

## Canadian Spousal Abuse Statistics

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The primary difficulty in attempting to obtain an accurate picture of spousal abuse in Canada is the reality that a great number of cases of abuse are never reported to police.

Below are statistics which help to provide a glimpse of the scope and nature of spousal abuse in Canada.

- An estimated 7% of women and 6% of men in a current or previous spousal relationship experienced spousal violence during the five years up to and including 2004.<sup>1</sup>
- 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.<sup>2</sup>
- 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).<sup>3</sup>
- While there are roughly three times as many female victims of reported spousal violence as there are males, 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%).<sup>4</sup>
- 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.<sup>5</sup>
- 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 (7 female victims and 3 male victims per million spouses in 2006)<sup>6</sup>

## Endnotes

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<sup>1</sup> Statistics Canada. (July 14, 2005) The Daily. *Family violence in Canada: A statistical profile*. Retrieved January 8, 2009 at <http://www.statcan.ca/Daily/English/050714/d050714a.htm>

<sup>2</sup> Canadian Centre for Justice Statistics. (2008). *Family Violence in Canada: A Statistical Profile 2008*. Ottawa: Minister of Industry, p. 11. Retrieved January 8, 2009 from <http://www.statcan.ca/english/freepub/85-224-XIE/85-224-XIE2008000.pdf>

<sup>3</sup> Ibid, p. 13

<sup>4</sup> Ibid., p. 13

<sup>5</sup> Ibid., p. 14

<sup>6</sup> Ibid., p. 39, Chart 4.1

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