



The Facts

A Global Context: The UN describes family violence as a pandemic. [It] *occurs in developed and developing countries alike. It has long been considered a private matter by bystanders-including neighbors, the community and government. But such private matters have a tendency to become public tragedies.*¹

In a report on Violence and Health, a report by the World Health organizations reveals the following:

In 2000, an estimated 520 000 people were killed in acts of interpersonal violence worldwide – a rate of 8.8 per 100 000. But official homicide statistics do not tell the whole story. Many deaths are concealed as accidents or attributed to natural or unknown causes. For every person who is killed by violence, many more are physically injured or psychologically. Although women can be violent towards their male partners and violence occurs also between partners of the same sex, the overwhelming burden of partner violence is borne by women at the hands of men.

*In surveys from around the world, 10–69% of women report being physically assaulted by an intimate male partner at some point in their lives. Available data suggest that in some countries one in four women report sexual violence by an intimate partner, and up to one-third of girls report forced sexual initiation. Hundreds of thousands more are forced into prostitution or subjected to violence in other settings, such as schools, workplaces and health care institutions.*²

In Canada, the number of women killed as a result of domestic violence is staggering. From 2000 – 2006, the number of women stabbed, shot, strangled or beaten to death by their intimate partners was nearly five times as many as the 101 Canadian soldiers and police officers killed over that same period.³ Indeed, the most dangerous place for a woman to be at risk of violent injury is in the home.

Over the last fiscal year, **in Alberta alone,** the number of woman and children resident in provincial shelters was nearly 13,000. Nearly 27,000 women and children sought emergency shelter residency and were unable to be accommodated (up from nearly 21,000 in the previous fiscal year). Alberta Shelters received over 100,000 crisis calls, marking a 15% increase over the previous fiscal year. Across Canada the numbers of women resident in shelter each year is between 90,000 and 100,000.⁴

¹ Published by the United Nations department of Public Information DPI/1772/HR – February 1996

² World Report on Violence and Health, WHO, Geneva, 2002

³ From *The War on Women* by Brian Vallée, Key Porter, 2007

⁴ From Statistics Canada, the Juristat, results from the biennial Translation Home Survey, "Canada's Shelters for abused Women, 2003/04"