

Sexual Assault/Abuse & Stats

What is sexual assault/sexual abuse?

Because of the trauma associated with an experience of sexual assault/abuse and the social stigma surrounding the crime, many sexual assault/abuse victims feel confused and tend to downplay or minimize their experiences.

Sexual Assault: includes any form of sexual activity without a person's consent.

This may include:

- Any kissing, fondling, touching, oral/anal sex or sexual intercourse without consent
- Not stopping sexual contact when asked to
- Forcing someone to engage in sexual intercourse or any other sexual act

(Department of Justice Canada, 2005b)

Sexual abuse and exploitation involves using a child for sexual purposes.

Examples of child sexual abuse include fondling, inviting a child to touch or be touched sexually, intercourse, rape, incest, sodomy, exhibitionism, or involving a child in prostitution or pornography

(Department of Justice Canada, 2005a)

Stalking includes being followed or spied on, receiving threatening and/or unwanted phone calls, e-mails, letters and unwanted gifts.

This is repeated on numerous occasions and in general serves no legitimate purpose but to cause the recipient to fear for their own safety

(Department of Justice Canada, 2005c)

Sexual harassment is any unwelcome behavior, sexual in nature, that adversely affects, or threatens to affect, directly or indirectly, a person's job security, working conditions or prospects for promotion or earnings; or prevents a person from getting a job, living accommodations or any kind of public service.

Suggestive remarks, sexual jokes or compromising invitations;

- verbal abuse
- visual display of suggestive images
- leering or whistling
- patting, rubbing or other unwanted physical contact
- outright demands for sexual favors
- physical assault

(Alberta Human Rights and Citizenship Commission, 2004)

Who is at risk of sexual assault / sexual abuse?

Survivors of sexual assault/abuse are boys and girls, women and men, young and old.

39% of Canadian women have experienced at least one incident of sexual assault since the age of 16
(Statistics Canada, 1993).

8% of adult victims of sexual assault

were men, reported to 154 police agencies across Canada

(Canadian Centre for Justice Statistics, 2003).

The most extensive study of child sexual abuse in Canada was conducted by the Committee on Sexual Offenses Against Children and Youths

(Badgley, 1988).

Study findings indicated that, among adult Canadians,

- 53 percent of women and
- 31 percent of men were sexually abused when they were children.

Who commits sexual assault/abuse?

Strangers were the assailants in 20% of sexual assaults reported to the police in 2003

(Canadian Centre for Justice Statistics)

All other assaults were committed by someone known to the survivor with the highest proportion of acquaintance assaults (41%) committed by a casual acquaintance of the survivor.

Children aged 12 and under are most often victimized by family members especially in the case of girls

(Canadian Centre for Justice Statistics, 2003)

In reported sexual assaults, 97% of sex offenders are men

(Canadian Centre for Justice Statistics, 2003)

Sobsey (1994) found that almost half of the perpetrators of abuse against people with disabilities made contact with the abuse survivor through services related to the survivor's disability.

Where are people at risk of sexual assault/abuse?

In 1993, Alberta had the second highest rate of sexual assault in Canada (Statistics Canada)

In 2003, police reported sexual offenses were highest in Saskatoon, Sudbury and Regina.

Edmonton ranked 10th and Calgary ranked 19th out of 25 Canadian

cities

(Canadian Centre for Justice Statistics, 2003)

Of sexual assaults reported to police in Canada in 2002, 64% took place in a residence, 26% in a public place, and 11% in commercial places

(Canadian Centre for Justice Statistics, 2003)