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CANADA'S SHELTERS FOR ABUSED WOMEN, 2001/02

by Ruth Code

Highlights

- In 2001/02, 101,248 women and dependent children were admitted to 482 shelters across Canada. In comparison, 96,359 women and dependent children were admitted to 448 shelters in 1999/2000 and 90,792 women and dependent children were admitted to 413 shelters in 1997/98.
- On April 15, 2002, 6,286 women and children were residing in shelters. This is an increase from 5,351 women and children residing in shelters on snapshot day 2000 and 6,115 women and children residing in shelters on snapshot day, 1998.
- 73% of the women and 84% of the children living in shelters on April 15, 2002 were there to escape abuse. This is a decrease from 81% of women and 91% of children residing in shelters for reasons of abuse as of noon April 17, 2001.
- The trend data shows that 60% of shelters were transition homes. This is a decrease from 63% in 2000 and 66% in 1998. Over the same time period the number of emergency shelters and women's emergency centres grew from a low of 11% in 1998 to 14% in 2000 to a high of 16% in 2002.
- On April 15, 2002, 110 women and 64 children departed before noon from 430 shelters across Canada. A minority of women, only 12%, returned to their spouse. One quarter (25%) left the shelter for alternate housing, 12% went to stay with friends or relatives, 8% returned home without their spouse, 19% went to other housing and for 25% of women it was not known where they were going to reside.
- On April 15, 2002, 115 shelters reported that they referred 295 women and 257 children elsewhere. A full three-quarters of these shelters (75%) could not accommodate these women and children because the shelter was full (up from 71% in 1999/2000)"
- Results from the 2001/02 survey indicated a slight decrease from 1999/2000 in the percentage of shelters that provided programs for children who have witnessed or experienced abuse (68% versus 75%).



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Introduction

Over the last thirty years community groups and governments have undertaken numerous actions and strategies aimed at the reduction of violence within the family. These strategies are designed to reduce and prevent the incidence of abuse, raise public awareness about family violence and provide services for victims such as housing for those fleeing abuse. Awareness and concern over family violence has risen among Canadians. According to a national public opinion survey conducted by EKOS Research Associates in 2002, the majority of Canadians (62%) reported that the problem of family violence in our society is more serious today than it was ten years ago. Three-quarters of Canadians felt that family violence should be an urgent priority for the federal government (77%) and for their community (76%).

Family violence can take many forms, including physical and sexual abuse, threats, harassment and financial and psychological abuse and can have serious and damaging effects on victims. According to the 1999 General Social Survey, violence in marriages and common-law unions is a reality that many women and men face. Women and men report similar rates of violence by their intimate partner. Women are more likely to be subjected to severe forms of violence (e.g. beaten, choked, sexually assaulted). Women are three times more likely to suffer injury, five times more likely to receive medical attention, and five times more likely to fear for their lives as a result of the violence (Family Violence in Canada, 2002). Furthermore, women account for the majority of victims in spousal homicide incidents, the most serious form of family violence.

One measure taken to assist women fleeing abuse and their children has been the development of a substantial system of shelters. The decision by a woman to use a shelter depends on a number of factors, including the availability and awareness of the service, the impact that this decision may have on other aspects of a victim's life such as custody over children, fear of reprisal by the abuser and reluctance due to shame or embarrassment.

The establishment of shelters to provide temporary safe refuge for abused women and their children dates back to the 1970's. Since that time, the combined efforts of the federal government, provincial/territorial governments and community groups have resulted in the development of over 500 shelters across Canada. There are also many provincial, territorial and community programs that provide services and programs for women who have experienced abuse. These include expenditures for the on-going operation and maintenance of shelters, counselling and prevention programs, legal services and public awareness programs.

Several recent Canadian evaluations examined how effectively shelters provide assistance to abused women and their children. An evaluation conducted by Canadian Mortgage and Housing Corporation (CMHC) in 1997 reported that a high proportion of the 9,000 residents of the 77 shelters studied during a one-year period rated the shelter support and services as "valuable." Similarly, the 1993 Violence Against Women Survey reported that 81% of the women who used a shelter found it helpful (Rodgers, 1994). In addition, an evaluation of 68 second-stage shelters funded by CMHC Canadian Next Step Program, concluded that the availability of second-stage housing was a critical factor in the decision not to return to an abusive partner (SPR Associates, 1997).

Currently, there are no shelters in Canada that provide residential services exclusively to adult male victims of family abuse. However, some shelters do provide some services to men abused by their family.

The Transition Home Survey is distributed across Canada to all agencies that provide residential services to abused women. In order to provide an accurate picture of the facilities that provide services to abused women and their children and the range of services offered, the survey includes provincially funded shelters for abused women and their children as well as agencies that provide services that are not exclusive to abused women and children. For these reasons, shelters such as YWCA's, safe home networks and general emergency shelters are included within the survey.

The Transition Home Survey is a census survey of residential facilities conducted every two years. Questionnaires are mailed to every known shelter identified as providing residential services (shelter) to abused women in every province and territory. Information is collected on the characteristics of the facilities and the services provided during the previous 12 months. The survey also includes a one-day snapshot providing information on the characteristics of women and children residing in shelters on a specific day. The purpose of this Juristat is to provide national information on the number of women and their children, who sought refuge for reasons of abuse during the 12 month period ending March 31, 2002, to provide a profile of the characteristics of the facilities who serve these women and to provide a profile of the clients they served on snapshot day, April 15, 2002. Where possible, comparisons are made with the 1997/98 and the 1999/2000 survey cycles (which had a 91% and 92% response rate, respectively). Additionally, since the characteristics of shelters and women and children residents may change over time and the number of shelters continue to change (through shelter openings and closings, and changes in designation), one way to measure change overtime is to hold constant the shelters studied. A trend data file was created that contained only those facilities that responded to the 1998, 2000 and 2002 cycles of the survey, in order to understand trends in the clientele served and the services provided. Information representative of the trends of a subset of 359 shelters that responded to the 1998, 2000 and 2002 cycles of the survey will be presented.¹

Types of shelters

The term shelter is used broadly to refer to all residential facilities for abused women and their dependent children. The types of shelters are defined by the Transition Home Survey as:

Transition Home – Short or moderate term (1 day to 11 weeks) first stage emergency housing.

Second Stage Housing – Long-term (3-12 months) secure housing with support and referral services designed to assist women while they search for permanent housing.

Safe Home Network – A network of private homes in rural or remote areas where there is no full-fledged operating shelter. It offers subsidiary very short-term (1-3 days) emergency housing.

Women's Emergency Centre/Shelter – Short-term (1-21 days) respite (temporary relief) for women and their dependent children.

Emergency Shelter – Short-term (1-3 days) respite for a wide population range, not exclusively abused women. Some facilities may provide accommodation for men as well as women. This type of facility may accommodate residents who are not associated with family abuse but are without a home due to an emergency situation (e.g., eviction for non-payment of rent). Other than residential (room and board) services, these shelters offer few additional client services.

Family Resource Centre – An Ontario government initiative that serves a wide range of clients and provides clients with an extensive array of information and referrals as well as residential services.

Other – All other facilities/shelters not otherwise classified. This category may include Rural Family Violence Prevention Centres in Alberta, Interim Housing in Manitoba, and other types of emergency shelters, such as YWCA's. These services may not be exclusive to abused women.

A Profile of Facilities

Change in the make-up of reporting shelter types

On April 15, 2002, there were 524 shelters that provided residential services for abused women and their children, according to the definition of shelter used in this survey, across Canada. Out of the 524 shelters contacted for the 2001/02 survey, 482 or 92% responded to the survey (Table 1).² In 1999/2000, 467 shelters out of the 508 shelters contacted, responded to the survey. Twenty-five new facilities reported to the 2001/02 survey, however, it is important to note that an increase in the number of new facilities does not necessarily mean an increase in the number of shelters. For example, if a shelter provides more than one type of residential facility service, (i.e. a transition home and a second stage home) a questionnaire is completed for each facility type. The number of spaces available to abused women does not necessarily increase with additional facility types. Of the twenty-five new shelters that reported to the 2001/02 survey, 64% (16) were housed in already existing shelters.³ Of the 40 new shelters that responded to the survey in 1999/2000, 60% (24) were housed in existing shelters. In 2001/02, more than half, 14 or 56% of all new facilities were emergency shelters and women's emergency centres.

Table 1

Number of shelters operating and responding to the Transition Home Survey by province and territory, 2001/02			
	Number operating	Number that responded	%
Canada	524	482	92
Newfoundland and Labrador	14	13	93
Prince Edward Island	4	4	100
Nova Scotia	20	18	90
New Brunswick	16	15	94
Quebec	111	103	94
Ontario	152	142	93
Manitoba	25	23	92
Saskatchewan	23	21	91
Alberta	40	36	90
British Columbia	100	91	91
Yukon	6	5	83
Northwest Territories	8	7	88
Nunavut	5	4	80

Source: Statistics Canada, Canadian Centre for Justice Statistics, Transition Home Survey, 2001/02.

- ¹ When presenting trend data information, the 1997/98, 1999/2000 and 2001/02 Transition Home Survey will be referred to as if they pertained solely to the year in which they were conducted. In reality, annual information for the 1997/98 Transition Home Survey covered the period April 1, 1997 to March 31, 1998 while the snapshot was April 20, 1998. The 1999/2000 cycle covered the period April 1, 1999 to March 31, 2000 for annual information and the snapshot day was April 17, 2000. The 2001/02 cycle covered the period April 1, 2001 to March 31, 2002 for annual information and the snapshot day was April 15, 2002.
- ² The exclusion of certain shelters, as well as non-response for certain questions by participating shelters, means that some information based on the 2001/02 survey is undercounted or incomplete. This is not the case for the information based on the trend data file.
- ³ Shelters may house multiple facility types for a number of reasons including operational factors such as costs, the length of resident stay, the location (urban/suburban, rural and reserve) and a lack of housing options for women and children upon departure).

Counting only openings of new facilities and excluding those housed in existing shelters, the number of shelter closures in 2001/02 exceeded new shelter growth for that reporting year (19 closures compared to 14 new facilities). In 1999/2000 there were 8 shelter closures and in 1997/98 six shelters closed.

Annual admissions to shelters continues to increase. In the year ending March 31, 2002⁴ there were 101,248 admissions to the 482 facilities that reported to the survey: 55,901 women and 45,347 children. In 1999/2000, there were 96,359 admissions to the 448 facilities that responded to the survey question: 57,182 women and 39,177 children. The 1997/98 survey found that 90,792 women and dependent children were

admitted to 413 shelters.⁵ (Table 2). Growth in the number of women and children admitted to shelters is also reflected in snapshot day data. On April 15, 2002, 6,286 women and children were residing in shelters. This is an increase from 5,351 women and children residing in shelters on snapshot day 1999/2000 and 6,115 women children residing in shelters on snapshot day, 1997/98.

⁴ The precise reporting period may vary. Shelters were asked to provide information for the twelve-month period ending March 31, 2002 or their own twelve-month fiscal period.

⁵ Response rates were quite high for both 2001/02 (92%), 1999/2000 (92%) and 1997/98 (91%), therefore non-response bias is minimal.

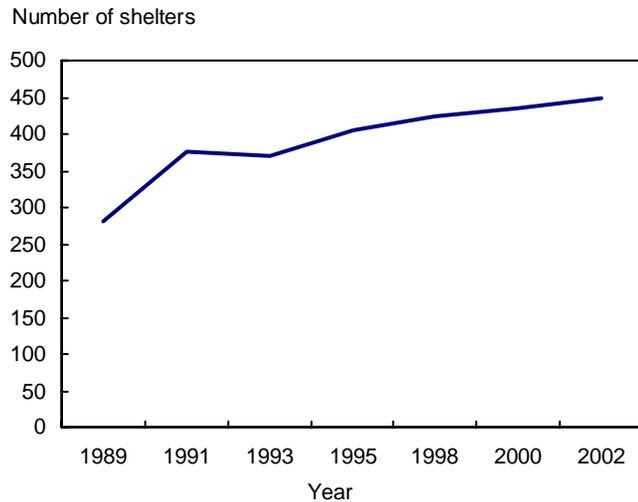
Table 2

	Number of annual admissions to shelters by province and facility type, 2002												
	Facility type												
	Total	Transition House			Second Stage Housing			Safe Home Network					
		Total	Women	Children	Total	Women	Children	Total	Women	Children			
Canada	101,248	53,390	28,963	24,427	3,620	1,470	2,150	684	380	304			
Newfoundland and Labrador	1162	978	514	464	2	1	1	0	0	0			
Prince Edward Island	232	155	80	75	77	33	44	0	0	0			
Nova Scotia	1,897	1,695	970	725	202	147	55	0	0	0			
New Brunswick	2,131	1,865	1,056	809	79	36	43	0	0	0			
Quebec	21,148	14,682	8,642	6,040	137	61	76	0	0	0			
Ontario	34,588	14,670	7,571	7,099	1,906	718	1,188	0	0	0			
Manitoba	6,565	459	180	279	425	160	265	0	0	0			
Saskatchewan	4,572	2,234	930	1,304	107	42	65	11	4	7			
Alberta	10,642	1,881	856	1,025	301	109	192	0	0	0			
British Columbia	15,909	13,247	7,442	5,805	361	151	210	673	376	297			
Yukon	754	699	391	308	19	11	8	0	0	0			
Northwest Territories	1,030	825	331	494	4	1	3	0	0	0			
Nunavut	618	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0			
		Women's Emergency Centre			Emergency Shelter			Family Resource Centre			Other		
		Total	Women	Children	Total	Women	Children	Total	Women	Children	Total	Women	Children
Canada	17,154	8,437	8,717	19,934	13,413	6,521	1,883	930	953	4,583	2,308	2,275	
Newfoundland and Labrador	0	0	0	151	151	0	0	0	0	31	27	4	
Prince Edward Island	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	
Nova Scotia	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	
New Brunswick	187	132	55	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	
Quebec	502	238	264	4,772	4,759	13	0	0	0	1,055	679	376	
Ontario	3,780	1,936	1,844	9,435	5,631	3,804	1,883	930	953	2,914	1,280	1,634	
Manitoba	3,909	1,880	2,029	1,651	646	1,005	0	0	0	121	45	76	
Saskatchewan	368	144	224	1,671	883	788	0	0	0	181	85	96	
Alberta	7,186	3,488	3,698	1,058	498	560	0	0	0	216	135	81	
British Columbia	367	297	70	1,196	845	351	0	0	0	65	57	8	
Yukon	36	15	21	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	
Northwest Territories	201	65	136	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	
Nunavut	618	242	376	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	

Source: Statistics Canada, Canadian Centre for Justice Statistics, Transition Home Survey, 2001/02.

Figure 1

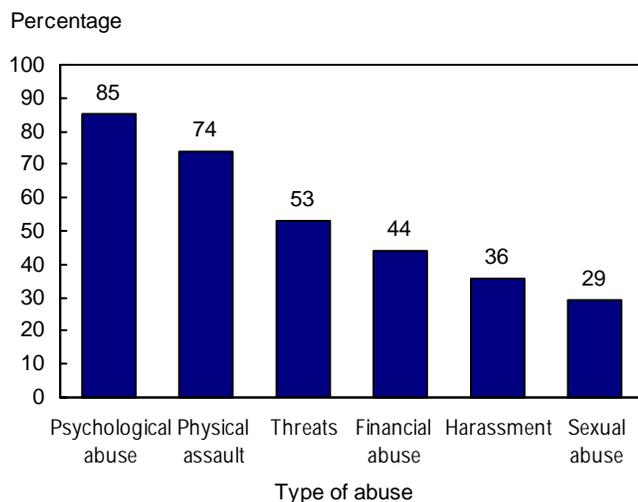
 **Growth in shelters for abused women**



Source: Statistics Canada, Canadian Centre for Justice Statistics, Transition Homes Survey, 2001/02.

Figure 2

 **Women in shelters by type of abuse, April 15, 2002**



Note: Figures do not add to 100% due to multiple responses.
 Source: Statistics Canada, Canadian Centre for Justice Statistics, Transition Home Survey, 2001/02.

Drop in the percentage of women and children residing in shelters primarily for reasons of abuse

While there has been an increase in the number of women and children residing in shelters, there has been a decrease in the proportion of women and children residing in shelters primarily for reasons of abuse. In a snapshot taken as of noon on April 15, 2002, 73% percent of the women and 84% of the children living in shelters were there to escape abuse (Table 3). This is a decrease from 81% of women and 91% of children residing in shelters for reasons of abuse on snapshot day in 2001 and 80% of women and children on snapshot day 1998.

Of the women residing in shelters for reasons of abuse in 2002, 85% were there to escape emotional/psychological abuse, 74% physical violence, 53% threats, 44% financial abuse, 36% harassment and 29% sexual abuse. (Figure 2). Of the women residing in shelters for reasons other than abuse, the majority (57%) were unable to find affordable housing, 31% were experiencing short term housing problems, 40% were experiencing drug and alcohol problems, and 39% mental health problems.⁶ (Table 3)

⁶ Percentages will not add up to 100% due to multiple responses.

Table 3

 **Reason(s) for residing in shelters, April 15, 2002**

	Number	Percentage
Total Women	3,287	100
Abuse	2,401	73
Non-Abuse	886	27
Abusive situations	2,401	100
Physical Abuse	1,768	74
Sexual Abuse	688	29
Financial Abuse	1,067	44
Psychological Abuse	2,046	85
Threats	1,286	53
Harassment	876	36
Other Abuse	109	5
Total women with parenting responsibilities	1,689	100
Protection of children from:		
Physical Abuse	395	23
Sexual Abuse	95	6
Threats	352	21
Psychological	726	43
Neglect	196	12
Witnessing abuse of mother	966	57
Situations not involving abuse	886	100
Housing Emergency	335	38
Unable to find affordable housing	506	57
Short-term housing problem	278	31
Mental Health Problems	348	39
Drug and Alcohol Addiction	358	40
Other Non-Abuse	231	26
Reason Unknown	18	2

Note: Percentages will not add to 100 due to multiple responses.
 Source: Statistics Canada, Canadian Centre for Justice Statistics, Transition Home Survey, 2001/02.

Shifts in the make-up of shelter types

The decrease in the percentage of women and children residing in shelters for reasons of abuse may be explained by shifts in the make-up of shelter types. In 2001/02, transition homes made up 54% (259) of the 482 shelters that reported to the survey, a decrease from 58% in 1999/2000 (269 of the 467 that reported to the 1999/2000 survey cycle). The number of reporting emergency shelters and women's emergency centres increased from 75 in 1999/2000 (16% of reporting shelters) to 99 in 2001/02 (20% of reporting shelters). Ontario reported the greatest change in the make up of shelter types from 1999/2000 to 2001/02, with a decrease from 65 to 53 transition homes and an increase from 30 to 45 emergency shelters and women's emergency centres.

Similar results are evidenced in the trend data which controls for the influence of shifts in response rate overtime on the breakdown of shelter types, by considering only facilities that have reported in 1998, 2000 and 2002. In 1998, 237 (66%) of the 359 shelters in the trend data were transition homes (Table 4). This number dropped over time to 225 (63%) in 2000 and further to 218 (60%) in 2002. Over the same time period the number of emergency shelters and women's emergency centres grew from a low of 40 (11%) in 1998 to 48 (14%) in 2000 to a high of 58 (16%) in 2002. This indicates that some shelters changed designations from transitions homes to emergency shelters. General emergency shelters provide services to a wide population range, not exclusively abused women. Operational factors, such as costs, availability of funding based on shelter type, capacity and duration of stay by residents, may account for the decrease in the number of transition homes and the corresponding increase in general emergency shelters and women's emergency centres.

While there has been a decrease in the number of transition homes, the proportion of women residing in this shelter type for reasons of abuse is high. In 2001/02, 84% of women residing in transition homes were there for reasons of abuse.

Table 4

Shelter Type ¹	Changes in shelter type over time, 1998-2002					
	Year					
	1998		2000		2002	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Total	359	100	359	100	359	100
Transition Home	237	66	225	63	218	60
Second Stage Housing	49	14	51	14	51	14
Safe Home Network	11	3	11	3	11	3
Women's Emergency Centre	19	5	21	6	32	9
Emergency Shelter	21	6	27	8	26	7
Family Resource Centre	11	3	12	3	10	3
Other	11	3	12	3	11	3

Percentages may not total 100% due to rounding.

¹ Figures relate only to the 359 shelters that responded to this question in the 1998, 2000 and 2002 cycles of the survey.

Source: Statistics Canada, Canadian Centre for Justice Statistics, Transition Home Survey Trend Data File, 1998-2002.

Ninety-five percent of women residing in second stage housing, 65% of women in women's emergency centres, 43% of women in general emergency shelters, 40% of women in family resource centres and 46% of women in other facility types were there for reasons of abuse.

The average rate of abused women residing in shelters across Canada is 18.7 per 100,000 women aged 15 and over. A breakdown of rates by province shows that rates of shelter use by abused women is the highest in the Yukon, 9 times the national average (103.2 per 100,000 women aged 15 and over). Rates were also high in the Northwest Territories (84.1 per 100,000 women) and Nunavut (58.4 per 100,000 women). Shelters in Manitoba reported the next highest rate of shelter use by abused women at 21.3 per 100,000 women. Newfoundland shelters reported the lowest rate (12.4 per 100,000 women). Differences in provincial rates are not necessarily a reflection of differences in the incidence of abuse, but may be affected by the availability and size of shelters, the catchment area that a shelter serves, and the number of shelters responding to the survey in each province and territory.

Table 5

	Rate ¹ of women in shelters, resident on April 15, 2002, admitted for reasons of abuse, province and territory		
	Number of resident women for reasons of abuse	Number of women in the population 15+	Rate per 100,000 women 15+
Canada	2,401	12,843,183	18.7
Newfoundland and Labrador	28	225,506	12.4
Prince Edward Island	12	57,486	20.9
Nova Scotia	85	399,042	21.3
New Brunswick	64	317,038	20.2
Quebec	458	3,114,217	14.7
Ontario	1,019	4,901,792	20.8
Manitoba	99	464,033	21.3
Saskatchewan	70	405,851	17.2
Alberta	189	1,213,604	15.6
British Columbia	348	1,710,156	20.3
Yukon	12	11,631	103.2
Northwest Territories	12	14,268	84.1
Nunavut	5	8,559	58.4

¹ Rates are calculated based on 100,000 population. Population estimates are provided by Statistics Canada, Demography Division. Populations as of July 1: preliminary postcensal estimates for 2002.

Source: Statistics Canada, Canadian Centre for Justice Statistics, Transition Home Survey, 2001/02.

The vast majority of abused women in shelters on April 15, 2002 were seeking shelter from someone with whom they had an intimate relationship (82%), either a spouse or common-law partner (66% in 2001/02 down from 68% in 1999/2000), former spouse or partner (10% in 2001/02 down from 14% in 1999/2000) or current or ex-boyfriend (5% in 1997/1998 and 1999/2000, 6% in 2001/02). A further 6% were abused by a relative, friend, caregiver, authority figure, down from 11% in 1999/2000 and up from 8% in 1997/98, while for 4% of women in 1999/2000 and 9% in 2001/02, the shelter could not specify the relationship.

Table 6

Characteristics of abused women residing in shelters by age, parental status, disability and relationship to abuser, April 15, 2002		
	Number	Percentage
Total women admitted due to abuse	2,401	100
Age		
15-24	456	19
25-34	846	35
35-44	633	26
45-54	222	9
55+	79	3
Age Unknown	169	7
Parental status		
Admitted with child(ren)	1,294	54
Admitted without child(ren)	395	16
Admitted who have no child(ren)	528	22
Parental status unknown	184	8
Disabilities		
Physical	151	6
Other	156	6
No disabilities	1,120	47
Don't know	974	41
Relationship between woman and abuser		
Spouse/common law partner	1,584	66
Ex-spouse/Ex-partner	252	10
Dating/Ex-dating	149	6
Relative	141	6
Other	62	3
Don't know	213	9

Source: Statistics Canada, Canadian Centre for Justice Statistics, Transition Home Survey, 2001/02.

Decrease in the number of children accompanying their mothers to shelters

In the year ending March 31, 1998, 74,813 residents (38,920 women and 35,893 children) were admitted to the 355 shelters that responded to that question in all three survey cycles. In the year ending March 31, 2000, the number of residents admitted to these same facilities dropped to 67,995 (36,736 women and 31,259 children) and increased slightly to 71,273 (38,738 women and 32,535 children) in March 31, 2002. A decrease in the number of children in shelters contributed the most to the overall decline in annual admissions to these facilities, a 10% decrease in the number of children accompanying their mothers to shelters from 1998 to 2002. This compares to a 2% decrease in the number of women admitted from 1998 to 2002.

Snapshot day trend data indicates similar results to annual admission data, whereby there has been a decrease in the number of children accompanying their mothers to shelters over time. From April 20, 1998 to April 15, 2002 there was an 8% decrease in the number of children residents. There was also a decrease in the percentage of abused women admitted with their children on respective snapshot days over the three reporting periods.⁷ The percentage of abused women admitted with their children declined from 58% to 56% and further to 54%.

⁷ A total of 357 shelters provided responses to this question in 1998, 2000 and 2002.

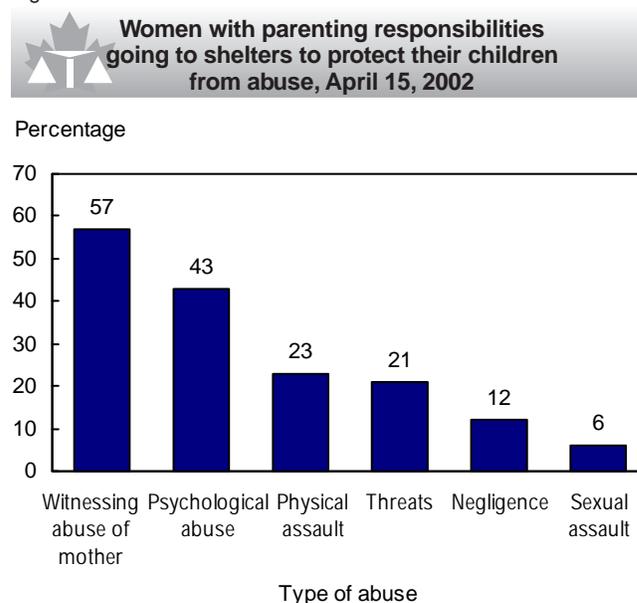
The decrease in the number of children accompanying their mothers to shelters coincided with amendments to provincial child welfare policies whereby it is possible for children to be apprehended by child welfare authorities when their mothers have been abused. The decrease in the number of children accompanying their mothers to shelters may also be explained by the increase in the number of short-term emergency type shelters and the decrease in the number of longer-term care transition homes.

Increase in the percentage of women protecting their children from witnessing abuse

While there has been a decrease in the proportion of children accompanying their mother to shelters, there has been an increase in the proportion of women with parenting responsibilities who reported protecting their children from witnessing the abuse of their mother. On April 15, 2002 over half of the women with parenting responsibilities (57%) brought their children to the shelter to protect them from witnessing the abuse of their mother. This represents an increase from 49% in 1999/2000. The trend data also shows an increase in the number of women with parenting responsibilities who were protecting their children from witnessing the abuse of their mother on respective snapshot days (50% in 2000 and 54% in 2002). According to the 1999 GSS, children heard or saw one parent assaulting the other in an estimated 461,000 households, which represents 37% of all households with spousal violence in the five years preceding the survey.

Of the women residing in shelters on snapshot day, 43% were there to protect their children from psychological abuse, 23% from physical violence, 21% from threats, 12% from neglect, and 6% from sexual abuse (Figure 3).

Figure 3



Note: Figures do not add to 100% due to multiple responses.
Source: Statistics Canada, Canadian Centre for Justice Statistics, Transition Home Survey, 2001/02.

The majority of children accompanying their mother to a shelter were very young. Children under 5 years of age constituted 39% of all children admitted and an additional 32% were aged 5 to 9. Children aged 10 to 15 made up 21%, while the smallest group (3%) were aged 16 and over. For 4% of children, the age was not known. Shelters in the trend data file show the same percentage breakdown of children by age over the three reporting periods.

Young women in abusive relationships continue to make up a small proportion of shelter users

Both the 1999 General Social Survey on Victimization and the 1993 Violence Against Women Survey show that women under the age of 25 had the highest rates of spousal violence and are at the greatest risk of being killed by estranged spouses (Hotton, 2001). The largest proportion of abused women residing in shelters on snapshot day were women aged 25 to 34 and this age group had the highest rates per 100,000 population.

Admissions of Adult Men to Shelters

In 1999/2000 and 2001/02 there were no shelters in Canada that provided residential services exclusively to adult male victims of family abuse.⁸ As with women, adult men were defined as those 15 years of age and over who were admitted to a facility with or without children. Adult men admitted with their mother were excluded.

Most facilities had policies that did not allow adult males to be admitted into their facility (89% in 1999/2000 and 90% in 2001/02). Seven percent of shelters had a policy that allowed adult men to be admitted, (up from 5% in 1999/2000) while 4% had no facility policy on admittance in both 1999/2000 and 2001/02. The slight increase in the percentage that permitted adult men to be admitted may be explained by the increase in the reporting number of general emergency shelters. In total 1,581 adult men were admitted to shelters. Almost 8 in 10 (79%), were admitted to general emergency shelters. Five percent of the total number of adult men admitted (73) were admitted for reasons of abuse and of the 73 adult men admitted for reasons of abuse, 18 (4%) were admitted for family violence related abuse.

Criminal justice system involvement

Most provinces and territories currently have charging guidelines and procedures in place to respond to family violence. Shelters, however, are not required to report abuse of adults to the police. While not all precipitating events that lead women to shelters are by definition criminal acts requiring police response, 29% of women in shelters for reasons of abuse

⁸ *The Kerby Rotary House in Calgary Alberta is a shelter designed to meet the needs of older victims of family violence by providing residential services to both female and male seniors over the age of 50. For more information on Kerby House please see "Family Violence in Canada: A Statistical Profile 2003."*

<p>How to get help</p> <p>Organizations exist in most communities to provide abused persons with information and support. Recommended steps for taking action and getting help include the following:</p> <p>Keep yourself and your children safe. Refuse to take blame for the abuse. Call a friend or family member you trust. Call a shelter or crisis line. Call the police. Join a support group. See a counsellor.</p> <p>Several of these steps for taking action and getting help are also appropriate for male victims of family abuse. Many large urban centres across Canada have private practitioners that offer support groups for abused men or have men's organizations that can direct individuals to available services.</p> <p>Sources: <i>Health Canada (1995), Canadian Association of Broadcasters (1996), The Denise House/Sedna Women's Shelter (1997), Nova Scotia Advisory Council on the Status of Women (1997), Government of Newfoundland and Labrador (1998), Tutty (1999).</i></p> <p>In addition to the above recommendations there are programs and services across Canada designed to reach out and assist abused women. Listed below are three new programs and services available to women.</p> <p>Shelternet</p> <p>Linking women with local shelters is an essential part of a community-based response to violence against women. Shelternet was launched in August 2002 and it provides an entry point for acquiring information</p>	<p>and links to local shelters, experts, counselling and 24 hour help-line services. Shelternet also provides links to shelters, safety plans, questions and answers about shelter and abuse, and a secure area for shelters to share resources. To view this website visit www.shelternet.ca.</p> <p>Support Link</p> <p>The focus of Support Link is to keep victims safe through planning and awareness. The program offers free cell phones, airtime, 911 pre-programmed into the phone, and comprehensive personal safety planning. These services are offered to victims at risk of sexual assault, domestic violence and stalking. In order to qualify for the program the victims must meet certain criteria: have reported the situation to police, are not living with the accused, abide by all protective orders (such as restraining orders), willing to work with a Support Link coordinator to create a safety plan, maintain regular contact with the coordinator and accept terms of the agreement and have reasonable grounds to believe they are at risk and understand the limitations of the phone such as the possibility of dead zones. Support link is a joint initiative of the Government of Ontario, Rogers AT&T Wireless and Ericson Canada.</p> <p>Hot Peach Pages</p> <p>This program originated in Saskatchewan and is premised on the concept that phone books are a good source to reach out to abused women. This service is ideal for accessing initial information on abuse, education and referral resources. The peach page is a full page in the phone book with information about abuse and helping agencies. They also have a Web site that has or provides links to: abuse information in 40 languages, specific information targeted to certain people (teens, rural women, aboriginal people etc.), list of agencies in over 165 countries, web pages of listed agencies and more detailed information on abuse.</p>
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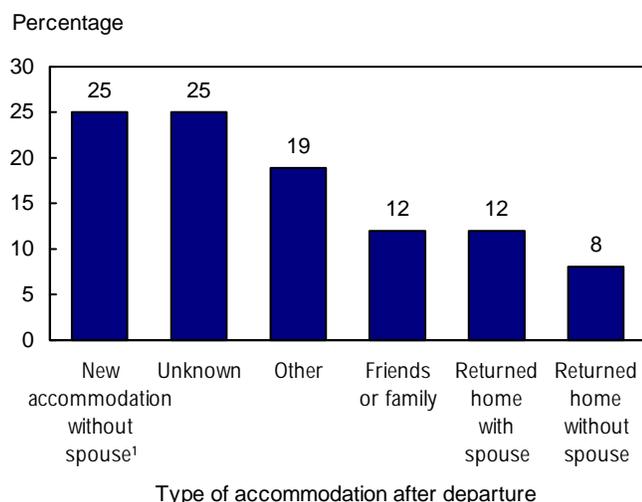
on April 15, 2002 had reported the most recent incident of abuse to the police. Charges were laid in 60% of these cases. An order for the abuser to stay away was given in 55% (up from 50% in 1999/2000) of cases reported to the police and in 91% of cases in which charges were laid (up from 81% in 1999/2000). The trend data, however, shows that the proportion of cases in which charges were laid has decreased over the three reporting periods (64% in 1998, 62% in 2000 and 60% in 2002).

Departures and Referrals

On April 15, 2002, 110 women and 64 children departed before noon from 430 shelters across Canada. A minority of women, only 12%, returned to their spouse. One quarter (25%) left the shelter for alternate housing, 12% went to stay with friends or relatives, 19% went to other housing, 8% returned home without their spouse and for 25% of women it was not know where they were going to reside (Figure 4).

Figure 4

Women's accommodations after leaving shelters, April 15, 2002



¹ New accommodation without spouses includes second stage housing, another emergency shelter and other new accommodations without spouse.
 Source: Statistics Canada, Canadian Centre for Justice Statistics, Transition Home Survey, 2001/02.

The number of women and children who use shelters does not necessarily reflect the actual need, as it does not capture those who were referred elsewhere because of lack of space. For this reason, the Transition Home Survey asked shelters if they referred women and children elsewhere on snapshot day and the reason(s) for that referral. On April 15, 2002, 115 shelters reported that they referred 295 women and 257 children elsewhere. This represents an increase of 76 women and children from 1999/2000.⁹ A full three-quarters of these shelters (75%) could not accommodate these women and children because the shelter was full (up from 71% in 1999/2000). In

8% of shelters the reason for the referral was drug or alcohol issues (down from 12% in 1999/2000), 9% because of mental health problems, 3% because of non-admit or caution list (down from 7% in 1999/2000), and 17% because of other reasons (down from 30% in 1999/2000).¹⁰

The trend data also shows that the number of shelters that had to refer women and children elsewhere because the shelter was full increased by 10 percentage points over the two reporting periods (58% in 2000 and 68% in 2002)

Extensive variety of services offered

Canadian shelters provide services in all provinces and territories and serve a variety of areas. In 2001/02, 90% of shelters served urban areas compared to 88% in 1999/2000. Providing services to rural or remote communities and culturally appropriate services for aboriginal communities living on-reserve is one of the continuing challenges for shelters. In 2001/02, 42% of shelters served rural areas, down from 47% in 1999/2000. Twenty-eight percent of shelters provided services to reserves, down from 34% in 2001/02.¹¹

⁹ A person may be referred elsewhere more than once on snapshot day.
¹⁰ Percentages will not add to 100% due to multiple responses.
¹¹ Percentages will not add to 100% due to multiple responses.

Table 7

Areas of service by province and territory, 2001/02

	Percentage serving:		
	Urban/suburban ¹	Rural/village ²	Reserves ³
Canada	90	42	28
Newfoundland and Labrador	85	38	15
Prince Edward Island	100	0	0
Nova Scotia	89	61	22
New Brunswick	93	60	27
Quebec	88	37	15
Ontario	90	47	39
Manitoba	91	60	52
Saskatchewan	100	62	52
Alberta	94	50	47
British Columbia	93	28	26
Yukon	60	40	0
Northwest Territories	100	57	43
Nunavut	0	75	0

¹ Urban/suburban areas have minimum population concentrations of 1,000 and a population density of at least 400 people per square kilometre.
² Rural areas include small towns, villages, and other populated places with less than 1,000 population.
³ Reserves is defined by a tract of land set aside by the federal government for the use and benefit of a First Nations Band which is governed by Indian and Northern Affairs Canada.
 Note: Percentages will not add to 100 due to multiple responses.
 Source: Statistics Canada, Canadian Centre for Justice Statistics, Transition Home Survey, 2001/02.

In addition to providing secure and safe accommodation, the majority of shelters offer a variety of services both to residents and to women living in the community. Services such as referrals, legal information, emotional support, transportation, crisis intervention and counselling are offered and are aimed at assisting women who have left abusive relationships to deal with complicated choices about supporting themselves and their children and the consequences associated with the violence. According to the 1999 General Social Survey, women in violent relationships reported experiencing anger (37%), confusion (35%), hurt or disappointment (27%), fear for personal safety (39%), fear for the safety of children (17%), low self-esteem (29%), depression and anxiety (27%), shame or guilt (19%), and sleeping problems (18%) (Hotton, 2001). Services provided by shelters attempt to address many of these issues and depend to a large extent on available funding and can vary with the availability of services in the larger community.

In 2001/02 shelters reported a drop in the percentage that provides group counselling and parenting skills to women residents. In 1997/98, 71% of shelters provided group counselling, in 1999/2000 this number dropped to 68% and in 2001/02 dropped further to 65%. Similarly, the percentage of shelters that provided parenting skills decreased from 82% in 1997/98 to 75% in 1999/2000 and 76% in 2001/02. The decline in some services offered to residents may be explained by the decline in the number of transition homes and the increase in the number of emergency shelters. The primary purpose of women's emergency centres and emergency shelters is short-term accommodation and therefore counselling type services

may fall outside the core shelter service of some. Additionally, services outside of a shelter's primary purpose may be more vulnerable to shifts in the availability of funding and resources.

The percentage of shelters that provided a crisis telephone line rose from 60% to 64% from 1997/98 to 1999/2000 and remained at 64% in 2001/02. The percentage that provided medical service rose from 55% in 1997/98 to 59% in 1999/2000 and dropped to 53% in 2001/02. Questions concerning addiction counselling and mental health services were added to the 2001/02 survey in order to provide a more complete picture of the range of client needs and services offered. Research indicates that coping with an abusive relationship creates considerable anxiety and may result in women experiencing depression, panic attacks, and substance abuse (Tutty, 1998). Over half of all shelters (56%) reported providing mental health services and 42% reported providing addiction counselling to women residents.

Services that remained unchanged from 1999/2000 to 2001/02 include individual, short-term counselling (89%), advocacy (87%), specialised services for women aged 55 and older (84%) and culturally sensitive services for Aboriginal women¹²

¹² Culturally sensitive services for Aboriginal women were such services as recognition of traditional healing methods, use of spiritual elders and teachers, accessibility to language interpreters and Aboriginal language materials, and recognition and understanding of Aboriginal cultural norms and beliefs.

Table 8



In-house services¹ provided by shelters to women residents, ex-residents and non-residents, 2001/02

	In-house services provided by shelters to women:					
	Residents		Non-residents		Ex-residents	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Individual short-term counselling	429	89	315	65	341	71
Individual long-term counselling	161	33	161	33	187	39
Group counselling	314	65	213	44	231	48
Family counselling programs	81	17	47	10	53	11
Crisis telephone line	310	64	334	69	318	66
Medical services	258	53	155	32	176	36
Legal services	329	68	244	51	261	54
Financial assistance/welfare	326	67	207	43	231	48
Life skills	341	71	161	33	207	43
Job training/employment search	138	29	71	15	101	21
Parenting skills	366	76	197	41	232	48
Housing referral	399	83	222	46	251	52
Culturally sensitive services for Aboriginal women	306	63	201	42	214	44
Culturally sensitive services for ethno-cultural and visible minority women	296	61	178	37	203	42
Services for women with disabilities	316	65	197	41	202	42
Recreation services	245	51	62	13	100	21
Advocacy	422	87	284	59	332	69
Specialized services for older women (55+)	410	84	95	20	101	21
Other	114	24	82	17	96	20

¹ Service reported as a percentage of 482 responding facilities.

Source: Statistics Canada, Canadian Centre for Justice Statistics, Transition Home Survey, 2001/02.

(63%). Culturally sensitive services for ethno-cultural and visible minority residents¹³ also increased from 58% to 61%, as did services to women with disabilities (62% to 65%).

To gain more detailed information on the extent of accessibility of shelters, information was gathered on the wheelchair accessibility of buildings entrances, bedrooms and bathrooms. Sixty-nine percent of shelters reported at least one building entrance that was wheelchair accessible. One half (52%) of shelters reported having bedrooms that were wheelchair accessible and 58% reported having bathrooms that were wheelchair accessible. It should be noted that since the mid-1990s, many shelters have improved accessibility through CMHC's Shelter Enhancement Program. Twenty percent of shelters provided TDD\TTY services for people with hearing impairment, and 23% provided sign language communication or interpretation services. Eighteen percent of shelters provided large print reading materials to people who are visually impaired and 5% of shelters provided Braille reading materials.

Services to children

Services provided to children victims and witnesses of family violence are an important component of the services provided by shelters. In 2001/02, 80% of shelters provided indoor recreational space and 76% provided outdoor recreational space to child residents. Shelters also provided group counselling (56%) and programs for children who have witnessed or experienced abuse (68%), a drop from 75% in 1999/2000.

Results from the trend data file show that the services provided by shelters to child residents remained stable between 1998, 2000 and 2002.

Providing services to non-residents and ex-residents is also an important aspect of a shelter's overall workload. Shelters offer assistance to ex-resident women in need of on-going

support in order to deal with a variety of factors including further threats of abuse, safe long term housing, employment and legal assistance (Tutty, 2001). On snapshot day, 2002, shelters had 1.4 times as many requests for assistance from ex-residents and non-residents as there were women residing in shelters. Shelters in 2001/02 reported a slight decline from 1999/2000 in the services offered to both ex-residents and non-residents. Shelters provided assistance to non-residents¹⁴ through a 24-hour crisis telephone line (69%, down from 75%), individual short-term counselling (65%, down from 70%) advocacy (59%, down from 64%) and legal services (51%, down from 56%). The majority of facilities provided ex-resident¹⁵ women with services such as individual short-term counselling (71%), down from 74%, a 24-hour crisis telephone line (66%) down from 71%, advocacy (69%) down from 70%. Group counselling and legal services also declined in 2001/02 (52% to 48% and 59% to 54%, respectively). Again, the provision of services is associated with facility type and these declines may be associated with the shift to fewer transition homes and the growth in emergency shelters.

Services to ex-residents and non-residents are made through telephone, letter, fax or walk-in contact. On snapshot day, 482 shelters reported 1,547 housing related contacts and 3,149 non-housing related contacts for a one-day total of 4,818 requests for services. In an average month shelters reported 51,742 housing related contacts, and 71,916 non-housing related contacts.

¹³ Culturally sensitive services for ethno-cultural and visible minority women include accessibility to language interpreters, resource materials in various languages, and counsellors who are familiar with immigration issues and parenting styles in different cultures.
¹⁴ A non-resident was someone who has never resided in a shelter but was receiving services, while an ex-resident was someone who had resided in the shelter in the past and was receiving follow-up services.
¹⁵ An ex-resident is someone who has resided at a facility before and is receiving follow-up services.

Issues and Challenges

The Transition Homes Survey asks shelters to list the top three issues and challenges they will be facing in the coming year. Shelters identified lack of funding, space and affordable housing for women upon departure as the top three issues and challenges.

Issues related to lack of funding including:

- Cutbacks in services and funding for new services
- No funding for outreach programs
- Rising cost of utilities and rent
- No funds to train new staff and keep up training of hired staff
- Adequate staff
- Transportation costs
- Cutbacks to social assistance

Issues related to space including:

- Funding for new facilities
- Funding to renovate existing facilities
- Financial resources to maintain existing facilities
- Maximum occupancy rates (overcrowding) and longer periods of stay
- Lack of furniture and space for new beds
- Accessibility

Issues related to affordable housing including:

- Lack of subsidized long-term housing

The Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation, who is in part responsible for providing funding to shelters for capital costs, reported that a major concern for shelters was difficulty in providing services due to limited budgets, resources, space and staff. (*Children and Youth in Homeless Families: Shelter Spaces and Services*, May 2001).

Many of these concerns for the up-coming year are reflected in inquest reports dating back to 1998. In July 1998, an Ontario coroner's inquest into the murder of Arlene May by her former boyfriend, Randy Iles, made 213 recommendations. The general recommendations included increasing public awareness of domestic violence and its effect on victims and witness. The Ministry of Community and Social Services also recommended a zero-tolerance policy as well as a review of funding for shelters for abused women and children.

Also in Ontario, a coroner's inquest was ordered for the murder of Gillian Hadley by her husband in June 2000. Many of the 58 recommendations made mirrored those in the 1998 Arlene May inquest. One of the recommendations made in the Hadley inquest looked to the shortage of safe temporary accommodation available to women immediately after they flee the abusive relationship as well as long-term assistance in the form of subsidized housing. It was also recommended that all community-based women's anti-violence services, including shelters, be adequately funded.

Following the recommendations, the Ontario government set up the Joint Committee on Domestic Violence to oversee the implementation of the jury's recommendations.

Shelters also often work together in multi-agency co-ordination committees to provide services and referrals to their residents. The majority of facilities were able to link to services in the community for their residents in the areas of job training or employment search, mental health services, legal services (71% each), financial assistance or welfare (68%), medical services (69%), and individual long-term counselling (57%).

Services provided in a variety of languages

As Canada's population has become increasingly diverse, many shelters have responded by ensuring that they have staff or volunteers who can communicate and deliver services in a variety of languages. In 2001/02, 99% of shelters reported that they could provide services in English, 60% in French, 24% in Vietnamese, 12% in Spanish, 12% in Ukrainian, 13% in Greek, 9% in Chinese, 9% in Punjabi. Twenty-five percent of shelters can communicate and deliver services in Aboriginal languages (4% in Inuktituk, 9% in Ojibway and 12% in Cree) (Table 9).

Table 9

Languages in which shelters, provided services, 2001/02		
	Number	Percentage
English	481	99
French	291	60
Vietnamese	118	24
Greek	64	13
Ukrainian	59	12
Cree	56	12
Spanish	56	12
Arabic	45	9
Punjabi	45	9
Chinese	44	9
Ojibway	45	9
Dutch	38	8
German	38	8
Tagalog	35	7
Portugese	30	6
Other	26	5
Inuktituk	19	4
Italian	19	4
Polish	19	4

Source: Statistics Canada, Canadian Centre for Justice Statistics, Transition Home Survey, 2001/02.

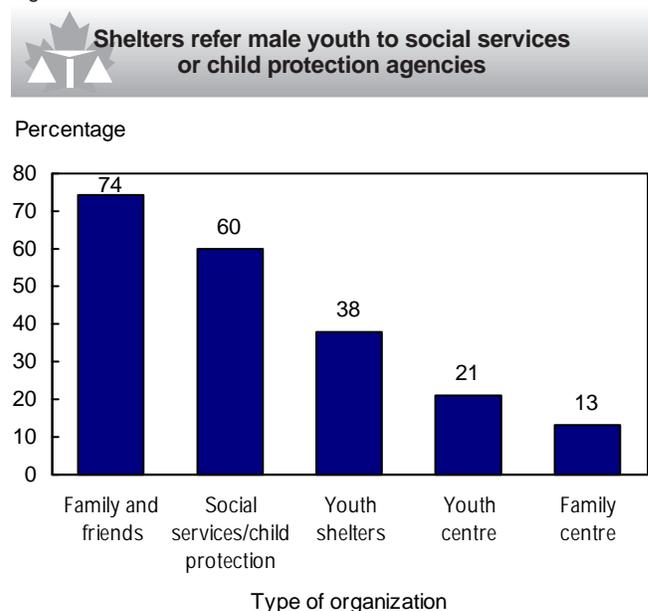
Admission of male youth

Shelters for abused women often have criteria to determine who is eligible for admission. While the objective of shelters is to provide residential services for abused women and their dependent children, limits are sometimes imposed on the age of male youth accompanying their mothers. The admittance of male youth depends on a number of factors including age, size of the youth and behaviour such as aggression. The existence of an age limit was reported by 72% of shelters; however of those shelters, 33% indicated that each case is reviewed individually. Twenty-four percent of shelters reported that while there is no set age limit for male youth, each case is reviewed individually before deciding whether or not to admit. For the remaining 4% of shelters, children were not accepted.

For those shelters that admitted male youth up to an age limit, with or without reviewing each case individually, 23% had an age limit of 16, 19% had an age limit of 18, 12% had an age limit of 14, and 8% had an age limit of 15.

For shelters that refer male youth elsewhere, either because they have an age limit or because the youth is referred elsewhere, a full three-quarters (74%) referred male youth to family or friends, 60% to social service/child protection agencies, 38% to youth shelters, 21% to youth centres, and 13% to family service centres (Figure 5). With the exception of referrals to family and friends, the breakdown of the type of organizations the male youth were referred to remained consistent with 1999/2000.

Figure 5



Note: Figures do not add to 100% due to multiple responses. Percentages are based on the responses of 229 facilities that referred male youth to other organizations.

Source: Statistics Canada, Canadian Centre for Justice Statistics, Transition Home Survey, 2001/02.

Revenues and Expenditures

The total combined income of the 451 shelters that reported their annual revenues and expenditures was \$214 million while the total amount of operating expenditures was \$212 million. This compares to \$171 million in revenues and \$170 million in expenditures in 1997/98, the last time this question was included on the survey. Of the 409 shelters that provided detailed revenue breakdowns in 2001/02, 85% of revenues came from government sources (up from 82% in 1997/98), a total of \$150 million from federal, provincial/territorial, regional, municipal governments and Aboriginal bands (up from \$140 million in 1997/98).

In 2001/02 shelters also received a total of \$26 million from non-governmental sources such as donations, fund raising, provincial/territorial lotteries, resident fees, loans and grants (for major repairs and improvements) and the United Way (a drop from \$30 million in 1997/98).

Data Sources

Transition Home Survey

The Transition Home Survey was developed under the federal government's Family Violence Initiative in consultation with provincial/territorial governments and transition home associations. The objectives of the survey are to collect information on residential services for abused women and their children during the previous twelve months of operation as well as to provide a one-day snapshot of the clients being served on a specific day. In 1991/92, Statistics Canada began collecting basic information on transition home services and clientele. The survey was repeated with some changes in 1992/93, 1994/95, 1997/98, and 1999/2000.

The Transition Home Survey is a mail-out/mail-back census survey of all residential facilities providing services to abused women and their children. Of the 524 residential facilities providing services to abused women and their children, 482 returned their questionnaires for a response rate of 92%. Separate questionnaires were completed for facilities that had two or more residences under the same name or address.

Violence Against Women Survey (VAWS)

In 1993, Statistics Canada conducted the VAWS on behalf of Health Canada. It was conducted by telephone using random digit dialing techniques. A total of 12,300 women aged 18 years and older were interviewed about their experiences of physical and sexual violence since the age of 16, their responses to these experiences, and their perceptions of their personal safety. Responses were weighted to represent the 10.5 million women in the Canadian population. Estimates were made of both twelve-month and adult lifetime rates of violence.

The General Social Survey (GSS) on Victimization

The GSS is an annual survey that monitors changes in Canadian society and provides information on specific policy issues of current or emerging interest. Each year, the GSS focuses on various regular topics (including time use, social support, the family, technology and victimization). In 1999, Statistics Canada conducted the victimization cycle of the GSS for a third time. Previous cycles were conducted in 1988 and in 1993. The objectives of the survey are to provide estimates of the prevalence of eight offence types (based on the Criminal Code definitions for these crimes) in the population, to examine factors related to the risk of victimization, victims' willingness to report crimes to the police, reasons for not reporting, and to measure public perceptions of crime and the criminal justice system.

The GSS is a telephone sample survey covering the non-institutionalized population aged 15 years or more in the ten provinces. A total of approximately 26,000 people were interviewed with a response rate of 81.3%.

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