



Domestic Violence

“DOMESTIC VIOLENCE is deliberate and purposeful violence, abuse, and intimidation perpetrated by one person against another in an intimate relationship. It occurs between two persons where one exercises power over the other, causing fear, physical, and/or psychological harm. It may be a single act or a series of acts forming a pattern of abuse. Domestic violence can occur in any relationship, however, women are primarily the victims and men are primarily the perpetrators. Children and young people may experience harm by being exposed to violence in adult relationships, being the direct victims of violence, or a combination of the two.”

(Domestic Violence Prevention Committee Report, 2009)

- In 2010, there were 3,255 victims of spousal and intimate partner violence, (or ‘domestic violence’) who reported the incident to the police in Nova Scotia. This includes 2,539 female victims (or 78%) and 704 male victims (or 22%) (see Figure 1). In other words, about four out of five victims of police-reported domestic violence in Nova Scotia are women. (Note that the sex of the victim was not captured for 12 of the victims during data collection.)

- Comparing how the incidence of domestic violence changed in Nova Scotia, in 2006, there were 2,270 victims. About 79% or 1,792 victims were women, and 20% or 463 were men (see Table 1). (Note that the sex of the victim was not captured for 15 of the victims during data collection.)

- From 2006 to 2010, the total number of police-reported domestic violence victims and domestic violence rates in Nova Scotia increased by 43.4% and 41.5% respectively (see Table 1).

Total police-reported spousal and intimate partner violence by sex of victim, Nova Scotia, 2010

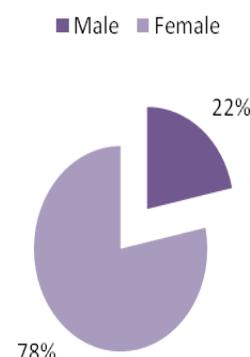


FIGURE 1

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

Table 1

Police-reported spousal intimate partner violence, Nova Scotia, 2006 and 2010

	Number		Percent Change
	2006	2010	
Total, victims of domestic violence	2,270	3,255	43.4%
Female victims of domestic violence	1,792	2,539	41.7%
Male victims of domestic violence	463	704	52.1%
Domestic violence rate, total, per 100,000 population	287	406	41.5%
Domestic violence rate, for female victims, per 100,000 population	438	609	39.0%
Domestic violence rate, for male victims, per 100,000 population	121	183	51.2%

SOURCE: Statistics Canada, CCJS, UCR2 2006 and 2010.



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 age 15 and over every five years (i.e., GSS 1999, 2004 and 2009). Definitions are important in survey data collection. Accordingly, a **SPOUSE** is defined to include legally married, common-law, separated and divorced partners. **AN INTIMATE PARTNER** includes a current or former boyfriend or girlfriend, and other intimate relationships such as 'extramarital lover', and 'estranged lover'.

- To many victims of spousal violence, however, disclosing the situation to others can be very difficult. According to the most recent self-reported survey on victimization (GSS 2009), only 15.2% of victims who experienced spousal violence reported the incident to the police. This is less than the previous two self-reported surveys in 1999 and 2004, where 19.4% and 19.0% of the victims reported the incident to the police respectively (see Table 2).

Table 2

Victims of self-reported spousal violence within the past 5 years who reported incident to the police, Canada, 1999, 2004 and 2009

Respondent reported incident to the police	1999		2004		2009 ¹	
	number	percent	number	percent	number	percent
Yes	240,000	19.4*	228,000	19.0*	180,000	15.2
No	962,000	77.6	962,000	80.2	996,000	84.0
No answer	37,000	3.0	10,000	0.8	10,000	0.8
Total	1,239,000	100.0	1,200,000	100.0	1,186,000	100.0

* significant difference from reference group (p < 0.05)

1 Reference group

SOURCE: Statistics Canada, GSS 1999, 2004 and 2009

- In 2009, there were 31,000 victims in Nova Scotia who self-reported that they have experienced spousal violence within the past five years.
- Consistent with previous GSS victimization cycles, women continued to report more serious forms of domestic violence in 2009. Female victims of self-reported domestic violence in Canada were about three times more likely than their male counterparts to report that they have been sexually assaulted, beaten, choked, or threatened by a gun or a knife by their current or former partner.
- In 2009, a one-day snapshot of 402 adult male offenders in Nova Scotia's correctional facilities revealed that just under one-third were in custody for domestic violence including 100 offenders who were considered to be at high risk for lethality.
- Statistics Canada's Transition Home Survey, taken on April 15, 2010, found that 84% of women in shelters in Nova Scotia that day were in the shelter because of abuse by a current or former spouse or common-law partner.

Table 3

Police-reported intimate partner homicide, Canada, 2009 and 2010

Type of intimate partner homicide	Year	
	2009	2010
Spousal* homicide	65	65
Intimate partner** homicide	23	24
Total, intimate partner homicide	88	89

* Includes both current and former, legal and common-law spouses.

** Includes both current and former boyfriend or girlfriend.

SOURCE: Statistics Canada, CCJS, Homicide Survey, 2009 and 2010

- In 2010, there were 89 spousal and intimate partner homicides (see Table 3).

- According to Statistics Canada, the rate of spousal and intimate partner homicide in Canada has decreased by 32% in the last three decades (i.e., from 1980 to 2010).

