

statistics on adult victims of violent crime in 1991, reported by 15 Canadian police departments, indicate that women are now as likely as men to be victims of violent offences and the majority of these offences occur in their home.<sup>8</sup>

The 1991 data reveal gender differences in the relationship between the victim and the assailant and in the location of the victimization. Women were more likely to be victimized by spouses or ex-spouses (43%) while this was the case for only 3% of male victims. More than one half (51%) of the males were victimized by strangers compared to 20% of the female victims. Sixty-two percent of incidents of violence against women occurred in their residence. Men, on the other hand, were more often victimized outdoors (43%) or in a public place (27%). Young offenders made up 23% of those charged under the *Criminal Code* in 1991; two-thirds were charged with crimes against property. The caseload in youth court during 1991-92 (excluding the provinces of Ontario and British Columbia), increased by 15% over 1990-91 and by 35% over 1986-87. The most common offence heard in youth court was theft under \$1000 (21%), followed by break and enter (15%).<sup>9</sup>

### A. Crimes of Violence

Nationally, there were 296,838 violent offences known to police in 1991, of which 87% were assaults. Of the total assault offences 12% were sexual assaults and 88% non-sexual assaults. The majority of assaults did not involve a weapon or result in serious injury. The violent crime rate was 1,099 violent crime offences per 100,000 population, representing an 8% increase over the 1990 rate.

Robbery, which accounted for 11% of violent offences, was the next most frequent crime of violence known to police. The robbery rate of 123 offences per 100,000 population represents an increase of 16% over the 1990 rate.

Of the known violent offences in 1991, homicides represented less than 1% (0.3%) of the total. The national homicide rate during that year was 2.8 offences (or victims) per 100,000 population. The 1991 rate is 7% higher than the average homicide rate of 2.6 per 100,000 population for the previous ten years.

### B. Property Crimes

There were 1,726,726 crimes against property in 1991. The national rate of property crime was 6,395 offences per 100,000 population. The 1991 rate is 9% higher than the property offence rate recorded in 1981.

<sup>8</sup> Official counts of crime in Canada are provided by all police forces from across the country through a system of Uniform Crime Reports (UCR). The UCR system provides similar, comparable and national crime statistics. However, these statistics do not provide information on the characteristics of crime incidents or of victims and accused. A "revised" UCR survey is being tested by Statistics Canada in a number of non-randomly selected police departments. The "revised" survey captures information on criminal incidents reported to police and the characteristics of both victims and offenders. The data from these survey must be treated with caution because they are not derived from a representative sample of police departments and are therefore not indicative of any national or regional trends in Canada. (Statistics Canada, Canadian Centre for Justice Statistics, *Juristat, Gender Differences Among Violent Crime Victims*, Vol 12, No. 21, Cat. 85-002, Minister of Industry, Science and Technology, Ottawa, November 1992).

<sup>9</sup> Statistics Canada, Canadian Centre for Justice Statistics, *Juristat, Youth Court Statistics 1991-92 Highlights*, Vol. 12, No. 16, Minister of Industry, Science and Technology, Ottawa, September 1992.