

## **Profile of Canadians who experienced victimization during childhood, 2018**

by Loanna Heidinger

Release date: December 12, 2022



Statistics  
Canada

Statistique  
Canada

**Canada**

---

## How to obtain more information

For information about this product or the wide range of services and data available from Statistics Canada, visit our website, [www.statcan.gc.ca](http://www.statcan.gc.ca).

You can also contact us by

**Email at** [infostats@statcan.gc.ca](mailto:infostats@statcan.gc.ca)

**Telephone**, from Monday to Friday, 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m., at the following numbers:

- Statistical Information Service 1-800-263-1136
- National telecommunications device for the hearing impaired 1-800-363-7629
- Fax line 1-514-283-9350

## Standards of service to the public

Statistics Canada is committed to serving its clients in a prompt, reliable and courteous manner. To this end, Statistics Canada has developed standards of service that its employees observe. To obtain a copy of these service standards, please contact Statistics Canada toll-free at 1-800-263-1136. The service standards are also published on [www.statcan.gc.ca](http://www.statcan.gc.ca) under "Contact us" > "[Standards of service to the public](#)."

## Note of appreciation

Canada owes the success of its statistical system to a long-standing partnership between Statistics Canada, the citizens of Canada, its businesses, governments and other institutions. Accurate and timely statistical information could not be produced without their continued co-operation and goodwill.

Published by authority of the Minister responsible for Statistics Canada

© His Majesty the King in Right of Canada as represented by the Minister of Industry, 2022

All rights reserved. Use of this publication is governed by the Statistics Canada [Open Licence Agreement](#).

An [HTML version](#) is also available.

*Cette publication est aussi disponible en français.*

---

## Profile of Canadians who experienced victimization during childhood, 2018: Highlights

- Results from the Survey on Safety in Public and Private Spaces (SSPPS) found that about three in ten (27%) Canadians over age 15 have experienced childhood victimization, that is at least one instance of physical or sexual abuse by an adult before age 15.
- Women (28%) were slightly more likely to have been physically or sexually abused during childhood compared with men (26%).
- Physical abuse was the most commonly experienced childhood victimization with approximately one in four (24%) Canadians having experienced at least one type of physical abuse during childhood.
- Sexual abuse during childhood was less common, with almost one in ten (7.8%) Canadians experiencing at least one type of sexual abuse prior to age 15.
- The majority (69%) of Canadians who were physically abused as children reported that the most serious incident was perpetrated by a parent or step-parent.
- The majority of Canadians who were sexually abused as a child stated that the perpetrator of the most serious incident was another adult other than a parent or step-parent.
- Among Canadians who experienced childhood victimization, fewer than one in ten (7.7%) indicated that before age 15 they had reported any of the abuse experienced to police or child protection services.
- A higher proportion of individuals who experienced multiple types of abusive behaviours reported the abuse to police or child protection services.
- The likelihood of having experienced childhood victimization were higher among Indigenous peoples, older adult cohorts, and lesbian, gay or bisexual individuals.
- The likelihood of negative adult outcomes, including poor mental and physical health, drug and alcohol use, and subsequent victimization in adulthood, were higher among those with a history of childhood victimization.

# Profile of Canadians who experienced victimization during childhood, 2018

by Loanna Heidinger

Childhood victimization is a public health concern associated with numerous adverse outcomes across the life course. The short- and long-term consequences of having experienced victimization, physical or sexual abuse, during childhood are well documented. Childhood victimization may impact early development causing disruptions in cognitive growth and in the development of the central nervous system (Avison 2010; Edwards 2018). In adulthood, a history of childhood victimization is associated with poor mental and physical health, low economic attainment, and substance use (Dong et al., 2003; Ferraro et al., 2016; Heidinger & Willson, 2021; Schafer et al., 2011). Childhood victimization also contributes to the intergenerational cycle of abuse, whereby children who experience abuse are more likely to become abusers (Greene et al., 2020) or to be abused during adulthood (Cotter, 2021a; Cotter, 2021b). In severe cases, childhood victimization can lead to injury or result in death.

Although an abundance of research exists on the impact of childhood victimization on various child and adult outcomes, a reliance on police-reported experiences of childhood abuse may hinder a complete understanding of childhood victimization in Canada. More specifically, police-reported data are limited to incidents of childhood abuse that have come to the attention of police; however, the majority of instances of childhood abuse are not reported to police or other authorities. Underreporting may be due to children not understanding the problematic or criminal nature of the abuse, especially when the abuse does not meet the criminal threshold (Finkelhor et al., 2001; Taylor & Gassner, 2010). In addition, childhood abuse is often perpetrated by a known and trusted adult, contributing to the complexity of reporting the abuse, especially in circumstances where the abuser threatens the child. Children may also be afraid of reporting instances of abuse due to the unknown consequences of reporting or may be discouraged or unable to report instances due to a lack of social support or available resources. Lastly, younger children, especially those under the age of 5, may not be able to verbalize or articulate in words what has occurred.

Outside of police-reported data, ethical constraints may limit the collection of alternative data gathered directly from children who experience abuse. Instead, data on childhood victimization can be collected retrospectively from adults. Retrospective data may avoid ethical concerns, and the difficulty associated with the potential traumatic impact of asking minors about their experiences of victimization. Self-reported data on past instances and experiences of childhood victimization allow for adult retrospective accounts of incidents that may not have come to the attention of police or other authorities and remains a reliable approach to investigating the experience and impact of childhood victimization in Canada.

This *Juristat* article presents estimates of self-reported experiences of childhood victimization using data from the 2018 Survey of Safety in Public and Private Spaces (SSPPS). The SSPPS asks Canadians over age 15 to report on instances of victimization during childhood, that is any experience of physical or sexual abuse by an adult before age 15. Using retrospective data from the SSPPS, the current article examines factors associated with an elevated likelihood of experiencing childhood victimization and further identifies outcomes that are associated with experiences of childhood victimization, including mental and physical health outcomes, drug and alcohol use, and subsequent victimization in adulthood. The article also includes information on additional experiences of child maltreatment, including experiences of emotional abuse and neglect and witnessing violence in the home. While child maltreatment is an important predictor of adult outcomes, the present article focuses on childhood victimization or experiences of physical or sexual abuse during childhood.

## **Text box 1** **Defining and measuring childhood victimization**

### **Childhood victimization**

The Survey of Safety in Public and Private Spaces (SSPPS) collected retrospective information about circumstances and experiences of physical and sexual abuse during childhood, referred to in this article as childhood victimization. Canadians over age 15 were asked to report on any instances of physical or sexual abuse by an adult – such as a parent, other family member, friend, neighbour or other adult – occurring before age 15. For the present study, a single incident of physical or sexual abuse by an adult during childhood meets the criteria for childhood victimization.

Physical abuse includes having ever experienced any of the following physically abusive behaviours or indicators by an adult before age 15: an adult slapped you on the face, head or ears, or hit you with something hard to hurt you; an adult pushed, grabbed, shoved or threw something at you to hurt you; or an adult kicked, bit, punched, choked, burned, or physically attacked you in some way.

Similarly, sexual abuse includes having ever experienced any of the following sexually abusive behaviours or indicators by an adult before age 15: an adult forced or attempted to force you into any unwanted sexual activity by threatening you, holding you down or hurting you in some way; or an adult touched you against your will in any sexual way, meaning anything from unwanted touching or grabbing to kissing or fondling.

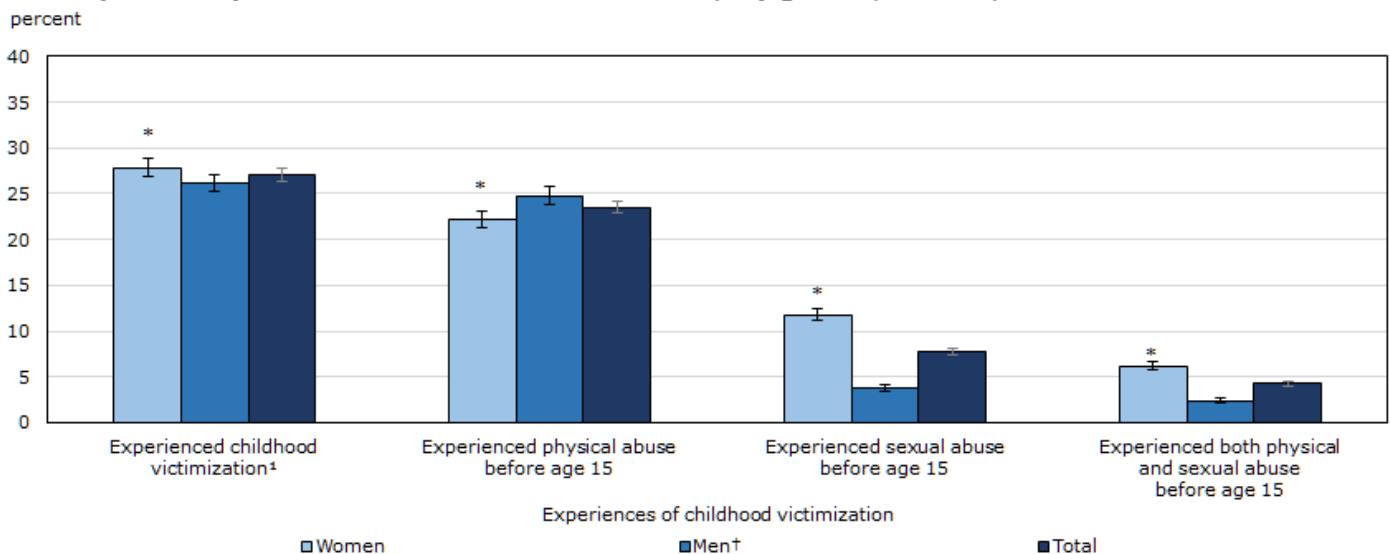
Childhood victimization is comprised of the above abusive behaviours or indicators of either physical or sexual violence. While any instance of these abusive behaviours makes up the total measure of childhood victimization, these abusive behaviours are also considered separately in subsequent analyses. In particular, the frequency or repeated instances of abusive behaviours, as well as the experience of multiple types of abusive behaviours are considered in the article.

Childhood victimization is often considered a severe and overt form of child maltreatment that may reach the threshold of a criminal offense. While other aspects of child maltreatment, such as neglect, may also be considered as family violence, they are not often included in measures of violence against children since these circumstances may be due to socioeconomic or cultural differences outside of the control of the family that may result in unintentional harms to a child. The SSPPS also collected data on these other facets of child maltreatment, such as harsh parenting and neglect, and witnessing violence in the home (see Text box 2 and Text box 3 for more information).

### About three in ten Canadians have experienced childhood victimization

Results from the SSPPS found that about three in ten (27%) Canadians over age 15 have experienced childhood victimization, which includes at least one instance of physical or sexual abuse by an adult—such as a parent, other family member, friend, neighbour or other adult—before age 15 (Table 1; Chart 1). Overall, women (28%) were slightly more likely to have been physically or sexually abused compared with men (26%).<sup>1</sup>

**Chart 1**  
**Self-reported experiences of childhood victimization, by gender, Canada, 2018**



\* significantly different from reference category (p < 0.05)

† reference category

1. Childhood victimization constitutes any instance of physical or sexual abuse by an adult – such as a parent, other family member, friend, neighbour or other adult – occurring before the age of 15.

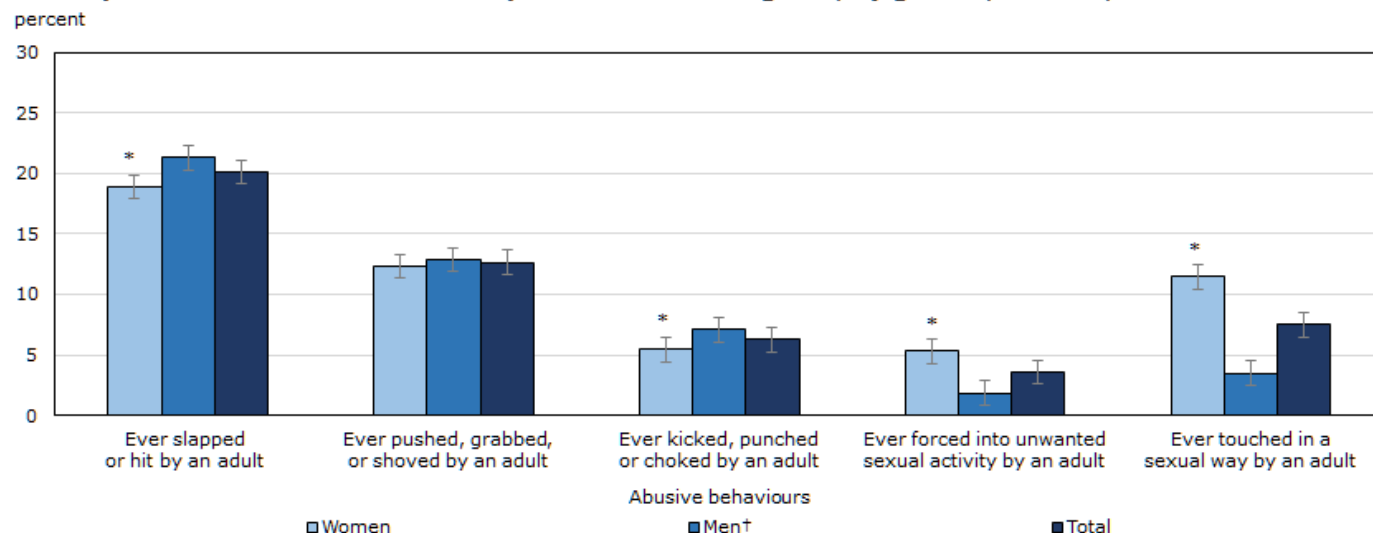
Source: Statistics Canada, Survey of Safety in Public and Private Spaces.

### Physical abuse most common type of childhood victimization experienced

Physical abuse was the most commonly experienced type of childhood victimization. Approximately one in four (24%) Canadians experienced at least one type of physical abuse during childhood. Men were slightly more likely to have been physically abused during childhood with one-quarter of men (25%) having experienced this abuse compared with about two in ten women (22%; Table 1).

Men were also more likely than women to have experienced certain physically abusive behaviours by an adult during childhood. More specifically, men were more likely to have been slapped or hit by an adult (21% versus 19% of women) or to have been kicked, punched, or choked by an adult (7.1% versus 5.4%) before age 15. Similar proportions of men (13%) and women (12%) reported having been pushed, grabbed, or shoved by an adult during childhood (Chart 2).

**Chart 2**  
**Self-reported abusive behaviours experienced before age 15, by gender, Canada, 2018**



\* significantly different from reference category (p < 0.05)

† reference category

Source: Statistics Canada, Survey of Safety in Public and Private Spaces.

### Sexual abuse during childhood much more prevalent among women

Compared to physical abuse, sexual abuse during childhood was less common, with almost one in ten (7.8%) Canadians experiencing at least one type of sexual abuse prior to age 15. Women (12%) were three times more likely than men (3.7%) to have been sexually abused by an adult during childhood. More specifically, women were about three times more likely to have been forced into unwanted sexual activity by an adult (5.3% versus 1.9% of men) and almost four times more likely to have been touched in a sexual way by an adult (11% versus 3.5%).

Among Canadians who experienced childhood victimization, about one in six (16%; 4.3% of all Canadians) were both physically and sexually abused. Women (22%; 6.2% of all women) were more than two times more likely than men (9.0%; 2.4% of all men) to have been both physically and sexually abused by an adult before age 15.

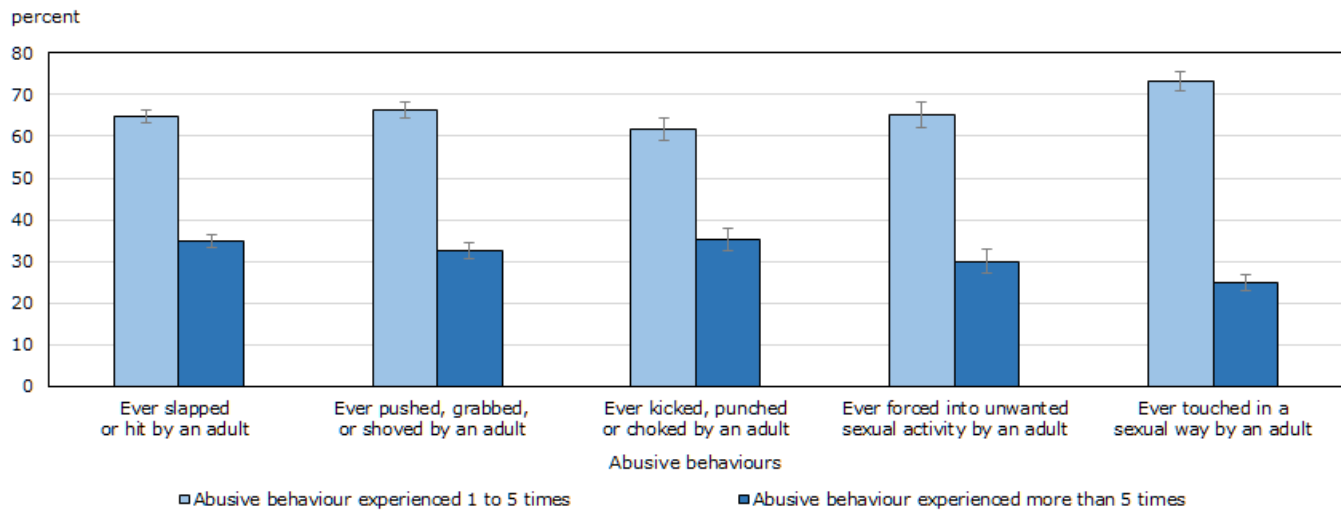
### Most victims experienced specific abusive behaviours one to five times during childhood

Looking at the frequency of abuse during childhood provides information and additional insight into the context of childhood abuse. More frequent instances of abuse may be indicative of more severe and persistent experiences of childhood abuse that may have more harmful short- and long-term consequences (World Health Organization, 2022a).

The SSPPS collected information on the frequency of experiencing physically or sexually abusive behaviours by an adult during childhood. For each type of abusive behaviour measured, respondents were asked how many times the abusive behaviour was experienced during childhood: one or two times, three to five times, six to 10 times, or more than 10 times. Abusive behaviours were categorized as occurring with a high frequency if the specific abusive behaviour was experienced more than five times during childhood. Abusive behaviours experienced one to five times during childhood were categorized as occurring with a low frequency.<sup>2</sup>

Among those who experienced childhood victimization, a higher proportion indicated that they had experienced any specific abusive behaviour one to five times. In other words, most Canadians who experienced physically or sexually abusive behaviours during childhood experienced these behaviours with a low frequency (Chart 3). For example, among those who experienced childhood victimization, about two-thirds reported they were slapped or hit by an adult one to five times (65%). Although a lower proportion of individuals experienced a high frequency of physically or sexually abusive behaviours, previous research indicates that these individuals may experience more persistent instances of abuse, reflective of a context of ongoing abuse (World Health Organization, 2022a).

**Chart 3**  
**Self-reported frequency of abusive behaviours among those who experienced childhood victimization, Canada, 2018**



**Note:** Percents are among those who experienced any childhood victimization.

**Source:** Statistics Canada, Survey of Safety in Public and Private Spaces.

In terms of specific physically or sexually abusive behaviours, potential differences between women and men were considered. Among those who experienced childhood victimization, women were more likely than men to have experienced certain abusive behaviours more than five times. For instance, women who experienced childhood victimization were more likely than men to have been pushed, grabbed or shoved by an adult multiple times (34% versus 30% of men) or to have been kicked, punched or choked by an adult multiple times (41% versus 31%; Table 2).

Women were also more likely than men to have experienced sexually abusive behaviours more than five times. Women who experienced childhood victimization were more likely than men to have ever been forced into unwanted sexual activity by an adult multiple times (32% versus 24% of men) and more likely to have ever been touched in a sexual way by an adult multiple times (27% versus 19%) during childhood.

### The prevalence of childhood victimization was consistent among Canadian provinces

Overall, there was not a lot of variation in childhood victimization across the Canadian provinces. A smaller proportion of individuals in Newfoundland and Labrador had experienced childhood victimization, with about one-fifth (19%) having experienced physical or sexual abuse during childhood. In British Columbia, almost one-third (30%) of individuals experienced childhood victimization. Except for Alberta, there were no reported differences in experiences of childhood victimization between women and men across the provinces (Table 3).

#### Text box 2

#### Harsh parenting and witnessing violence during childhood

In addition to collecting information on experiences of physical and sexual abuse during childhood (childhood victimization), the SSPPS also collected retrospective information on experiences of harsh parenting and neglect, and on witnessing violence in the home during childhood. These measures encompass additional realms of child maltreatment perpetrated by parents or guardians and may further contribute to an overall understanding of experiences of maltreatment during childhood.

#### Harsh parenting

Harsh or severe parenting is measured through a range of behaviours by parents or guardians towards their children. While these behaviours are often considered less serious than physical or sexual abuse and typically do not meet the threshold for criminal victimization, these experiences are associated with negative outcomes across the life course, such as an increased risk of victimization in adulthood (Cotter, 2021a; Cotter, 2021b).

Any instance of the following behaviours by a parent or guardian before age 15 meets the criteria for harsh parenting: a parent or guardian spanked you with their hand or slapped you on your hand; a parent or guardian said things that really hurt your feelings; a parent or guardian made you feel like you were not wanted or loved; a parent or guardian did not take care of your basic needs, such as keeping you clean or providing food or clothing.



It is important to note that harsh parenting and neglect can also be reflective of parental patterns associated with economic hardship and other stressors outside the immediate control of the parent or guardian. Furthermore, additional information on the relationship to the parent or guardian responsible for harsh parenting and neglect was not collected; that is, the parent or guardian responsible for these behaviours may have been outside of the birth family, including step-parents or other adult guardians within a foster system.

### **Nearly two-thirds of Canadians have experienced harsh parenting during childhood**

Nearly two-thirds (64%) of Canadians have ever experienced some form of harsh parenting by a parent or guardian before age 15. Women (65%) were slightly more likely than men (62%) to have experienced harsh parenting during childhood (Table 4).

Gender differences were also evident when looking at individual indicators of harsh parenting. Women were more likely to have had a parent or guardian ever say things that really hurt their feelings (43% versus 34% of men) or to have felt unwanted or unloved by a parent or guardian (22% versus 15% of men). Women (4.3%) were also slightly more likely to have ever had basic needs unmet by a parent or guardian compared with men (3.3%). Similar proportions of women (54%) and men (56%) were spanked or slapped on the hand by a parent or guardian during childhood.

### **Witnessing violence**

Witnessing violence involves exposure to violence between adults in the household during childhood. Although this measure does not capture violence committed against the child, exposure to any acts of violence by parents or guardians against any other adult in the home, including exposure to intimate partner or spousal violence, may be linked to a variety of poor outcomes including subsequent experiences of violent victimization in adulthood (Cotter, 2021a; Cotter, 2021b).

Witnessing violence is measured by whether the respondent ever saw or heard any of their parents or guardians say hurtful or mean things to each other or to another adult in their home; or ever saw or heard any one of their parents, step-parents or guardians hit each other or another adult during childhood.

Due to the high co-occurrence of experiencing childhood victimization and witnessing violence, violence in the home can be an indication that a child may be a victim of abuse. As such, under child protection services, witnessing violence is grounds for intervention in many Canadian provinces and territories.<sup>3</sup>

### **About four in ten Canadians witnessed violence during childhood**

Overall, about four in ten (44%) Canadians witnessed violence between their parent or guardian and another adult in the home during childhood. More specifically, about four in ten (43%) Canadians ever saw or heard their parent or guardian say hurtful things to each other or another adult and just over one in ten (12%) Canadians ever saw or heard their parent or guardian hit each other or another adult in the home during childhood (Table 4).

Compared to men (41%), women (47%) were more likely to have ever witnessed violence in the household during childhood. More specifically, women were more likely to have ever seen or heard their parent or guardian say hurtful things to each other or another adult (46% versus 40% of men) and slightly more likely to have ever seen or heard their parent or guardian hit each other or another adult (12% versus 11% of men).

### **Almost three-quarters of Canadians experienced some form of child maltreatment**

Almost three-quarters (72%) of Canadians experienced at least one instance of child maltreatment, that is experienced childhood victimization, harsh parenting or witnessed violence during childhood (Table 4). Women (73%) were slightly more likely than men (70%) to have experienced any instance of child maltreatment before age 15. Results from the SSPPS indicate that any experience of childhood maltreatment is not uncommon; however, it may be the co-occurrence of these facets of child maltreatment that may contribute to a context of disadvantage that is more detrimental to children and adults across the life course (see Text box 3).

### **Most serious incident of childhood physical abuse commonly committed by parent or step-parent**

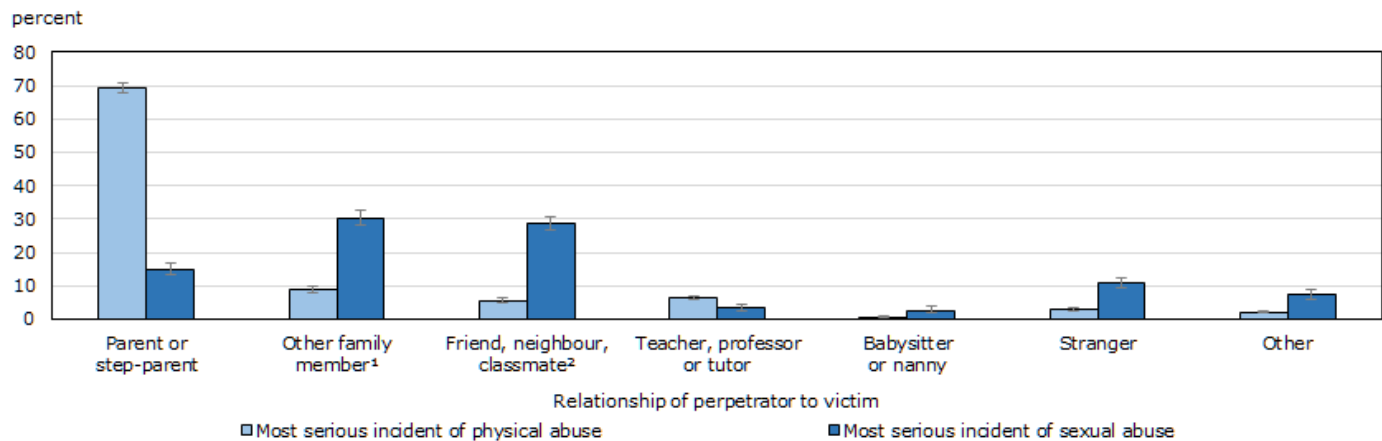
The SSPPS asked respondents who were physically or sexually abused during childhood to provide information about the most serious incident of abuse. It is important to note that details provided about the most serious incident may not be representative of all incidents of abuse, but rather only the incident deemed most serious to the respondent.<sup>4</sup>



According to the SSPPS, the majority (69%) of Canadians who were physically abused as children reported that the most serious incident was perpetrated by a parent or step-parent (Chart 4). Women (73%) were more likely than men (66%) to have reported that a parent or step-parent was responsible for the most serious incident of physical abuse during childhood. Women (9.8%) were also more likely than men (7.9%) to report that another family member was responsible for the most serious incident of physical abuse during childhood (Table 5).

A smaller proportion of Canadians reported that the most serious incident of physical abuse during childhood was committed by someone outside the family, such as a friend, neighbour, or classmate (5.7%); teacher, professor or tutor (6.5%); or stranger (2.9%). Men were more likely to report that the most serious incident of physical abuse was perpetrated by an adult outside the family. More specifically, men were almost three times more likely to have reported that the most serious incident of physical abuse during childhood was perpetrated by a teacher, professor or tutor (9.2% versus 3.5% of women) and two times more likely to have reported that the most serious incident of physical abuse was perpetrated by a stranger (4.0% versus 1.7% of women).

**Chart 4**  
**Relationship of perpetrator to victim in most serious self-reported incident of childhood victimization, Canada, 2018**



1. Includes grandmother, grandfather, brother, sister or other family member.

2. Includes boyfriend or girlfriend, ex-boyfriend or ex-girlfriend, friend, neighbour, a family friend or an acquaintance, classmate, or person known by sight only.

**Note:** Includes the relationship between the victim and the person responsible for the most severe instance of abuse. Respondents reporting experiences of childhood physical abuse may also have reported childhood sexual abuse, and vice-versa.

**Source:** Statistics Canada, Survey of Safety in Public and Private Spaces.

### Most serious incident of childhood sexual abuse commonly committed by an adult other than a parent

The majority of Canadians who were sexually abused as a child stated that the perpetrator of the most serious incident was a friend, neighbour, or classmate or another family member—such as a grandparent, sibling or other member. According to the SSPPS, a similar proportion of individuals who were sexually abused during childhood reported that the most serious incident was perpetrated by a friend, neighbour, or classmate (29%) or by another family member (30%)

Similar proportions of men (32%) and women (27%) reported that the most serious incident of sexual abuse during childhood was perpetrated by a friend, neighbour, or classmate. However, women (33%) were more likely than men (22%) to report that the most serious incident of sexual abuse during childhood was perpetrated by a family member other than a parent or step-parent. These findings mirror those found in police reported accounts of sexual abuse, which primarily find that women are overrepresented as victims of sexual violence by a family member (Conroy, 2021).

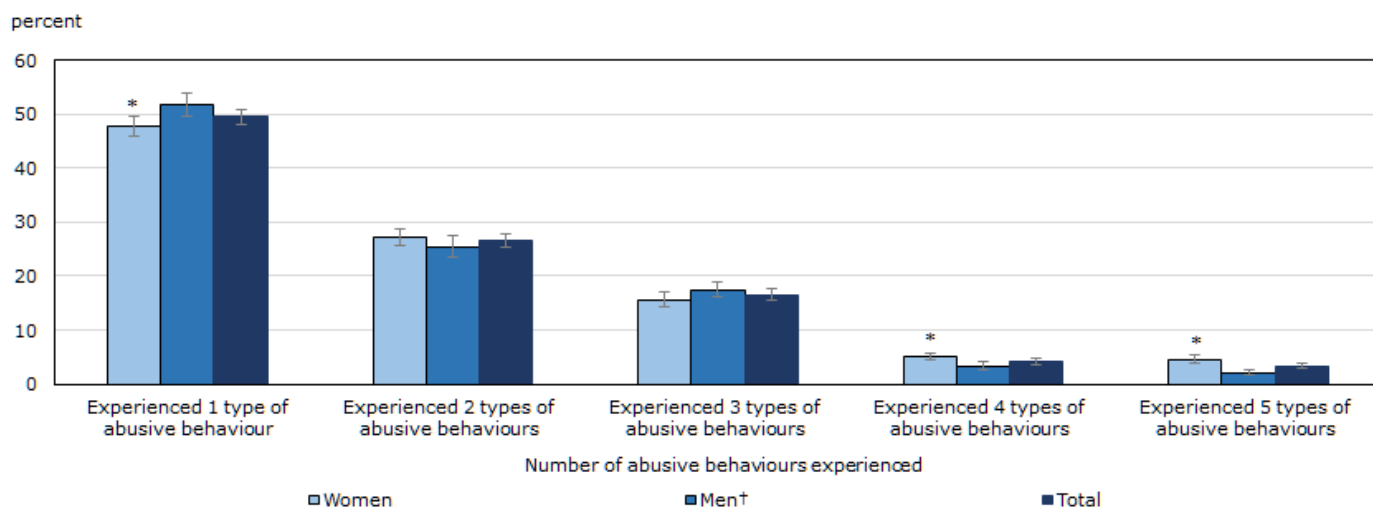
One-sixth (15%) of Canadians who were sexually abused during childhood indicated that the most serious incident was perpetrated by a parent or step-parent. Women (17%) were more likely than men (10%) to have reported that the most serious incident of sexual abuse during childhood was perpetrated by a parent or step-parent. A small proportion (3.4%) of Canadians stated that the most serious incident of sexual abuse during childhood was perpetrated by a teacher, professor or tutor, with men (6.0%) more than two times more likely than women (2.5%) to have stated this. For information about the gender of the perpetrator in the most serious incident of physical or sexual abuse during childhood, see Table 6.

## Half of Canadians who experienced childhood victimization, experienced one type of abusive behaviour

Previous research suggests that the cumulative experience of abusive behaviours may be particularly detrimental for adult outcomes; children experiencing many forms of violence may experience the most enduring abuse and be the most disadvantaged (Chapman et al., 2004; Friedman et al., 2015). In other words, rather than focusing on any single type of physical or sexual abuse, cumulative measures of multiple types of abusive behaviours during childhood may further indicate more pervasive experiences of victimization during childhood.

According to the SSPPS, among Canadians who experienced childhood victimization, half (50%) had experienced a single type of abusive behaviour or indicator of childhood victimization (see Text box 1 for a full list of indicators included). The proportion drops for each additional type of abusive behaviour experienced with just over one-quarter (26%) of Canadians having experienced two types of abusive behaviours and nearly two in ten (16%) having experienced three types. A small proportion of Canadians who experienced childhood victimization indicated that they had experienced four (4.2%) or all five<sup>5</sup> (3.3%) types of abusive behaviours. Women were about two times more likely than men to have experienced four (5.0% versus 3.3% among men) or five (4.5% versus 2.0%) types of abusive behaviours during childhood (Table 7; Chart 5).

**Chart 5**  
**Number of abusive behaviours experienced before age 15 among those who experienced childhood victimization, by gender, Canada, 2018**

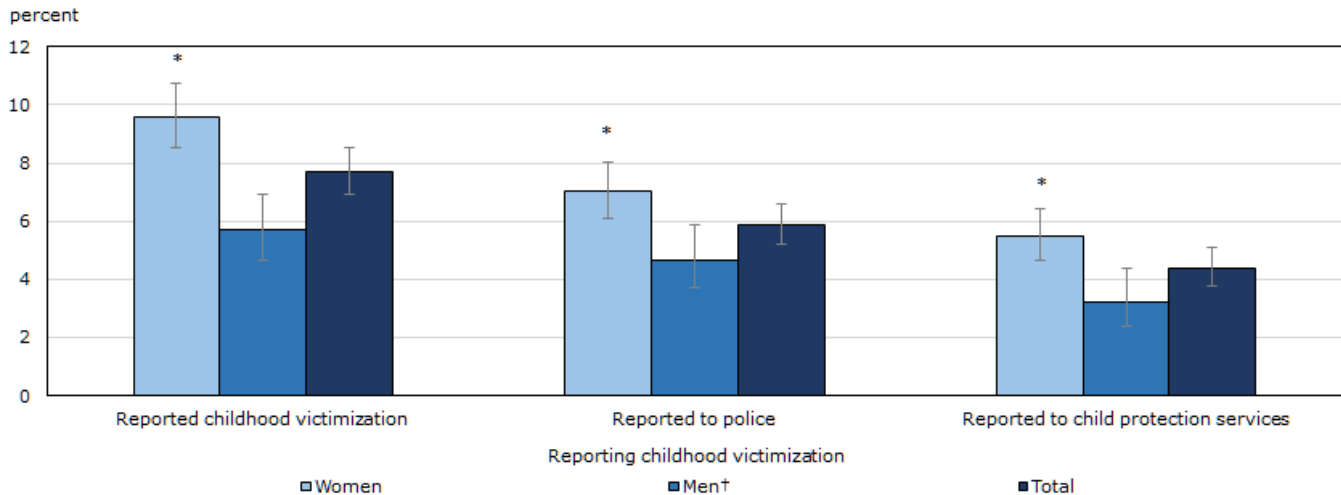


\* significantly different from reference category ( $p < 0.05$ )  
 † reference category  
 Source: Statistics Canada, Survey of Safety in Public and Private Spaces.

## Small proportion of childhood victimization reported to authorities, men less likely to have reported

Consistent with previous findings on childhood victimization and reporting, results from the SSPPS found that the vast majority of victims of childhood victimization did not report the incident or any incidents to authorities or child protection services. Among Canadians who experienced childhood victimization, fewer than one in ten (7.7%) indicated that before age 15 they had reported any of the abuse experienced to police or child protection services.<sup>6</sup> More specifically, about one in twenty (5.9%) Canadians who experienced physical or sexual abuse during childhood saw or spoke to police about the experience. A smaller proportion saw or spoke to child protection services about the experience (4.4%; Table 8; Chart 6).

Overall, women (9.6%) who experienced childhood victimization were more likely than men (5.7%) to have indicated that before age 15 they had reported any abuse experienced. Compared with men, women were more likely to have reported childhood abuse to police (7.0% versus 4.7% of men) and twice as likely to have reported to child protection services (5.5% versus 3.2% of men) during childhood.

**Chart 6****Reporting childhood victimization to police or child protective services among those who experienced childhood victimization, by gender, Canada, 2018**

\* significantly different from reference category ( $p < 0.05$ )

† reference category

Source: Statistics Canada, Survey of Safety in Public and Private Spaces.

**Higher proportion of those experiencing multiple types of abusive behaviours report to authorities**

While the majority of childhood abuse goes unreported, a higher proportion of Canadians who experienced multiple types of abusive behaviours during childhood indicated that they reported the abuse to authorities. Among Canadians who had experienced four types of abusive behaviours, about one in five (19%) indicated that they had reported the childhood abuse to either police or child protection services before age 15. This proportion was even higher among individuals who experienced all five types of abusive behaviours, with one-quarter (25%) indicating that they reported the abuse experienced during childhood.

The increased tendency to report among those who experienced the broadest range of abusive behaviours was particularly notable among women. Women who experienced four types of abusive behaviours (26%) were almost four times more likely and women who experienced all five types of abusive behaviours (30%) were about twice as likely to have reported the abuse during childhood compared with men who experienced four (6.8%) or five (15%) types of abusive behaviours (Table 9).

**Text box 3****Childhood victimization and the co-occurrence of child maltreatment**

Previous research has found that experiences of childhood victimization often co-occur with other forms of child maltreatment (Friedman et al., 2015). Experiences of various types of child maltreatment may be indicative of a pattern of negative childhood circumstances. Child maltreatment encompasses not only experiences of childhood victimization— that is childhood physical and sexual abuse — but also includes other adverse childhood experiences, including emotional abuse and neglect and witnessing violence during childhood.

The World Health Organization (WHO) further defines child maltreatment as “the abuse and neglect that occurs to children under 18 years of age. It includes all types of physical and/or emotional ill-treatment, sexual abuse, neglect, negligence and commercial or other exploitation, which results in actual or potential harm to the child’s health, survival, development or dignity in the context of a relationship of responsibility, trust or power (World Health Organization, 2022b).” Although these other experiences of child maltreatment are not included in measures of childhood victimization in this article, this text box provides information on co-occurring experiences of childhood victimization with other facets of child maltreatment.

**Majority of Canadians who experienced childhood victimization also experienced another form of child maltreatment**

Consistent with previous research, results from the Survey of Safety in Public and Private Spaces (SSPPS) found that the majority of individuals who experienced childhood victimization also experienced harsh parenting or witnessed violence in the household. Previous research has found that childhood victimization overlaps with other facets of child maltreatment and contributes to a negative context that can set children on trajectories of disadvantage that continues across the life course.

Nine in ten (90%) Canadians who experienced childhood victimization also experienced some form of harsh parenting by a parent or guardian before age 15. Similar proportions of women (91%) and men (90%) reported experiencing harsh parenting in addition to childhood victimization (Table 10).

Among Canadians who experienced childhood victimization, almost three quarters (73%) also witnessed violence in the household. Women who had experienced childhood victimization (74%) were more likely than men who had experienced childhood victimization (71%) to have also witnessed violence in the household.

### **About 7 in 10 Canadians who experienced childhood victimization experienced harsh parenting and witnessed violence**

The cumulative experience of exposure to various co-occurring facets of child maltreatment may further help identify some of the most disadvantaged children. Approximately seven in ten (69%) Canadians who experienced childhood victimization experienced both harsh parenting and witnessed violence in their household in addition to experiencing childhood victimization. Slight gender differences were also evident. Women (70%) were more likely to have experienced all three measured facets of child maltreatment—childhood victimization, harsh parenting and witnessing violence—relative to men (67%).

## **Factors associated with an increased risk of experiencing childhood victimization**

An abundance of research exists suggesting that experiences of childhood victimization may be more common among certain children (Cotter, 2021b; Perreault, 2022). Descriptive analyses identified the proportion of Canadians over age 15 who experienced childhood victimization by key demographic characteristics, including Indigenous identity, age and sexual orientation (Table 11).

In order to identify demographic characteristics associated with an increased risk of having experienced childhood victimization, a multivariate analysis was conducted (Table 12). All demographic characteristic variables from Table 11 were included in the model; however, only variables that were significant were kept in the final model.<sup>7</sup>

### **Higher proportion of Indigenous peoples experience childhood victimization**

Almost four in ten (38%) Indigenous<sup>8</sup> peoples experienced childhood victimization. In comparison, this was the case for just over one-quarter (27%) of non-Indigenous peoples (Table 11). Results from a logistic regression further point to the increased risk of childhood victimization among Indigenous peoples. After controlling for other demographic variables, the odds of having experienced childhood victimization remained 1.5 times higher among Indigenous peoples relative to non-Indigenous people.

The overrepresentation of Indigenous peoples as victims of childhood violence is rooted in the traumatic history of colonization which continues to negatively impact Indigenous peoples, families, and their communities (The Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada, 2015). The dismantling of Indigenous families and culture and the forceful apprehension and placement of Indigenous children into residential schools and foster care where violence and maltreatment were common, have contributed to the intergenerational transmission of violence and an overall increased risk for childhood victimization among Indigenous peoples (for more information on victimization of Indigenous peoples see Perreault, 2022; for information on victimization of Indigenous women see Heidinger, 2022).

### **Childhood victimization more common among lesbian, gay and bisexual individuals**

Previous research has found a disparity in rates of childhood abuse between lesbian, gay and bisexual (LGB) youth and heterosexual youth (for a review, see Friedman et al., 2011). LGB youth are more likely to report a pattern of childhood victimization, including higher overall levels of sexual and physical abuse and higher levels of physical abuse by a parent or guardian. While it is not clear why LGB youth disproportionately experience childhood victimization, previous research suggests that the ongoing stigmatization of LGB individuals both in the family and community may contribute to experiences of violence during childhood (Corliss et al., 2002).

Results from the SSPPS echo these previous findings. Overall, a significantly higher proportion of Canadians who are lesbian, gay, bisexual or of another sexual orientation that is not heterosexual<sup>9</sup> experienced childhood victimization compared with heterosexual Canadians. Approximately four in ten lesbian or gay (41%) and bisexual (42%) Canadians experienced childhood victimization compared with just over one-quarter (27%) of heterosexual Canadians. A similar pattern was evident for both women and men. Lesbian (44%) and bisexual (45%) women and gay (40%) and bisexual (39%) men were more likely than their heterosexual counterparts (27% of heterosexual women and 26% of heterosexual men, respectively) to have experienced childhood victimization (Table 11).

A logistic regression predicting the likelihood of having experienced childhood victimization further confirms these results. Overall, the odds of having experienced childhood victimization were almost two times higher among lesbian or gay Canadians and among bisexual Canadians compared with heterosexual Canadians, even after controlling for other demographic variables (Table 12).

### **Experiences of childhood victimization more common among older Canadians**

When looking at the age distribution of respondents who have experienced childhood victimization, cohort differences were evident. The prevalence of childhood victimization was lower among the youngest Canadians (20%), that is those aged 15 to 24, compared with all older cohorts of the population. Results suggest that while childhood victimization is serious, there is some evidence to suggest that the prevalence of childhood victimization is decreasing, with younger cohorts experiencing less childhood victimization compared with those from older generations. It is important to note that the laws surrounding child discipline have changed, and a transformation in the way adults and children interact may have contributed to the lower prevalence of childhood victimization among younger cohorts (Government of Canada, 2011; Hango, 2017).

Furthermore, among the youngest cohort of respondents, there was no difference between the prevalence of childhood victimization among women (21%) relative to men (20%). Results from a logistic regression indicate that the odds of experiencing childhood victimization were higher among older cohorts of the population compared with the youngest cohort of respondents. For example, the odds of experiencing childhood victimization were about two times higher for individuals in the ages of 45 to 54 and 55 to 64 relative to individuals aged 15 to 24 (Table 12).

### **Numerous negative outcomes associated with a history of childhood victimization**

Previous research concludes that experiences of childhood victimization are associated with a multitude of detrimental adult outcomes, including poor mental and physical health, drug and alcohol use, and subsequent victimization in adulthood (Afifi et al., 2016; Afifi et al., 2014; Afifi et al., 2012; Cotter, 2021a; Cotter, 2021b). Descriptive analyses present the distribution of outcomes among Canadians over age 15 who experienced childhood victimization relative to those with no history of childhood victimization (Table 13).

Multivariate analyses were further conducted in order to assess whether having experienced childhood victimization was associated with poor adult (since age 15) outcomes<sup>10</sup> (Table 14). The analyses identified adult outcomes (self-reported general and mental health, drug and alcohol use, suicidal ideation, and subsequent violent victimization) that had a higher likelihood of occurring among Canadians who had experienced childhood victimization relative to Canadians who had not experienced childhood victimization (see Table 13). The final model was further adjusted for key demographic factors (see Table 12). Adjusted odds ratios (AOR) are presented in order to identify if having experienced childhood victimization was associated with poor adult outcomes beyond differences in demographic factors.

### **History of childhood victimization and homelessness**

Canadians who experienced childhood victimization had a higher likelihood of having been homeless or of having had to temporarily live with family or friends because they had nowhere else to go. Overall, about six (5.6%) percent of Canadians who experienced childhood victimization reported that they were homeless at some point, that is, having to live in a shelter, on the street, or in an abandoned building. In comparison, fewer than one (0.8%) percent of Canadians who had not experienced childhood victimization reported that they were ever homeless (Table 13).

Similarly, about one in five (21%) Canadians who experienced childhood victimization reported hidden homelessness; that is that they had ever temporarily lived with family or friends because they had nowhere else to go. In comparison, this was the case for about one in twenty (6.0%) Canadians who had not experienced childhood victimization. Women who experienced childhood victimization were slightly more likely to have ever temporarily lived with family or friends (22%) compared to men who had experienced childhood victimization (20%).

Results from a logistic regression indicated that those with a history of childhood victimization had more than six times the odds of having ever been homeless (AOR=6.05) and over three times the odds of having ever temporarily lived with family or friends because they had nowhere else to go (AOR=3.48; Table 14). Furthermore, individuals who experienced five types of abusive behaviours had almost 30 times the odds of having ever been homeless and about 12 times the odds of having ever lived with family or friends relative to those who had not experienced childhood victimization.



## Physical health, mental health poor among those who experience childhood victimization

An abundance of research links childhood experiences of physical and sexual abuse to poor general and mental health outcomes in adulthood (Afifi et al., 2016; Afifi et al., 2014). It is important to note, that while both mental and general health are measures of health, the onset of mental health problems typically commence during adolescence and persist into adulthood while general or more physical health conditions may manifest later in life (Kim & Durden, 2007).

A larger proportion of Canadians who experienced childhood victimization rated their current general or mental health as fair or poor. About three in twenty (16%) Canadians who experienced childhood victimization rated their current general health as fair or poor. In comparison, this was the case for one in ten (9.5%) Canadians who had not experienced childhood victimization (Table 13).

Furthermore, individuals who experienced childhood victimization were two times more likely to rate their current mental health as fair or poor compared with those who had not experienced childhood victimization (18% versus 8.9%, respectively). Women who experienced childhood victimization (21%) were more likely to rate their mental health as fair or poor compared with men (15%) who experienced childhood victimization.

Overall, after controlling for demographic variables in a logistic regression, Canadians who experienced childhood victimization had about 1.3 times the odds of reporting fair or poor general health (AOR=1.28) and almost 2 times the odds of reporting fair or poor mental health (AOR=1.85) compared with those who had not experienced childhood victimization (Table 14).

## History of childhood victimization and suicidal thoughts

In 2019, suicide was listed as one of the top ten leading causes of death in Canada (Statistics Canada, 2019). Growing research suggests a link between a history of childhood victimization and suicidal thoughts (Fuller-Thomson, 2016). Individuals who experienced childhood victimization (30%) were about three times more likely than those who had not experienced childhood victimization (10%) to have seriously contemplated suicide in their life. Women who experienced childhood victimization (33%) were more likely than men who experienced childhood victimization (26%) to have had suicidal thoughts.

According to results from a logistic regression, the odds of having seriously contemplated suicide were about three times higher among Canadians who experienced childhood victimization (AOR=3.09) relative to Canadians with no history of childhood victimization, after taking into account key demographic characteristics. Furthermore, individuals who experienced five types of abusive behaviours had about 11 times the odds of having seriously contemplated suicide relative to those who had not experienced childhood victimization.

## Binge drinking, marijuana, non-prescription drug use more common among those with history of childhood victimization

Previous research has found that the prevalence of drug and alcohol use is higher among adolescents and adults who experienced childhood victimization (Afifi et al., 2012). In particular, the use of drugs and alcohol may be a coping mechanism used to deal with childhood trauma. Similarly, results from the SSPPS found that about one in five (22%) Canadians who experienced childhood victimization used marijuana in the past 12 months compared with 14% of Canadians who had not experienced childhood victimization (Table 13). Furthermore, individuals who experienced childhood victimization were two times more likely than those who had not experienced childhood victimization to have used non-prescription drugs—such as magic mushrooms, cocaine, speed, methamphetamine, ecstasy, PCP, mescaline, heroin or fentanyl—in the 12 months preceding the survey (4.5% versus 2.2%, respectively).

Binge drinking in the 12 months preceding the survey was also slightly more prevalent among Canadians with a prior history of childhood victimization. Binge drinking is defined as having consumed four or more alcoholic beverages in one sitting for women and five or more alcoholic beverages in one sitting for men. Overall, about 16% of Canadians who experienced childhood victimization reported binge drinking in the past 12 months compared with 14% of Canadians who had not experienced childhood victimization. Men (18%) who experienced childhood victimization were more likely to have binge drank in the past year compared with women (14%) who experienced childhood victimization.

Furthermore, after controlling for demographic factors these associations remained, with the odds of binge drinking (AOR=1.16), marijuana drug use (AOR=1.69), and non-prescription drug use (AOR=2.02) all independently higher for individuals with a history of childhood victimization relative to those with no history of childhood victimization (Table 14).

## Childhood victimization and prevalence of subsequent victimization in adulthood

Canadians who experienced childhood victimization were more than two times more likely than those who had not experienced childhood victimization to have experienced violent victimization in adulthood (since age 15). Violent victimization includes experiences of intimate partner violence (IPV) and violence by another perpetrator that occurs in contexts outside of intimate partner relationships (non-IPV). IPV and non-IPV encompass different forms of violent victimization but are often combined to estimate a total prevalence of criminal victimization.

Overall, about seven in ten (69%) Canadians who experienced childhood victimization subsequently experienced violent victimization in adulthood. In comparison, this was the case for about one-third (33%) of Canadians who had not experienced childhood victimization. Similarly, individuals who experienced childhood victimization, were over two times more likely than those who had not experienced childhood victimization to have experienced violent victimization in the 12 months preceding the survey (10% versus 4.8 %, Table 13).

Among Canadians who experienced childhood victimization, women (73%) were more likely than men (65%) to have experienced violent victimization in adulthood.<sup>11</sup> Similar proportions of women and men who experienced childhood victimization experienced violent victimization in the 12 months preceding the survey (10% of women and 9.9% of men).

The odds of being victimized in adulthood were over four times higher among individuals who experienced childhood victimization (AOR=4.36). Furthermore, the odds of having been victimized in the 12 months preceding the survey were more than two times higher for those who experienced childhood victimization (AOR=2.31) relative to those who had not experienced childhood victimization (Table 14).

Furthermore, relative to Canadians who had not experienced childhood victimization, those who experienced five types of abusive behaviours had over 13 times the odds of having been victimized in adulthood (AOR=13.18) and over five times the odds of having been victimized in the 12 months preceding the survey (AOR=5.35).

### Prevalence of IPV higher among those with history of childhood victimization

The SSPPS defines an intimate partner as a current or former spouse, common-law partner or dating partner. Canadians with a history of childhood victimization were more likely to have experienced IPV since age 15. More than half (60%) of Canadians who experienced childhood victimization also experienced IPV in adulthood. In comparison, about three in ten (33%) Canadians who had not experienced childhood victimization had experienced IPV. Women (67%) who experienced childhood victimization were more likely than men (53%) who experienced childhood victimization to have experienced IPV since age 15.

After controlling for demographic characteristics, the odds of experiencing IPV was about three times higher among individuals who experienced childhood victimization (AOR=3.07) compared with the odds among those with no history of childhood victimization.

### Prevalence of non-IPV higher among those with history of childhood victimization

The SSPPS defines a non-intimate partner as another perpetrator with whom the victim did not have an intimate relationship, such as acquaintances, friends, family members, co-workers, strangers and others. Canadians who experienced childhood victimization (62%) were more than two times more likely than those who had not experienced childhood victimization (28%) to have experienced non-IPV after age 15. Compared to men who experienced childhood victimization (59%), women who experienced childhood victimization (65%) were more likely to have also experienced non-IPV.

According to results from a logistic regression, the odds of experiencing non-IPV were almost four times higher among Canadians who experienced childhood victimization (AOR=3.92) relative to Canadians with no history of childhood victimization, after taking into account key demographic characteristics.

## Summary

Childhood victimization, that is physical or sexual abuse, is an important public health concern that has detrimental outcomes for children and adults across the life course. Overall, about three in ten (27%) Canadians over age 15 were physically or sexually abused by an adult during their childhood. Women were slightly more likely than men to have experienced childhood victimization.



The relationship to the perpetrator varied for the most serious incident of physical and sexual abuse. According to the SSPPS, while the majority of Canadians who experienced physical abuse as a child stated that the most serious abuse was perpetrated by a parent or step-parent, in contrast, the majority of Canadians who experienced sexual abuse as a child stated that the perpetrator was another family member – such as a grandparent, sibling or other member – or a friend, neighbour, or classmate.

Consistent with previous findings on childhood victimization and reporting, results from the SSPPS found that the majority of victims of childhood victimization did not report the abusive incident or incidents to authorities or child protection services. However, victims of more types of abusive behaviours were more likely to have reported their victimization. Childhood victimization is also associated with higher risk of adverse outcomes, including higher rates of homelessness, poorer adult physical and mental health, increased risk of drug use, and increased risk of subsequent victimization in adulthood.

The results of this analysis provide further evidence of the detrimental consequences of childhood victimization. Furthermore, results point to the importance of including other measures of child maltreatment that may co-occur with victimization during childhood. While self-reported retrospective analysis is but one possible measure of childhood victimization in Canada, it is an essential tool for the ongoing monitoring of the prevalence and impact of child abuse.

## Survey Description

In 2018, Statistics Canada conducted the first cycle of the Survey of Safety in Public and Private Spaces (SSPPS). The purpose of the survey is to collect information on Canadians' experiences in public, at work, online, and in their intimate partner relationships. The SSPPS also collects retrospective information on physical and sexual abuse before age 15, during childhood.

The target population for the SSPPS is the Canadian population aged 15 and over, living in the provinces and territories. Canadians residing in institutions are not included. This means that the survey results may not reflect the experiences of childhood victimization among those living in shelters, institutions, or other collective dwellings. Once a household was contacted, an individual 15 years or older was randomly selected to respond to the survey.

In the provinces, data collection took place from April to December 2018 inclusively. Responses were obtained by self-administered online questionnaire or by interviewer-administered telephone questionnaire. Respondents were able to respond in the official language of their choice. The sample size for the 10 provinces was 43,296 respondents. The response rate in the provinces was 43.1%.

In the territories, data collection took place from July to December 2018 inclusively. Responses were obtained by self-administered online questionnaire or by interviewer-administered in-person questionnaire. Respondents were able to respond in the official language of their choice. The sample size for the 3 territories was 2,597 respondents. The response rate in the territories was 73.2%.

Non-respondents included people who refused to participate, could not be reached, or could not speak English or French. Respondents in the sample were weighted so that their responses represent the non-institutionalized Canadian population aged 15 and older.

## Data limitations

As with any household survey, there are some data limitations. The results are based on a sample and are therefore subject to sampling errors. Somewhat different results might have been obtained if the entire population had been surveyed.

For the quality of estimates, the lower and upper bounds of the confidence intervals are presented. Confidence intervals should be interpreted as follows: If the survey were repeated many times, then 95% of the time (or 19 times out of 20), the confidence interval would cover the true population value.

## References

- Afifi, T. O., MacMillan, H. L., Boyle, M., Cheung, K., Taillieu, T., Turner, S., & Sareen, J. (2016). Child abuse and physical health in adulthood. *Health Reports*. Statistics Canada Catalogue no. 82-003-X.
- Afifi, T. O., MacMillan, H. L., Boyle, M., Cheung, K., Taillieu, T., & Sareen, J. (2014). Child abuse and mental disorders in Canada. *Canadian Medical Association Journal*. p. 1.
- Afifi, T. O., Hendriksen, C. A., Asumndson G. J., & Sareen, J. (2012). Child maltreatment and substance use disorders among men and women in a nationally representative sample. *Canadian Journal of Psychiatry*. 57(11), 677-686.
- Avison, W. R. (2010). Incorporating children's lives into a life course perspective on stress and mental health, *Journal of Health and Social Behavior*, 41(4), 361–75.
- Chapman, D. P., Whitfield, C. L., Felitti, V. J., Dube, S. R., Edwards, V. J., & Anda, R. F. (2004). Adverse childhood experiences and the risk of depressive disorders in adulthood. *Journal of Affective Disorders*, 82: 217-225.
- Conroy, S. (2021). Family violence in Canada: A statistical profile, 2019. *Juristat*. Statistics Canada Catalogue no. 85-002-X.
- Corliss, H. L., Cochran, S. D., & Mays, V. M. (2002). Reports of parental maltreatment during childhood in a United States population-based survey of homosexual, bisexual, and heterosexual adults. *Child Abuse & Neglect: The International Journal*, 26(11), 1165-78.
- Cotter, A. (2021a). Criminal Victimization in Canada, 2019. *Juristat*. Statistics Canada Catalogue no. 85-002-X.
- Cotter, A. (2021b). Intimate partner violence in Canada, 2018: An overview. *Juristat*. Statistics Canada Catalogue no. 85-002-X.
- Dong, M., Anda, R. F., Dube, S. R., Giles, W. H. & Felitti, V. J. (2003). The relationship of exposure to childhood sexual abuse to other forms of abuse, neglect, and household dysfunction during childhood, *Child Abuse and Neglect*, 27(6), 625–39.
- Edwards, D. (2018). Childhood sexual abuse and brain development: A discussion of associated structural changes and negative psychological outcomes. *Child Abuse Review*, 27: 198-208.
- Ferraro, K. F., Schafer, M. H. & Wilkinson, L. R. (2016). Childhood disadvantage and health problems in middle and later life: early imprints on physical health?, *American Sociological Review*, 81(1), 107–33.
- Finkelhor, D., Wolakand, J., & Berliner, L. (2001). Police reporting and professional help seeking for child crime victims: A review. *Child Maltreatment*, 6(1), 17-30.
- Friedman, E. M., Montez, J. K., Sheehan, C. M., Guenewald, T. & Seeman, T. E. (2015). Childhood adversities and adult cardiometabolic health: does the quantity, timing, and type of adversity matter?, *Journal of Aging and Health*, 27(8), 1311–38.
- Friedman, M. S., Marshal, M. P., Guadamuz, T. E., Wei, C., Wong, C. F., Saewyc, E., & Stall, R. (2011). A Meta-Analysis of Disparities in Childhood Sexual Abuse, Parental Physical Abuse, and Peer Victimization Among Sexual Minority and Sexual Nonminority Individuals. *American Journal of Public Health*. 101(8), 1481-94.
- Fuller-Thomson, E., Baird, S. L., Dhrodia, R., & Brennenstuhl, S. (2016). The association between adverse childhood experiences (ACEs) and suicide attempts in a population-based study. *Child: Care, Health and Development*, 42(5), 725-734.
- Greene, C. A., Haisley, L., Wallace, C., & Ford, J. D. (2020). Intergenerational effects of childhood maltreatment: A systemic review of the parenting practices of adult survivors of childhood abuse, neglect and violence. *Clinical Psychology Review*, 80: 101891.
- Government of Canada. (2011). Criminal Law and Managing Children's Behaviour. *Justice Canada*. [www.justice.gc.ca/eng/rp-pr/cj-jp/fv-vf/mcb-cce/index.html](http://www.justice.gc.ca/eng/rp-pr/cj-jp/fv-vf/mcb-cce/index.html)
- Hango, D. (2017). Childhood physical abuse: differences by birth cohort. *Insights on Canadian Society*. Statistics Canada Catalogue no. 75-006-X.
- Heidinger, L. (2022). Violent victimization and perceptions of safety: Experiences of First Nations, Métis and Inuit women in Canada. *Juristat*. Statistics Canada Catalogue no. 85-002-X.
- Heidinger, L. & Willson, A. (2021). The lasting imprint of childhood disadvantage: cumulative histories of exposure to childhood adversity and trajectories of psychological distress in adulthood. *Longitudinal and Life Course Studies*, 13(1), 121-144.
- Kim, J. & Durden, E. (2007). Socioeconomic status and age trajectories of health. *Social Science and Medicine*, 65(12), 2489-2502.
- Perreault, S. (2022). Victimization of First Nations people, Métis and Inuit in Canada. *Juristat*. Statistics Canada Catalogue no. 85-002-X.
- The Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada. (2015). Honouring the truth, reconciling for the future: Summary of the final report of the truth and reconciliation commission of Canada. [publications.gc.ca/collections/collection\\_2015/trc/IR4-7-2015-eng.pdf](http://publications.gc.ca/collections/collection_2015/trc/IR4-7-2015-eng.pdf)

Schafer, M. H., Ferraro, K. F. & Mustillo, S. A. (2011). Children of misfortune: early adversity and cumulative inequality in perceived life trajectories, *American Journal of Sociology*, 116(4), 1053–91.

Statistics Canada (2019). *Deaths, 2019*. The *Daily*. [www150.statcan.gc.ca/n1/daily-quotidien/201126/dq201126b-eng.htm](http://www150.statcan.gc.ca/n1/daily-quotidien/201126/dq201126b-eng.htm)

Taylor, S. C. & Gassner, L. (2010). Stemming the flow: Challenges for policing adult sexual assault with regard to attrition rates and under-reporting of sexual offences. *Police Practice and Research*, 11(3), 240-255.

World Health Organization. (2022a). *Child Maltreatment – fact sheets*. [www.who.int/news-room/fact-sheets/detail/child-maltreatment](http://www.who.int/news-room/fact-sheets/detail/child-maltreatment)

World Health Organization. (2022b). *Violence against children*. [www.who.int/health-topics/violence-against-children#tab=tab\\_2](http://www.who.int/health-topics/violence-against-children#tab=tab_2)

## Notes

1. Unless indicated otherwise, all differences discussed in-text are statistically significant at  $p < 0.05$ .
2. The frequency of abusive behaviours is calculated for each abusive behaviour individually. However, adults could have experienced more than one type of abusive behaviour during childhood. Therefore, they may have experienced each abusive behaviour one to five times, but overall experienced multiple instances of abuse.
3. See Family Violence Laws, Department of Justice Canada for information regarding legislation in Canadian provinces and territories.
4. Respondents were asked about their relationship with the adult who committed the most serious incident of physical and sexual abuse against them. For respondents who experienced both physical and sexual abuse, information of the most serious incident of each is collected. It is unknown if the same person or relationship type was involved in other instances of abuse that the respondent may have experienced.
5. The measure of co-occurring child maltreatment does not account for whether the instance of abuse was committed by the same adult or if the abuse occurred at the same time. On the one hand, an adult may have experienced multiple types of childhood abuse in one instance. On the other hand, an adult may have experienced multiple types of childhood abuse across varying instances.
6. Respondents were asked if before age 15 they had ever seen or spoken to police or child protection services about any of the incidents that they had experienced. For those victims who suffered multiple incidents of abuse (including both physical and sexual) it is not known which incident resulted in the victim speaking to authorities.
7. A multivariate regression model was constructed to analyze factors associated with the odds of experiencing childhood victimization. The initial model included gender, age, sexual minority status, Indigenous identity, disability status, racialized identity, and immigrant status. Only significant variables were retained in the final model; the odds ratios presented reflect results from the final model.
8. The Indigenous population was identified using the following question: “Are you an Aboriginal person, that is, First Nations, Métis or Inuk (Inuit)?” In this article, the term “Indigenous” is used to refer to all First Nations, Métis and Inuit. Where possible, results are presented separately for First Nations, Métis and Inuit Indigenous identity groups.
9. This is a current measure of sexual orientation among adults over age 15 and may not reflect the sexual orientation at the time of childhood when victimization occurred.
10. Multivariate regression models were constructed to analyze the odds of experiencing individual adult outcomes (since age 15) among Canadians who had experienced childhood victimization relative to Canadians who had not experienced childhood victimization. Each model adjusts for significant demographic characteristics age, sexual orientation, location of residence and Indigenous identity.
11. No significant difference between males and females with a history of childhood victimization who experienced violent victimization in adulthood.

## Detailed data tables

**Table 1**  
**Self-reported experiences of childhood victimization, by gender, Canada, 2018**

Type of childhood victimization	Women			Men†			Total		
	percent	95% confidence interval		percent	95% confidence interval		percent	95% confidence interval	
		from	to		from	to		from	to
Experienced childhood victimization <sup>1</sup>	27.9*	26.9	28.8	26.1	25.2	27.1	27.0	26.4	27.7
Experienced physical abuse before age 15	22.3*	21.4	23.2	24.8	23.9	25.7	23.5	22.9	24.2
Ever slapped or hit by adult	18.9*	18.1	19.8	21.3	20.5	22.2	20.1	19.5	20.7
Ever pushed, grabbed, or shoved by adult	12.3	11.6	13.0	12.9	12.2	13.6	12.6	12.1	13.1
Ever kicked, punched or choked by adult	5.4*	5.0	5.9	7.1	6.6	7.7	6.3	5.9	6.6
Experienced sexual abuse before age 15	11.8*	11.2	12.4	3.7	3.3	4.1	7.8	7.4	8.1
Ever forced into unwanted sexual activity by adult	5.3*	4.9	5.7	1.9	1.6	2.1	3.6	3.4	3.8
Ever touched in a sexual way by adult	11.5*	10.9	12.1	3.5	3.1	3.8	7.5	7.2	7.9
Experienced both physical and sexual abuse before age 15	6.2*	5.7	6.6	2.4	2.1	2.7	4.3	4.0	4.6

\* significantly different from reference category ( $p < 0.05$ )

† reference category

1. Childhood victimization constitutes any instance of physical or sexual abuse by an adult – such as a parent, other family member, friend, neighbour or other adult – occurring before the age of 15.

**Source:** Statistics Canada, Survey of Safety in Public and Private Spaces.

**Table 2**  
**Self-reported frequency of instances of abusive behaviours among those who experienced childhood victimization, by gender, Canada, 2018**

Physically or sexually abusive behaviour	Women			Men†			Total		
	percent	95% confidence interval		percent	95% confidence interval		percent	95% confidence interval	
		from	to		from	to		from	to
<b>Ever slapped or hit by adult</b>									
1 to 5 times	64.2	62.0	66.4	65.0	62.8	67.1	64.7	63.1	66.2
More than 5 times	35.5	33.3	37.8	34.5	32.4	36.7	35.0	33.4	36.5
<b>Ever pushed, grabbed, or shoved by adult</b>									
1 to 5 times	64.5	61.7	67.2	68.1	65.4	70.6	66.3	64.4	68.2
More than 5 times	34.4*	31.7	37.2	30.4	27.9	33.0	32.4	30.5	34.3
<b>Ever kicked, punched or choked by adult</b>									
1 to 5 times	56.6*	52.3	60.8	65.9	62.3	69.3	61.9	59.2	64.6
More than 5 times	40.8*	36.6	45.0	31.1	27.8	34.6	35.3	32.7	38.0
<b>Ever forced into unwanted sexual activity by adult</b>									
1 to 5 times	64.0	60.2	67.6	68.6	62.0	74.6	65.2	62.0	68.2
More than 5 times	32.1*	28.6	35.7	24.2	18.8	30.6	30.0	27.0	33.1
<b>Ever touched in a sexual way by adult</b>									
1 to 5 times	72.1*	69.7	74.5	77.1	72.5	81.1	73.3	71.1	75.4
More than 5 times	26.5*	24.2	29.0	19.1	15.5	23.4	24.8	22.8	26.9

\* significantly different from reference category ( $p < 0.05$ )

† reference category

**Note:** An adult includes parents, other family members, friends, neighbours or other adults.

**Source:** Statistics Canada, Survey of Safety in Public and Private Spaces.

**Table 3**  
**Self-reported experiences of childhood victimization, by gender and region, Canada, 2018**

Province or territory	Women			Men†			Total		
	percent	95% confidence interval		percent	95% confidence interval		percent	95% confidence interval	
		from	to		from	to		from	to
Newfoundland and Labrador	19.0	16.3	21.9	18.9	16.0	22.3	18.9	16.9	21.1
Prince Edward Island	26.1	22.0	30.5	22.3	18.6	26.4	24.2	21.3	27.3
Nova Scotia	28.4	25.7	31.2	26.1	22.9	29.6	27.3	25.2	29.6
New Brunswick	25.9	23.2	28.8	23.2	20.4	26.3	24.6	22.6	26.7
Quebec	27.1	25.1	29.2	26.5	24.2	28.9	26.9	25.4	28.5
Ontario	31.5	29.2	33.9	26.2	24.0	28.4	28.8	27.3	30.4
Manitoba	25.8	24.1	27.5	24.3	22.7	26.0	25.1	23.9	26.3
Saskatchewan	27.4	25.5	29.3	26.4	24.5	28.3	26.9	25.6	28.3
Alberta	25.9*	23.4	28.5	26.8	24.3	29.5	26.3	24.4	28.2
British Columbia	31.4	29.4	33.6	29.5	27.3	31.7	30.5	29.0	32.0
Yukon	36.5	31.2	42.1	39.3	32.1	47.0	37.9	32.6	43.6
Northwest Territories	35.0	28.8	41.7	31.7	27.2	36.6	33.4	30.4	36.5
Nunavut	32.6*	26.0	40.1	20.1	16.0	25.0	26.1	22.5	30.1
<b>Canada</b>	<b>27.9*</b>	<b>26.9</b>	<b>28.8</b>	<b>26.1</b>	<b>25.2</b>	<b>27.1</b>	<b>27.0</b>	<b>26.4</b>	<b>27.7</b>

\* significantly different from reference category ( $p < 0.05$ )

† reference category

**Note:** Province or territory refers to the respondent's province or territory of residence at the time of the survey, and does not necessarily correspond to where the childhood victimization occurred.

**Source:** Statistics Canada, Survey of Safety in Public and Private Spaces.

**Table 4**  
**Self-reported experiences of harsh parenting or witnessing violence during childhood, by gender, Canada, 2018**

Type of childhood experience	Women			Men†			Total		
	percent	95% confidence interval		percent	95% confidence interval		percent	95% confidence interval	
		from	to		from	to		from	to
Experienced harsh parenting before age 15	65.0*	64.0	66.0	62.3	61.2	63.4	63.7	62.9	64.4
Ever spanked or slapped by parent	54.4	53.3	55.5	55.8	54.7	56.9	55.1	54.3	55.9
Parent ever said things that hurt feelings	42.6*	41.6	43.7	33.6	32.5	34.7	38.2	37.5	39.0
Ever feel not wanted or loved by parent	22.1*	21.2	23.0	15.4	14.6	16.2	18.8	18.2	19.5
Parent ever did not take care of your basic needs	4.3†	3.9	4.7	3.3	2.9	3.7	3.8	3.5	4.1
Witnessed violence before age 15	47.3*	46.3	48.3	41.1	40.0	42.2	44.3	43.5	45.0
Ever saw or heard parents say hurtful things to each other or other adult	46.4*	45.4	47.4	39.7	38.6	40.8	43.2	42.4	43.9
Ever saw or heard parents hit each other or other adult	12.4*	11.7	13.1	10.9	10.2	11.6	11.7	11.3	12.2
Experienced any child maltreatment <sup>1</sup>	73.1*	72.2	74.0	70.1	69.0	71.2	71.6	70.9	72.4

\* significantly different from reference category ( $p < 0.05$ )

† reference category

1. Child maltreatment includes any instance of childhood victimization (physical or sexual abuse), harsh parenting, or witnessing violence during childhood (before age 15).

**Note:** Parent includes any parent or other caregiver.

**Source:** Statistics Canada, Survey of Safety in Public and Private Spaces.



**Table 5**  
**Relationship of perpetrator to victim in most serious self-reported incident of childhood victimization, by gender, Canada, 2018**

Relationship of perpetrator to victim in most serious incident	Women			Men†			Total		
	percent	95% confidence interval		percent	95% confidence interval		percent	95% confidence interval	
		from	to		from	to		from	to
<b>Most serious incident of physical abuse</b>									
Parent or step-parent	73.2*	71.2	75.2	65.9	63.8	67.9	69.4	68.0	70.8
Other family member <sup>1</sup>	9.8*	8.6	11.2	7.9	6.9	9.2	8.8	8.0	9.7
Friend, neighbour, or classmate <sup>2</sup>	4.5*	3.7	5.4	6.8	5.9	7.9	5.7	5.0	6.4
Teacher, professor or tutor	3.5*	2.9	4.2	9.2	8.3	10.3	6.5	5.9	7.1
Babysitter or nanny	0.7	0.4	1.2	0.5	0.2	1.1	0.6	0.4	0.9
Stranger	1.7*	1.2	2.5	4.0	3.1	5.2	2.9	2.4	3.6
Other	2.2	1.6	3.0	2.0	1.5	2.6	2.1	1.7	2.6
<b>Most serious incident of sexual abuse</b>									
Parent or step-parent	16.6*	14.6	18.9	10.0	7.4	13.4	15.0	13.3	16.9
Other family member <sup>1</sup>	32.8*	30.3	35.3	21.9	17.5	27.0	30.2	28.1	32.5
Friend, neighbour, or classmate <sup>2</sup>	27.4	25.1	29.8	32.2	28.0	36.8	28.5	26.5	30.6
Teacher, professor or tutor	2.5*	1.6	3.8	6.0	4.4	8.0	3.4	2.6	4.4
Babysitter or nanny	2.2	1.4	3.4	4.1	2.5	6.8	2.7	1.9	3.7
Stranger	9.5*	8.1	11.2	15.6	12.4	19.4	11.0	9.6	12.5
Other	6.8	5.4	8.5	8.6	6.3	11.6	7.2	6.0	8.7

\* significantly different from reference category ( $p < 0.05$ )

† reference category

1. Includes grandmother, grandfather, brother, sister or other family member.

2. Includes boyfriend or girlfriend, ex-boyfriend or ex-girlfriend, friend, neighbour, a family friend or an acquaintance, classmate, or person known by sight only.

**Note:** Includes the relationship between the victim and the person responsible for the most severe instance of abuse. Respondents reporting experiences of childhood physical abuse may also have reported childhood sexual abuse, and vice-versa. Responses of 'don't know' and 'refuse' are not shown but are included in percent calculations. For this reason, percent totals may not add to 100%.

**Source:** Statistics Canada, Survey of Safety in Public and Private Spaces.

**Table 6**  
**Gender of perpetrator in most serious self-reported incident of childhood victimization, by gender, Canada, 2018**

Gender of perpetrator in most serious incident	Women			Men†			Total		
	percent	95% confidence interval		percent	95% confidence interval		percent	95% confidence interval	
		from	to		from	to		from	to
<b>Most serious incident of physical abuse</b>									
Male	46.5*	44.3	48.7	63.7	61.6	65.8	55.5	53.9	57.0
Female	43.5*	41.3	45.8	27.5	25.6	29.6	35.1	33.6	36.7
Not stated	10.0	8.6	11.6	8.8	7.8	9.9	9.4	8.5	10.3
<b>Most serious incident of sexual abuse</b>									
Male	86.2*	84.1	88.0	62.5	57.7	67.0	79.6	77.5	81.6
Female	2.6*	1.6	4.1	9.3	6.7	12.7	4.4	3.3	5.8
Not stated	11.3*	9.8	13.0	28.2	24.1	32.8	16.0	14.3	17.8

\* significantly different from reference category (p < 0.05)

† reference category

**Note:** Includes the gender of the person responsible for the most severe instance of abuse. Respondents reporting experiences of childhood physical abuse may also have reported childhood sexual abuse, and vice-versa.

**Source:** Statistics Canada, Survey of Safety in Public and Private Spaces.

**Table 7**  
**Number of abusive behaviours experienced before age 15 among those who experienced childhood victimization, by gender, Canada, 2018**

Number of abusive behaviours experienced before age 15	Women			Men†			Total		
	percent	95% confidence interval		percent	95% confidence interval		percent	95% confidence interval	
		from	to		from	to		from	to
1 type of abusive behaviour	47.7*	45.8	49.6	51.7	49.7	53.8	49.5	48.1	50.9
2 types of abusive behaviours	27.1	25.5	28.8	25.4	23.6	27.4	26.5	25.2	27.7
3 types of abusive behaviours	15.6	14.2	17.1	17.5	16.1	19.1	16.5	15.5	17.6
4 types of abusive behaviours	5.0*	4.4	5.8	3.3	2.6	4.2	4.2	3.7	4.7
5 types of abusive behaviours	4.5*	3.8	5.4	2.0	1.6	2.6	3.3	2.9	3.8

\* significantly different from reference category (p < 0.05)

† reference category

**Note:** See Table 1 for a list of abusive behaviours included.

**Source:** Statistics Canada, Survey of Safety in Public and Private Spaces.

**Table 8**  
**Reporting childhood victimization to police or child protective services among those who experienced childhood victimization, by gender, Canada, 2018**

Reported childhood victimization before age 15	Women			Men†			Total		
	percent	95% confidence interval		percent	95% confidence interval		percent	95% confidence interval	
		from	to		from	to		from	to
Reported childhood victimization	9.6*	8.5	10.8	5.7	4.6	6.9	7.7	6.9	8.5
Reported to police	7.0*	6.1	8.0	4.7	3.7	5.9	5.9	5.2	6.6
Reported to child protection services	5.5*	4.7	6.4	3.2	2.4	4.4	4.4	3.8	5.1

\* significantly different from reference category ( $p < 0.05$ )

† reference category

Source: Statistics Canada, Survey of Safety in Public and Private Spaces.

**Table 9**  
**Reporting to police or child protective services among those who experienced childhood victimization, by number of abusive behaviours and gender, Canada, 2018**

Number of abusive behaviours experienced before age 15	Women			Men†			Total		
	percent	95% confidence interval		percent	95% confidence interval		percent	95% confidence interval	
		from	to		from	to		from	to
1 type of abusive behaviour	4.8*	3.8	6.2	3.1	2.2	4.3	4.0	3.3	4.8
2 types of abusive behaviours	11.5	9.3	14.1	9.1	6.0	13.6	10.3	8.3	12.7
3 types of abusive behaviours	12.9	10.3	16.1	9.2	7.0	12.1	11.0	9.2	13.2
4 types of abusive behaviours	26.3*	20.3	33.2	6.8	2.6	16.5	18.9	14.5	24.3
5 types of abusive behaviours	29.7*	22.0	38.8	15.0	8.7	24.6	25.4	19.5	32.4

\* significantly different from reference category ( $p < 0.05$ )

† reference category

Note: See Table 1 for a list of abusive behaviours included.

Source: Statistics Canada, Survey of Safety in Public and Private Spaces.

**Table 10**  
**Self-reported experiences of child maltreatment among those who experienced childhood victimization, by gender, Canada, 2018**

Types of maltreatment experienced before age 15	Women			Men†			Total		
	percent	95% confidence interval		percent	95% confidence interval		percent	95% confidence interval	
		from	to		from	to		from	to
Childhood victimization and harsh parenting	90.8	89.7	91.9	90.0	88.7	91.2	90.5	89.6	91.2
Childhood victimization and witnessed violence	74.2*	72.6	75.8	70.8	68.9	72.6	72.7	71.5	73.9
Childhood victimization, harsh parenting and witnessed violence	70.3*	68.6	72.0	66.8	64.8	68.7	68.7	67.4	70.0

\* significantly different from reference category ( $p < 0.05$ )

† reference category

Source: Statistics Canada, Survey of Safety in Public and Private Spaces.

**Table 11**  
**Self-reported experiences of childhood victimization by gender and selected characteristics of victim, Canada, 2018**

Selected characteristics	Women			Men†			Total		
	percent	95% confidence interval		percent	95% confidence interval		percent	95% confidence interval	
		from	to		from	to		from	to
<b>Age group</b>									
15 to 24†	20.6	17.5	24.1	19.9	16.9	23.2	20.2	18.0	22.5
25 to 34	27.7***	25.1	30.4	21.6	19.2	24.2	24.8*	23.0	26.7
35 to 44	30.7***	28.6	32.9	27.3*	25.2	29.5	29.0*	27.5	30.7
45 to 54	32.7*	30.5	34.9	31.3*	29.1	33.7	32.0*	30.4	33.6
55 to 64	32.3***	30.5	34.2	29.3*	27.4	31.2	30.8*	29.5	32.1
65 and over	23.6**	22.2	25.1	27.0*	25.3	28.8	25.2*	24.1	26.3
<b>Sexual Orientation<sup>1</sup></b>									
Heterosexual†	27.5**	26.5	28.4	25.8	24.8	26.7	26.6	26.0	27.3
Lesbian or gay	43.9*	35.1	53.0	39.9*	32.9	47.3	41.5*	36.0	47.2
Bisexual	44.9*	37.1	53.0	39.3*	28.6	51.1	42.3*	36.0	48.8
Sexual orientation not elsewhere classified	F	F	F	F	F	F	42.5	27.7	58.8
<b>Disability<sup>2</sup></b>									
Person with disability	38.4*	36.7	40.0	36.0*	34.0	38.0	37.4*	36.1	38.6
Person without disability†	21.0	20.0	22.1	21.8	20.7	22.8	21.4	20.7	22.2
<b>Indigenous identity<sup>3</sup></b>									
Indigenous person	41.9*	37.3	46.6	34.8*	29.5	40.5	38.5*	35.0	42.1
First Nations	42.3*	35.4	49.5	32.5	25.4	40.6	37.8*	32.7	43.3
Métis	43.4*	36.8	50.3	37.1*	29.6	45.2	40.1*	35.0	45.3
Inuit	22.1	13.9	33.2	16.8*	11.5	24.0	20.1*	15.0	26.5
Non-Indigenous person†	27.4**	26.5	28.4	25.8	24.9	26.8	26.7	26.0	27.3
<b>Ethnocultural group</b>									
Racialized population	23.6*	21.2	26.2	25.8	23.6	28.2	24.9*	23.2	26.7
Arab	34.6	23.4	47.9	30.6	23.5	38.9	32.4	25.7	39.9
Black	31.6	25.5	38.4	32.2	25.7	39.6	31.8	27.3	36.7
Chinese	21.8*	17.9	26.4	21.5*	17.9	25.6	21.7*	19.0	24.7
Filipino	21.6	14.8	30.4	19.0*	13.5	25.9	20.5*	15.8	26.3
Japanese	F	F	F	F	F	F	19.8	10.9	33.4
Korean	F	F	F	F	F	F	20.6	13.2	30.7
Latin American	38.9	29.5	49.2	32.0	23.7	41.7	35.4*	29.0	42.5
South Asian	23.2	17.8	29.7	25.5	20.8	30.9	24.7	21.0	28.7
Southeast Asian	21.5	13.5	32.6	30.6	20.2	43.3	26.4	19.1	35.3
West Asian	F	F	F	34.8	23.4	48.2	32.2	23.2	42.7

See notes at the end of the table.

**Table 11**  
**Self-reported experiences of childhood victimization by gender and selected characteristics of victim, Canada, 2018**

Selected characteristics	Women			Men†			Total		
	percent	95% confidence interval		percent	95% confidence interval		percent	95% confidence interval	
		from	to		from	to		from	to
Group not indicated elsewhere	24.8	15.2	37.9	27.2	16.7	41.0	25.8	18.5	34.8
Non-racialized population <sup>4†</sup>	28.5**	27.6	29.5	26.0	24.9	27.0	27.3	26.6	28.0
<b>Immigrant</b>									
Immigrant	24.7*	22.6	27.0	26.5*	24.6	28.4	25.8	24.4	27.3
Non-immigrant†	29.0*	27.9	30.0	26.1	25.0	27.2	27.6	26.9	28.3
<b>Location of residence</b>									
Rural	26.2	24.2	28.3	25.3	23.1	27.7	25.7	24.2	27.3
Urban†	28.2**	27.1	29.3	26.3	25.2	27.4	27.3	26.5	28.1

F too unreliable to be published

\* significantly different from reference category only ( $p < 0.05$ )

\*\* significantly different from estimate for men only ( $p < 0.05$ )

\*\*\* significantly different from reference category ( $p < 0.05$ ) and estimate for men ( $p < 0.05$ )

† reference category

1. This is a current measure of sexual orientation among those over age 15 and may not reflect the sexual orientation at the time of childhood when victimization occurred.

2. This is a current measure of disability among those over age 15 and may not reflect the disability at the time of childhood when victimization occurred.

3. Indigenous people include those who reported being a First Nations, Métis or Inuit person. Respondents could report belonging to more than one Indigenous group.

4. Excludes Indigenous persons.

**Source:** Statistics Canada, Survey of Safety in Public and Private Spaces.

**Table 12**  
**Logistic regressions predicting odds of experiencing childhood victimization by selected demographic characteristics, Canada, 2018**

Selected demographic characteristics	odds ratio <sup>1</sup>	95% confidence interval	
		from	to
<b>Age group</b>			
15 to 24	reference category	...	...
25 to 34	1.38***	1.17	1.64
35 to 44	1.77***	1.50	2.10
45 to 54	2.05***	1.74	2.41
55 to 64	1.90***	1.62	2.23
65 and over	1.37***	1.16	1.60
<b>Indigenous identity<sup>2</sup></b>			
Indigenous person	1.53***	1.31	1.79
non-Indigenous person	reference category	...	...
<b>Sexual orientation<sup>3</sup></b>			
Heterosexual	reference category	...	...
Lesbian or gay	1.87***	1.46	2.38
Bisexual	1.93***	1.45	2.56
Sexual orientation not elsewhere classified	n.s.	n.s.	n.s.
<b>Disability<sup>4</sup></b>			
Person with disability	2.16***	2.01	2.32
Person without disability	reference category	...	...

... not applicable

n.s. not significant

\*\*\* significantly different from reference category ( $p < 0.001$ )

1. Odds ratio represents the odds that an outcome (e.g., childhood victimization) will occur given a particular demographic characteristic, compared to the odds of the outcome occurring in the absence of that demographic characteristic. An odds ratio higher than 1 indicates a characteristic associated with an increased probability for the outcome to occur, while an odds ratio below 1 indicates a decreased probability.

2. Indigenous people include those who reported being a First Nations, Métis or Inuit person. Respondents could report belonging to more than one Indigenous group.

3. This is a current measure of sexual orientation among those over age 15 and may not reflect the sexual orientation at the time of childhood when victimization occurred.

4. This is a current measure of disability among those over age 15 and may not reflect the disability at the time of childhood when victimization occurred.

**Note:** Model initially included all variables in table 10, but only significant ( $p < 0.05$ ) characteristics were retained in the final model.

**Source:** Statistics Canada, Survey of Safety in Public and Private Spaces.

**Table 13**  
**Adult outcomes by self-reported experiences of childhood victimization and gender, Canada, 2018**

	Experienced childhood victimization			Did not experience childhood victimization <sup>†</sup>		
	Women	Men	Total	Women	Men	Total
<b>Selected adult<sup>1</sup> outcomes</b>	percent					
<b>Employed in past 12 months</b>						
Yes	68.0***	72.6*	70.3	65.4**	75.4	70.4
No	31.7***	27.1*	29.4	34.2**	24.3	29.2
<b>Highest degree earned</b>						
Less than high school	9.3***	11.4*	10.3*	12.4**	14.0	13.2
High school	24.2	24.4	24.3	25.1	25.4	25.3
College or trade school	30.5*	29.2	29.9*	28.1	27.9	27.9
University	35.6	34.3	35.0*	33.7	32.2	32.9
<b>Household income group<sup>2</sup></b>						
Less than \$20,000	7.9*	7.8*	7.9*	5.7	5.5	5.6
\$20,000 to \$59,999	29.4**	25.5	27.6	28.4**	24.2	26.3
\$60,000 to \$99,999	23.8	25.0	24.3	22.9**	24.5	23.7
\$100,000 to \$149,999	19.6	20.2	19.9	19.9**	21.6	20.8
\$150,000 or more	19.3*	21.4*	20.3*	23.0	24.1	23.5
<b>Marital status</b>						
Married or common-law	56.5**	62.0	59.1	58.0**	62.7	60.3
Separated or divorced	12.8***	7.7*	10.4*	8.5**	5.0	6.7
Widowed	6.4***	2.1	4.3*	8.3**	2.2	5.2
Single, never married	24.0**	27.8	25.9	25.0**	29.9	27.5
<b>Ever homeless</b>						
Yes	5.7*	5.4*	5.6*	0.7	0.9	0.8
No	94.0*	94.4*	94.2*	99.0	98.8	98.9
<b>Ever lived with family/friends because nowhere else to go</b>						
Yes	21.8*	19.6*	20.8*	5.6	6.2	6.0
No	78.1*	77.8*	79.0*	93.9	93.5	93.7
<b>Self-rated general health</b>						
Excellent, very good or good	82.7***	85.1*	83.8*	90.3	90.5	90.3
Fair or poor	17.2***	14.8*	16.1*	9.5	9.4	9.5
<b>Self-rated mental health</b>						
Excellent, very good or good	79.0***	84.4*	81.4*	90.1**	91.5	90.7
Fair or poor	20.9***	15.4*	18.5*	9.5**	8.2	8.9

See notes at the end of the table.



**Table 13**  
**Adult outcomes by self-reported experiences of childhood victimization and gender, Canada, 2018**

	Experienced childhood victimization			Did not experience childhood victimization <sup>†</sup>		
	Women	Men	Total	Women	Men	Total
<b>Selected adult<sup>1</sup> outcomes</b>	percent					
<b>Suicidal thoughts</b>						
Yes	32.9***	25.9*	29.6*	10.8	10.0	10.5
No	66.7***	73.9*	70.1*	88.8	89.8	89.2
<b>Binge drank<sup>3</sup> more than once a month in past 12 months</b>						
Yes	13.6***	18.4*	15.9*	10.9**	16.2	13.5
No	86.1***	81.2*	83.8*	88.7**	83.4	86.1
<b>Use of marijuana in past 12 months</b>						
Yes	19.5***	24.5*	21.9*	11.0**	16.8	13.9
No	80.4***	75.4*	78.0*	88.9**	83.0	86.0
<b>Use of non-prescribed drugs in past 12 months</b>						
Yes	3.3***	5.7*	4.5*	1.3**	3.2	2.2
No	96.5***	94.1*	95.3*	98.6**	96.7	97.7
<b>Violent victimization<sup>4</sup> since age 15</b>						
Yes	73.1***	65.2*	69.4*	34.5**	30.7	32.6
No	25.2***	32.1*	28.4*	61.6**	64.9	63.2
<b>Violent victimization<sup>4</sup> past 12 months</b>						
Yes	10.1*	9.9*	10.2*	4.6	5.0	4.8
No	84.9*	84.1*	84.3*	92.0	91.0	91.5
<b>Intimate partner violence<sup>5</sup> since age 15</b>						
Yes	66.6***	53.3*	60.3*	35.1**	30.0	32.6
No	31.3***	43.6*	37.1*	62.1**	66.5	64.2
<b>Non-intimate partner violence since age 15</b>						
Yes	64.5***	59.2*	62.1*	28.8**	27.1	28.0
No	34.4***	39.6*	36.8*	68.8**	70.9	69.8

\* significantly different from reference category only ( $p < 0.05$ )

\*\* significantly different from estimate for men only ( $p < 0.05$ )

\*\*\* significantly different from reference category ( $p < 0.05$ ) and estimate for men ( $p < 0.05$ )

† reference category

1. Adult refers to respondents of the SSPPS and includes any respondent 15 years of age or older.

2. Represents before-tax household income and comes from multiple sources. For 84% of respondents, income data was obtained from successful linkage to tax records. For 15% of respondents, linkage to tax records was not successful or respondents did not consent to linkage with other sources; income data for these respondents is imputed. In the territories (less than 1% of the total sample), respondents were asked to self-report their personal and household income or provide a range in which their before-tax income fell.

3. For women, binge drinking is defined as consuming four or more alcoholic beverages in one sitting. For men, binge drinking is defined as consuming five or more alcoholic beverages in one sitting.

4. Violent victimization includes intimate partner violence and non-intimate partner violence.

5. Percent calculation excludes respondents who reported that they have never been in an intimate partner relationship.

**Source:** Statistics Canada, Survey of Safety in Public and Private Spaces.

**Table 14**  
**Logistic regressions: odds of experiencing selected adult outcomes by childhood victimization, Canada, 2018**

Childhood victimization	Ever homeless	Ever lived with family/friends	Fair or poor self-rated general health	Fair or poor self-rated mental health	Suicidal thoughts	Binge drank <sup>2</sup> more than once a month in past 12 months	Use of marijuana in past 12 months	Use of non-prescribed drugs in past 12 months	Violent victimization <sup>3</sup> since age 15	Violent victimization <sup>3</sup> in past 12 months	Intimate partner violence <sup>4</sup> since age 15	Non-intimate partner violence since age 15
	adjusted odds ratio <sup>1</sup>											
<b>Childhood victimization</b>												
No	reference category											
Yes	6.05***	3.48***	1.28***	1.85***	3.09***	1.16***	1.69***	2.02***	4.36***	2.31***	3.07***	3.92***
<b>Childhood victimization before age 15</b>												
Did not experience childhood victimization	reference category											
Experienced 1 type of abusive behaviour	3.61***	2.28***	n.s.	1.47***	2.17***	1.14*	1.55***	1.60**	3.21***	1.86***	2.57***	2.96***
Experienced 2 types of abusive behaviours	4.58***	3.55***	1.19*	2.12***	3.26***	n.s.	1.75***	2.16***	5.22***	2.45***	3.27***	4.28***
Experienced 3 types of abusive behaviours	8.81***	5.55***	1.67***	1.97***	3.96***	n.s.	1.91***	2.81***	6.98***	3.06***	3.56***	6.22***
Experienced 4 types of abusive behaviours	16.96***	6.87***	1.68**	3.04***	9.27***	n.s.	1.87***	n.s.	10.38***	2.15***	5.46***	8.43***
Experienced 5 types of abusive behaviours	28.23***	12.35***	2.41***	3.09***	11.13***	n.s.	2.28***	3.44**	13.18***	5.35***	6.99***	12.99***

n.s. not significant

\* significantly different from reference category (p < 0.05)

\*\* significantly different from reference category (p < 0.01)

\*\*\* significantly different from reference category (p < 0.001)

1. Adjusted odds ratio represents the odds that an adult outcome (e.g., ever homeless) will occur given a previous history of childhood victimization, compared to the odds of the outcome occurring in the absence of childhood victimization. An odds ratio higher than 1 indicates childhood victimization is associated with an increased probability for the adult outcome to occur, while an odds ratio below 1 indicates a decreased probability. Each model adjusts for significant demographic variables included in Table 11; however, not all variables that were significant in Table 11 remained significant in each distinct model.

2. For women, binge drinking is defined as consuming four or more alcoholic beverages in one sitting. For men, binge drinking is defined as consuming five or more alcoholic beverages in one sitting.

3. Violent victimization includes intimate partner violence and non-intimate partner violence.

4. Percent calculation excludes respondents who reported that they have never been in an intimate partner relationship.

**Note:** A distinct model is run for each adult outcome considered. Adult refers to respondents of the SSPPS and includes any respondent 15 years of age or older. See Table 1 for a list of abusive behaviours included.

**Source:** Statistics Canada, Survey of Safety in Public and Private Spaces.