

Recent release from the National Clearinghouse on Family Violence: NCFV E-Bulletin - July 2008

### **Same-Sex Partner Violence**

The July edition of the E-bulletin focuses on violence which occurs in same-sex relationships. The unique circumstances and needs of men and women who experience same-sex partner violence are starting to be examined in the research community and recognized by health and social service providers. This issue highlights some of this important work.

### **Fast Facts**

Spousal Abuse among Same-Sex Partners  
According to Statistics Canada:

The 2004 General Social Survey on Victimization found that while the overall proportion of those who experienced spousal violence and who indicated that they were gay or lesbian was low, the rate of spousal violence reported between same-sex couples was twice the rate of violence between heterosexual couples (15% versus 7%).

Analysis of a 10-year police-reported linked file showed that 2.5% of police-reported incidents of spousal violence occurred between same-sex couples. The proportion of these incidents in which the couples were gay males was two-and-a-half times that of lesbian couples (72% versus 28%). Note that these data may undercount the prevalence of violence between same-sex couples as police may code the relationship as something other than current or ex-spouse (e.g., boyfriend or girlfriend).

Seventy percent (70%) of spousal incidents between same-sex couples reported to police between 1995 and 2004 were single incidents, compared to 62% among heterosexual couples. Heterosexual couples are at slightly increased risk of repeated spousal abuse (33% versus 27%) and chronic abuse (5% versus 4%) compared to same-sex couples.

Source: Statistics Canada. Canadian Centre for Justice Statistics. Family Violence in Canada: A Statistical Profile 2005 and Family Violence in Canada: A Statistical Profile 2006 (Cat. No.85-224-XIE)

1. The results of the survey describe rates of violence committed against those who self-identified as gay/lesbian, but does not distinguish the sexual orientation of the perpetrator.
2. Use with caution, coefficient of variation is high (16.6% to 33.3%).
3. The composite data file linked all spousal violence incidents reported to selected police services over a 10-year period, from 1995 to 2004.

<http://www.statcan.gc.ca/pub/85-224-x/85-224-x2005000-eng.pdf>

## Sexual Orientation and Victimization Stats Canada, 2004

### Highlights

- According to the 2004 General Social Survey (GSS), gays, lesbians and bisexuals reported experiencing higher rates of violent victimization including sexual assault, robbery and physical assault, than did their heterosexual counterparts.
- Despite experiencing higher rates of violence, gays, lesbians and bisexuals did not express higher levels of fear than did heterosexuals. Regardless of sexual orientation, about 9 out of 10 Canadians indicated that they were “somewhat” or “very” satisfied with their personal safety from crime.
- Gays, lesbians and bisexuals expressed lower levels of satisfaction with police performance than their heterosexual counterparts. For example, fewer gays, lesbians and bisexuals felt that the police were doing a good job of treating people fairly compared to heterosexuals (42% of gays/lesbians and 47% of bisexuals versus 60% of heterosexuals).
- The proportion of gays, lesbians and bisexuals who felt they had experienced discrimination was about 3 times higher than that of heterosexuals. Furthermore, 78% of gays and lesbians who experienced discrimination believed it was because of their sexual orientation compared to 29% of bisexuals and 2% of heterosexuals.

<http://www.statcan.gc.ca/pub/85f0033m/2008016/5002051-eng.htm>