



# Sexual Assault

TABLE 1

Police-reported sexual assault crimes, Nova Scotia and Canada, 2010

2010	Nova Scotia		Canada	
	number	percentage	number	percentage
Sexual assault – level 1	663	97.2%	21,604	97.4%
Sexual assault – level 2 – weapon or bodily harm	13	1.9%	388	1.7%
Sexual assault – level 3 - aggravated	6	0.9%	188	0.8%
<b>Total, sexual assault (levels 1, 2 and 3)</b>	<b>682</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>22,180</b>	<b>100.0%</b>

SOURCE: Statistics Canada, CCJS, Uniform Crime Reporting (UCR2), 2010.

Sexual assault - Levels 1 to 3, by sex of victim, Nova Scotia, 2010



FIGURE 1

Source: Statistics Canada, CCJS, Uniform Crime Reporting (UCR2), 2010.

- In 2010, a total of 682 sexual assault victims reported the crime to the police in Nova Scotia. This includes 572 (or 84%) female victims.

- Police-reported sexual assault in Nova Scotia decreased by 2.7% between 2009 and 2010. However, the sexual assault rate for female victims remain high at 118 per 100,000 population, compared to 24 per 100,000 population for male victims.

- Statistics Canada’s General Social Survey (GSS) collected self-reported victimization data in Canada for 1999, 2004, and 2009. Results from GSS 2009 show that 88% or close to 9 in 10 sexual assaults were never reported to the police (Perreault and Brennan, 2010). Under-reporting of sexual assault incidents is an issue.

## DID YOU KNOW

Statistics Canada uses two survey instruments to collect data on crime and victimization. The Uniform Crime Reporting (UCR2) survey is an incident-based police-reported crime data survey collected annually. The other instrument is the General Social Survey (GSS) which collects self-reported victimization data from Canadians every five years (i.e., GSS 1999, 2004 and 2009).

**THE UCR2** captures three levels of sexual assault as well as “other sexual offences” as defined by the *Criminal Code*. Sexual assault level 1 is an assault committed in circumstances of a sexual nature that the sexual integrity of the victim is violated, where minor or no physical injuries are inflicted on the victim. Sexual assault level 2 involves sexual assault with a weapon, threats, or causing bodily harm. Sexual assault level 3 is an aggravated sexual assault that results in wounding, maiming, disfiguring or endangering the life of the victim. UCR2 also includes “other sexual offences” that primarily address incidents of sexual abuse directed at children. For the self-reported survey, **THE GSS** defines sexual assault as ‘forced sexual activity, an attempt at forced sexual activity, or unwanted sexual touching, grabbing, kissing, or fondling’.



- In 2009, there were 677,000 self-reported sexual assault victims across Canada which translates to a rate of 24 per 1,000 population age 15 years and older (see Table 2).

**TABLE 2**

Self-reported violent victimization, by type of offence, Canada, 1999, 2004 and 2009

Year	Sexual assault		Robbery		Physical assault	
	number (thousands)	rate <sup>1</sup>	number (thousands)	rate <sup>1</sup>	number (thousands)	rate <sup>1</sup>
1999	502	21	228	9*	1,961	81
2004	546	21	274	11	1,931	75
<b>2009<sup>†</sup></b>	<b>677</b>	<b>24</b>	<b>368</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>2,222</b>	<b>80</b>

<sup>†</sup> Reference Category

\* Significantly different from reference category ( p < 0.05 )

<sup>1</sup> Rates are calculated per 1,000 population age 15 years and older.

SOURCE: Statistics Canada, General Social Survey, 1999, 2004, 2009

- As seen in Table 2, Canadians reported similar rates of sexual assault victimization in 1999, 2004, and 2009. The majority (or 81%) of sexual assaults reported in GSS 2009 involved sexual touching, unwanted grabbing, kissing, or fondling. This trend reflects similar findings from police-reported data in 2010, where the majority (or 97%) of sexual assaults were level 1 incidents (see Table 1).

**TABLE 3**

Self-reported sexual assault, by victim's sex, Canada, 2009

Victim's sex	Sexual assault	
	number (thousands)	rate <sup>1</sup>
<b>Female<sup>†</sup></b>	<b>472</b>	<b>34</b>
Male	204 <sup>E</sup>	15 <sup>E*</sup>

<sup>E</sup> Use with caution

<sup>†</sup> Reference Category

\* Significantly different from reference category ( p < 0.05 )

<sup>1</sup> Rates are calculated per 1,000 population age 15 years and older.

SOURCE: Statistics Canada, General Social Survey, 2009

- From the 2009 self-reported survey, the rate for sexual assault victimization of females is twice the rate compared to males (See Table 3). Using the same GSS 2009 survey, over 70% of all sexual assaults self-reported in Canada involved a female victim over the age of 15 (or about 472,000).

- Self-reported victimization data shows that in 2009, 87% of sexual assault incidents were committed by a male offender which translates to about 510,000 individuals (see Table 4).

- In Nova Scotia, for the last five years (2006 to 2010), there has been 3,541 police-reported sexual assault victims which includes 3,010 (or 85%) women, and 519 (or 15%) men victims. (Note that the sex of 12 victims was not captured during the reporting.)

- Looking at who sexually assaulted Nova Scotian women in the last five years (2006-2010), according to police-reported data, 26% has been victimized by a casual acquaintance; 24% by a non-spousal family member; 13% by a stranger; 10% by a current or former spouse, or boyfriend or girlfriend; and 7% by a friend. (Note as well that the relationship between the victim and the accused was unknown for 17% of female victims who reported the violation to the police in Nova Scotia during that same time period.)

**TABLE 4**

Self-reported sexual assault, by offender's sex, Canada, 2009

Offender's sex	Sexual Assault	
	number (thousands)	percent
<b>Male</b>	<b>510</b>	<b>87%</b>
Female	75 <sup>E</sup>	13% <sup>E</sup>

<sup>E</sup> Use with caution

SOURCE: Statistics Canada, General Social Survey, 2009

