the highest proportion of women seeking victim services for spousal or intimate partner violence, and Nunavut (14%) and New Brunswick (18%) reported the lowest proportion using victim services. For additional information on this topic, refer to J. Brzozowski. "Victim services in Canada, 2005-2006." *Juristat*. Vol. 27, no.7 Statistics Canada Catalogue no.85-002-XIE.

Shelters for abused women complement other programs and services for victims of violence. According to the most recent data from the Transition Home Survey (THS), admissions of women and their children to Canada's shelters for abused women totaled nearly 106,000 from April 1, 2005 to March 31, 2006.

Like the VSS, the THS collects information on the characteristics of victims on a specific snapshot day. On April 19, 2006, close to 7,500 women and their children (53% women and 47% children) were in residential shelters across Canada. About seven women residents in 10 were seeking refuge from abuse (74%). Of those women, roughly eight out of 10 were trying to escape abuse by a current or former spouse.

Nova Scotia (86%), Quebec (85%), Saskatchewan, Manitoba and New Brunswick (84% each) reported the highest proportion of women in shelters to escape abuse by a current or former spouse.<sup>2</sup> The majority of women in shelters (66%) were fleeing psychological or emotional abuse. This is the dominant trend in all provinces and territories except for Nunavut, where nearly two-thirds (62%) of shelter residents were fleeing from physical abuse. For additional information on this topic, refer to A. Taylor-Butts. "Canada's shelters for abused women, 2005-2006." *Juristat*. Vol. 27, no. 4. Statistics Canada Catalogue no. 85-002-XIE.

1. Excludes homicide, other offences causing death, and criminal harassment.
2. Jurisdictional comparisons should be made with caution as factors such as shelter capacity and availability can influence usage. Moreover, usage should not be considered a proxy measure for the incidence of spousal violence in a province or territory.



The downward trend in spousal violence is consistent with an overall decrease in police-reported violent crime in Canada (Dauvergne, 2008). Similarly, according to the 2004 GSS self-reported victimization data, over the 5-year period from 1999 and 2004 there was a slight decline in spousal assaults experienced by women.<sup>12</sup> The 2004 GSS reported that 7% of women who were living in a marital or common-law relationship experienced physical or sexual assault by a spouse at least once during the previous 5 years, down from 8% in 1999 (Mihorean, 2005).

Although it is difficult to determine the reasons why spousal violence has declined, explanations may include increased societal awareness and lower tolerance of spousal abuse, as well as greater access to social services to protect victims (e.g., shelters) and improved responses by the criminal justice system. Over the past couple of decades, pro-charging and pro-prosecution policies have been introduced in all Canadian jurisdictions mandating that charges be laid where there are reasonable and probable grounds to believe that an offence had been committed (Ad Hoc Federal-Provincial-Territorial Working Group, 2003). Other measures to improve the justice system's response to spousal violence include multi-agency coordinating committees, specialized domestic violence courts, civic domestic violence legislation, as well as increased services and supports for victims and treatment for offenders.

### Police charging for spousal violence consistent over time

Over the 9 years between 1998 and 2006, the percentage of reported incidents of spousal violence that resulted in a charge being laid by police has remained relatively stable (Table 1.12). The percentage of charges laid remained unchanged from 1998 to 2000 at 73%, peaking to 80% in 2002, and has since returned to 74% in 2006.

### Summarizing spousal violence in Canada in 2006

In examining spousal violence across Canada's provinces and territories, this section revealed a higher proportion of police-reported spousal abuse in Nunavut and Quebec, as well as among females, victims aged 25 to 44 and current spouses.

Spousal violence in 2006 was most frequently characterized as common assault and involving physical force. Overall, all forms of assault, weapon use and injuries resulting from spousal violence were more prevalent in the western provinces and in the territories. Stalking and uttering threats, on the other hand, were particularly prevalent in Quebec, and were much more likely to be perpetrated by males and former spouses.

#### Text box 3

##### Spousal abuse before, during and after pregnancy

The Maternity Experiences Survey (MES), conducted by Statistics Canada on behalf of the Public Health Agency of Canada in the fall of 2006, was the first national survey devoted to this topic in Canada. Its purpose was to collect data from mothers who had recently given birth on important perinatal health indicators.

Telephone interviews were conducted with over 6,000 new mothers,<sup>1</sup> aged 15 years and over, covering a range of health issues related to pregnancy, labour, birth and post-partum experiences. In addition, questions concerning smoking, alcohol and drug use, and physical and sexual abuse were also included.

The MES estimated that 6% of mothers (aged 15 years and older) who had recently given birth experienced abuse or violence at the hand of a spouse, partner or boyfriend within the previous 2 years. This figure represents approximately 4,300 new mothers that were either physically or sexually victimized by their partner.

Of the new mothers who reported abuse by a partner or boyfriend in the last two years, over three-quarters (77%) reported what may be considered less serious forms of partner violence such as being pushed, grabbed or shoved in a way that could have hurt them, and nearly half (47%) said that something had been thrown at them that could have caused them harm. A smaller proportion of new

mothers who reported experiences of partner abuse said that they had experienced more serious types of violence such as being kicked, bitten or hit with a fist (26%), hit with something (16%), choked (14%), beaten (10%), threatened with or had a gun or knife used against them (8%<sup>2</sup>) or forced into unwanted sexual activity (7%<sup>2</sup>).<sup>3</sup>

The MES data also suggest that the partner violence experienced by new mothers was not an isolated event. While just over one-third (37%) of new mothers said that the violence occurred just once over that last two years, 22% said the abuse happened twice, and 13% said it occurred 11 or more times.

Of new mothers who had recently given birth and who reported partner abuse within the last two years, nearly three-quarters (74%) indicated that the violence occurred before they were pregnant, and nearly one-third (32%) said that they were abused during their pregnancy. About 1 in 3 (29%) new mothers indicated that their partner knew that they were pregnant at the time of abuse. Another 28% of new moms experiencing abuse reported that the violence occurred after the birth of their child.

For additional information about the MES, consult the Public Health Agency of Canada website at: [www.publichealth.gc.ca/mes](http://www.publichealth.gc.ca/mes).

1. 'New mothers' refers to women who have recently given birth, not necessarily for the first time.
2. Use with caution.
3. Percentages do not add to 100% due to multiple responses.



The examination of trends in spousal violence over time shows that while the proportion of overall police-reported spousal violence has experienced a steady decline, the percent of police charging in Canada has remained fairly consistent. The majority of reported spousal violence resulted in police laying charges, particularly for female victims and for those living in Manitoba and Ontario.

### Endnotes

1. Spouse includes legally married, common-law, separated and divorced partners.
2. Coverage of the Incident-based Uniform Crime Reporting (UCR2) survey for each jurisdiction in 2006 was 100% for all of the provinces and territories except Quebec (99.4%), Ontario (98.9%), Alberta (98.7%), Manitoba (96.8%), New Brunswick (90.7%), and British Columbia (33.7%).
3. The UCR2 Trend Database is a non-representative sample based on 63 police services across Canada, representing 53% of the population of Canada in 2006.
4. The General Social Survey conducts a cycle on victimization every 5 years which collects self-reported information about experiences of spousal violence which may or may not have been reported to police.
5. To ensure that data are comparable across the provinces and territories, proportions have been weighted. Weighting was necessary in order to compensate for those jurisdictions reporting a high proportion of incidents where the relationship between a victim and their perpetrator was unknown. For further information, refer to the section on 'Data sources'.
6. According to the 2004 GSS, differences in rates of spousal violence were not statistically significant for women or for men across any of the provinces.
7. Ex-spouse includes separated and divorced partners.
8. Reasons for an incident being cleared otherwise include: the complainant declined to lay charges, departmental discretion, suicide of accused, death of accused, death of witness/complainant, committal of accused to mental hospital, accused in foreign country, accused involved in other incidents, reason beyond departmental control and diversionary program.
9. In addition, specialized domestic violence courts have been established in Saskatchewan, Alberta and most recently in New Brunswick.
10. The UCR2 Trend Database is used to examine trends in spousal violence. This database is a non-representative sample of 63 police services that have reported to the survey consistently since 1998, representing 53% of the population of Canada in 2006.
11. To ensure that data are comparable, proportions have been weighted. Weighting was necessary in order to compensate for those jurisdictions reporting a high proportion of incidents where the relationship between a victim and their perpetrator was unknown. For further information, refer to the 'Data sources' section.
12. The decline (from 8% to 7%) was statistically significant for women. There was no change in the rate of spousal assaults against men.

**Table 1.1**  
**Number of violent crimes reported to a subset of police services, by sex of victim and relationship to accused, 2006**

Relationship of accused to victim	Total		Sex of victims			
			Female		Male	
	number	percent	number	percent	number	percent
<b>Total victims of violent crime</b>	<b>320,098</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>161,442</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>158,656</b>	<b>100</b>
<b>Total family</b>	<b>70,339</b>	<b>22</b>	<b>50,898</b>	<b>32</b>	<b>19,441</b>	<b>12</b>
<b>Total spouse</b>	<b>38,573</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>32,028</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>6,545</b>	<b>4</b>
Current spouse <sup>1</sup>	26,567	8	22,114	14	4,453	3
Ex-spouse <sup>2</sup>	12,006	4	9,914	6	2,092	1
<b>Total other family</b>	<b>31,766</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>18,870</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>12,896</b>	<b>8</b>
Parent <sup>3</sup>	10,273	3	6,044	4	4,229	3
Child <sup>3</sup>	5,999	2	3,901	2	2,098	1
Sibling <sup>4</sup>	7,685	2	4,440	3	3,245	2
Extended family <sup>5</sup>	7,809	2	4,485	3	3,324	2
<b>Total friends/acquaintances</b>	<b>113,209</b>	<b>35</b>	<b>59,030</b>	<b>37</b>	<b>54,179</b>	<b>34</b>
Boyfriend/girlfriend	16,532	5	13,681	8	2,851	2
Ex-boyfriend/girlfriend	10,403	3	8,727	5	1,676	1
Close friend	9,571	3	4,709	3	4,862	3
Business relationship	12,629	4	4,723	3	7,906	5
Casual acquaintance	58,860	18	25,061	16	33,799	21
Criminal relationship	1,692	1	372	0	1,320	1
Authority figure	3,522	1	1,757	1	1,765	1
Stranger	73,799	23	22,807	14	50,992	32
Unknown <sup>6</sup>	62,751	20	28,707	18	34,044	21

0 true zero or a value rounded to zero

1. Current spouse includes legally married and common-law partners.

2. Ex-spouse includes separated and divorced partners.

3. Includes some cases where age or the relationship to the accused may have been miscoded.

4. Sibling includes natural, step, half, foster or adopted brother or sister.

5. Extended family includes others related to the victim either by blood or marriage, e.g., aunts, uncles, cousins and in-laws.

6. Unknown includes cases where the relationship between the victim and the accused is unknown.

**Notes:** Percentages may not total 100% due to rounding. Excludes incidents where the sex and/or age of the victim was unknown. Data are not nationally representative. Based on data from 149 police services representing approximately 90% of the population of Canada in 2006. Hamilton Police Service is excluded from the analysis due to data quality of the relationship variable. Current spouse and ex-spouse categories include victims aged 15 to 98. Violent crime includes violations causing death, attempted murder, sexual assaults, assaults, robbery, criminal harassment, uttering threats and other violations involving violence or the threat of violence.

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

Table 1.2

**Number of spousal violence incidents as a proportion of total violent incidents, reported to a subset of police services, by province/territory and sex of victim, 2006**

	Total		Sex of victim	
			Female	Male
	number	proportion <sup>1</sup>	proportion <sup>1</sup>	proportion <sup>1</sup>
<b>Canada</b>	<b>38,573</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>3</b>
Newfoundland and Labrador	349	10	9	2
Prince Edward Island	109	16	14	2
Nova Scotia	652	8	7	2
New Brunswick	460	8	7	1
Quebec	15,248	20	17	3
Ontario	11,713	14	12	3
Manitoba	1,577	11	9	2
Saskatchewan	2,128	13	11	2
Alberta	4,447	18	15	3
British Columbia	1,383	8	6	1
Yukon	53	13	10	2
Northwest Territories	189	16	14	2
Nunavut	265	20	18	3

1. To ensure that data are comparable across the provinces and territories, proportions have been adjusted for incidents where the relationship between the victim and the accused was unknown. Weights were calculated based on total violent incidents against spouses. For further information, refer to the Data sources section.

**Notes:** Data are not nationally representative. Based on data from 149 police services representing approximately 90% of the population of Canada in 2006. Hamilton Police Service is excluded from the analysis due to data quality of the relationship variable. Coverage of the UCR2 survey for each jurisdiction in 2006 is 100% for all of the provinces and territories except: Quebec (99.4%), Ontario (98.9%), Alberta (98.7%), Manitoba (96.8%), New Brunswick (90.7%), and British Columbia (33.7%). Excludes incidents where the sex and/or age of the victim was unknown. Includes victims aged 15 to 98. Spousal violence refers to violence committed by legally married, common-law, separated and divorced partners.

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

Table 1.3

**Number of spousal violence incidents as a proportion of total violent incidents, reported to a subset of police services, by age group and sex of victim, 2006**

Victim's age group	Total		Sex of victim	
			Female	Male
	number	proportion <sup>1</sup>	proportion <sup>1</sup>	proportion <sup>1</sup>
15 to 24 years	6,714	16	14	2
25 to 34 years	12,547	33	28	5
35 to 44 years	11,922	32	26	6
45 to 54 years	5,483	15	11	3
55 years and older	1,907	5	4	1
<b>Total</b>	<b>38,573</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>3</b>

1. To ensure that data are comparable across the provinces and territories, proportions have been adjusted for incidents where the relationship between the victim and the accused was unknown. Weights were calculated based on total violent incidents against spouses. For further information, refer to the Data sources section.

**Notes:** Percentages may not add up to 100% due to rounding. Excludes incidents where the sex and/or the age of the victim was unknown. Includes victims aged 15 to 98. Spousal violence refers to violence committed by legally married, common-law, separated and divorced partners. Data are not nationally representative. Based on data from 149 police services representing approximately 90% of the population of Canada in 2006. Hamilton Police Service is excluded from the analysis due to data quality of the relationship variable.

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

Table 1.4

**Number of spousal violence incidents as a proportion of total violent incidents, reported to a subset of police services, by age group, 2006**

	Victim's age group						
	Total		15 to 24 years	25 to 34 years	35 to 44 years	45 to 54 years	55 years and over
	number	proportion <sup>1</sup>	proportion <sup>1</sup>				
<b>Canada</b>	<b>38,573</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>33</b>	<b>32</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>5</b>
Newfoundland & Labrador	349	10	6	29	39	17	8
Prince Edward Island	109	16	9	20	37	26	8
Nova Scotia	652	8	10	24	40	18	8
New Brunswick	460	8	10	39	29	15	7
Quebec	15,248	20	22	32	29	13	4
Ontario	11,713	14	13	31	34	16	6
Manitoba	1,577	11	17	38	30	12	4
Saskatchewan	2,128	13	16	39	29	12	4
Alberta	4,447	18	17	34	30	14	4
British Columbia	1,383	8	9	32	37	16	7
Yukon	53	13	16	26	40	10	8
Northwest Territories	189	16	18	29	33	17	3
Nunavut	265	20	19	36	35	7	3

1. To ensure that data are comparable across the provinces and territories, proportions have been adjusted for incidents where the relationship between the victim and the accused was unknown. Weights were calculated based on total violent incidents against spouses. For further information, refer to the Data sources section.

**Notes:** Excludes incidents where the sex and/or the age of the victim was unknown. Includes victims aged 15 to 98. Spousal violence refers to violence committed by legally married, common-law, separated and divorced partners. Coverage of the UCR2 survey for each jurisdiction in 2006 is 100% for all of the provinces and territories except: Quebec (99.4%), Ontario (98.9%), Alberta (98.7%), Manitoba (96.8%), New Brunswick (90.7%), and British Columbia (33.7%). Data are not nationally representative. Based on data from 149 police services representing approximately 90% of the population of Canada in 2006. Hamilton Police Service is excluded from the analysis due to data quality of the relationship variable.

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

Table 1.5

**Victims of spousal violence by offence type and sex of victim, reported to a subset of police services, 2006**

Offence type	Sex of victim					
	Total		Female		Male	
	number	percent	number	percent	number	percent
Homicide/attempts	155	0	110	0	45	1
Sexual assault <sup>1</sup>	633	2	622	2	11	0
Major assault (levels 2 & 3) <sup>2</sup>	5,555	14	4,047	13	1,508	23
Common assault (level 1)	23,680	61	19,749	62	3,931	60
Criminal harassment	3,053	8	2,705	8	348	5
Uttering threats	4,283	11	3,663	11	620	9
Other violent offences <sup>3</sup>	1,214	3	1,132	4	82	1
<b>Total offences</b>	<b>38,573</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>32,028</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>6,545</b>	<b>100</b>

0 true zero or a value rounded to zero

1. Sexual assault is classified into either one of three levels according to the seriousness of the incident or as other sexual crimes. Level 1, sexual assault, is the category of least physical injury to the victim; level 2 includes sexual assault with a weapon, threats to use a weapon, or causing bodily harm; and level 3 includes aggravated sexual assault which wounds, maims, disfigures or endangers the life of the victim.

2. Major assault includes assault with a weapon or causing bodily harm (level 2) and aggravated assault, is defined as assault that wounds, maims, disfigures or endangers the life of the victim (level 3).

3. Other violent offences include robbery, unlawfully causing bodily harm, discharge firearm with intent, assault against peace-public officer, criminal negligence causing bodily harm, other assaults, kidnapping, hostage-taking, explosives causing death/bodily harm, arson, and other violent violations.

**Notes:** Percentages may not add up to 100% due to rounding. Excludes incidents where the sex and/or the age of the victim was unknown. Includes victims aged 15 to 98. Spousal violence refers to violence committed by legally married, common-law, separated and divorced partners. Data are not nationally representative. Based on data from 149 police services representing approximately 90% of the population of Canada in 2006. Hamilton Police Service is excluded from the analysis due to data quality of the relationship variable.

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

**Table 1.6**  
**Victims of spousal violence by province and offence type, reported to a subset of police services, 2006**

	Homicide/ attempts		Sexual assault <sup>1</sup>		Major assault (levels 2 and 3) <sup>2</sup>		Common assault (level 1)		Criminal harassment		Uttering threats		Other violent offences <sup>3</sup>		Total violent crime	
	number	%	number	%	number	%	number	%	number	%	number	%	number	%	number	%
<b>Canada</b>	<b>155</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>633</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>5,555</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>23,680</b>	<b>61</b>	<b>3,053</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>4,283</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>1,214</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>38,573</b>	<b>100</b>
Newfoundland and Labrador	4	1	4	1	44	13	225	64	17	5	47	13	8	2	349	1
Prince Edward Island	1	1	0	0	8	7	84	77	4	4	10	9	2	2	109	0
Nova Scotia	5	1	14	2	65	10	438	67	27	4	87	13	16	2	652	2
New Brunswick	1	0	7	2	53	12	291	63	31	7	67	15	10	2	460	1
Quebec	58	0	294	2	1,935	13	8,183	54	1,854	12	2,441	16	483	3	15,248	40
Ontario	44	0	189	2	1,777	15	7,462	64	886	8	936	8	419	4	11,713	30
Manitoba	6	0	24	2	352	22	1,026	65	14	1	109	7	46	3	1,577	4
Saskatchewan	12	1	32	2	398	19	1,483	70	40	2	133	6	30	1	2,128	6
Alberta	18	0	40	1	679	15	3,141	71	118	3	287	6	164	4	4,447	12
British Columbia	6	0	24	2	167	12	940	68	62	4	155	11	29	2	1,383	4
Yukon	0	0	0	0	11	21	41	77	0	0	1	2	0	0	53	0
Northwest Territories	0	0	2	1	22	12	156	83	0	0	6	3	3	2	189	0
Nunavut	0	0	3	1	44	17	210	79	0	0	4	2	4	2	265	1

0 true zero or a value rounded to zero

- Sexual assault is classified into either one of three levels according to the seriousness of the incident or as other sexual crimes. Level 1, sexual assault, is the category of least physical injury to the victim; level 2 includes sexual assault with a weapon, threats to use a weapon, or causing bodily harm; and level 3 includes aggravated sexual assault which wounds, maims, disfigures or endangers the life of the victim.
- Major assault includes assault with a weapon or causing bodily harm (level 2) and aggravated assault, is defined as assault that wounds, maims, disfigures or endangers the life of the victim (level 3).
- Other violent offences include robbery, unlawfully causing bodily harm, discharge firearm with intent, assault against peace-public officer, criminal negligence causing bodily harm, other assaults, kidnapping, hostage-taking, explosives causing death/bodily harm, arson, and other violent violations.

**Notes:** Percentages may not add up to 100% due to rounding. Excludes incidents where the sex and/or the age of the victim was unknown. Includes victims aged 15 to 98. Spousal violence refers to violence committed by legally married, common-law, separated and divorced partners. Data are not nationally representative. Based on data from 149 police services representing approximately 90% of the population of Canada in 2006. Hamilton Police Service is excluded from the analysis due to data quality of the relationship variable. Coverage of the UCR2 survey for each jurisdiction in 2006 is 100% for all of the provinces and territories except: Quebec (99.4%), Ontario (98.9%), Alberta (98.7%), Manitoba (96.8%), New Brunswick (90.7%), and British Columbia (33.7%).

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

Table 1.7

**Victims of criminal harassment by sex of victim and relationship to accused, reported to a subset of police services, 2006**

Relationship of accused to victim	Total		Sex of victim			
			Female		Male	
	number	percent	number	percent	number	percent
<b>Total victims of criminal harassment</b>	<b>15,963</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>12,064</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>3,899</b>	<b>100</b>
<b>Total family</b>	<b>3,730</b>	<b>23</b>	<b>3,149</b>	<b>26</b>	<b>581</b>	<b>15</b>
<b>Total spouse</b>	<b>3,053</b>	<b>19</b>	<b>2,705</b>	<b>22</b>	<b>348</b>	<b>9</b>
Current spouse <sup>1</sup>	297	2	286	2	11	0
Ex-spouse <sup>2</sup>	2,756	17	2,419	20	337	9
<b>Total other family</b>	<b>677</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>444</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>233</b>	<b>6</b>
Parent <sup>3</sup>	181	1	119	1	62	2
Child	105	1	73	1	32	1
Sibling <sup>4</sup>	181	1	115	1	66	2
Extended family <sup>5</sup>	210	1	137	1	73	2
<b>Total friends/acquaintances</b>	<b>7,677</b>	<b>48</b>	<b>5,620</b>	<b>47</b>	<b>2,057</b>	<b>53</b>
Boyfriend/girlfriend	333	2	295	2	38	1
Ex-boyfriend/girlfriend	2,591	16	2,281	19	310	8
Close friend	419	3	315	3	104	3
Business relationship	788	5	477	4	311	8
Casual acquaintance	3,452	22	2,193	18	1,259	32
Criminal relationship	32	0	19	0	13	0
Authority figure	62	0	40	0	22	1
Stranger	1,466	9	1,014	8	452	12
Unknown <sup>6</sup>	3,090	19	2,281	19	809	21

0 true zero or a value rounded to zero

1. Current spouse includes legally married and common-law partners.

2. Ex-spouse includes separated and divorced partners.

3. Includes some cases where age or the relationship to the accused may have been miscoded.

4. Sibling includes natural, step, half, foster or adopted brother or sister.

5. Extended family includes others related to the victim either by blood or marriage, e.g., aunts, uncles, cousins and in-laws.

6. Unknown includes cases where the relationship of the accused to the victim is unknown.

**Notes:** Percentages may not total 100% due to rounding. Excludes incidents where the sex and/or age of the victim was unknown. Data are not nationally representative. Based on data from 149 police services representing approximately 90% of the population of Canada in 2006. Hamilton Police Service is excluded from the analysis due to data quality of the relationship variable. Current spouse and ex-spouse categories include victims aged 15 to 98.

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

**Table 1.8**  
**Incident clearance status of spousal violence cases by sex of victim, reported to a subset of police services, 2006**

Incident clearance status	Sex of victim					
	Total		Female		Male	
	number	percent	number	percent	number	percent
<b>Total cleared</b>	<b>36,048</b>	<b>93</b>	<b>30,026</b>	<b>94</b>	<b>6,022</b>	<b>92</b>
Cleared by charge	29,744	77	25,369	79	4,375	67
<b>Cleared otherwise total</b>	<b>6,304</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>4,657</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>1,647</b>	<b>25</b>
Complainant declined to lay charges	3,005	8	2,265	7	740	11
Other <sup>1</sup>	3,299	9	2,392	7	907	14
Not cleared <sup>2</sup>	2,525	7	2,002	6	523	8
<b>Total victims of spousal violence</b>	<b>38,573</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>32,028</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>6,545</b>	<b>100</b>

1. Other includes departmental discretion, reason beyond department control, suicide of accused, death of accused, death of witness/complainant, committal of accused to mental hospital, accused in foreign country, accused involved in other incidents, already sentenced, and diversionary program.

2. Not cleared refers to cases where an accused has not been identified in connection with the incident.

**Notes:** Percentages may not add up to 100% due to rounding. Excludes incidents where the sex and/or the age of the victim was unknown. Includes victims aged 15 to 98. Spousal violence refers to violence committed by legally married, common-law, separated and divorced partners. Data are not nationally representative. Based on data from 149 police services representing approximately 90% of the population of Canada in 2006. Hamilton Police Service is excluded from the analysis due to data quality of the relationship variable.

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

**Table 1.9**  
**Incident clearance status of spousal violence cases by province and territory, reported to a subset of police services, 2006**

	Total cleared	Cleared by charge	Cleared otherwise	
			Complainant declined to lay charge	Other <sup>1</sup>
			percent	percent
<b>Canada</b>	<b>93</b>	<b>77</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>9</b>
Newfoundland and Labrador	79	56	20	3
Prince Edward Island	99	79	11	9
Nova Scotia	91	81	6	5
New Brunswick	94	57	24	12
Quebec	92	67	12	13
Ontario	96	90	1	5
Manitoba	97	92	2	3
Saskatchewan	93	66	20	7
Alberta	95	82	5	7
British Columbia	85	75	5	5
Yukon	98	87	8	4
Northwest Territories	94	61	22	11
Nunavut	98	87	5	7

1. Other includes departmental discretion, reason beyond department control, suicide of accused, death of accused, death of witness/complainant, committal of accused to mental hospital, accused in foreign country, accused involved in other incidents, already sentenced, diversionary program.

**Notes:** Percentages may not add up to 100% due to rounding. Excludes incidents where the sex and/or the age of the victim was unknown. Includes victims aged 15 to 98. Spousal violence refers to violence committed by legally married, common-law, separated and divorced partners. Data are not nationally representative. Based on data from 149 police services representing approximately 90% of the population of Canada in 2006. Hamilton Police Service is excluded from the analysis due to data quality of the relationship variable. Coverage of the UCR2 survey for each jurisdiction in 2006 is 100% for all the provinces and territories except: Quebec (99.4%), Ontario (98.9%), Alberta (98.7%), Manitoba (96.8%), New Brunswick (90.7%), and British Columbia (33.7%).

Table 1.10

**Method of violence causing the most serious injury to the victim in spousal violence incidents, reported to a subset of police services, 2006**

Type of weapon	Total		Sex of victim			
			Female		Male	
	number	percent	number	percent	number	percent
No weapon <sup>1</sup>	17,673	46	14,782	46	2,891	44
Physical force	17,216	45	14,719	46	2,497	38
<b>Weapons</b>	2,534	7	1,562	5	972	15
Firearms	40	0	34	0	6	0
Knife, other piercing cutting instrument	819	2	429	1	390	6
Club/blunt instrument	476	1	318	1	158	2
Other weapon <sup>2</sup>	1,199	3	781	2	418	6
Unknown <sup>3</sup>	1,150	3	965	3	185	3
<b>Total victims of spousal violence</b>	<b>38,573</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>32,028</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>6,545</b>	<b>100</b>

0 true zero or a value rounded to zero

1. The weapon involved did not cause physical injury or no weapon was involved in the incident.

2. Includes other types of weapons such as explosives, fire, motor vehicle or any device used to poison.

3. There was no indication of what type of weapon caused an injury to the victim.

**Notes:** Percentages may not add up to 100% due to rounding. Excludes incidents where the sex and/or the age of the victim was unknown. Includes victims aged 15 to 98. Spousal violence refers to violence committed by legally married, common-law, separated and divorced partners. Excludes Toronto due to unavailability of disaggregated data on weapon use. Data are not nationally representative. Based on data from 149 police services representing approximately 90% of the population of Canada in 2006. Hamilton Police Service is excluded from the analysis due to data quality of the relationship variable.

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

Table 1.11

**Method of violence causing the most serious injury to the victim in spousal violence incidents, reported to a subset of police services, 2006**

	No weapon <sup>1</sup>	Physical force	Weapons	Unknown <sup>2</sup>
	percent			
<b>Canada</b>	<b>46</b>	<b>45</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>3</b>
Newfoundland and Labrador	50	43	6	1
Prince Edward Island	45	47	8	0
Nova Scotia	56	38	6	1
New Brunswick	42	50	7	1
Quebec	58	32	3	6
Ontario	41	51	7	1
Manitoba	32	54	13	1
Saskatchewan	30	59	10	2
Alberta	33	57	9	1
British Columbia	41	52	7	0
Yukon	28	62	9	0
Northwest Territories	37	53	8	2
Nunavut	14	77	7	2

0 true zero or a value rounded to zero

1. The weapon involved did not cause physical injury or no weapon was involved in the incident.

2. There was no indication of what type of weapon caused an injury to the victim.

**Notes:** Percentages may not add up to 100% due to rounding. Excludes incidents where the sex and/or the age of the victim was unknown. Includes victims aged 15 to 98. Spousal violence refers to violence committed by legally married, common-law, separated and divorced partners. Data are not nationally representative. Based on data from 149 police services representing approximately 90% of the population of Canada in 2006. Hamilton Police Service is excluded from the analysis due to data quality of the relationship variable. Coverage of the UCR2 survey for each jurisdiction in 2006 is 100% for all of the provinces and territories except: Quebec (99.4%), Ontario (98.9%), Alberta (98.7%), Manitoba (96.8%), New Brunswick (90.7%), and British Columbia (33.7%).

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



**Table 1.12**  
**Trends in clearance rates for spousal violence incidents, reported to a subset of police services, 1998 to 2006**

Incident clearance rates	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006
	percent								
<b>Total cleared</b>	<b>92</b>	<b>94</b>	<b>94</b>	<b>95</b>	<b>95</b>	<b>95</b>	<b>94</b>	<b>93</b>	<b>92</b>
Cleared by charge	73	73	73	79	80	78	76	76	73
<b>Cleared otherwise total</b>	<b>19</b>	<b>22</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>19</b>
Complainant declined to lay charges	13	16	15	10	9	8	9	8	9
Other <sup>1</sup>	6	6	6	6	6	8	10	10	10
Not cleared	8	6	6	5	5	5	6	7	8
<b>Total</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>

1. Other includes departmental discretion, reason beyond control of department, suicide of accused, death of accused, death of witness/complainant, committal of accused to mental hospital, accused in foreign country, accused involved in other incidents, accused already sentenced, and diversionary program.

**Notes:** Percentages may not add up to 100% due to rounding. Excludes incidents where the sex and/or the age of the victim was unknown. Includes victims aged 15 to 89. Spousal violence refers to violence committed by legally married, common-law, separated and divorced partners. Data are based on a non-representative sample of 63 police services across Canada, representing 53% of the population of Canada in 2006.

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

## Fact sheet: Family violence against children and youth

This section examines police-reported<sup>1</sup> incidents of physical and sexual violence against children and youth (under the age of 18) that were perpetrated by family members in 2006.

Incidents of physical and sexual violence against children and youth are reported by a subset of 149 police services to the Incident-based Uniform Crime Reporting (UCR) survey. This subset of police services represented approximately 90% of the population of Canada in 2006.

Violence against children and youth reported to police represents only a portion of the violence committed against young people. Children and youth can be victims of other types of abuse and violence that are not included in this section, ranging from child maltreatment and neglect to abduction and criminal harassment. For information on child maltreatment and neglect, refer to Trocmé et al. (2005). For information on violence committed against children and youth by non-family members, refer to AuCoin (2005).

### Rates of assault<sup>2</sup> higher against children and youth than against adults

In 2006, the rate of police-reported physical and sexual assaults against children and youth was higher than the rate for adults. For every 100,000 young persons under 18 years of age, 792 reported being either physically or sexually assaulted compared to a rate of 714 among adults (Table 2.1). Teenagers, between the ages of 12 and 17, were particularly vulnerable to physical and sexual violence. The rate of police-reported assault against teens was nearly double the rate against children and youth as a whole (1,548 compared to 792).

The disparity in rates between adults and youth is more pronounced for incidents of sexual assault. In 2006, the rate of police-reported sexual assaults against children and youth was over 5 times higher than it was for adults (190 compared to 35). Sexual assault level 1, the category of least physical injury to the victim, accounted for the majority of the sexual assaults committed against children and youth (83%).

Conversely, rates of physical assault against young people were slightly lower than the rates of physical assault against adults (602 child and youth victims compared to 679 adult victims per 100,000 population) (Table 2.1).

### Child and youth victims typically know their perpetrators

Police-reported data indicate that children and youth are most likely to be physically or sexually assaulted by someone they know.

For every 100,000 young persons, 334 were victims of physical or sexual violence by a friend or an acquaintance, 187 experienced violence by a family member, and 101 were victimized by a stranger (Table 2.2).

When children and youth are victims of family violence, parents are the most commonly identified perpetrators. In 2006, 107 per 100,000 children and youth were physically or sexually assaulted by a parent. This rate was more than twice as high as the rate of assaults committed by siblings (39 per 100,000), and nearly 3 times higher than the rate of assaults committed by extended family<sup>3</sup> (36 per 100,000 population) (Table 2.4, Chart 2.1).

Children and youth were more likely to have been physically assaulted by a parent than sexually assaulted. The rate of physical assault by a parent was more than 3 times higher than the rate of sexual assault (83 compared to 24 victims per 100,000 children and youth) (Table 2.4).

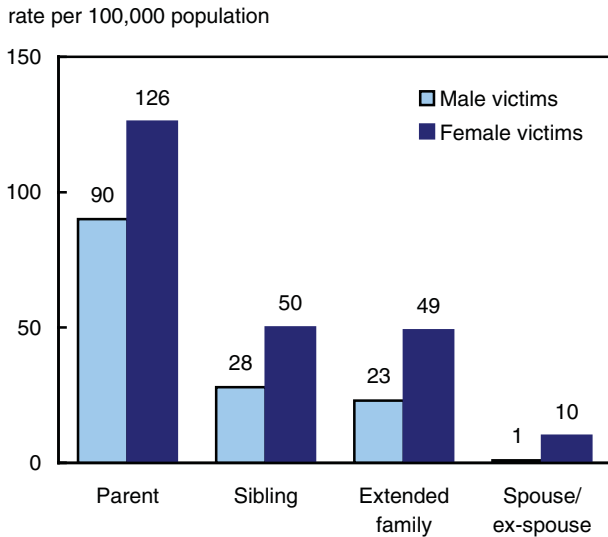
### Family-related physical assaults highest against teenage girls

Police-reported rates of physical assault by family members were slightly higher for girls than for boys (133 compared with 116 incidents per 100,000 population) (Table 2.2).

Rates of family-related physical assault generally increased with the age of the victim. Among girls, the rate of physical assaults committed by a family member increased steadily from age 12 to the highest rate at age 17 (339 incidents per 100,000 population). Among boys, rates of physical assault by a family member showed gradual increases with age, peaking at age 13 and 16 (170 incidents per 100,000 population) (Chart 2.2).

The rate of sexual assault against children and youth committed by family members was 4 times higher for girls than for boys (102 compared with 25 incidents per 100,000 population) (Table 2.2).

**Chart 2.1**  
**Rates of family violence higher for girls than for boys, regardless of relationship, 2006**



**Notes:** Includes children and youth under the age of 18. Excludes incidents where the sex and/or age of the victim was unknown. Excludes incidents where the relationship between the victim and the accused was unknown. The 'parent' category includes victims under the age of 18 where the relationship of the accused to the victim was miscoded as 'child' and should have been coded as 'parent'. Includes victims of either physical or sexual assault. Data are not nationally representative. Counts are based on data from 149 police services representing approximately 90% of the population of Canada in 2006. Hamilton Police Service is excluded from the analysis due to data quality of the relationship variable. Rate per 100,000 population for the geographic area policed by the UCR2 respondents, based on population estimates provided by Demography Division, Statistics Canada.

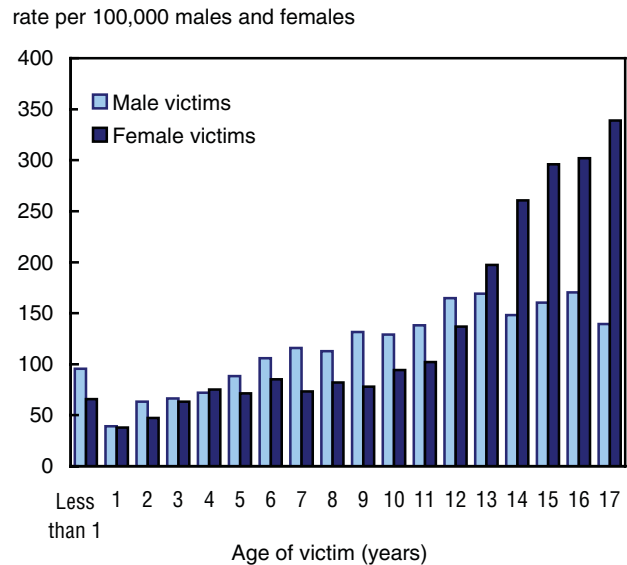
**Source:** Statistics Canada, Canadian Centre for Justice Statistics, Incident-based Uniform Crime Reporting (UCR2) Survey.

Similar to previous years, in 2006, young teenage girls between 11 and 14 years of age experienced the highest rates of sexual assault by a family member. While sexual assault rates were much lower for male child victims, they were highest among boys between 3 and 9 years of age (Chart 2.3).

**Nearly 4 in 10 child victims of family violence suffer injuries**

Children and youth who were victimized were more likely to be physically injured by a non-family member than by a family member. Police-reported data indicated that 39% of child and youth victims of family violence sustained a physical injury in 2006, compared to 48% when the perpetrator was a non-family member (Table 2.6). The majority of injuries sustained were considered to be minor injuries requiring no professional medical treatment or only some first aid.

**Chart 2.2**  
**Rates of family-related physical assaults increase with age for teen girls, 2006**



**Notes:** Includes children and youth under the age of 18. Excludes incidents where the sex and/or age of the victim was unknown. Excludes incidents where the relationship between the victim and the accused was unknown. Data are not nationally representative. Counts are based on data from 149 police services representing approximately 90% of the population of Canada in 2006. Hamilton Police Service is excluded from the analysis due to data quality of the relationship variable. Rate per 100,000 population for the geographic area policed by the UCR2 respondents, based on population estimates provided by Demography Division, Statistics Canada.

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

Boys were more likely than girls to sustain physical injuries resulting from family violence (46% compared to 35%).

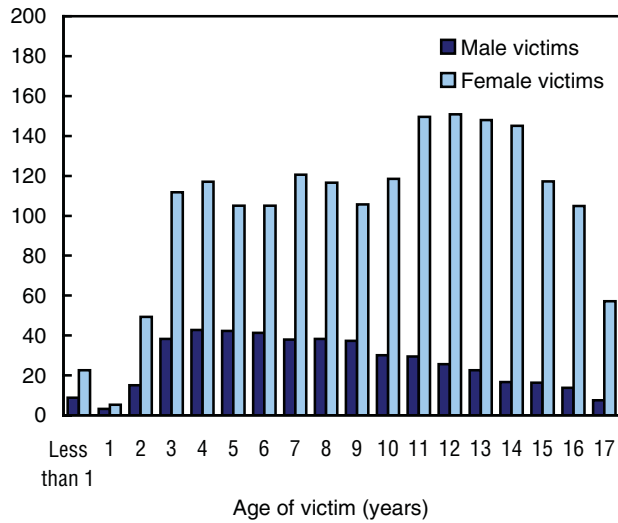
**Males commit majority of family-related violence against children and youth**

In 2006, male family members were identified as the accused in 96% of all family-related sexual assaults and in 71% of family-related physical assaults against children and youth. Fathers<sup>4</sup> were involved in 35% of sexual assault incidents against their children, followed by male extended family members (33%) and brothers (28%).

Female family members were seldom identified as perpetrators of violence against young persons (4% of family related sexual assaults and 29% of physical assaults). Of all child and youth victims of family inflicted physical assaults committed by females, 70% were assaulted by their mother, 16% by a sister, 13% by an extended family member and 1% by a spouse or ex-spouse.

**Chart 2.3**  
**Family-related sexual assault rates highest among 11-to-14 year old girls and young boys, 2006**

rate per 100,000 males and females



**Notes:** Includes children and youth under the age of 18. Excludes incidents where the sex and/or age of the victim was unknown. Excludes incidents where the relationship between the victim and the accused was unknown. Data are not nationally representative. Counts are based on data from 149 police services representing approximately 90% of the population of Canada in 2006. Hamilton Police Service is excluded from the analysis due to data quality of the relationship variable. Rate per 100,000 population for the geographic area policed by the UCR2 respondents, based on population estimates provided by Demography Division, Statistics Canada.

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

**Endnotes**

1. Police-reported data reflect incidents that have come to the attention of police, including those that occurred or were reported in a given year but occurred in a previous year.
2. Includes physical and sexual assault combined. For more detailed information about these offences, refer to the 'Definitions' section.
3. Extended family includes persons related by blood, marriage, adoption or foster care (i.e., aunts, uncles, cousins, sisters/brothers-in-law, etc.).
4. The UCR2 survey combines biological, step and adopted fathers into one category.

**Table 2.1**  
**Victims of physical and sexual assault by age group, reported to a subset of police services, 2006**

Type of assault	Total victims		Adult victims		Children and youth		Children and youth victims by age group					
							Less than 3		3 to 11		12 to 17	
	number	rate	number	rate	number	rate	number	rate	number	rate	number	rate
<b>Assault - total</b>	<b>223,940</b>		<b>172,300</b>		<b>51,640</b>		<b>1,145</b>		<b>13,106</b>		<b>37,389</b>	
<b>Sexual assault - total</b>	<b>20,845</b>		<b>8,461</b>		<b>12,384</b>		<b>250</b>		<b>5,184</b>		<b>6,950</b>	
Aggravated sexual assault (level 3)	160		121		39		2		10		27	
Sexual assault with a weapon or causing bodily harm (level 2)	357		246		111		2		27		82	
Sexual assault (level 1)	18,143		7,809		10,334		200		4,159		5,975	
Other sexual crimes <sup>1</sup>	2,185		285		1,900		46		988		866	
<b>Physical assault - total</b>	<b>203,095</b>		<b>163,839</b>		<b>39,256</b>		<b>895</b>		<b>7,922</b>		<b>30,439</b>	
Aggravated assault (level 3)	3,069		2,661		408		69		27		312	
Assault with a weapon or causing bodily harm (level 2)	46,643		37,879		8,764		209		1,701		6,854	
Common assault (level 1)	144,800		115,049		29,751		579		6,118		23,054	
Unlawfully causing bodily harm	505		408		97		15		21		61	
Discharge firearm with intent	143		94		49		0		10		39	
Assault against peace/public officer	6,294		6,270		24		1		2		21	
Criminal negligence causing bodily harm	194		139		55		16		19		20	
Other assaults	1,447		1,339		108		6		24		78	

0 true zero or a value rounded to zero

1. Other sexual crimes include such offences as sexual interference, sexual exploitation, invitation to sexual touching, incest, anal intercourse and bestiality.

**Notes:** Children and youth include all those under the age of 18. Excludes incidents where the sex and/or age of the victim was unknown. Data are not nationally representative.

The Incident-based Uniform Crime Reporting (UCR2) Survey collected data from 149 police services representing approximately 90% of the population of Canada in 2006.

Hamilton Police Service is excluded from the analysis due to data quality of the relationship variable. Rate per 100,000 population for the geographic areas policed by the UCR2 respondents, based on populations provided by Demography Division, Statistics Canada.

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

Table 2.2

**Child and youth victims of physical and sexual assault by sex of victim and relationship to accused, reported to a subset of police services, 2006**

Relationship of accused to victim	Total		Sex of victim			
			Female		Male	
	number	rate	number	rate	number	rate
<b>Total assault</b>						
<b>Total</b>	<b>51,640</b>	<b>792</b>	<b>26,298</b>	<b>827</b>	<b>25,342</b>	<b>759</b>
Family <sup>1</sup>	12,198	187	7,489	235	4,709	141
Friend/acquaintance <sup>2</sup>	21,788	334	11,028	347	10,760	322
Stranger	6,611	101	2,523	79	4,088	122
Unknown <sup>3</sup>	11,043	169	5,258	165	5,785	173
<b>Sexual assault<sup>4</sup></b>						
<b>Total</b>	<b>12,384</b>	<b>190</b>	<b>10,011</b>	<b>315</b>	<b>2,373</b>	<b>71</b>
Family <sup>1</sup>	4,089	63	3,257	102	832	25
Friend/acquaintance <sup>2</sup>	4,995	77	4,036	127	959	29
Stranger	1,203	18	1,035	33	168	5
Unknown <sup>3</sup>	2,097	32	1,683	53	414	12
<b>Physical assault<sup>5</sup></b>						
<b>Total</b>	<b>39,256</b>	<b>602</b>	<b>16,287</b>	<b>512</b>	<b>22,969</b>	<b>688</b>
Family <sup>1</sup>	8,109	124	4,232	133	3,877	116
Friend/acquaintance <sup>2</sup>	16,793	258	6,992	220	9,801	294
Stranger	5,408	83	1,488	47	3,920	117
Unknown <sup>3</sup>	8,946	137	3,575	112	5,371	161

1. Includes spouse, ex-spouse, parent, sibling and extended family.

2. Includes any relationship in which the accused and the victim are familiar with each other, but are not related, or in a legal guardianship relationship.

3. Includes cases where the relationship between the victim and the accused is unknown.

4. Sexual assault includes sexual assault (level 1), sexual assault with a weapon or causing bodily harm (level 2), aggravated sexual assault (level 3) and the 'other sexual crimes' category which includes sexual interference, sexual touching, sexual exploitation, incest, etc.

5. Physical assault includes common assault (level 1) assault with a weapon or causing bodily harm (level 2), aggravated assault (level 3), unlawfully causing bodily harm, discharge firearm with intent, criminal negligence causing bodily harm and other assaults.

**Notes:** Children and youth include all those under the age of 18. Excludes incidents where the sex and/or age of the victim was unknown. Data are not nationally representative.

The Incident-based Uniform Crime Reporting (UCR2) Survey collected data from 149 police services representing approximately 90% of the population of Canada in 2006.

Hamilton Police Service is excluded from the analysis due to data quality of the relationship variable. Rate per 100,000 population for the geographic areas policed by the UCR2 respondents, based on populations provided by Demography Division, Statistics Canada.

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

Table 2.3

**Child and youth victims of physical and sexual assault by age group of victim and relationship to accused, reported to a subset of police services, 2006**

Relationship of accused to victim	Total	Victim's age group					
		Less than 3	3 to 5	6 to 8	9 to 11	12 to 14	15 to 17
	number	rate					
<b>Total assault</b>							
<b>Total</b>	<b>51,640</b>	<b>118</b>	<b>257</b>	<b>373</b>	<b>598</b>	<b>1,304</b>	<b>1,784</b>
Family <sup>1</sup>	12,198	72	140	165	182	254	273
Friend/acquaintance <sup>2</sup>	21,788	18	62	110	230	620	808
Stranger	6,611	7	12	27	56	165	289
Unknown <sup>3</sup>	11,043	21	43	71	130	264	414
<b>Sexual assault<sup>4</sup></b>							
<b>Total</b>	<b>12,384</b>	<b>26</b>	<b>146</b>	<b>166</b>	<b>181</b>	<b>305</b>	<b>271</b>
Family <sup>1</sup>	4,089	17	72	74	76	82	52
Friend/acquaintance <sup>2</sup>	4,995	5	44	54	63	140	129
Stranger	1,203	1	5	8	12	35	42
Unknown <sup>3</sup>	2,097	3	25	30	30	49	48
<b>Physical assault<sup>5</sup></b>							
<b>Total</b>	<b>39,256</b>	<b>92</b>	<b>111</b>	<b>206</b>	<b>417</b>	<b>999</b>	<b>1,513</b>
Family <sup>1</sup>	8,109	55	68	91	106	173	221
Friend/acquaintance <sup>2</sup>	16,793	13	18	56	166	480	679
Stranger	5,408	6	7	19	44	131	247
Unknown <sup>3</sup>	8,946	18	18	41	100	216	366

1. Includes spouse, ex-spouse, parent, sibling and extended family.

2. Includes any relationship in which the accused and the victim are familiar with each other, but are not related, or in a legal guardianship relationship.

3. Includes cases where the relationship between the victim and the accused is unknown.

4. Sexual assault includes sexual assault (level 1), sexual assault with a weapon or causing bodily harm (level 2), aggravated sexual assault (level 3) and the 'other sexual crimes' category which includes sexual interference, sexual touching, sexual exploitation, incest, etc.

5. Physical assault includes common assault (level 1), assault with a weapon or causing bodily harm (level 2), aggravated assault (level 3), unlawfully causing bodily harm, discharge firearm with intent, criminal negligence causing bodily harm and other assaults.

**Notes:** Children and youth include all those under the age of 18. Excludes incidents where the sex and/or age of the victim was unknown. Data are not nationally representative.

The Incident-based Uniform Crime Reporting (UCR2) Survey collected data from 149 police services representing approximately 90% of the population of Canada in 2006.

Hamilton Police Service is excluded from the analysis due to data quality of the relationship variable. Rate per 100,000 population for the geographic areas policed by the UCR2 respondents, based on populations provided by Demography Division, Statistics Canada.

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

Table 2.4

**Child and youth victims by sex of victim and type of assault by family members, reported to a subset of police services, 2006**

Relationship of accused to victim	Total		Sex of victim			
			Female		Male	
	number	rate	number	rate	number	rate
<b>Total assault</b>						
<b>Total family</b>	<b>12,198</b>	<b>187</b>	<b>7,489</b>	<b>235</b>	<b>4,709</b>	<b>141</b>
Parent <sup>1</sup>	7,006	107	4,013	126	2,993	90
Sibling <sup>2</sup>	2,522	39	1,597	50	925	28
Extended family <sup>3</sup>	2,330	36	1,568	49	762	23
Spouse/ex-spouse <sup>4</sup>	340	5	311	10	29	1
<b>Sexual assault<sup>5</sup></b>						
<b>Total family</b>	<b>4,089</b>	<b>63</b>	<b>3,257</b>	<b>102</b>	<b>832</b>	<b>25</b>
Parent <sup>1</sup>	1,568	24	1,257	40	311	9
Sibling <sup>2</sup>	1,141	17	896	28	245	7
Extended family <sup>3</sup>	1,356	21	1,083	34	273	8
Spouse/ex-spouse <sup>4</sup>	24	0	21	1	3	0
<b>Physical assault<sup>6</sup></b>						
<b>Total family</b>	<b>8,109</b>	<b>124</b>	<b>4,232</b>	<b>133</b>	<b>3,877</b>	<b>116</b>
Parent <sup>1</sup>	5,438	83	2,756	87	2,682	80
Sibling <sup>2</sup>	1,381	21	701	22	680	20
Extended family <sup>3</sup>	974	15	485	15	489	15
Spouse/ex-spouse <sup>4</sup>	316	5	290	9	26	1

0 true zero or a value rounded to zero

1. Includes a small number of cases where age or the relationship between the accused and the victim may have been miscoded.

2. Sibling includes natural, step, half, foster or adopted siblings.

3. Extended family includes others related by blood, marriage, adoption or foster care.

4. Spouse includes legally married and common-law partners and ex-spouses. Population counts by marital status are not available by the geographic areas policed by the UCR2 respondents.

5. Sexual assault includes sexual assault (level 1), sexual assault with a weapon or causing bodily harm (level 2), aggravated sexual assault (level 3) and the 'other sexual crimes' category which includes sexual interference, sexual touching, sexual exploitation, incest, etc.

6. Physical assault includes common assault (level 1), assault with a weapon or causing bodily harm (level 2), aggravated assault (level 3), unlawfully causing bodily harm, discharge firearm with intent, criminal negligence causing bodily harm and other assaults.

**Notes:** Children and youth include all those under the age of 18. Excludes incidents where the sex and/or age of the victim was unknown. Data are not nationally representative.

The Incident-based Uniform Crime Reporting (UCR2) Survey collected data from 149 police services representing approximately 90% of the population of Canada in 2006.

Hamilton Police Service is excluded from the analysis due to data quality of the relationship variable. Rate per 100,000 population for the geographic areas policed by the UCR2 respondents, based on populations provided by Demography Division, Statistics Canada.

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



Table 2.5

**Child and youth victims by age group of victim and type of assault by family members, reported to a subset of police services, 2006**

Relationship of accused to victim	Total	Victim's age group						
		Less than 3	3 to 5	6 to 8	9 to 11	12 to 14	15 to 17	
	number	rate				rate		
<b>Total assault</b>								
<b>Total family</b>	<b>12,198</b>	<b>187</b>	<b>72</b>	<b>140</b>	<b>165</b>	<b>182</b>	<b>254</b>	<b>273</b>
Parent <sup>1</sup>	7,006	107	59	87	97	102	152	132
Sibling <sup>2</sup>	2,522	39	5	23	34	43	55	62
Extended family <sup>3</sup>	2,330	36	8	30	34	38	45	53
Spouse/ex-spouse <sup>4</sup>	340	5	0	0	0	0	2	25
<b>Sexual assault<sup>5</sup></b>								
<b>Total family</b>	<b>4,089</b>	<b>63</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>72</b>	<b>74</b>	<b>76</b>	<b>82</b>	<b>52</b>
Parent <sup>1</sup>	1,568	24	11	31	23	24	33	21
Sibling <sup>2</sup>	1,141	17	2	17	24	27	22	12
Extended family <sup>3</sup>	1,356	21	3	24	27	25	26	18
Spouse/ex-spouse <sup>4</sup>	24	0	0	0	0	0	0	2
<b>Physical assault<sup>6</sup></b>								
<b>Total family</b>	<b>8,109</b>	<b>124</b>	<b>55</b>	<b>68</b>	<b>91</b>	<b>106</b>	<b>173</b>	<b>221</b>
Parent <sup>1</sup>	5,438	83	48	56	75	78	118	111
Sibling <sup>2</sup>	1,381	21	3	6	10	16	33	50
Extended family <sup>3</sup>	974	15	4	5	7	12	19	35
Spouse/ex-spouse <sup>4</sup>	316	5	0	0	0	0	2	24

0 true zero or a value rounded to zero

1. Includes a small number of cases where age or the relationship between the accused and the victim may have been miscoded.

2. Sibling includes natural, step, half, foster or adopted siblings.

3. Extended family includes others related by blood, marriage, adoption or foster care.

4. Spouse includes legally married and common-law partners and ex-spouses. Population counts by marital status are not available for this geographic level.

5. Sexual assault includes sexual assault (level 1), sexual assault with a weapon or causing bodily harm (level 2), aggravated sexual assault (level 3) and the 'other sexual crimes' category which includes sexual interference, sexual touching, sexual exploitation, incest, etc.

6. Physical assault includes common assault (level 1), assault with a weapon or causing bodily harm (level 2), aggravated assault (level 3), unlawfully causing bodily harm, discharge firearm with intent, criminal negligence causing bodily harm and other assaults.

**Notes:** Children and youth include all those under the age of 18. Excludes incidents where the sex and/or age of the victim was unknown. Data are not nationally representative.

The Incident-based Uniform Crime Reporting (UCR2) Survey collected data from 149 police services representing approximately 90% of the population of Canada in 2006. Hamilton Police Service is excluded from the analysis due to quality of the relationship variable. Rate per 100,000 population for the geographic areas policed by the UCR2 respondents, based on populations provided by Demography Division, Statistics Canada.

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

Table 2.6

**Child and youth victims of physical and sexual assault committed by family or non-family members by level of injury, reported to a subset of police services, 2006**

Level of injury	Offences committed by family members													
	Total assault victims						Sexual assault <sup>1</sup> victims				Physical assault <sup>2</sup> victims			
	Total family		Female		Male		Female		Male		Female		Male	
	number	%	number	%	number	%	number	%	number	%	number	%	number	%
<b>Total</b>	<b>12,198</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>7,489</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>4,709</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>3,257</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>832</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>4,232</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>3,877</b>	<b>100</b>
Unknown	1,556	13	1,034	14	522	11	650	20	159	19	384	9	363	9
No injuries <sup>3</sup>	5,696	47	3,703	49	1,993	42	2,153	66	541	65	1,550	37	1,452	37
Minor physical injury <sup>4</sup>	4,639	38	2,586	34	2,053	44	371	11	94	11	2,215	52	1,959	51
Major physical injury <sup>5</sup>	143	1	62	1	81	2	2	0	4	0	60	1	77	2
Death	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Not applicable <sup>6</sup>	164	1	104	1	60	1	81	2	34	4	23	1	26	1
Level of injury	Offences committed by non-family members													
	Total assault victims						Sexual assault <sup>1</sup> victims				Physical assault <sup>2</sup> victims			
	Total non-family		Female		Male		Female		Male		Female		Male	
	number	%	number	%	number	%	number	%	number	%	number	%	number	%
<b>Total</b>	<b>28,399</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>13,551</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>14,848</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>5,071</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>1,127</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>8,480</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>13,721</b>	<b>100</b>
Unknown	1,949	7	1,093	8	856	6	641	13	184	16	452	5	672	5
No injuries <sup>3</sup>	12,725	45	6,849	51	5,876	40	3,598	71	791	70	3,251	38	5,085	37
Minor physical injury <sup>4</sup>	12,970	46	5,329	39	7,641	51	688	14	114	10	4,641	55	7,527	55
Major physical injury <sup>5</sup>	506	2	102	1	404	3	6	0	0	0	96	1	404	3
Death	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Not applicable <sup>6</sup>	249	1	178	1	71	0	138	3	38	3	40	0	33	0

0 true zero or a value rounded to zero

- Sexual assault includes sexual assault (level 1), sexual assault with a weapon (level 2), aggravated sexual assault (level 3) and the 'other sexual crimes' category which includes sexual interference, sexual touching, sexual exploitation, incest, etc.
- Physical assault includes common assault (level 1) assault with a weapon or causing bodily harm (level 2), aggravated assault (level 3), unlawfully causing bodily harm, discharge firearm with intent, criminal negligence causing bodily harm and other assaults.
- No visible injuries were noted at the time of the incident, or the violation did not involve the use of weapons or physical force against the victim.
- Minor physical injury is an injury that required no professional medical treatment or only some first injury aid (e.g., band aid, ice, etc.).
- Major physical injury is an injury that required professional medical attention at the scene or transportation to a medical facility.
- The violation did not involve the use of weapons nor physical force against the victim.

**Notes:** Children and youth include all those under the age of 18. Excludes incidents where the sex and/or age of the victim was unknown. Data are not nationally representative. The Incident-based Uniform Crime Reporting (UCR2) Survey collected data from 149 police services representing approximately 90% of the population of Canada in 2006. Hamilton Police Service is excluded from the analysis due to data quality of the relationship variable. Percentages may not add up to 100% due to rounding.

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

## Fact sheet: Family violence against older adults

This section examines police-reported violent crimes (physical assault, sexual assault, robbery, criminal harassment, uttering threats, and other violent violations) committed by family members against seniors (aged 65 years and older) in 2006.

Incidents of violent crime against seniors are reported by a subset of 149 police services to the Incident-based Uniform Crime Reporting (UCR) survey. This subset of police forces represented approximately 90% of the population of Canada in 2006.

Police-reported violence represents only a portion of the violence committed against seniors in Canada since not all incidents are reported to the police, and police do not capture data on emotional or psychological abuse perpetrated against seniors. For additional information on seniors as victims of property or household crimes, and seniors' feelings of personal safety, refer to Ogrodnik (2007).

### Seniors least likely age group to be victimized

Police-reported data have consistently shown that persons 65 years of age and over are the least likely age group to be victimized. In 2006, there were 6,033 police-reported incidents of violence committed against seniors, which gives a rate of 149 incidents for every 100,000 seniors. This rate was 16 times lower than the rate for 15 to 24 year olds, the age group at highest risk of victimization (2,395 per 100,000) (Chart 3.1).

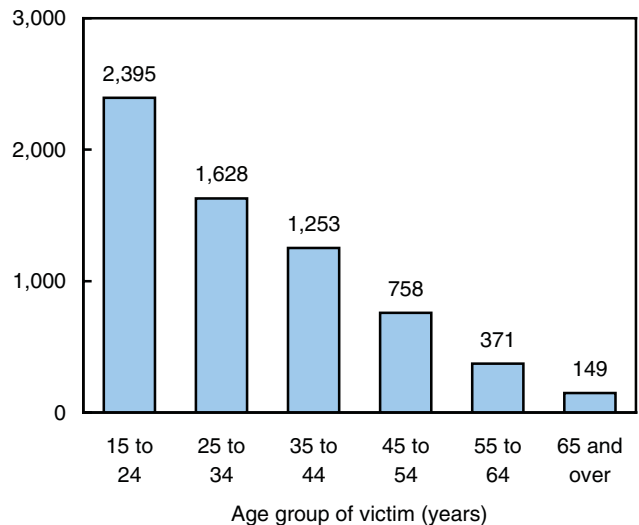
Similar to victims of crime in general, senior victims were more likely to report being victimized by someone they knew (83 per 100,000) than by a stranger (40 per 100,000). Among perpetrators known to senior victims, friends or acquaintances were the most common (34 per 100,000) (Table 3.1).

Senior victims of family violence were most likely to report being victimized by an adult child (14 per 100,000) or current or former spouse (13 per 100,000). In comparison, persons under 65 years of age were most often victimized by their spouse, followed by a parent or extended family member (Table 3.1, Chart 3.2).

The rate of police-reported family violence against seniors was 43 incidents for every 100,000 persons aged 65 years and over. While the overall rates of violence against seniors

**Chart 3.1**  
**Seniors have lowest rates of police-reported violence, 2006**

rate per 100,000 population



**Notes:** Data are not nationally representative. Based on a subset of 149 police services representing approximately 90% of the population of Canada in 2006. Hamilton Police Service is excluded from the analysis due to data quality of the relationship variable. Excludes unknown sex and includes all relationships.

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

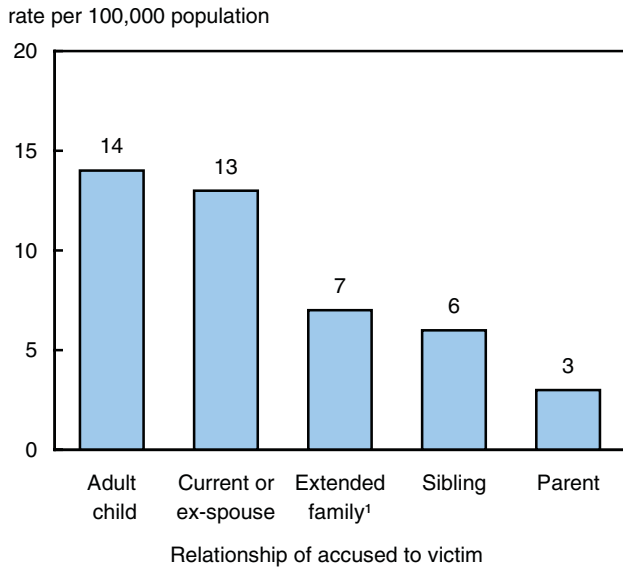
were higher for senior men (150 versus 103 for senior women), rates of family violence were higher for senior women (47 versus 37 per 100,000) (Table 3.1).

Older seniors (aged 85 years and over) were less likely to report being victims of family violence (20 per 100,000) compared to younger seniors aged 75 to 84 years of age (35 per 100,000) and 65 to 74 years of age (53 per 100,000) (Chart 3.3).

### Common assault most frequently committed violent offence against senior victims

Common assault (level 1, the least serious type of assault) was the most frequently reported violent offence against seniors (49 per 100,000), followed by uttering threats (23 per 100,000) and robbery (20 per 100,000). Rates of

**Chart 3.2**  
**Most family violence against seniors is committed by the seniors' children or spouses, 2006**



1. Extended family includes aunts, uncles, cousins, sisters/brothers-in-law, etc.

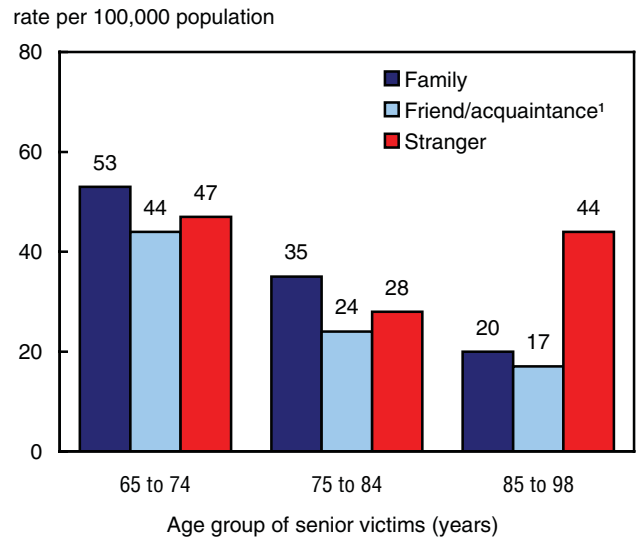
**Notes:** Data are not nationally representative. Based on data from 149 police services representing approximately 90% of the population of Canada in 2006. Hamilton Police Service is excluded from the analysis due to data quality of the relationship variable. Excludes incidents where the victim's sex, age and/or relationship of the accused to the victim was unknown.

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

violence against seniors were lower when the violence was committed by a family member compared to a non-family member (43 versus 81 per 100,000) (Table 3.2).

Police-reported data show that over half of violent incidents committed against seniors do not result in physical injury to the victim (58%), whether perpetrated by a family or non-family member (54% versus 60%). When physical injuries are sustained, they are generally minor in nature

**Chart 3.3**  
**Older seniors report lower rates of family violence, 2006**



1. Includes friends, boy/girlfriends, ex-boy/girlfriends, authority figures and casual acquaintances.

**Note:** Data are not nationally representative. Based on a subset of 149 police services representing approximately 90% of the population of Canada in 2006. Hamilton Police Service is excluded from the analysis due to data quality of the relationship variable. Excludes incidents where the sex and/or the age of the victim was unknown.

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

resulting from the aggressor's use of physical force. There was little difference between male and female senior victims in the level of injury sustained due to family violence (Table 3.3).

Senior women were more likely to be harmed by physical force than senior men (81% versus 73%), while senior men were more likely to be injured by a weapon (21% versus 13%) (Table 3.4).

Table 3.1

**Senior (65 years and over) victims of violent crime by sex and relationship to accused, reported to a subset of police services, 2006**

Relationship of accused to victim	Total		Female		Male	
	number	rate	number	rate	number	rate
Known to the victim	3,359	83	1,685	74	1,674	96
Strangers	1,618	40	666	29	952	54
<b>Total family</b>	<b>1,716</b>	<b>43</b>	<b>1,069</b>	<b>47</b>	<b>647</b>	<b>37</b>
Spouse/ex-spouse	513	13	375	16	138	8
Parent	137	3	67	3	70	4
Child	544	14	327	14	217	12
Sibling	227	6	136	6	91	5
Extended family <sup>1</sup>	295	7	164	7	131	7
<b>Friends, acquaintances, others</b>	<b>1,643</b>	<b>41</b>	<b>616</b>	<b>27</b>	<b>1,027</b>	<b>59</b>
Friend or acquaintance <sup>2</sup>	1,365	34	536	23	829	47
Business relationship	262	6	76	3	186	11
Criminal relationship	16	0	4	0	12	1
<b>Total violence against older adults</b>	<b>4,977</b>	<b>123</b>	<b>2,351</b>	<b>103</b>	<b>2,626</b>	<b>150</b>

0 true zero or value rounded to zero

1. Extended family includes aunts, uncles, cousins, sisters/brothers-in-law, etc.

2. Includes friends, boy/girlfriends, ex-boy/girlfriends, authority figures and casual acquaintances.

**Notes:** Excludes incidents where the victim's sex and/or victim's age and/or relationship of the accused to the victim was unknown. Data are not nationally representative. Based on data from 149 police services representing approximately 90% of the population in Canada in 2006. Hamilton Police Service is excluded from the analysis due to data quality of the relationship variable. Includes family violence and non-family violence against victims aged 65 years and over. Rate per 100,000 population for the geographic areas policed by the UCR2 respondents, based on populations provided by Demography Division, Statistics Canada.

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

Table 3.2

**Older adult (65 years and over) victims of violent crime by offence type and relationship to accused, reported to a subset of police services, 2006**

Offence type	Total senior victims		Violent offences committed by family members						Violent offences committed by non-family members					
			Total		Female		Male		Total		Female		Male	
	number	rate	number	rate	number	rate	number	rate	number	rate	number	rate	number	rate
Homicide/attempts	41	1	23	1	16	1	7	1	18	0	6	0	12	1
Sexual assault (levels 1,2,3)	99	2	16	0	14	1	2	0	83	2	75	3	8	0
Major assault (levels 2,3)	590	15	237	6	126	6	111	6	353	9	90	4	263	15
Common assault (level 1)	1,986	49	912	23	573	25	339	19	1,074	27	389	17	685	39
Robbery	818	20	17	0	10	0	7	0	801	20	395	17	406	23
Criminal harassment	302	7	107	3	77	3	30	2	195	5	101	4	94	5
Uttering threats	914	23	341	8	210	9	131	7	573	14	175	8	398	23
Other violent offences <sup>1</sup>	227	6	63	2	43	2	20	1	164	4	51	2	113	6
<b>Total</b>	<b>4,977</b>	<b>123</b>	<b>1,716</b>	<b>43</b>	<b>1,069</b>	<b>47</b>	<b>647</b>	<b>37</b>	<b>3,261</b>	<b>81</b>	<b>1,282</b>	<b>56</b>	<b>1,979</b>	<b>113</b>

0 true zero or a value rounded to zero

1. Includes arson, other assaults, assault against a peace/public officer, criminal negligence causing bodily harm, discharge firearm with intent, extortion, kidnapping, unlawfully causing bodily harm, and other violent offences.

**Notes:** Includes family and non-family violence against victims aged 65 years and older. Excludes incidents where the victim's sex, age and/or relationship was unknown. Rate per 100,000 population for the geographic areas policed by the UCR2 respondents, based on populations provided by Demography Division, Statistics Canada. Data are not nationally representative. Based on data from 149 police services representing approximately 90% of the population in Canada in 2006. Hamilton Police Service is excluded from the analysis due to data quality of the relationship variable.

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

Table 3.3

**Level of injury by sex and relationship of older adult (65 years and over) victims, reported to a subset of police services, 2006**

Level of injury	Total victims		Violent offences committed by family members						Violent offences committed by non-family members					
			Total		Female		Male		Total		Female		Male	
	number	%	number	%	number	%	number	%	number	%	number	%	number	%
Unknown	225	5	92	5	56	5	36	6	133	4	57	4	76	4
No injuries <sup>1</sup>	2,875	58	931	54	587	55	344	53	1,944	60	805	63	1,139	58
Minor physical injuries <sup>2</sup>	1,736	35	651	38	399	37	252	39	1,085	33	390	30	695	35
Major physical injuries <sup>3</sup>	117	2	29	2	18	2	11	2	88	3	29	2	59	3
Death	24	1	13	1	9	1	4	1	11	0	1	0	10	1
<b>Total</b>	<b>4,977</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>1,716</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>1 069</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>647</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>3,261</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>1,282</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>1,979</b>	<b>100</b>

0 true zero or a value rounded to zero

1. No visible injuries were noted at the time of the incident, or the violation did not involve the use of weapons or physical force against the victim.

2. Minor physical injuries require no professional medical treatment or only some first aid.

3. Major physical injuries require professional medical attention at the scene or transportation to a medical facility.

**Notes:** Percentages may not add up to 100% due to rounding. Excludes incidents where the victim's sex, age and/or relationship between the accused and the victim was unknown.

Data are not nationally representative. Based on data from 149 police services representing approximately 90% of the population in Canada in 2006. Hamilton Police Service is excluded from the analysis due to data quality of the relationship variable. Includes family and non-family violence against victims aged 65 years and older.

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

Table 3.4

**Method of violence causing most serious injury to the victim in family violence against older adults (aged 65 years and over), reported to a subset of police services, 2006**

Method of violence	Total			Female			Male		
	number	percent	rate	number	percent	rate	number	percent	rate
<b>Total</b>	<b>784</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>19</b>	<b>481</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>21</b>	<b>303</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>17</b>
Unknown <sup>1</sup>	47	6	1	29	6	1	18	6	1
Physical force	610	78	15	388	81	17	222	73	13
<b>Weapon</b>	<b>127</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>64</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>63</b>	<b>21</b>	<b>4</b>
Knife/other piercing instrument	43	5	1	20	4	1	23	8	1
Club/blunt instrument	20	3	0	9	2	0	11	4	1
Other weapon <sup>2</sup>	64	8	2	35	7	1	29	10	2

0 true zero or a value rounded to zero

1. The weapon used in this incident was not known.

2. Other weapon includes explosives, fire, motor vehicle or any device used to poison.

**Notes:** Percentages may not add up to 100% due to rounding. Excludes incidents where the sex and/or age of the victim was unknown. Excludes incidents where no injuries were reported. Data are not nationally representative. Based on data from 149 police services representing approximately 90% of the population of Canada in 2006. Hamilton Police Service is excluded from the analysis due to data quality of the relationship variable. Rate per 100,000 population for the geographic areas policed by the UCR2 respondents, based on populations provided by Demography Division, Statistics Canada.

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

## Fact sheet: Family homicides

The following section examines spousal homicides and homicides committed by family members against children and youth, and older adults (age 65 years and older).

The annual Homicide survey, administered by the Canadian Centre for Justice Statistics (CCJS), collects detailed police-reported information on all homicides that occur in Canada. The term 'homicide' throughout this section includes the following *Criminal Code* offences: 1<sup>st</sup> degree murder, 2<sup>nd</sup> degree murder, manslaughter and infanticide.

### Spousal homicides

According to the Homicide survey, spousal homicides<sup>1</sup> represented 17% of all solved<sup>2</sup> homicides in Canada, and nearly half (47%) of all family homicides in 2006.

Overall, rates of spousal homicides for both male and female victims have been declining over the last 30 years (1977 to 2006) following the pattern of homicide overall (Chart 4.1).

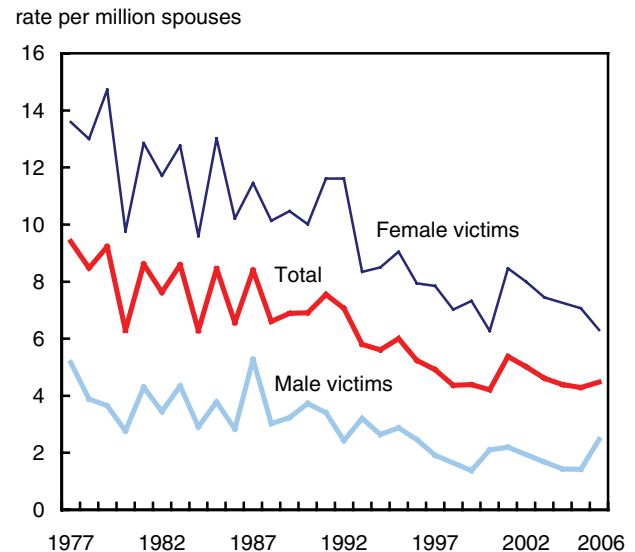
Women are more likely than men to be victims of spousal homicide. The rate of spousal homicide against females has been between 3 and 5 times higher than the rate for males during the 30-year period from 1977 to 2006. It is important to note that 2006 saw an increase in the rate for male spousal victims (Table 4.1).

### Spousal homicide most often involved common-law partners

Between 1997 and 2006, 39% of spousal homicides involved victims living in common-law relationships (including same-sex couples), accounting for the largest proportion of spousal homicides. However, common-law couples comprised just 16% of spousal relationships in 2006 (Statistics Canada, 2007). Approximately one-third (36%) of spousal homicides occurred between married persons, followed by those who were separated (23%) or divorced (2%) (Table 4.2).

Rates of spousal homicide are highest for young adults, especially for female victims. Between 1997 and 2006, the rate of young women (aged 15 to 24) killed by their spouse was nearly 3 times higher than all female victims of spousal homicide (20 compared to the overall rate of 7 per million female spouses). Similarly, the rate of young males (aged 15 to 24) killed by their spouse was more than 4 times that

**Chart 4.1**  
Spousal homicide rate generally declining since mid-1970s



**Notes:** Spouses include legally married, common-law, separated, and divorced persons age 15 years or older. Excludes same-sex spouses.

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

of all male spouses (8 compared to the overall rate of 2 per million male spouses) (Chart 4.2).

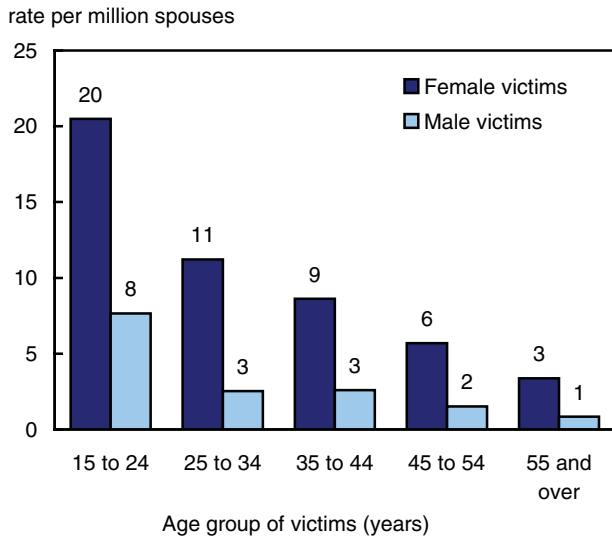
### Most male victims of spousal homicide killed by stabbing, while female spouses were equally likely to be stabbed or shot

Methods used to kill spouses differed for male and female victims. Between 1997 and 2006, the most common method used to kill male spouses was stabbing (69%). In contrast, female victims of spousal homicide were equally likely to be stabbed or shot (30% each). A larger proportion of female spousal victims were killed as a result of physical force such as beating, strangulation, suffocation or drowning compared to males (36% of female victims versus 11% of male victims) (Table 4.4).

Over the past decade, the rate of firearm-related spousal homicides decreased by nearly 50% (1.14 per million spouses to 0.59 per million spouses). In 1996 there were 27 firearm-related spousal homicides compared to 16 in 2006 (Chart 4.3).



**Chart 4.2**  
**Young females most at risk of spousal homicide, 1997 to 2006**



**Notes:** Rate per 1,000,000 legally married, common-law, separated and divorced spouses, 15 years of age and over, based on estimates provided by Demography Division, Statistics Canada. Spousal homicides reported by police include a small number of victims who were separated from a common-law relationship. As population estimates are unavailable for this sub-population, the overall rates of spousal homicide may be slightly overestimated. Seven same-sex partners were excluded from the analysis, due to the unavailability of population estimates.

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

### Family homicides against children and youth<sup>3</sup>

In 2006, there were 60 homicides committed against children and youth under the age of 18 across Canada.

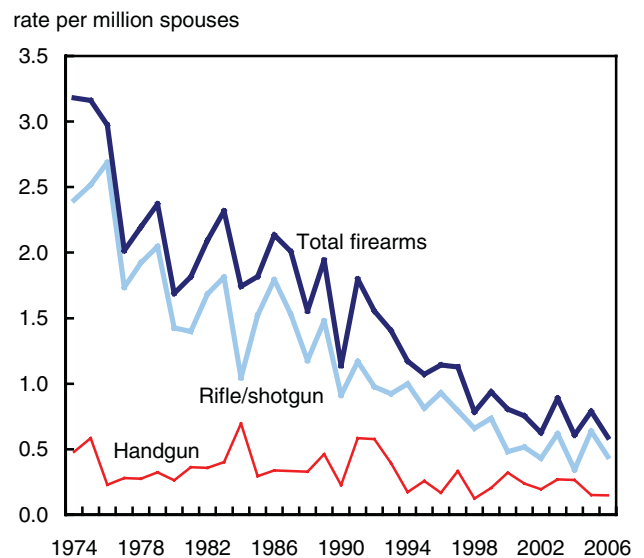
Six in 10 homicides against children and youth were committed by family members in 2006 (36 homicides), compared to 27% committed by non-family members (including acquaintances and friends) (16). The remaining 13% of child homicides (8) were unsolved.

With few exceptions, the rate of child and youth homicides perpetrated by family members has been consistently higher than the rate committed by non-family members (Chart 4.4). The family rate decreased in 2005 to just over 3 homicides per million children and youth, the lowest rate in 33 years.

#### Parents responsible for most family-related homicides against children and youth

The majority of family perpetrated homicides against children under 18 years of age are committed by parents. Over the past three decades (1977 to 2006), 90% of

**Chart 4.3**  
**Decline in rates of firearm spousal homicides, 1974 to 2006**



**Notes:** Rate per 1,000,000 legally married, common-law, separated and divorced spouses, 15 years of age and over, based on estimates provided by Demography Division, Statistics Canada. Same-sex partners were excluded from the analysis, due to the unavailability of population estimates.

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

family-related homicide victims under the age of 18 were killed by a parent.<sup>4</sup>

Fathers are more likely than mothers to be the perpetrators (Chart 4.5). Between 1997 and 2006, 56% of children killed by a family member were killed by their fathers, 33% by their mothers, and the remaining 10% by other family members including siblings, grandparents, cousins or other extended family.<sup>5</sup>

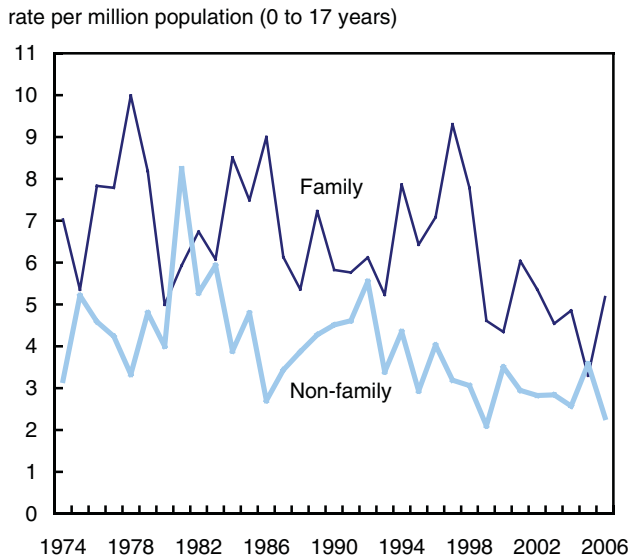
#### Infants are at greatest risk of homicide by a family member

Between 1997 and 2006, about one-quarter (26%) of children and youth killed by a family member were infants (under the age of one year). Baby boys tend to be at somewhat greater risk than baby girls. During the most recent 10-year period, the rate of baby boys killed by a family member averaged 35 per million male infants, compared to 27 per million female infants (Chart 4.6).

The methods used in family-related homicides against children under the age of 18 varied depending on the age of the victim (Table 4.5). Family members who kill young children (0 to 6 years of age) are most likely to use



**Chart 4.4**  
**Rates of family homicide against children and youth higher than non-family homicide, 1974 to 2006**



**Notes:** Excludes homicides for which police reported the accused-victim relationship as unknown. Rates are calculated per million children and youth (0 to 17 year olds) using population estimates provided by Statistics Canada, Census and Demographic Statistics, Demography Division.

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

physical force (e.g. strangulation, beating or Shaken Baby Syndrome). Older children and youth (7 to 17 years of age) are most likely to be killed with a weapon (e.g. knife or firearm).

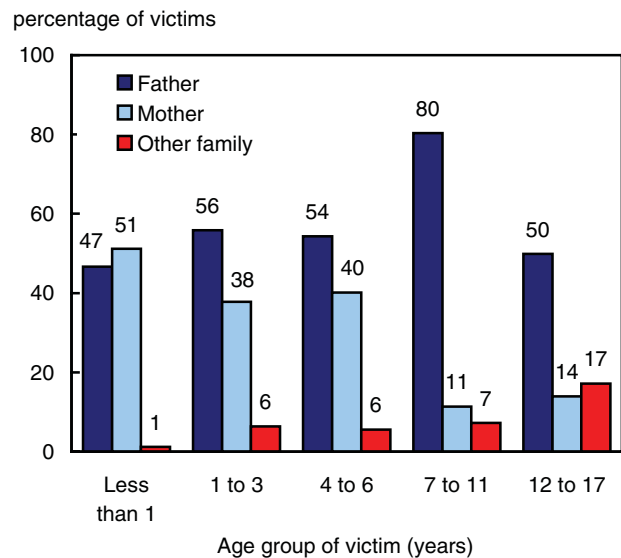
### Family homicides against older persons

Data from the Homicide survey indicate that the rate of homicide is lower among older adults compared to those under 65 years of age. This is consistent with overall police-reported crime rates which show that older Canadians are the least likely age group to be victimized.

In 2006, a total of 30 homicides were committed against seniors (18 males and 12 females). One-half of the homicides against seniors were committed by a family member, one-quarter (26%) were killed by an acquaintance, and 13% by a stranger. The remaining were unsolved.

Family-perpetrated homicides against seniors represented a relatively small proportion (2.5%) of all homicides in

**Chart 4.5**  
**Fathers responsible for the majority of family homicides against children and youth, 1997 to 2006**



**Notes:** Percentages may not add up to 100% due to rounding. Based upon a subset consisting of those victims who were killed by one person, representing 95% of the total number of family-related homicides against children and youth from 1997 to 2006. Mothers and fathers include biological, step, adoptive and foster parents. 'Other family' includes siblings, cousins and any other family member related to the victim by blood, marriage or adoption.

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

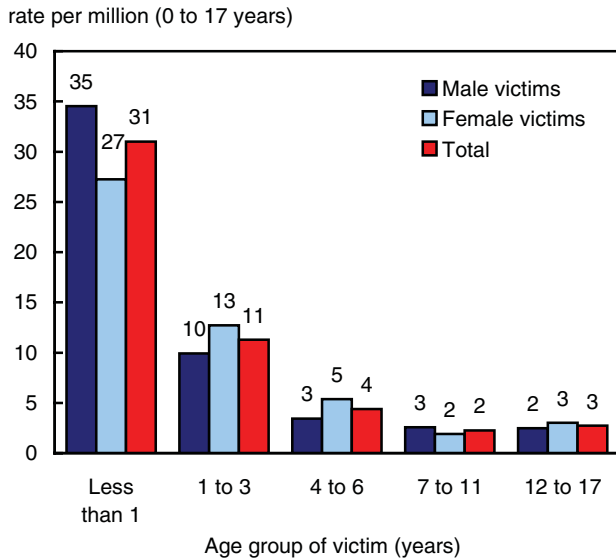
Canada (605) in 2006. With few exceptions, over the past three decades (1977 to 2006), the rate of family-related homicide against seniors has been lower than that of non-family perpetrated homicides (Chart 4.7).

### Family-related homicides against older women most often committed by a spouse or adult son

Family-related homicides against older women are most commonly committed by the victim's spouse (40%) or adult son (34%). Senior male homicide victims killed by family members are most often murdered by their adult son or step-son (61%) (Chart 4.8).

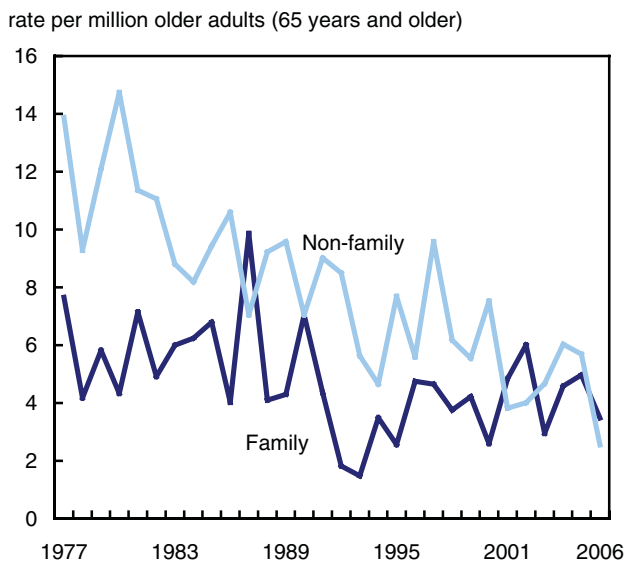
Homicides committed by family members against older adults (65 years and older) are primarily motivated out of frustration, anger or despair (34%) followed by an argument (29%). In comparison, the most common apparent motive behind homicides committed by non-family members against senior is financial gain (34%) (Table 4.6).

**Chart 4.6**  
**Infants are at greatest risk of homicide by a family member, 1997 to 2006**



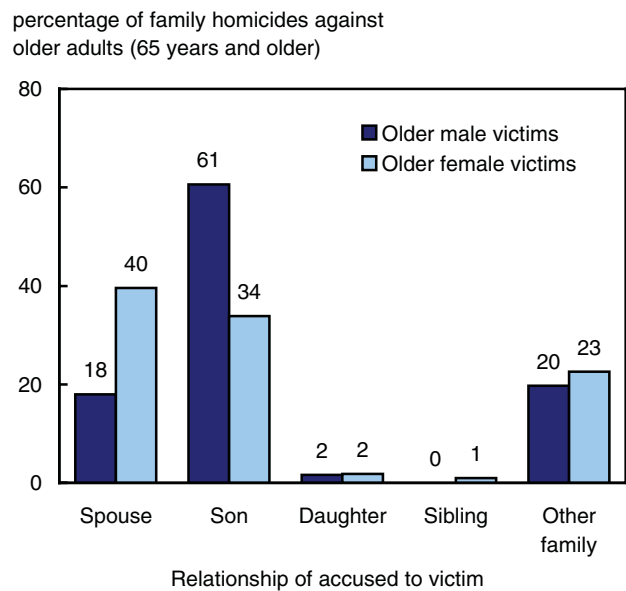
**Note:** Rates are calculated per million children and youth (0 to 17 years olds) according to the applicable age group and sex category using population estimates provided by Statistics Canada, Census and Demographic Statistics, Demography Division.  
**Source:** Statistics Canada, Canadian Centre for Justice Statistics, Homicide Survey.

**Chart 4.7**  
**Gap narrows between rates of family and non-family homicides against seniors, 1977 to 2006**



**Note:** Rates are calculated per million older adults (65 years and older) using population estimates provided by Statistics Canada, Census and Demographic Statistics, Demography Division.  
**Source:** Statistics Canada, Canadian Centre for Justice Statistics, Homicide Survey.

**Chart 4.8**  
**Senior victims of family homicide most likely to be killed by spouses and adult sons, 1997 to 2006**



0 true zero or a value rounded to zero  
**Notes:** Percentages may not add to 100% due to rounding. Spouse includes legal, common-law, separated, divorced and same sex spouses. Son and daughter includes biological, adoptive, foster and step-children. Sibling includes biological, adoptive, foster and step-siblings. 'Other family' includes grandchildren, aunts, uncles, nieces, cousins and any other family member related by blood, marriage or adoption.  
**Source:** Statistics Canada, Canadian Centre for Justice Statistics, Homicide Survey.

**Endnotes**

1. Spousal homicides involve persons in legal marriages, those who are separated or divorced from such unions and those in common-law relationships (including same-sex spouses).
2. Solved homicides refer to those where at least one accused has been identified by police.
3. Throughout this section, the terms 'children' and 'child' are used interchangeably and refer to all children (biological or adopted) of the victim and includes children and youth under the age of 18. Child and youth homicides may be under-reported since some deaths caused by intentional injury may be misclassified as resulting from natural or undetermined causes.
4. Includes step and adopted parents.
5. Related to the victim by blood, marriage or adoption.

**Table 4.1**  
**Number and rates of spousal homicide, 1977 to 2006**

	Sex of victim			
	Male		Female	
	number	Female	rate per million spouses	Female
1977	30	80	5.2	13.6
1978	23	78	3.9	13.0
1979	22	90	3.7	14.7
1980	17	61	2.8	9.8
1981	27	82	4.3	12.9
1982	22	76	3.5	11.7
1983	28	84	4.3	12.8
1984	19	64	2.9	9.6
1985	25	88	3.8	13.0
1986	19	70	2.8	10.2
1987	36	80	5.3	11.5
1988	21	72	3.0	10.1
1989	23	76	3.2	10.5
1990	27	74	3.7	10.0
1991	25	87	3.4	11.6
1992	18	88	2.4	11.6
1993	24	64	3.2	8.3
1994	20	66	2.6	8.5
1995	22	71	2.9	9.0
1996	19	63	2.5	7.9
1997	15	63	1.9	7.8
1998	13	57	1.6	7.0
1999	11	60	1.4	7.3
2000	17	52	2.1	6.3
2001	18	71	2.2	8.5
2002	16	68	1.9	8.0
2003	14	64	1.7	7.5
2004	12	63	1.4	7.3
2005	12	62	1.4	7.1
2006	22	56	2.6	6.3

**Notes:** Rate per 1,000,000 legally married, common-law, separated and divorced spouses, 15 years of age and over, based on estimates provided by Demography Division, Statistics Canada. Spousal homicides reported by police include a small number of victims who were separated from a common-law relationship. As population estimates are unavailable for this sub-population, the overall rates of spousal homicide may be slightly over estimated. Seven same-sex partners were excluded from the analysis, due to the unavailability of population estimates.

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

**Table 4.2**  
**Family homicides by accused-victim relationship and sex of the victim, 1997 to 2006**

Victim killed by	Total victims		Sex of victim			
			Female		Male	
	number	percent	number	percent	number	percent
<b>Total family homicides</b>	<b>1,637</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>992</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>645</b>	<b>100</b>
<b>Total spouses</b>	<b>766</b>	<b>47</b>	<b>616</b>	<b>62</b>	<b>150</b>	<b>23</b>
Married	274	17	238	24	36	6
Common-law <sup>1</sup>	301	18	206	21	95	15
Separated <sup>2</sup>	178	11	160	16	18	3
Divorced	13	1	12	1	1	0
<b>Parent<sup>3</sup></b>	<b>376</b>	<b>23</b>	<b>183</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>193</b>	<b>30</b>
Father	241	15	111	11	130	20
Mother	135	8	72	7	63	10
<b>Child<sup>4</sup></b>	<b>199</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>93</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>106</b>	<b>16</b>
Daughter/step	27	2	15	1	12	2
Son/step	172	10	78	8	94	14
<b>Sibling</b>	<b>90</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>24</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>66</b>	<b>10</b>
Brother	81	5	21	2	60	9
Sister	9	1	3	0	6	1
Other family <sup>5</sup>	206	13	77	8	129	20

0 true zero or a value rounded to zero

1. Common-law relationship includes same-sex spouses.

2. Includes those who are separated from a common-law relationship or same-sex relationship.

3. Parent includes biological, step, foster and adoptive parents.

4. Child includes biological, step, foster and adoptive children.

5. Other family includes all others related to the victim through blood, marriage, foster care or adoption.

**Notes:** Excludes incidents where the sex of the victim was unknown. Percentages may not add up to 100% due to rounding.

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

**Table 4.3**  
**Average number of victims and rates of spousal homicides in Canada, by province/territory, 1997 to 2006**

	Average 1997 to 2006	
	number of victims	rate
<b>Canada</b>	<b>76</b>	<b>4.6</b>
Newfoundland	0.8	2.8
Prince Edward Island	0.4	5.5
Nova Scotia	1.8	3.5
New Brunswick	1.3	3.2
Quebec	17.0	4.3
Ontario	24.0	3.8
Manitoba	3.3	5.6
Saskatchewan	4.7	9.2
Alberta	9.5	5.8
British Columbia	11.5	5.1
Yukon	0.5	30.4
Northwest Territories	0.5	23.8
Nunavut <sup>1</sup>	0.75	71.5

1. Nunavut officially became a Canadian territory in 1999. Thus Nunavut includes data from 1999 to 2006.

**Notes:** Rate per 1,000,000 legally married, common-law, separated and divorced spouses, 15 years of age and over, based on estimates provided by Demography Division, Statistics Canada. Spousal homicides reported by police include a small number of victims who were separated from a common-law relationship. As population estimates are unavailable for this sub-population, the overall rates of spousal homicide may be slightly overestimated. Seven same-sex partners were excluded from the analysis, due to the unavailability of population estimates.

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

**Table 4.4**  
**Known causes of death among spousal and non-spousal relationships by sex, 1997 to 2006**

	Spouse <sup>1</sup>				Non-spouse <sup>2</sup>			
	Female victims		Male victims		Female victims		Male victims	
	number	percent	number	percent	number	percent	number	percent
<b>Total</b>	<b>604</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>146</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>681</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>2,565</b>	<b>100</b>
Shooting	179	30	20	14	111	16	703	27
Stabbing	182	30	101	69	261	38	938	37
Strangulation <sup>3</sup>	123	20	6	4	120	18	102	4
Beating	97	16	10	7	148	22	714	28
Other <sup>4</sup>	23	4	9	5	41	6	108	4

1. Spouse includes legally married, common-law, separated and divorced partners.

2. To control for the effects of age in the comparison of spousal and non-spousal homicides, non-spousal victims include only those individuals 15 years of age and older.

3. Strangulation includes suffocation and drowning.

4. Other includes poisoning or lethal injection, smoke inhalation, burns, exposure/hypothermia, or other.

**Notes:** Excludes incidents where the accused-victim relationship was unknown. Excludes those homicides where the cause of death was unknown. Excludes those homicides where the sex of victim was unknown. Percentages may not add up to 100% due to rounding.

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

**Table 4.5**  
**Family-related homicides against children and youth by method, 1997 to 2006**

Method used to cause death	Total victims	Victim's age group										
		Less than 1 year		1 to 3 years		4 to 6 years		7 to 11 years		12 to 17 years		
		number	percent	number	percent	number	percent	number	percent	number	percent	
<b>Total<sup>1</sup></b>	<b>386</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>99</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>119</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>50</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>46</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>72</b>	<b>100</b>
Strangulation, suffocation or drowning	92	24	28	28	30	25	15	30	8	17	11	15
Beating	72	19	22	22	33	28	9	18	5	11	3	4
Shooting	57	15	1	1	9	8	8	16	15	33	24	33
Stabbing	57	15	5	5	14	12	6	12	12	26	20	28
Shaken Baby Syndrome <sup>2</sup>	52	13	34	34	18	15	0	0	0	0	0	0
Poisoning or lethal injection	17	4	1	1	3	3	7	14	1	2	5	7
Fire (smoke inhalation, burns)	17	4	1	1	5	4	3	6	3	7	5	7
Other <sup>3</sup>	22	6	7	7	7	6	2	4	2	4	4	6

0 true zero or value rounded to zero

1. Excludes 7 homicides for which method used to cause death was unknown.

2. Shaken Baby Syndrome (SBS) was added to the survey as a method used to cause death in 1997.

3. Other includes exposure/hypothermia, deaths caused by motor vehicles, starvation, heat, etc.

**Notes:** Family homicides are homicides committed by a spouse, parent, child, sibling or other members related by blood, marriage or adoption. Percentages may not add up to 100% due to rounding.

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

**Table 4.6**  
**Homicides against older adults (65 years and older) by motive and gender, family and non-family, 1997 to 2006**

Apparent motive	Homicides committed by family members				Homicides committed by unrelated accused			
	Males	Females	Total	Percent of total	Males	Females	Total	Percent of total
	number	number	number	percent	number	number	number	percent
Revenge	2	2	4	3	4	3	7	3
Jealousy	3	1	4	3	4	2	6	3
Argument	23	22	45	29	31	9	40	20
Frustration, anger or despair	11	43	54	34	20	7	27	14
Financial gain <sup>1</sup>	5	7	12	8	53	15	68	34
Fear of apprehension	0	2	2	1	2	3	5	3
No apparent motive <sup>2</sup>	11	13	24	15	24	16	40	20
Other <sup>3</sup>	2	11	13	8	4	2	6	3
<b>Total</b>	<b>57</b>	<b>101</b>	<b>158</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>142</b>	<b>57</b>	<b>199</b>	<b>100</b>

0 true zero or value rounded to zero

1. Includes robberies, homicides committed to obtain insurance monies or inheritances, etc.

2. Includes mental illness, dementia, etc.

3. Includes hate crimes, random killings, mercy killings/assisted suicide, etc.

**Note:** Excludes 24 homicides for which motive was unknown.

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

## Data sources

### Incident-based Uniform Crime Reporting (UCR2) Survey

The Incident-based Uniform Crime reporting (UCR2) survey collects detailed information on individual criminal incidents reported to police including characteristics of victims, accused persons and incidents. In 2006, detailed data were collected from 149 police services representing approximately 90% of the population of Canada. Hamilton Police Service is excluded from the analysis due to data quality of the relationship variable. Other than Ontario and Quebec, the data are primarily from urban police departments. The reader is cautioned that these data are not geographically representative at the national or provincial level.

The UCR2 Trend Database contains historical data that permits the analysis of trends in the characteristics of incidents, accused and victims, such as victim-accused relationship. This database currently includes 63 police services that have reported to the UCR2 survey consistently since 1998. These respondents accounted for 53% of the population of Canada in 2006.

#### Weighted proportions

Due to data quality and comparability issues, rates of spousal violence at the provincial/territorial levels are not presented in this report. A number of police services reported a substantial proportion of violent incidents where the relationship between the accused and the victim was 'unknown' which if ignored would result in the underestimation of the proportion of incidents attributed to spousal violence. For example, Hamilton Police Service coded 98% of violent incidents as relationship 'unknown', RCMP in Alberta reported 60% and the OPP 48%. A UCR data quality measure that evaluates this relationship variable indicated that Hamilton Police Service should be removed from all analyses. To handle the remaining respondents with significant 'unknowns', a methodology was developed to take into account the proportion of unknown relationships.

The following table shows the percentage of violent incidents reported by police where the relationship between the accused and the victim was coded as 'unknown' by province and territory.

<b>Canada</b>	<b>19.6</b>
Newfoundland and Labrador	33.2
Prince Edward Island	43.5
Nova Scotia	30.9
New Brunswick	20.9
Quebec	4.8
Ontario	19.4
Manitoba	25.3
Saskatchewan	27.8
Alberta	35.3
British Columbia	7.9
Yukon Territory	61.3
Northwest Territories	58.8
Nunavut	41.6

To compensate for the unknown relationships and to ensure that provincial/territorial statistics are representative and comparable, it was necessary to calculate a weighted proportion of spousal violence for each province and territory. Rather than simply ignore the unknown relationships, a proportion for spousal violence was calculated for each police service. The weight that each police service carries in the overall provincial number is equal to the total number of violent offences for that police service. The underlying assumption here is that the violent incidents with unknown relationships are similar to those with known relationships. Again, the same UCR data quality measure used to determine that Hamilton should be excluded supported this assumption.

#### General Social Survey on Victimization (GSS)

In 2004, the victimization cycle of the General Social Survey (GSS) was conducted for the fourth time. Previous victimization cycles were conducted in 1988, 1993 and 1999. The target population included all non-institutionalized people aged 15 and older (i.e., individuals living in households). Households without non-cellular telephones were excluded from the survey. This exclusion represents a small proportion (2%) of the population.

Data were collected each month from January 2004 to December 2004. Over this period, a total of approximately 24,000 people were successfully interviewed using Computer-Assisted Telephone Interviewing (CATI), yielding a response rate of 75%. Some types of non-responses included respondents who refused to participate, those who could not be reached, or individuals who could not speak English or French well enough to complete the survey.



It is important to acknowledge that there are limitations to the data. The data that appear in the report are based on estimates from a sample of the Canadian population and are therefore subject to sampling error. This type of error refers to the difference between an estimate derived from the sample and the one that would have been obtained from a census that used the same procedure to collect data from every person in the population.

In addition, there is the possibility of non-sampling errors. These refer to such issues as the respondents' inability to remember/report events accurately, refusal by respondents to report, and errors in coding and processing of data.

Using the 2004 GSS sample design and sample size, an estimate of a given proportion of the total population, expressed as a percentage, is expected to be within one percentage point of the true proportion 19 times out of 20.

### Homicide Survey

The Homicide survey began collecting police-reported data on homicide incidents, victims and accused persons in Canada in 1961, and began collecting data on family-related homicides in 1974. When a homicide becomes known to the police, the investigating police department completes a survey questionnaire, which is then forwarded to the Canadian Centre for Justice Statistics. The count for a particular year represents all homicides reported in that year, regardless of when the death actually occurred. In 1991 and 1997, the survey was revised and expanded to include additional variables, such as previous conviction histories of the accused and victim, employment of the accused and victim, victim's use of force at the time of the incident, and Shaken Baby Syndrome as a cause of death.

The Homicide Survey also contains a narrative section, where investigating officers insert additional details on the homicide that are not included in the questionnaire portion of the survey. These additional details include such information as the presence/absence of a restraining order and the attempted suicide of the accused. However, generalizations cannot be made to all homicides, since the availability of this supplementary information varies between homicide reports.

### Transition Home Survey

The Transition Home survey (THS) 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 the characteristics of residential services for abused women and their children during the previous twelve months of operation. In addition, the THS collects information on selected characteristics for the women and children residing in these shelters on a specified

'snapshot' day. In 1991-1992, Statistics Canada began collecting basic information on transition home services and clientele. A more comprehensive survey was developed and administered in subsequent years.

The THS is a biennial mail-out/mail-back census survey of all residential facilities providing services to abused women and their children. Shelters that serve a broader population, in addition to women escaping domestic violence, such as those providing residential services to male victims of spousal abuse and men and women seeking refuge for reasons other than abuse are also included on the THS. Facilities that exclusively serve male victims of spousal abuse fall outside the scope of this survey. At the time of this survey, one such facility was known to be in operation. The THS does not include shelters that do not provide residential services. For additional results from the THS, refer to the *Juristat* entitled: Canada's Shelters for abused women, 2005/2006.

### Victim Services Survey

Until recently, there were no nationally available data on the number and types of victim service agencies in Canada. In an effort to fill this information gap, the Canadian Centre for Justice Statistics (CCJS), with funding from Justice Canada's Policy Centre for Victim Issues, conducted its first national survey of victim services in 2003. It was developed in consultation with federal, provincial and territorial ministries responsible for justice and victim services, and with a number of victim service agencies from across Canada. The objectives of the survey are to provide a profile of victim service agencies, information on the types of services offered, and some insight into the clients who use them through a snapshot of clients served on a specific date. In addition, the survey collects standardized information from criminal injuries compensation and other financial benefit programs regarding applications for compensation and awards for victims of crime.

Recognizing the need to monitor the number and types of victim service agencies and to address emerging issues in the field of victim services, the Victim Services Survey (VSS) was repeated in 2005/2006.

Victim services are defined as agencies that provide direct services to primary or secondary victims of crime and are funded in whole or in part by a ministry responsible for justice matters. The survey covered system-based, police-based, court-based and community-based agencies, sexual assault centres, criminal injuries compensation programs and other financial benefit programs.

The VSS is a mail-out/mail-back paper questionnaire and is intended to be a census of all victim service agencies that fall within its scope. Although it was intended that each service location complete one form, for administrative reasons, some lead agencies submitted one form representing

data for all service locations under their administration. For additional results from the VSS, refer to the *Juristat* entitled: *Victim Services in Canada, 2005/2006*.

### **Maternity Experiences Survey**

The Maternity Experiences Survey (MES) is the first Canadian survey devoted to pregnancy, labour, birth and postpartum experiences. It is a core project of the Canadian Perinatal Surveillance System of the Public Health Agency of Canada who sponsored this survey. Its purpose was to collect data from recent mothers on important perinatal health indicators, such as: health and health care during pregnancy; labour and birth practices as well as an overall evaluation of the experience; characteristics and health of the newborn, breastfeeding intentions and practice; mothers' views of their postpartum health and health care; information mothers had on pregnancy, childbirth and postpartum period; and other factors that may have affected their maternity experiences (e.g., socio-demographic characteristics, reproductive history, stressful events, support).

The survey was conducted in the fall of 2006, following the Canadian Census of Population. The survey's sample was selected using demographic information collected during the census. The target population was defined as women who: gave birth between the 15<sup>th</sup> of February and the 15<sup>th</sup> of May 2006 (provinces) or between the 1<sup>st</sup> of November 2005 and the 1<sup>st</sup> of February 2006 (territories); had a single birth; were at least 15 years of age at the time of baby's birth; and whose baby was born in Canada and lived with the mother at least one night per month. Mothers who lived on First Nations reserves and in collective dwellings were excluded. Of the estimated 76,500 women who would meet these criteria, the MES sample included 8,542 mothers. The survey's file contains 6,421 records of mothers who responded to the survey and gave Statistics Canada permission to share their responses with the survey sponsor.

## Definitions

**Assault** refers to three levels of physical assaults which include the following categories:

- **Common assault**, (section 265). This includes the *Criminal Code* category assault (level 1). This is the least serious form of assault and includes pushing, slapping, punching, and face-to-face verbal threats.
- **Major assault levels 2 and 3**, (sections 267, 268). This includes more serious forms of assault, i.e. assault with a weapon or causing bodily harm (level 2) and aggravated assault (level 3). Assault level 2 involves carrying, using or threatening to use a weapon against someone or causing someone bodily harm. Assault level 3 involves wounding, maiming, disfiguring or endangering the life of someone.

**Criminal harassment**, (section 264.1) is defined as repeatedly following another person from place to place or repeatedly attempting to contact the person against their wishes causing that person to reasonably fear for their personal safety or the safety of anyone known to them.

**Family and non-family** - The nature of the relationship between the victim and the accused is determined by establishing the identity of the accused relative to the victim. Family members include spouses, children, siblings, parents or other persons related to the victim by blood, marriage or another legal relationship (e.g. adoption). All other relationships are considered to be non-family.

**Homicide** includes first and second degree murder, manslaughter and infanticide. Deaths caused by criminal negligence, suicide, accidental or justifiable homicides are not included in this classification.

**Major injuries** are those that require professional medical treatment or immediate transportation to a medical facility.

**Minor injuries** are defined as those that do not require professional medical treatment or only some first aid.

**Older adults and seniors** are used interchangeably in this report and refer to Canadians aged 65 years or older.

**Sexual assault** encompasses a wide range of criminal acts in the *Criminal Code* of Canada. Such conduct ranges from unwanted sexual touching to sexual violence resulting in serious physical injury or disfigurement to the victim. It also includes special categories of offences designed to protect children from sexual abuse.

- **Sexual assault level 1**, (section 271). This involves minor physical injuries or no injuries to the victim.
- **Sexual assault level 2**, (section 272). This includes sexual assault with a weapon, threats or causing bodily harm.
- **Aggravated sexual assault level 3**, (section 273). This results in wounding, maiming, disfiguring or endangering the life of the victim.
- **Other sexual offences** include a group of offences that are primarily meant to address incidents of sexual abuse directed at children. The *Criminal Code* offences that are included in this category are:
  - **Sexual interference** (section 151) – is the direct or indirect touching (for a sexual purpose) of a person under the age of 14 years using a part of the body or an object.
  - **Invitation to sexual touching** (section 152) – is the inviting, counseling, or inciting of a person under the age of 14 years to touch (for a sexual purpose) the body of any person directly or indirectly with a part of the body or with an object.
  - **Sexual exploitation** (section 153) – occurs when a person in a position of trust or authority towards a young person or a person with whom the young person is in a relationship of dependency, commits sexual interference or invitation to sexual touching. In this section “young person” refers to a person between 14 and 18 years of age.
  - **Incest** (section 155) – occurs when an individual has sexual intercourse with a person that has a known defined blood relationship with them.

- **Anal intercourse** (section 159) and **Bestiality** (Section 160) are also included in this category of offences. These offences may be directed at children, but not always.

**Spouse** – The UCR2 survey defines spouse as the husband or wife through marriage or common-law and

includes same-sex partners. Where indicated, separated and/or divorced spouses are also included in this category. The separated or divorced category includes the former husband or wife (by marriage or by common law relationship) who is separated or divorced at the time of the criminal incident. Includes same-sex ex-partners/ of homosexual relationships.

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