Gender-based Violence (GBV) against Indigenous Peoples in Canada: A Snapshot

Many Indigenous women, girls and 2SLGBTQQIA+ people experience higher rates of GBV. Legacies of colonialism, historical trauma, intergenerational transmission of violence, and anti-Indigenous racism can exacerbate violence against Indigenous Peoples.

Sexual Violence

Indigenous women are more likely than non-Indigenous women to have experienced sexual assault since age 15.

In 2018, rates of sexual assault in the previous 12 months against Indigenous women were more than 3 times higher than among non-Indigenous women.

Intimate Partner Violence

Indigenous women are significantly more likely than non-Indigenous women to have experienced intimate partner violence since age 15.

A significantly higher proportion of Indigenous than non-Indigenous women have experienced either physical or sexual abuse by an intimate partner since age 15.

In 2018, 17% of Indigenous women said they had experienced intimate partner violence in the previous 12 months.

Indigenous women account for approximately 5% of all women in Canada but accounted for 21% of all women killed by an intimate partner from 2014 to 2019.

Due to intersecting forms of discrimination and inequality, some groups of Indigenous women are at even greater risk of experiencing GBV.

Intimate partner violence since age 15 among groups of Indigenous women

Sources: Unless otherwise indicated, all data are from the Survey of Safety in Public and Private Spaces (SSPPS), 2018. Some SSPPS data are from custom tabulations that are not available online.

1. Two Spirit, lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer, questioning, intersex and asexual plus people.
2. All experiences of violence presented on this infographic are self-reported, except homicide data.
3. Some distinctions-based data are available for them to be presented in this infographic. Other data are not available due to low response rates. Data collected should be used to inform culturally appropriate research.
4. Intimate partner violence for 12 months refers to the 12 months preceding the respondent's completion of the Survey of Safety in Public and Private Spaces. Data non-Indigenous women.
5. Intimate partner violence includes emotional, psychological, physical, sexual or financial abuse.
7. All respondents included in the following statistics identified their gender as female.
8. This is the Statistics Canada term used for analysis and presentation of SSPPS data. It refers to “those whose sexual orientation was lesbian, gay, bisexual, or another sexual orientation that was not heterosexual. Also includes respondents whose sex at birth did not align with their gender (i.e., they are transgender).”

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