



Sexual Violence

Table 1

Police-reported sexual assault incidents, Nova Scotia and Canada, 2011

2011	Nova Scotia		Canada	
	number	percentage	number	Percentage
Sexual assault – level 1	694	98.0%	21,283	97.5%
Sexual assault – level 2 – weapon or bodily harm	6	0.8%	398	1.8%
Sexual assault – level 3 – aggravated	8	1.1%	140	0.6%
Total, sexual assault (levels 1, 2 and 3)	708	100.0%	21,821	100.0%

Source: Statistics Canada. *Table 252-0051 – Incident-based crime statistics, by detailed violations, annual (number unless otherwise noted), CANSIM (database).*

- In 2011, a total of 708 sexual assault incidents in Nova Scotia were reported to the police, where 98% were level 1 sexual assault.
- Police-reported data for Nova Scotia indicate that, in 2011, 82% of victims of sexual assault were female while 97% of suspects were male.
- Also in Nova Scotia for 2011, there were 105 police-reported incidents of sexual violations against children which translate to a rate of 11.11 per 100,000 population.

Table 2

Police-reported sexual assault rates, Nova Scotia and Canada, 2011

	Rates per 100,000 population					
	Nova Scotia			Canada		
	2001	2006	2011	2001	2006	2011
Sexual assault – level 1	88.58	84.43	73.41	75.96	66.54	61.72
Sexual assault – level 2 – weapon or bodily harm	1.07	1.07	0.63	1.03	1.19	1.15
Sexual assault – level 3 – Aggravated	0.54	0.32	0.85	0.52	0.56	0.41

Source: Statistics Canada. *Table 252-0051 – Incident-based crime statistics, by detailed violations, annual (number unless otherwise noted), CANSIM (database).*

- According to police-reported data, in the last decade, level 1 sexual assault rates per 100,000 population for both Nova Scotia and Canada are on a downward trend.
- According to Statistics Canada's General Social Survey (GSS), self-reported victimization data in Canada in 2009 show that 88% or close to 9 in 10 sexual assaults were not reported to the police (Perreault and Brennan, 2010). Under-reporting of sexual assault incidents continues to be an issue, and must be taken into consideration when interpreting police-reported data.

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 15 years of age or older. The victimization survey is administered 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.

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’.

Table 3
Self-reported sexual assault incidents and rates, Canada, 1999, 2004 and 2011

Year	Sexual assault	
	number (thousands)	rate ¹
1999	502	21
2004	546	21
2009	677	24

¹ Rates are calculated per 1,000 population age 15 years and older

Source: Statistics Canada. *General Social Survey*, 1999, 2004 and 2009

- As seen in Table 3, Canadians self-reported similar rates of sexual assault victimization in 1999, 2004 and 2009.
- The majority (81%) of sexual assaults reported in GSS 2009 involved sexual touching, unwanted grabbing, kissing, or fondling.
- From GSS 2009, 70% of all self-reported sexual assaults in Canada involved a female victim or about 472,000 female victims compared to 204,000² male victims.
- The rate of self-reported violent victimization among Aboriginal women was almost three times higher than the rate reported by non-Aboriginal women. The 2009 GSS found that nearly 67,000 or 13% of Aboriginal women aged 15 or older living in Canadian provinces self-reported that they had been a victim of sexual assault, robbery, and/or physical assault.
- 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.
- Derived from the Integrated Criminal Court Survey (ICCS) administered by Statistics Canada’s Canadian Centre for Justice Statistics (CCJS), there were 132 males accused and 2 females accused of sexual assault in adult criminal courts in Nova Scotia for the fiscal year 2010/2011.

² Use with caution

