



Just Facts

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Research and Statistics Division

Victimization of Indigenous Children and Youth

Higher proportion of Indigenous people self-report experiencing a form of childhood maltreatment

A higher proportion of Indigenous people self-reported experiencing some form of childhood physical and/or sexual maltreatment before the age of 15 compared to their non-Indigenous counterparts (40% and 29%, respectively). Survey results also showed some differences in the prevailing types of childhood maltreatment between Indigenous men and women. More specifically, Indigenous women were more likely than Indigenous men to self-report experiencing 'both physical and sexual maltreatment' as a child (14% and 5%^{E1}, respectively); Indigenous men were more likely than Indigenous women to self-report experiencing 'physical maltreatment only' as a child (31% and 21%, respectively).²

A family member is a common perpetrator in maltreatment cases

In cases of physical child maltreatment, a family member was most frequently self-reported as the adult perpetrator for Indigenous people and non-Indigenous people (74% and 70%, respectively). In cases of sexual child maltreatment, for Indigenous and non-Indigenous people a family member (44% and 37%, respectively) or an acquaintance (35% and 38%, respectively) was more often self-reported as the adult responsible.³

High number of Indigenous children in foster care

In 2011, close to half (48%) of all children under the age of 15 in foster care were Indigenous, whereas Indigenous children under the age of 15 represented only 7% of the overall population of 14 year olds and younger.⁴ The *Canadian Incidence Study of Reported Child Abuse and Neglect*⁵ found that 22% of substantiated cases of child abuse and neglect involved children with an "Indigenous heritage". Several reports have "shown that *neglect* is the most commonly substantiated form of maltreatment for investigations involving First Nations children, whereas *exposure to domestic violence* is the most commonly substantiated form of maltreatment for investigations involving non-Aboriginal children."⁶

Higher levels of Indigenous people have witnessed violence committed by a parent, step-parent or guardian as a child

The 2014 GSS on Victimization showed that 21% of Indigenous people in the provinces self-report witnessing violence committed by a parent, step-parent or guardian as a child compared to 10% of non-



Indigenous people in the provinces. The 2014 GSS also highlights that 17% of respondents in the territories self-report witnessing violence committed by a parent, step-parent or guardian as a child.^{7, 8}

High self-reported prevalence of Indigenous Youth Victimization

National data show that self-reported rates of victimization are higher among youth and then decrease as age increases.⁹ According to Boyce (2016)¹⁰, the violent victimization¹¹ rate for Indigenous people aged 15 to 24 was 330^E per 1,000 population aged 15-24, 136^E per 1,000 population aged 25-44, and 89^E per 1,000 population aged 45 and older. In comparison, the violent victimization rate for non-Indigenous people was 155 per 1,000 population aged 15 to 24 years old, 92 per 1,000 population aged 25-44 and 38 per 1,000 population aged 45 and older. It is important to note that the rate of 330^E per 1,000 population aged 15 to 24 for Indigenous people was significantly different than for non-Indigenous people.

Gap in research

Despite some additions to the GSS, there is a general lack of Indigenous-specific data on child and youth victimization.

¹ "E" is identified by Statistics Canada as "use with caution".

² Boyce, J. "Victimization of Aboriginal people in Canada, 2014." *Juristat*. Statistics Canada Catalogue no. 85-002-X. 2016.

³ Ibid.

⁴ Turner, A. "Living arrangements of Aboriginal children aged 14 and under." *Insights on Canadian Society*. Statistics Canada Catalogue no. 75-006-X, 2016.

⁵ Trocmé, N., et al. "Canadian Incidence Study of Reported Child Abuse and Neglect, 2008: Major Findings." Ottawa: Public Health Agency of Canada, 2010.

⁶ First Nations Child and Family Caring Society of Canada. "Information Sheet: Research Summary on First Nations Child Welfare." Online: First Nations <https://fncaringsociety.com/sites/default/files/ResearchSummary-FirstNationChildWelfare.pdf>.

⁷ Burczykca, M. Trends in self-reported spousal violence in Canada, 2014. *Juristat*. Statistics Canada Catalogue no. 85-002-X, 2016; Perreault, S. and Simpson, L. "Criminal victimization in the Territories, 2014." *Juristat*. Statistics Canada Catalogue no. 85-002-X, 2016.

⁸ Respondent in the territories were not separated by Indigenous and non-Indigenous people.

⁹ Perreault, S. "Criminal victimization in Canada, 2014." *Juristat*. Statistics Canada Catalogue no. 85-002-X, 2015.

¹⁰ Boyce, J. 2016.

¹¹ Self-reported victimization in the past 12 months.

