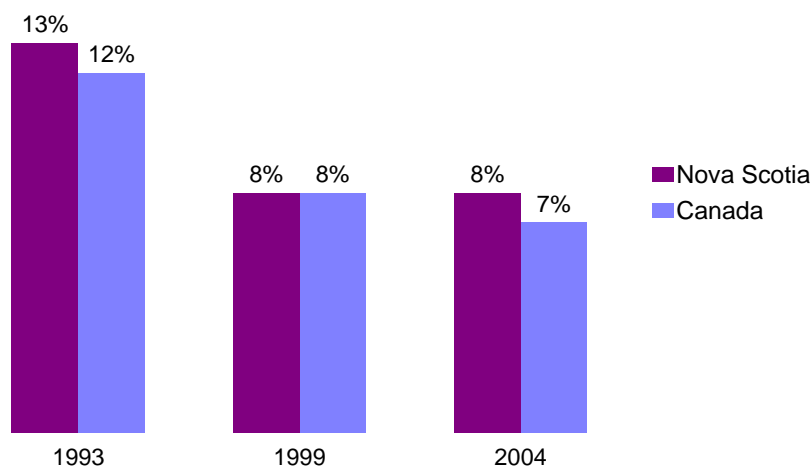




Fact Sheet on Intimate Partner Violence

What we know about intimate partner violence in the population:

5-Year Spousal Assault Rates of Females Nova Scotia and Canada, 1993-2004



Source: Statistics Canada, *General Social Survey*, 2004, 1999; *Violence Against Women Survey*, 1993.

- Between 1993 and 1999, the proportion of Nova Scotia women who reported experiencing physical violence at the hands of their current or former spouse/intimate partner within five years declined from 13 per cent to 8 per cent. From 1999 to 2004, this percentage remained unchanged – meaning an estimated 21,000 Nova Scotian women were victims of intimate partner violence between 1999 and 2004.
- Compared to men, women are more likely to report experiencing the most serious forms of intimate partner violence, such as being beaten, choked, or threatened with or having a gun or knife used against them.
- Female victims of spousal violence are also much more likely to report being injured, suffer lost productivity, experience multiple assaults, fear for their lives, and experience negative emotional consequences as a result of the intimate partner violence they experience. Male victims were much more likely (30 per cent versus 6 per cent) to report that the violence had not affected them.

Who is at highest risk?

- Young women (aged 15 to 24) who are in common-law relationships are at greater risk of experiencing intimate partner violence, as are women who have been in a relationship for three years or less, and women whose partners are frequent, heavy drinkers.
- Aboriginal women in Canada are at least three times more likely to have experienced spousal violence than non-Aboriginal women.
- Spousal violence is more likely to occur where emotional abuse is present.
- Eighteen per cent of Canadian women and 17 per cent of men reported experiencing emotional abuse in 2004. Women were more likely to report certain types of emotional abuse – that their partner “put them down and called them names to make them feel bad”, that their partner harmed or threatened to harm someone close to them, or that their partner prevented them from having access to the family income.
- A third of all incidents of spousal violence in Canada (approximately 394,000 cases between 1999 and 2004) were witnessed by children.

Seeking help:

- Nearly three-quarters of spousal violence incidents against women in Nova Scotia are not reported to police. In 2004, only 26 per cent of Nova Scotia women who had experienced intimate partner violence reported it to police, one of the lowest rates in Canada¹. In Canada as a whole, 36 per cent of women who experienced intimate partner violence reported it to police.
- A large proportion of victims of intimate partner violence (83 per cent of Canadian women and 60 per cent of Canadian men) confide in informal sources of help and support such as family, friend, co-worker, doctor/nurse, or clergy.
- Approximately 47 per cent of female victims and 20 per cent of male victims of intimate partner violence indicated that they had sought help from formal helping agencies or organizations such as victims’ services, women’s centres, psychologists, etc (data is for Canada as a whole).
- Male victims of intimate partner violence were more likely than female victims (35 per cent versus 12 per cent), not to mention the violence to anyone (data is for Canada, as a whole).

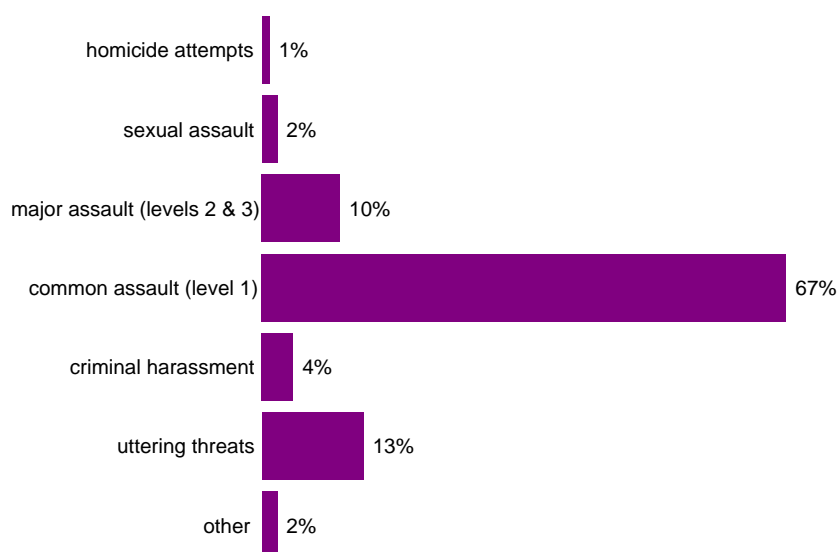
What we know about intimate partner violence that is reported to police:

- In 2006, 652 incidents of spousal violence¹ were reported to police in Nova Scotia. These incidents comprised 8 per cent of all violent offences reported to police in the province.
- About 8 in 10 victims of spousal violence are female.

- Close to three-quarters of victims are aged 25 to 44.

Just over two-thirds of reported incidents of spousal violence in 2006 were common assaults.

*Spousal Violence Reported to Police in Nova Scotia
by Offence Type, 2006*



Source: Statistics Canada, Catalogue # 85-224, 2008

- There are differences in types of offences reported depending on sex of victim (male victims are more likely to report major assaults) and marital status (ex-spouses/partners were much more likely to report stalking (criminal harassment) and uttering threats compared to current spouses/partners).
- Of the 652 incidents of spousal violence reported to police in 2006, 91 per cent were cleared; 81 per cent were cleared through the laying of a charge and 11 per cent were cleared otherwise (in more than half of the cases in this category, ie., 6 per cent overall, the complainant declined to lay a charge).

¹ Source: Information obtained through personal communication with Lucie Ogrodnik, senior analyst, Canadian Centre for Justice Statistics, Statistics Canada, July 9, 2009.

² Spousal violence refers to violence committed by legally married, common-law, separated, and divorced partners.

Updated July, 2009. Sources: All statistics above are from Statistics Canada, Catalogue no. 85-224, Family Violence in Canada: A Statistical Profile, 2005 and 2008 except where noted.