

Get all the Facts

Violent Victimization of Women with Disabilities, 2014

- Rates of violent victimization were higher among women and men with a disability compared to Canadians who did not have a disability, regardless of the type of disability.
- Women and men with a cognitive disability or mental health-related disability had a rate of violent victimization about four times higher than among those who did not have a disability.
- Women with a mental health-related or cognitive disability had rates four times higher compared to those without a disability (261 per 1,000 and 241¹ per 1,000, respectively, versus 65 per 1,000). Rates of violent victimization were also higher among men: 4.5 times higher among men with a cognitive disability (259¹) and 3 times higher among those with a mental health-related disability (193) when compared to men who did not have a disability (58).
- Women and men with a sensory or physical disability had a rate of violent victimization roughly twice as high as those who did not have a disability.
- Four in ten (40%) Canadians with a disability were physically and/or sexually abused during their childhood, compared to about one-quarter (27%) of those who did not have a disability.
- Almost half (46%) of all Canadian women who reported having ever experienced homelessness had a disability, as did nearly four in ten (37%) men.
- Almost a quarter (23%) of women with a disability experienced emotional, financial, physical or sexual violence or abuse committed by a current or former partner in the past 5 years, a similar proportion as men with a disability (22%). For both women and men, this was roughly two times higher when compared to those without a disability.
- For the 12 months preceding the survey, Canadians with a disability reported a rate of violent victimization about twice as high as those who did not report a disability. Women 15 years of age and older with a disability had 137 incidents of violent victimization for every 1,000, compared to 65 incidents per 1,000 women without a disability. The rate for men with a disability was also close to double that of men who did not have a disability (105 versus 58).
- Women with a disability (56 incidents per 1,000 population) were close to twice as likely as women without a disability (29 per 1,000) and about 14 times more likely than men without a disability (4¹ per 1,000) to have been sexually assaulted.
- The odds of violent victimization among women with a disability who identified as lesbian, gay, or bisexual were 2.3 times higher than among heterosexual women with a disability. Sexual orientation did not impact the risk of violent victimization for men with a disability.
- Aboriginal persons with a disability were more likely than non-Aboriginal persons with a disability to have been violently victimized in the past 12 months (206¹ incidents per 1,000 versus 120 per 1,000).
- One in five (18%) women with a disability reported that an adult touched them in a sexual way before the age of 15, a proportion double that of women without a disability (9%). The same pattern was evident among men with a disability but at a lower prevalence.

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- Women and men with a disability who were physically abused as children were more likely to report having been violently victimized in the 12 months preceding the survey:
 - Women were almost twice as likely (199 incidents per 1,000 population versus 110).
 - Men were three times more likely (174 per 1,000 compared with 57). Men with a physical disability or a cognitive disability who had been physically abused during their childhood reported a rate close to 4 times higher.
- The proportion of those with a disability who had experienced homelessness of any kind was about double that of those without a disability, for both men and women
- Incidents of violent victimization of people with a disability tended to involve a male perpetrator (85%), an offender under the age of 35 (65%), and a lone offender (72%).
- One in five persons with a disability (22% of women and 21% of men) reported that they were emotionally or financially abused by a current or former partner with whom they had contact in the past 5 years, approximately double what was reported by persons without a disability (11% of women and 13% of men).
- Women without a disability were slightly less likely than men to have experienced any form of spousal violence or abuse (11% and 14%, respectively), though women in general are most likely to experience the most serious forms of spousal violence, such as being sexually assaulted, beaten, choked, or threatened with a weapon.
- Women with a cognitive disability were more likely than men to have been a victim of violence or abuse by a current or former spouse or common-law partner: More than four in ten (43%) women with a cognitive disability were victims of some form of abuse or violence, compared to approximately one-quarter (27%) of men.
- Most notably, 71% of women with a disability used or contacted some sort of victims' service as a result of spousal violence, significantly higher than women who did not have a disability (44%) or men with or without a disability (29%¹ and 17%¹, respectively).

<https://www150.statcan.gc.ca/n1/pub/85-002-x/2018001/article/54910-eng.htm>

¹ Use with caution.

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