

The incidence of violence perpetrated against women in this country received a considerable amount of attention from many witnesses. They presented the Committee with a shocking array of statistics derived from official data sources, victimization and public attitude surveys and special studies of emergency service providers.

- In 1989, 12,970 sexual assaults were known to the police. Between 1983 and 1989, the number of complaints of sexual assault made to the police increased by 93%. Every 17 minutes there is a sexual assault committed in Canada and 90% of the victims are female. One in four women will be sexually assaulted at some time in their lives, half before the age of 17. Between 63% and 83% of female victims will be sexually assaulted by someone they know. There are between 14,000 and 18,000 sexual assaults in the province of Quebec every year.
- Of aboriginal women surveyed in a recent study by the Ontario Native Women's Association, 80% had been assaulted or abused. In Toronto secondary schools, 20% of girls reported having been sexually assaulted and 11% reported physical violence while dating. One study reported that 53% of women who have been disabled from birth had been raped, abused, or assaulted. In the province of Quebec, of the requests for assistance received by sexual assault centres, 40% to 50% are from women who are incest survivors. Approximately 60% of women physically or sexually assaulted by their husbands or partners are injured, and 20% require medical attention. At least 50% of women are afraid to walk on their own streets at night unaccompanied.
- At least 1 in 10 women is physically and/or sexually assaulted each year by a husband, ex-husband or live-in partner. A woman is hit by a husband or partner an average of 30 times before she even calls the police. In any given year, if a woman is assaulted by a man in the community, it is 13 times more likely to be her partner than a stranger. In 1989, in Ontario, 78 transition houses accommodated 9,838 women, accompanied by 11,000 children, and 87% of the families were in an emergency shelter because of domestic violence. Osborne House, one of the largest shelters in Canada, provided emergency shelter to 2,000 women and children in the city of Winnipeg in 1989. The husband is the victim of battering in no more than 5% of all assaults by one spouse against another.
- In 1989, 48% of Canadians reported that they personally knew of situations in which women were physically abused by husbands or live-in partners. Of children who have lived in a shelter, 25% indicated, before counselling, that it was appropriate for a man to strike a woman if the house was messy. Of the total number of adults and juveniles charged by the police for crimes of violence in 1989, 89% were males. A study done in London, Ontario, in 1987, found that over 50% of young offenders