

**Paying for Violence:
Some of the Costs of Violence Against Women in B.C.**

Prepared for the Ministry of Women's Equality

Province of British Columbia

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

[About the Authors](#)

[A. Summary](#)

[B. Background](#)

[C. Purpose, Scope and Definitions](#)

[D. Methodology](#)

[E. Limitations of the Estimates](#)

F. Quantifications

1. Policing

2. Correctional Services

3. Criminal Injury Compensation

4. Victim Assistance Programs and Counselling for Women

5. Aboriginal Programs

6. Mental Health Care

7. Alcohol and Drug Treatment

8. Income Assistance

9. Transition Houses and Sexual/Woman Assault Centres

10. Women's Loss of Paid and Unpaid Work Time

11. Programs for Children and Assaultive Men

G. Consequences Examined But Not Quantified

1. Emergency Medical Care

2. Intergenerational Effects

H. Some Future Research Directions

I. Bibliography

ABOUT THE AUTHORS

Richard Kerr is an economic consultant specializing in the application of economic analysis to social policy issues. In previous research for the federal Department of Justice and Status of Women Canada, Mr. Kerr examined the effects of marriage and children on the post-divorce earnings capacities of women and men. His report *An Economic*

Model to Assist in the Determination of Spousal

Support

was cited in the Supreme Court of Canada's historic Moge decision as a study to which judges could refer in the determination of spousal support following divorce. Mr. Kerr has also prepared numerous reports for law firms in British Columbia and Ontario and has testified in court as an expert witness concerning various economic issues. He was previously a senior economist with the Government of Canada.

Janice McLean has provided consulting and training services to a wide range of organizations in the private, public and not-for-profit sectors since 1980. She co-authored the major study of Canadian fertility clinics for the Royal Commission on New Reproductive Technologies. Ms McLean designed and organized five annual consultations with national women's groups for the Canadian Advisory Council on the Status of Women. She has also managed and delivered community college women's programs. Ms McLean has served as a volunteer member of the boards of women's organizations at the national and local levels. Through her professional and volunteer activities she has become knowledgeable on a wide range of women's equality issues, particularly in the areas of health and education.

A. SUMMARY

When men are violent to women, there are consequences for the victim, for her children, for the perpetrator, and for society. British Columbia has the highest reported incidence of violence against women of any province in Canada. This report is a first step in assessing some of the economic costs of this violence. In previous research it has been noted that B.C. taxpayers are paying significant but unknown sums of money in health costs for doctors, emergency wards, mental health clinics, substance abuse treatments; in criminal justice costs for police, courts and corrections; and in social service costs for welfare, housing and child care. Employers also pay for violence against women in higher absenteeism and lower productivity. This project quantifies some of these financial costs, but in no way can we "cost" the horrifying physical and psychological damage of this violence to the women and their children.

The following table summarizes our preliminary estimates of some of the economic costs of violence against women in British Columbia.

Estimates of Some Costs of Violence Against Women in British Columbia

	\$ millions
Policing	47
Corrections	39
Criminal injury compensation	17
Victim assistance programs	3
Counselling for women	5
Aboriginal programs	3
Mental health care (partial)	18
Alcohol and drug treatment	7
Income assistance	161
Transition houses	25
Sexual and woman assault centres	2
Women's loss of work time	54
Children Who Witness	2
Treatment programs for assaultive men	2
Total identified costs	\$385 million

Emergency medical care costs unknown but large (see G.1)

Intergenerational costs costs unknown but large (see G.2)

Many of the amounts shown above are estimates based on a series of assumptions. By further refining these assumptions and the methodology, the precision of the estimates could be improved. Nevertheless, we believe that the estimates presented here provide useful, and generally conservative, approximations of costs in the specified categories.

Even this preliminary and partial analysis demonstrates the enormity of the identifiable costs which society and the women experiencing violence are bearing. We believe that if the missing costs of health care, child services, housing, legal and court costs, and intergenerational effects were added to the above total, the quantifiable costs of violence against women for B. C. alone would likely approach one billion dollars per year. If one then considers the pain and suffering, the loss of life, the lost potential, and the damage to the lives of the assaulted women and their families, especially the children, the total "costs" of violence against women are truly staggering.

This study has attempted to quantify some of the current government expenditures resulting from violence against women. What is apparent, however, is that a great many women who

may need and be entitled to assistance are not receiving it, because they do not seek assistance, because the cause of their injuries or other problems is not recognized, or because the help they need is not available to them. If these needs were being fully met, the costs to government would be much greater than at present. Significant reductions in the costs of violence against women will require effective initiatives, by government and by society at large, to prevent this violence.

B. BACKGROUND

The growth in public and government awareness of the extent of violence against women has its origins in the efforts of women working in transition house and sexual assault centres. These efforts have since been supplemented by research studies and task force reports. Despite the documentation of the extent of violence against women and changing public attitudes, such violence continues, in both private and public life, and against women of all ages.

Historically, women have been the property of fathers and then "given" to husbands. Rape laws were designed to preserve valuable sexual property for the exclusive use of those men to whom the women "belonged".[\[1\]](#) It was only in 1983 that amendments to the Criminal Code made rape in marriage a crime. We now live in a society where violence is endemic both inside and outside the family and our culture actually extols and celebrates this violence.[\[2\]](#) Thus our society is rooted in a tolerance of violence against women, and a reluctance to intervene in private family matters.

Although the family is where one expects to find love and protection, a woman in B.C. is now more likely to be killed by her partner than by anyone else, and she is more likely to be injured by her partner than she is to be injured in a car accident. It has also been estimated that between 50,000 and 70,000 B.C. school age children have witnessed violence against their mothers.[\[3\]](#)

There is a growing awareness of the private and social costs of this violence. As stated by the 1992 British Columbia Task Force on Family Violence:

"... family and sexual violence is enormously expensive. The social costs are staggering in human suffering, in lost potential and in hard cash. Prevention and early intervention offer the best hope of reducing or eliminating these costs. It is not a question of whether we can afford to pay or not. It is a question of do we pay now or do we pay later?"

Despite the awareness that the costs of violence against women are great, there have been

few systematic attempts to quantify them. Two recent Canadian studies, by Lorraine Greaves et al and by Tanis Day, estimate some nation-wide costs of violence against women. Some comparisons of our results with those of the Greaves and Day studies are provided in Sections F and G.

Despite awareness of the widespread nature of male violence against women, societal response has concentrated on the abuse of individual women. Abused women have been treated as "victims" and what services there are now have been primarily crisis responses. Thus this study and its resulting cost estimates cover primarily some short term consequences of male violence. Many of the consequences of violence, both short and long term, have yet to be costed. Furthermore, many of the needs for counselling, jobs, and housing have yet to be adequately addressed at a societal level. Although there has been increased attention, particularly by the criminal justice system, to physical and sexual assault, emotional abuse is still largely ignored.

As well, assisting a woman to leave a violent man does not necessarily stop his violence, as evidenced by the numerous murders committed by estranged husbands. Structural changes within our society will be required to equalize male and female power dynamics and end male violence.

Male violence against women is enormously costly - to the women who experience violence directly, to women generally whose lives are constrained by the fear of violence, and to governments whose expenditures are swollen by responding to some of the consequences of this violence. Individual men, including those who are non-violent, also lose as a result of the barriers that are created by violence towards women. The quantification which follows focusses on only a small range of these "costs".

C. PURPOSE, SCOPE AND DEFINITIONS

The Ministry of Women's Equality initiated this research project to provide an accounting of some of the direct and hidden monetary costs to society of violence against women. It was hoped that this accounting, although partial and preliminary, would raise public awareness of the costs to all of society, and would help mobilize individual and community support for stopping the violence.

The Ministry of Women's Equality requested estimates of the economic costs of at least ten identifiable consequences of violence against women. The selection of consequences to be analyzed and, if possible, quantified was determined through discussion with Ministry staff and consideration of available data, time, and budget.

The Ministry asked that costs related to violence against children be excluded from the estimates on the grounds that child abuse is generally different in its character and causes from violence against women. The focus on the consequences of violence against women should not be interpreted as a lack of concern by either the Ministry or the authors about violence against children or men. In several instances, the methodologies developed in this report do produce estimates of some of the costs of violence against men and children as well as against women, and find these to be substantial.

Nevertheless, analysis of violent offences shows that violence against women is much more likely to be perpetrated by spouses, ex-spouses or friends; while men are more likely to be victimized by acquaintances or strangers. Women are also much more likely than men to be assaulted sexually rather than physically. It seems likely that these differences in the nature of the violence experienced by women and men would lead to differences in the pattern of consequences, and in the societal responses needed to prevent the violence and to deal with its consequences.

The age classification used to define "women" in this report varies slightly depending on the available data. For example, in both Statistics Canada's *Violence Against Women Survey* and in *Canadian Crime Statistics*

[4] women are defined as females age 18 and older. The *Summary Statistics* of the Police Services Division uses age 17 as the dividing line, providing data on attempted murders, sexual and non-sexual assaults committed against children under age 17 (shown separately for male and female children).

Violent crimes: The following categories of offences are considered crimes of violence for the purposes of this study: homicide (including murder and manslaughter), attempted murder, sexual assault (including sexual assault with a weapon and aggravated sexual assault), other sex offences, and non-sexual assault (including assault with a weapon or causing bodily harm and aggravated assault).

In the *Uniform Crime Reporting Survey* conducted by Statistics Canada, robbery is considered a crime of violence because it involves the use or threat of violence against a person [5] (unlike other forms of theft which are classified as non-violent). Because of uncertainty about whether a robbery victim's gender is a factor in the commission of the offence, we had difficulty deciding whether robberies with women as victims should be included in the violence against women category. In some robberies (e.g. bank robbery) the gender of the victims is not likely a factor in the commission of the offence. In some other robberies (e.g. purse-snatching), the victims may be more likely to be chosen because they are women and are perceived as being easier targets. In this study, robbery is excluded as a violent crime at the request of the Ministry of Women's Equality. This undoubtedly leads to an

underestimate of the incidence of violent crime directed against women, and an underestimate of the associated costs.

Statistics Canada's *Violence Against Women Survey*

examined violence against women by current and previous male partners, by dates, other friends, relatives, neighbours, co-workers, bosses, other acquaintances, and by strangers. Violence against women by other women was not included in that survey.

Estimates derived from other sources^[6] of the number of violent offences committed against women or of the number of violent offenders whose victims were women, include offences committed against women by other women as well as by men. It is known, however, that approximately 88% of violent offences committed against women are committed by males^[7].

The violence-related problems of specific groups of women -aboriginal women, immigrant women, women of colour, women with disabilities, poor women, elderly women, lesbians, and women in isolated areas, were deemed by the Ministry of Women's Equality and ourselves to require separate consideration and are not addressed explicitly in this report.

D. METHODOLOGY

Our work began with a careful review of the work of the 1992 British Columbia Task Force on Family Violence, and the 1993 report of the Canadian Panel on Violence Against Women.

We also reviewed a wide range of literature obtained primarily through Health Canada's National Clearinghouse on Family Violence, the Ministry of Women's Equality library, the Status of Women Canada library, the Canadian Council on Social Development, and the British Columbia Institute on Family Violence. Information and suggestions were obtained from specialists in the field through in-person and telephone interviews, and electronically via the Internet. In our search for statistical data, we focussed primarily on B.C. and Canadian sources. Provincial ministries and Statistics Canada were the main sources of this data.

In some cases, the determination of costs is derived directly from budgetary data provided by the Ministry of Women's Equality. For some other categories, estimates of the costs related to violence against women were provided by the provincial Ministries of Attorney General or Health. In cases where responsible ministries were unable to provide estimates of the costs relating to violence against women (e.g. policing, corrections, criminal injury compensation, income assistance, time lost) estimates are derived by the authors from administrative data provided by the Ministries. In some cases supplementary data from Statistics Canada's 1993

Violence Against Women Survey or Canadian Crime Statistics 1994 are also used.

For the most part, estimates are based on budgetary data for the 1994/95 fiscal year, although in some cases it was possible to obtain expenditure data for 1995/96. In each case, the time period to which the estimate applies is clearly indicated.

E. LIMITATIONS OF THE ESTIMATES

Much of the abuse of women is only now coming to be labelled as such, on a continuum that ranges from verbal insults or financial control through physical blows and sexual attacks, to murder. This study focuses mainly on costs resulting from only a narrow range of this violence. We do not, for example, attempt to estimate the costs resulting from widespread sexual harassment in the workplace[\[8\]](#) or in education[\[9\]](#), or from psychological abuse. There are few women whose lives are not restricted by fear of violence and this is a cost to us all.
[\[10\]](#)

We believe that the cost estimates provided in this report are significantly less than the real economic costs of violence against women for the following reasons:

- Male violence against women has been under-reported by the women themselves e.g. not contacting police, and by the institutions and their personnel e.g. doctors, hospitals, police.[\[11\]](#) Therefore costs presently incurred do not reflect the extent of the need for services.
- Pre-natal damage caused by abuse of pregnant women has not been quantified. This damage can result from an assault on the mother, or from her substance abuse brought on by the violence. Children may also be harmed if they are dropped or hit during attacks on the mother, or they are neglected as a result of wife abuse.
- The long-term consequences of inter-generational transfers of violent behaviour cannot be accurately estimated.
- Most of the additional private costs incurred by the women e.g. for legal services, housing, and additional child care, are not included. The considerable time and resources contributed by family members, friends, and extended family are very difficult to measure and are not included. The lost earnings of inmates convicted of crimes of violence against women are also not included.
- Also missing are additional public sector expenditures on legal and court costs, tax

expenditures such as the child benefit, most of the long and short-term health care costs, and hidden costs to the educational system due to effects on the children who witness abuse of their mothers or fall into poverty following marital breakdowns.

In addition to physical and sexual violence, the Federal Panel on Violence Against Women identified psychological, financial, and spiritual forms of violence. The consequences of these forms of abuse are not addressed explicitly in this report.

F. QUANTIFICATIONS

This section provides details on 11 cost estimates of consequences of violence against women. In each case, the methodology is described, limitations of the estimate are discussed, and comparisons with other studies are provided.

F.1 Policing

F.1.1 Estimate

Approximately \$47 million per year of direct and indirect policing costs are attributable to violence against women in British Columbia.

F.1.2 Methodology

The estimate of policing costs attributable to violence against women is derived by determining total policing costs in British Columbia, and then estimating the proportion of these costs that are devoted directly or indirectly to dealing with crimes of violence, and the proportion of crimes of violence having women as victims.

No statistics are available on the proportion of B.C. police resources directly and indirectly attributable to dealing with crimes of violence, and there is no generally accepted methodology for deriving such estimates. The estimates resulting from the methodology described below should thus be viewed as preliminary, as starting points for further analysis and discussion.

The estimates include costs attributable to violent acts committed on women by both males and females. According to Statistics Canada data, 88% of the crimes of violence committed against females are committed by males [\[12\]](#).

F.1.3 Definitions

Measurement of crime: In this section, the measurements of crime are based on the *Uniform Crime Reporting (UCR) Survey*, a data collection system developed by Statistics Canada. The UCR crime data do not provide a count of all crimes actually committed since many crimes are not reported to the police. Some reported offences are considered by the police to be "unfounded" and are not included in the totals of "actual offences".

Crimes of violence: Homicide, attempted murder, sexual assault (including sexual assault with a weapon and aggravated sexual assault) and other sex offences, non-sexual assault (including assault with a weapon or causing bodily harm and aggravated assault), and kidnapping are categorized as crimes of violence for purposes of this study.

A study by the Vancouver Police Department points out that crimes which are not classified as violent (e.g. break and enter and mischief) are sometimes used, mainly by men, to harass former partners [13]. Women may feel threatened by the commission of crimes which are officially classified as non-violent.

Total offences: In addition to the crimes of violence listed above, "total offences" include robbery, break and enter, motor vehicle and other theft, other *Criminal Code* offences, drug offences, and offences under other federal statutes (including offences under the *Immigration Act*, the *Canada Shipping Act* and the *Customs Act*). Offences under provincial statutes consist mainly of violations of the *Liquor Control Act* and *Licensing Act*. Traffic offences include impaired driving, failure to stop or remain at the scene of an accident, and dangerous driving. Violations of municipal bylaws are not included in the offence totals used in this report.

Offences cleared: These are offences for which the police believe they have identified an offender, regardless of whether a person is actually charged with an offence.

Total policing costs: These include expenditures on provincial and municipal level policing (including federal government contributions), as well as most other federal government expenditures on policing in British Columbia. The contracts for municipal and provincial policing provided by the RCMP in B.C. include a portion of training and some other costs that may be incurred by the RCMP outside of British Columbia but which are attributable to policing in this province. Federal costs of port police, the Canadian Security and Intelligence Service, customs and immigration, and fisheries and wildlife operations are also not included. Expenditures for by-law enforcement (including parking) are not included in the totals. Victim services program costs are reported in a later section.

F.1.4 Analysis

Police resource use and violent crime

Provincial and municipal level policing expenditures in British Columbia totalled \$600 million in 1994/95 [14]. In addition, federal policing costs incurred in British Columbia were \$79 million [15]. Total policing costs incurred by federal, provincial and municipal governments in British Columbia were thus \$679 million in 1994/95.

Based on the table below, traffic offences accounted for 9% of all offences (excluding municipal bylaw enforcement) and non-traffic offences accounted for 91%. It is assumed that non-traffic offences also accounted for 91% of police resource use totalling \$618 million for 1994/95.

Number of Offences, and Cases Cleared by Category of Offence,
British Columbia 1994

Category of Offence	Offences #	Offences Cleared #
Homicide	113	80
Attempted Murder	111	89
Sexual Assaults	5,291	3,385
Other Sex Offences	571	417
Non-sexual Assaults	42,035	32,276
Kidnapping	172	120
Total Violent	48,293	36,367
Other Criminal Code	468,374	106,388
Other Federal Statutes	25,432	20,149
Provincial Statutes excluding traffic	56,340	52,607
Total non-traffic	598,439	215,511
Traffic Offences	61,604	N/A
Total	54	

Source: Police Services Division, Ministry of Attorney General
Summary Statistics
1985-1994

Appendix C

Violent crimes accounted for 8% of the number of non-traffic offences. The proportion of non-traffic police resources allocated to dealing with violent crimes (including pro-rated shares of administrative costs and time not allocated to specific offences) would, however, be greater than 8%. This is because the average amount of time spent responding to an incident of violent crime is considerably greater than the average time devoted to dealing with other offences[16].

As is apparent from the above table, clearance rates are significantly higher for violent crimes than for other criminal code offences, reflecting in part the allocation of proportionately greater resources to them. Violent offences accounted for 17% of non-traffic cases cleared. A key assumption in this analysis is that violent offences also account for 17% of non-traffic police resource use. Based on this assumption, it is estimated that policing costs associated with crimes of violence in British Columbia were \$105 million in 1994/95. This estimate implicitly includes a pro-rated portion of training and administrative costs, crime prevention activities, and patrol time spent on stand-by (not responding to specific calls).

Violent crimes against females

Since data are not available on the gender of victims of violent crime in British Columbia, national data on victimization from Statistics Canada are used. These data are provided in the following table.

Percentage of Crimes of Violence with Female Victims, Canada 1994

Category of offence	Female victims as % of all victims[17]
Homicide	30
Attempted Murder	24
Sexual Assault	85
Other Sexual Offences	74
Non-sexual Assault	47
Kidnapping	62

Source: Canadian Crime Statistics 1994 (Statistics Canada Cat. no. 85-205)

This Canadian data for female victimization is combined with the numbers of each violent offence reported in British Columbia to estimate that almost 25,000 females were victims of violent offences reported in B.C. in 1994. Females are thus estimated to have been 52% of the victims of reported violent offences. Based on this estimate, it is assumed that 52% of the

police resources attributable to crimes of violence were directed to dealing with violence against females.

Policing costs and violence against women

According to Statistics Canada, approximately 80% of female victims of violence in Canada were age 18 or older [18]. According to B.C. police statistics, victims were age 17 or older in approximately 92% of assaults recorded as offences in 1994 (65% of sexual assaults and 97% of non-sexual assaults). Assaults (sexual and non-sexual) account for about 98% of all violent crimes. The average of the Statistics Canada and B.C. police figures is used to estimate that 86% of female victims were adult women.

Finally, it is estimated that direct and indirect policing costs attributable to violence against women were approximately \$47 million in 1994/95 [19]. This is almost 7% of the total expenditures on policing in British Columbia.

F.1.5 Limitations of the Estimate

Since 32% of all RCMP officers (other than those at Headquarters or the Training Academy) are stationed in British Columbia, a considerable portion of the RCMP Headquarters and Training Academy costs may be incurred in support of policing in B.C. (e.g. forensic and informatic services, and general administration). Although some of these costs may already be included in the contracts under which RCMP services are provided in B.C., it is likely that there is an additional share of the \$412 million in RCMP Headquarters and Training Academy costs which could properly be attributed as indirect costs of B.C. policing. The exclusion of these costs from our calculation likely results in an understatement of total B.C. policing costs.

A major weakness in the estimate derived above is the use of data on "cases cleared" to estimate that 17% of police resources are directly and indirectly attributable to crimes of violence. A detailed study of police resource allocation in British Columbia might provide the basis for a more reliable estimate, however, such studies are reportedly very difficult to conduct. Further discussion with senior police department officials could also help to refine the estimate.

Despite the limitations of the methodology, it is clear that the direct and indirect policing costs attributable to crimes of violence are considerable and that the policing costs of violence against women account for close to half of this amount.

F.1.6 Comparison with Other Studies

Based on a 1975 study by the Vancouver Police Department and interviews with police officers, Linda MacLeod estimated that wife-battering calls accounted for about 3% of all

requests for police assistance.[\[20\]](#) Wife battering is, however, only one category of violence against women that results in utilization of police resources. It is also likely that the reporting of wife assault has increased since 1975.

Greaves et al estimate that 3% of policing costs in Canada are attributable to violence against women and children[\[21\]](#). Their estimate excludes attempted murder, kidnapping, and a high proportion of non-sexual assaults from the offence totals. They also assume that the police resources devoted to individual crimes of violence are equal, on average, to those devoted to non-violent crimes such as break and enter, and thefts.

F.2 Correctional Services

F.2.1 Estimate

Expenditures in British Columbia by the federal and B.C. governments on correctional services resulting from violence against women totalled approximately \$39 million in 1994/95.

F.2.2 Methodology

Data on offender populations and expenditures were obtained from the Correctional Services of Canada and the B.C. Ministry of Attorney General. This information is used to estimate the costs associated with incarceration and supervision (probation and parole) of offenders convicted of crimes of violence (against both males and females). The portion of these costs attributable specifically to violence against women is estimated using Statistics Canada data on the gender and age of victims of violent offences.

F.2.3 Analysis

Federal costs

Federal government expenditures on correctional services in 1994/95 totalled \$1,063 million for Canada as a whole[\[22\]](#).

According to the Correctional Services of Canada, the distribution of the "on-register" (imprisoned) offender population in March 1993 was as follows for Canada[\[23\]](#):

Offence	Offenders male	Offenders female
	#	%
Homicide	2,427	16.4
Attempted Murder	259	1.7

Sexual Offences	2,067	13.9
Other Violent Offences	1,050	7.1
Violent Offences Sub-total	5,803	39.1
Robbery	3,519	23.7
Break and Enter	1,975	13.3
Other Non-Violent Offences	2,171	14.6
Drugs	1,355	9.1
Total All Offences	14,823	100.0

Source: Basic Facts About Corrections in Canada, 1993 p.16

Thus 39.1% of the total offenders were imprisoned for violent offences (excluding robbery). This figure is used to estimate that \$416 million of federal correctional expenditures were attributable to crimes of violence (against both males and females)[\[24\]](#).

The numbers of inmates by category of offence shown above are combined with the proportion of victims who were female for each category of offence[\[25\]](#) to estimate that 52% of the victims of violent offenders were female. Of the female victims, it is estimated that 86% were adult women[\[26\]](#). Federal correctional expenditures attributable to crimes of violence against women in Canada as a whole are estimated to be \$186 million[\[27\]](#).

At March 31, 1994 there were 1,192 offenders imprisoned in the Pacific region of Corrections Canada (of whom 40 were female)[\[28\]](#). This represented 13% of the total federal inmate population. It is thus estimated that federal expenditures on correctional services for the Pacific region that were attributable to crimes of violence against women were \$24 million for 1994/95[\[29\]](#).

B.C. costs

In 1994/95, there was an estimated average of 406 prisoners in B.C. provincial adult correctional institutions who were imprisoned for violent offences (not including robbery)[\[30\]](#). The average cost per offender in custody was \$171 per day (including imputed rent on buildings)[\[31\]](#). The annual cost of provincial incarceration of these violent offenders was thus approximately \$25 million[\[32\]](#).

In 1994/95 there was an estimated average of 39 prisoners in B.C. youth institutions who were imprisoned for violent offences (not including robbery)[\[33\]](#). The average cost per offender in custody was \$282 per day. The annual cost of provincial incarceration of violent offenders in youth institutions was approximately \$4 million[\[34\]](#).

Ministry of Attorney General expenditures on adult and youth community supervision and family services totalled \$55 million in 1994/95[35]. Adult and youth community supervision cases were 87% of the total caseload[36]. It is assumed that 87% of the expenditures also pertained to adult and youth community supervision i.e. \$48 million. It is further estimated that approximately 10% or \$5 million is attributable to violent offenders[37].

The total B.C. government corrections expenditures attributable to crimes of violence is thus estimated at \$34 million for 1994/95.

	\$ millions
Adult Institutions	25
Youth Institutions	4
Adult and Youth Community	5
	34 million

No direct data are available on the gender of victims of provincial offenders. As in the policing and federal corrections sections, it is assumed that approximately 52% of the victims of violence are female, of whom 86% are adult women. Provincial costs of incarceration associated with violence against women are estimated to have been roughly \$15 million in 1994/95[38].

The combined federal and provincial corrections costs attributable to those convicted of crimes of violence against women are estimated to be approximately \$39 million per year.

F.2.4 Limitations of the estimate

In the estimates derived above it was assumed that the average costs of incarceration and community supervision were the same for violent and non-violent offenders. It is likely, however, that the costs associated with those convicted of violent offences are higher on average than for those convicted of non-violent offences.

The annual report of the B.C. Ministry of Attorney General for 1994/95 notes that the Corrections Branch has renewed its efforts to focus probation officer time and expertise on young offenders and adult offenders with violent tendencies. This suggests that the estimates derived above underestimate the proportion of provincial resources directed to those who committed violent crimes against women. This is likely true as well of the estimate of federal resources devoted to those convicted of violent offences.

The above estimate does not include the earnings lost by the perpetrators of violence against women and the taxes they would have paid from those earnings. This loss of earnings would

include not only the earnings lost by offenders during periods of incarceration, but also during periods of additional unemployment or underemployment following their release.

F.2.5 Comparison with Other Studies

Greaves et al estimate the corrections costs to federal and provincial governments for men found guilty of sexual assault, spousal homicide, and wife assault to be \$648 million annually.

	\$ millions
incarceration for sexual assault	\$296
probation for sexual assault	\$ 59
incarceration for spousal homicide	\$ 36
supervision for spousal homicide	\$ 6
incarceration for wife assault	\$122
supervision for wife assault	\$129

Although the Greaves study does not provide a total for British Columbia, the B.C. share of reported violent offences was 17.6% in 1994[39]. This suggests that the B.C. share of the above estimated costs would be approximately \$114 million per year. This is almost 3 times the estimate of \$39 million derived in the present study, even though the Greaves estimate does not include costs associated with manslaughter, attempted murder, and non-spousal physical assaults.

It appears that the Greaves estimates assume that those sentenced to prison terms serve their full sentences in prison. If so, this would result in considerable overestimation of the incarceration costs. The Greaves study also appears to overestimate the proportions of individuals charged with the more serious levels of assault (Assault II and III).

F.3 Criminal Injury Compensation Program

F.3.1 Estimate

In 1995, Criminal Injury Compensation Program expenditures attributable to violence against women (awards plus a pro-rated share of administration) totalled approximately \$17 million.

F.3.2 Methodology

Data on compensation payments by category of offence and on the proportions pertaining to female and child victims were provided by the program staff. Annual reports for 1994 and 1995 were also examined. Estimates of the expenditures attributable to crimes of violence

against women are derived by combining the data from these sources. Pro-rated shares of administration costs and of increases in future obligations are also included in the total.

F.3.3 Program Description

The Criminal Injury Compensation Program (CICP) is administered by the Workers' Compensation Board of British Columbia for the Ministry of Attorney General. The program provides compensation, within certain limitations, for personal injury or death resulting from any crimes listed in the Act which established the program. According to the program's annual report for 1994, the intent of the Act is to alleviate hardships caused by crime-related medical expenses and loss of income, and to provide compensation for pain and suffering. The Annual Report states, however, that "it is not the program's purpose to award large sums of money to victims in the manner of an award arising out of civil litigation." [40] Compensation can be provided under the CICP regardless of whether the offender is prosecuted or convicted.

In 1995, compensation payments for all recipients were distributed as follows [41]:

	%
funeral and burial	1
loss of support to dependants	6
medical aid	5
counselling	19
pain and suffering	49
vocational expenses	15
wage loss	15
child maintenance	1
	100

F.3.4 Analysis

Program expenditures in 1995 totalled \$35.7 million (on an accrual basis). Compensation actually paid out totalled \$22.2 million, and \$5.3 million was spent on administration [42]. The estimated increase in the present value of future CICP obligations was \$8.5 million.

CICP staff estimate [43] that males are 28% of victims and females are 72%, and that approximately 25% of the awards are for children and 75% for adults. These proportions imply that 54% of awards were paid to women [44]. However, the CICP Annual Reports for 1994 and 1995 state that approximately "30 percent of the victims have been children and 60 percent have been female". These proportions imply that 42% of the victims were adult women [45].

In the analysis which follows, the proportion of victims who were women and the proportion of awards paid to women is assumed to be 48% i.e. the average of the above two sets of estimates.

The CICIP Annual Report for 1995 provides a breakdown of awards paid by category of offence. In our analysis, the amounts paid with respect to robbery, arson, and dangerous or impaired operation of a vessel are removed from the total in order to be more consistent with the definition of crimes of violence used elsewhere in this study. These excluded awards account for less than 3% of the total amounts paid.

The awards pertaining to crimes of violence (against both males and females) can be grouped by category of offence as follows:

	\$
homicide	1,640,703
attempted murder	1,186,108
sexual assault	5,475,125
other sexual offences	3,020,983
assault	9,397,009
other offences	795,871
	\$21,515,799

Of this amount, an estimated \$10.3 million was paid with respect to crimes of violence against women[46]. Adding a pro-rated share of the CICIP's \$5.3 million in administrative expenses and the \$8.5 million share of increased future obligations brings the total to \$17 million[47].

F.3.5 Limitations of the Estimate

Criminal Injury Compensation Program officials report that although the individual case files do record the gender and age of the victim, the current computer system is unable to generate reports which would provide a reliable breakdown of awards by gender and age. Revisions to the computer system, which would permit the generation of such reports, have been underway since last year.

F.3.6 Comparison with Other Studies

Greaves et al estimate the cost of criminal injury compensation to be \$13 million for Canada as a whole, however their estimate covers the category of sexual assault only[48]. It appears that the Greaves estimate includes payments to both males and females. The Greaves study

contains individual estimates for five provinces but does not provide such an estimate for British Columbia.

F.4 Victim Assistance Programs and Counselling for Women

F.4.1 Estimate

The Ministry of Attorney General funded police-based victim assistance programs costing \$1.7 million in 1995/96, of which an estimated 73% or \$1.2 million was to serve women. Of the \$2.1 million spent by the Ministry of Attorney General on specialized victim assistance programs, approximately 93% or \$2 million was to assist women.

Stopping the Violence funding from the Ministry of Women's Equality supports community-based programs providing counselling services to help women who have experienced sexual assault, violence in relationships, or childhood abuse. In 1995/96, this funding totalled \$4,250,000. Contracts were administered by the Ministry of Attorney General, the Ministry of Health, and the Ministry of Women's Equality. There is also some additional expenditure by the Ministry of Health directed to counselling for victims of violence which totals approximately \$1.1 million annually. [\[49\]](#)

F.4.2 Methodology

The above costings were provided by the Ministries of Attorney General and Women's Equality.

F.4.3 Limitations of the Estimates

It is likely that there is additional funding, not captured in these estimates, by the federal government and possibly the Ministry of Social Services of counselling provided to women who are victims of violence. No private counselling costs are included in the estimate.

F.4.4 Comparison with Other Studies

In the Greaves report, counselling and prevention expenditures in British Columbia are shown as \$1,979,000 for 1994. Counselling and prevention costs in Canada as a whole are shown as a combined total estimated to be \$293 million annually (consisting mainly of an estimated \$245 million in federal government expenditures). The federal government expenditures are not broken down by province.

F.5 Aboriginal programs

F.5.1 Estimate

The Ministry of Women's Equality provided \$2.1 million in 1995/96 to the Ministry of Health to fund programs relating to aboriginal family violence. In 1995/96, The Ministry of Attorney General spent \$592,000 on programs related to aboriginal victim assistance and aboriginal family violence.

F.5.2 Methodology

The above costings were provided by the Ministries of Women's Equality and Attorney General.

F.5.3 Limitations of the Estimate

At least some of these funds would have been used to respond to child abuse as well as wife abuse.

It is likely that the federal government provided funds to assist aboriginal communities to deal with violence against women (and other violence). These expenditures are not included in the total.

F.5.4 Comparison with Other Studies

This category was not examined in the Greaves or Day studies.

F.6 Mental Health Care

F.6.1 Estimate

The Mental Health Division of the Ministry of Health estimates that \$18 million is spent annually by that ministry providing services for women with acute, usually short-term, mental health problems who have experienced abuse. For these women, the Ministry of Health acknowledges that violence is one potential contributing factor to their mental health problems, although not necessarily the primary cause.

F.6.2 Methodology

The estimate described above was provided by the Mental Health Division of the B.C. Ministry of Health. Some of the literature discussing the relationship between violence against women and mental health problems was also reviewed.

F.6.3 Limitations of the Estimate

All costs of treatment of long-term, chronically disabling mental health problems are excluded from the above estimate. According to staff of the Mental Health Division, Ministry of Health, the costs of treating women who suffer from "serious and persistent" (i.e. long-term, chronically disabling) mental illness would not be reduced even if violence against women were eliminated entirely. It is the position of the Mental Health Division that "Such illnesses predominantly have a biological cause (e.g. schizophrenia, bi-polar disorder). While people with these serious and persistent mental illnesses are vulnerable to abuse -- and a high percentage have experienced violence in their lives -- it would not be accurate to infer that violence is a causal factor in their illness". [\[50\]](#) In contrast, much of the literature reviewed for this study suggests that violence is a causal factor in the long-term mental health problems of many women and that even in cases where it is not the initiating factor, it adds to the difficulty, duration and costs of treatment.

Costs related to mental health treatment provided by the psychiatric units of acute care hospitals, and general hospital admissions (e.g. for depression) are not estimated in this study. It would be difficult to make an accurate estimate of these costs because of the nature of hospital funding and current reporting practices. Hospitals are provided with block funding which is then spent as each hospital decides. Estimates of mental health treatment costs in hospital psychiatric units vary widely on a per bed per day basis.

Costs of mental health treatment by doctors, psychologists, social workers and other counsellors outside mental health centres or hospital settings are not included in the totals above. The costs of mental health treatment for men who are violent toward women are also not included.

F.6.4 Comparison with Other Studies

The Greaves study estimates the costs of psychiatric treatment of female survivors of sexual assault to be \$293 million for Canada. This estimate covers psychiatric wards, and both short and long-term psychiatric hospitals.

The Day study estimates the costs in Canada of psychiatric hospital stays by women victims of violence to be \$506,772,343 annually.

F.6.5 Supplementary Information

In the case of community mental health services, a number of B.C. studies have established that approximately 60% of women receiving treatment have been victims of violence. It is estimated that a higher proportion of women patients at the Riverview Hospital, in the order of 75%, would have experienced violence in their lives. [\[51\]](#)

In a U.S. study [\[52\]](#) of adolescent and adult male and female psychiatric inpatients, it was

found that patients who had been abused tended to remain in the hospital about one-third longer than patients reporting no history of abuse.[\[53\]](#)

A 1991 Canadian study[\[54\]](#) reported that 49% of female psychiatric inpatients had been assaulted by their husbands, and that there was a significant relationship between admission to hospital and recent assault. In a group of women randomly selected from the population of a women's shelter, West et al[\[55\]](#) found that 37% had major depressive disorder and 47% had post-traumatic stress disorder.

Jaffe et al emphasized that battered women may be given inappropriate psychiatric diagnoses because of the overlap between the Battered Women's Syndrome and more readily identifiable psychiatric difficulties.[\[56\]](#) The Federal Panel on Violence Against Women cited examples of the additional treatment costs that can result from such misdiagnoses.[\[57\]](#)

From a comparison of battered women with a control group of non-battered women, Jaffe et al concluded that women who were victims of their husband's physical abuse had significantly more physical complaints, a higher level of anxiety, and reported more symptoms of depression. Their adjustment problems were significantly related to stressors in their lives which are likely to be related to violence in the family (such as moves, separation, police involvement, problems in the workplace, child behavioural problems, etc.). This research suggested that battered women represent a population that is at an elevated risk of developing pronounced mental health problems. Jaffe and colleagues suggest that with women who are being evaluated for psychiatric problems, it is important to explore whether violence may be a causative factor.[\[58\]](#)

F.7 Alcohol and Drug Treatment

F.7.1 Estimate

The B.C. Ministry of Health estimates that of the \$44.3 million annual (1995/96) cost of alcohol and drug treatment services for both men and women which the Ministry funded or provided directly, \$7.3 million was spent on women with addiction problems who have also been victims of physical or sexual abuse. This is 16.5% of the total expenditures.

F.7.2 Methodology

The above estimate was provided by Alcohol and Drug Services, B.C. Ministry of Health. Literature examining the link between violence against women and substance abuse was reviewed. The micro-data file from the Statistics Canada Violence Against Women Survey was analyzed.

F.7.3 Limitations of the Estimate

The above estimate covers only the costs of treatment funded or provided by the Drug and Alcohol Services of the Ministry of Health. Accommodation costs for individuals undergoing treatment are not included. Costs paid for by employee assistance programs, insurance or individuals themselves are not included.

F.7.4 Comparison with Other Studies

This cost category is not addressed explicitly in the Greaves or Day studies.

F.7.5 Supplementary Information

According to information from Alcohol and Drug Services, it is probable that at least half of the women admitted to alcohol and drug treatment programs have experienced physical or sexual abuse, either as children or as adults. Large numbers of women clients also report having experienced emotional abuse (ranging from 63% to 93% in different studies).

From October 1992 to March 1993 all clients admitted to publicly funded alcohol and drug services in B.C. were asked questions as to their experience of violence. Of females who were "misusing substances", 64% said they had experienced emotional abuse, 52% reported past physical abuse and 43% said they had been sexually abused. The data provided do not distinguish between abuse experienced as children or as adults.

Between September 1993 and March 1994, 138 women admitted to day programs at 12 locations throughout B.C. were asked whether they had experienced abuse. Sexual abuse was reported by 53% of women; physical abuse was reported by 47% and emotional abuse was reported by 80%.

From February to April 1994, approximately 500 clients admitted to residential and non-residential programs were interviewed. Of female clients, 93% reported experiencing emotional abuse at some time in their lives, 69% said they had experienced physical abuse and 51% reported sexual abuse. Almost 8% of women said they experienced physical abuse in the previous 30 days and almost 3% said they had experienced sexual abuse in that period. High proportions of males admitted to these programs also reported high rates of abuse. [\[59\]](#)

According to the Statistics Canada Violence Against Women Survey, 10% of B.C. women who reported non-spousal violence said that they had used alcohol, drugs or both to cope with the most recent incident of violence. Of ever-married women who said that they had at some time experienced spousal violence, 30% said that they had used alcohol, drugs or both to cope with the effects of this violence.

Of B.C. women who reported experiencing violence in the last 12 months, 19% said that they were currently using drugs or medication to help them sleep, calm down or get out of depression. This compares with 9% of women who took drugs or medication for these reasons among those who reported that they had never experienced violence. Of women who said they had experienced violence, but not in the last 12 months, 15% were currently taking drugs or medication for the stated purposes.

If the incidence of drug taking among women who had experienced violence had been the same as the incidence for women who had no reported experience of violence, the overall rate of drug taking for these purposes among B.C. women would have been one third lower than it was. Further analysis would be required to determine whether factors other than experiences of violence could be contributing to the higher rates of drug and medication use among women who had experienced violence.

A 1989 Canadian survey by Groenveld and Shain of 2,100 women living with male partners also indicated a higher prevalence of psychoactive drug use among women who had experienced abuse in comparison with those who had not experienced abuse.

"The highest rate of prescription and over-the-counter medication use was reported by women who were sexually abused as adults.

More women who had experienced physical abuse by their partners tended to use sleeping pills (40% more women) and sedatives (74% more women) than women who were not abused.

Illicit drug use (marijuana, LSD, cocaine, speed) etc. was many times higher among those who had experienced violence than among the non-abused group."[\[60\]](#)

Another recent Canadian study[\[61\]](#) reportedly found that 16% of physically abused wives were also alcohol dependent. This figure was eight times higher than the rate for those who had not been abused.

The Addiction Research Foundation has produced an educational package which contains a useful discussion of drug-taking by women who experience violence:

Women cope with abusive relationships in many different ways, including taking psychoactive drugs. Drugs might seem an attractive, viable option to a woman who feels trapped in an abusive relationship. Drugs, especially prescription medications, are generally accessible, and drug use might be more socially acceptable than flight from abuse. Drugs may be a woman's way to reduce anxiety.

Psychoactive drugs help the user dissociate from feelings of anxiety and fear. They can induce

false feelings of confidence and control and can provide temporary relief from anxiety caused by abuse or the anticipation of abuse. However, drug use can increase the risk of injury, create further barriers to seeking assistance and, over time, can lead to a serious drug dependence problem.

Using psychoactive drugs impairs the woman's judgment and provides her with an unrealistic sense of control over violent and potentially violent situations. This decreases her ability to protect herself physically. Furthermore, lessening the physical and emotional pain of abuse can gradually diminish the significance of these abusive episodes in the woman's mind. The severity of abuse generally increases, but the person who is being abused may not recognize this. Consequently, she increases her chances of being seriously hurt by the abuser.

A woman's alcoholism or drug addiction may also be used by her partner as an excuse for violence. [\[62\]](#)

F.8 Income Assistance

F.8.1 Estimate

The income assistance paid to divorced or separated women who had experienced repeated incidents of violence in their former relationships is estimated to have been \$161 million in 1994/95.

F.8.2 Methodology

This estimate is derived by combining administrative data on the GAIN [\[63\]](#) caseload and expenditures, with Statistics Canada data on the incidence of violence in former spousal relationships.

F.8.3 Analysis

The following table shows the distribution of the female GAIN caseload for March 1995 by marital status.

Marital Status	Cases	Expenditures (thousands)
Single - never married	41,170	29,078
Married	5,321	5,019
Married - separated	24,451	22,152
Divorced	13,886	10,317

Widowed	2,945	1,803
Common-law relationship	3,797	3,63
Common-law - separated	14,314	13,342
Unknown	590	438
Total	\$106,474	85,833

The total GAIN expenditures for both male and female recipients (and their children) in March 1995 was \$157,114,792. The total GAIN expenditures for the 1994/95 fiscal year were \$1,790,046,000. [\[64\]](#)

Women who were separated (married or common-law) or divorced accounted for at least 29.2% of total GAIN expenditures in March 1995 [\[65\]](#). The marital status classifications are subject to an unknown degree of error. When MSS clients are asked for their marital status they are not generally given the list of classifications used. Thus a client may say she is single even though "common-law - separated" would be the correct MSS classification. It seems probable that the misclassification of clients would understate the proportion of GAIN payments to women who are separated (including common-law) and divorced and overstate the proportion paid to single - never married. If it is assumed that 10% of the single - never married clients were actually separated or divorced [\[66\]](#), payments to separated and divorced women would be 31% of the GAIN total. [\[67\]](#) Assuming this same proportion applied to the fiscal year as a whole, GAIN payments to separated and divorced women would have totalled approximately \$555 million in 1994/95.

The following table, derived from the Statistics Canada Violence Against Women Survey, shows the numbers of B.C. women with current spouses and previous spouses, distributed according to the total number of incidents of spousal violence reported to the interviewer.

Number of incidents of spousal violence	B.C. women with current spouses		B.C. women with previous spouses	
	#	%	#	%
None	656,648	81	258,084	48
One	87,301	11	71,466	13
Two to Five	35,058	4	55,722	10
Six to Ten	10,889	1	38,226	7
Eleven or More	17,696	2	2	118,587
Total	07,592	100	542,085	100

The Statistics Canada survey does not provide a direct indication of the proportion of previous relationships in which the presence of wife assault actually contributed to ending the relationship. In this study, we assume that in relationships where violence was repeated six or more times, the violence was likely a causative factor in ending the relationship. Of women

whose previous marriages had ended, 29% reported six or more incidents of violence by the previous spouse compared to only 3% of women who reported this frequency of violence from a current spouse.

This group of women who experienced high rates of violence in their former spousal relationships accounted for the overwhelming majority of the incidents of wife assault reported to the Statistics Canada survey[68]. As a result of being kicked, choked or beaten with a fist or other object, most of the women in this group would have been injured, often repeatedly, during the relationship. Most of these women would have feared for their lives during their former relationships (and often afterwards as well)[69]. In most cases their former male partners would also have practiced emotionally controlling and abusive behaviour[70].

A key assumption in the analysis which follows is that for women whose previous relationships had been characterized by this pattern of repeated violence, the violence was a major contributing factor in the ending of the relationship.

It seems probable that the incidence of repeated and severe violence in their former relationships would be at least as high for separated and divorced women receiving social assistance as among separated and divorced women generally. It is therefore assumed that wife assault was a decisive factor causing the end of the previous relationship for 29% of separated and divorced women receiving income assistance. Social assistance costs in B.C. due to spousal violence are estimated to be \$161 million for 1994/95.[71] This represents approximately 9% of total GAIN expenditures.

If one were to adopt the more restrictive assumption that spousal violence was a causative factor in ending a relationship only if there were eleven or more incidents of violence, the estimated social assistance costs would still be \$122 million[72].

F.8.4 Limitations of the Estimate

The main weakness of the estimate derived above is the absence of a quantifiable link between the violence experienced by separated and divorced women in their previous relationships, the breakdown of those relationships, and their receipt of income assistance. It is believed that most separated or divorced women receiving income assistance do report having experienced violence from their former spouses, however, the relationship between this violence and the ending of the relationship has not been systematically explored[73].

In screening women for the Family Maintenance Program, the Ministry of Social Services does ask women about their experience of violence in previous relationships. Although these responses are kept in case files, aggregate reports are only generated to keep track of the number of cases in which there is concern that former spouses would be violent in the future

if they were to be pursued for support payments. Further analysis of the information gathered in the screening process might provide a clearer picture of the relationship between wife abuse and social assistance caseloads.

It is probable that there is existing research on the link between marital breakdown and wife abuse. Once identified, this data could be used to refine the estimate of social assistance costs produced in this paper. It could also contribute to estimation of other expenditures on social services, housing, child care, legal and court costs, and tax losses that may be linked to marital breakdown.[\[74\]](#)

In addition to the social assistance costs discussed above, some social services costs may also be due to the consequences of violence against women (e.g. some family counselling and foster care costs). This would be a worthwhile subject for further analysis.

F.8.5 Comparison with Other Studies

The Greaves study provides an estimate of \$1,804 million for the Canada Assistance Plan costs. No methodology is provided to indicate how this estimate was derived other than to state that it was provided by Philip Hepworth of Human Resources Development Canada. The HRDC estimate was not limited to costs of violence against women. It included \$750 million of costs related to child welfare (including foster care and adoption)[\[75\]](#). The HRDC estimate included only federal government contributions to the provinces, which in the case of British Columbia cover much less than half of social assistance and social services costs.

F.9 Transition Houses and Sexual/Woman Assault Centres

F.9.1 Estimate

For 1995/96, the Ministry of Women's Equality budget for support to transition houses was \$20.3 million. It is estimated that an additional \$5 million per year is raised by the transition houses from other sources.

Provincial government funding of sexual assault/woman assault centres totalled an estimated \$1.7 million in 1995/96 (not including expenditures on services for male victims of sexual assault). This consisted of \$850,000 from the Ministry of Women's Equality and \$880,000 from the Ministry of Attorney General.[\[76\]](#)

F.9.2 Methodology

Expenditure data were provided by the Ministry of Women's Equality and the Ministry of Attorney General. The B.C.-Yukon Society of Transition Houses provided an estimate of the

additional funding raised by transition houses.

The B.C.-Yukon Society of Transition Houses estimates that, on average, the Ministry of Women's Equality funding accounts for about 80% of funding for B.C. transition houses. This estimate agrees with that of Stopping the Violence Branch staff.

The total expenditures by transition houses, are thus estimated at approximately \$25 million in both 1994/95 and 1995/96.

F.9.3 Limitations of the Estimate

According to the B.C.-Yukon Society of Transition Houses, at least 90% of transition houses have significant volunteer involvement in their programs. The value of this volunteer time has not been included in the estimate. Some municipalities exempt transition houses from payment of municipal taxes. Additional research would be required to estimate the value of these additional contributions to transition house programs.

If space is not available in a local transition house, the Ministry of Social Services will often pay for accommodation in a hotel or motel until space in a transition house becomes available. B. C. Housing reportedly has a policy of priority placement of women and children from violent relationships. Further research could identify these additional housing-related costs as well as the additional costs paid by the women themselves.

F.9.4 Comparison with Other Studies

The Greaves study estimates the Canada-wide (excluding Quebec and the North West Territories) costs of transition and secondary stage housing to be \$88 million annually. Because transition house expenditures in Quebec and the North West Territories could not be obtained as separate items, their expenditures are not included in this estimate, but are shown in a separate "miscellaneous" category which includes other unspecified expenditures. The Greaves estimate includes only \$2,550,000 in transition house expenditures for British Columbia in 1994.

The Day study estimates the annual cost of transition houses in Canada to be \$135 million for 1992/93, not including volunteer hours. It does not provide a B.C. total.

F.10 Women's Loss of Paid and Unpaid Work Time

F.10.1 Estimate

We estimate the value of paid and unpaid work time lost by women due to violence to be \$54 million annually.

F.10.2 Methodology

The Violence Against Women Survey results are used to estimate the number of women in British Columbia who, in the 12 months prior to the survey, took time off from their daily activities (paid and unpaid) as a result of experiencing violence. The survey data also provide an estimate of the number of these women who had paid work. This is combined with other Statistics Canada data on the average earnings of women in British Columbia to derive an estimate of the loss of women's earnings due to violence. Statistics Canada data on time use is used to estimate the value of unpaid time lost due to violence.

F.10.3 Analysis

According to the Statistics Canada Violence Against Women Survey, 11% of women who experienced non-spousal sexual assault took time off from their daily activities due to the most recent incident. Nineteen percent of women who experienced non-spousal physical assault took time off as a result of the most recent incident. Combining these rates with the numbers of women who reported incidents of non-spousal sexual and physical assaults in the 12 months prior to the survey produces an estimate that 125,000 Canadian women took time off during this period due to non-spousal violence[77].

In the 12 months prior to the survey, an estimated 314,000 Canadian women experienced spousal violence[78]. The survey does not indicate the proportion of women who took time off due to the most recent incident of spousal violence. We assume that the rate was the same as the weighted average for those who experienced non-spousal violence (14%). This results in an estimate that 44,000 Canadian women took time off due to spousal violence[79]. The total number of Canadian women estimated to have taken time off during the 12 month period due to spousal and non-spousal violence is 169,000[80].

British Columbia women experienced 16% of the violence reported to the Statistics Canada survey for the preceding 12 months[81]. It can thus be estimated that approximately 27,000 B.C. women took time off during this period[82]. Of B.C. women who experienced violence in the 12 month period, 83% had paid work[83]. This suggests that approximately 22,000 B.C. women per year lost time from paid work due to violence[84].

The Violence Against Women Survey did not ask women how long they took off due to violence. Although dated, the 1983 Canadian Urban Victimization Study (CUVS) was the only source that we could find which provided information on this question. The CUVS responses indicated that the distribution of injured women who lost time from work was as follows:

Time lost by injured women	injured women %	women who lost time %
none	48	N/A
up to 5 days	15	29
6 to 20 days	19	37
21 days or more	18	35
	100	100

The CUVS did not report a figure for the average number of days lost. For the purposes of this study, it is assumed that women who lost days due to violence lost an average of 15 days [85]. This seems likely to be an underestimate of the true figure, since it does not reflect the days lost by women who may be permanently incapacitated or killed.

The average gross earnings of B.C. women (age 15 and over) who had paid work in 1994 was \$20,398 [86]. This earnings level is assumed to apply to the women who lost time due to violence, producing an estimate of \$18 million for the annual total of lost earnings. [87] Since this estimate is based on average gross earnings, it implicitly includes income tax revenues that would be lost by governments. For women whose absences are covered by paid sick leave, the earnings loss is shared by employers and co-workers.

It is also possible to derive an estimate of the value of unpaid time lost due to violence. According to a time use survey by Statistics Canada, [88] Canadian females aged 15 and over spend an average of 2.5 hours per day on paid work and 4.9 hours per day on "unpaid productive work". This total includes 2.5 hours of domestic work, .6 hours of primary childcare, 1 hour of shopping and services, and .8 hours of education. The total hours of unpaid productive work is thus approximately twice the amount of paid work.

There is a considerable body of literature debating the appropriate valuation of women's unpaid work. According to one school of thought, unpaid work should be valued at the average wage earned by women in paid work. Applying that approach in this analysis, the estimated value of time lost due to violence against women in B.C. is estimated to be approximately twice the value of lost paid time or \$36 million per year.

The total value of paid and unpaid time lost in B.C. due to violence against women is estimated to be \$54 million per year [89].

F.10.4 Limitations of the Estimate

Women who are victims of violence are also deprived of the ability to enjoy non-work time - a loss which cannot be meaningfully quantified.

The loss of earnings due to death or permanent incapacitation is not included in the estimates. The effects of sexual harassment of women in the labour force are also not included in these cost estimates.

The above estimates cover only the costs of time off from everyday activities. For employers, some additional costs of violence against women would include:

- reduced productivity: Abused women have said that the violence eventually affected their emotional and physical health, and many believe their work was negatively affected. [\[90\]](#) Some abusive spouses also use the workplace to continue to control women e.g. by harassing phone calls or unwanted visits.

- increased errors or accidents: A nurse in a major food-processing plant said that "an upset employee working on the line is not attentive to what's going on around her, so there is potential for injury to herself or co-workers." [\[91\]](#)

- effects on co-workers,

- administrative costs of developing policies and procedures, providing assistance.

The estimates of the **value of lost work time** derived in this paper could be improved by matching the age and marital status characteristics of female victims of violence with labour force, earnings and time use data. Alternative methods of valuing the loss of unpaid work time could also be explored. Additional data sources (e.g. the Criminal Injury Compensation Program) could be sought regarding the average loss of work time due to violence against women.

F.10.5 Comparison with Other Studies

The Greaves report estimates that 129,037 Canadian women took time off work (paid or unpaid) due to violence in the 12 months prior to the Statistics Canada survey (compared to 169,000 estimated above). For each day that these women lost from work, the Greaves study estimates a loss of net earnings of \$7 million and a loss of tax revenue of \$1.4 million. The study does not provide an estimate of the average number of days taken off. The Greaves estimate does not include days lost due to non-spousal physical assaults.

The Greaves report estimates that the present value of lost lifetime net earnings due to women killed by their partners is \$23 million per year for Canada. The present value of lost tax revenue is estimated to be \$2.7 million per year.

The Day study estimates the annual total cost of work lost by women victims of violence in

Canada to be \$357 million of paid work and \$217 of unpaid work (\$574 million total). Day's estimate is based on an average of 15.8 days lost by women who take time off (paid and unpaid). Her methodology implicitly assumes that all of the time lost by women in the paid labour force is paid time.

F.11 Programs for Children and Assaultive Men

F.11.1 Estimate

In 1995/96, the Ministry of Women's Equality provided \$1.7 million for the Children Who Witness program. Expenditures on treatment programs for assaultive men by the Ministries of Women's Equality, Health, and Attorney General totalled approximately \$2.2 million in 1995/96.

F.11.2 Methodology

The Ministry of Women's Equality contributed \$531,163 in 1995/96 to treatment programs for assaultive men. This funding was divided equally between the Ministry of Health and the Ministry of Attorney General. The Ministry of Health used the Women's Equality contribution to fund six institution and community-based programs dealing with violence against women. The Ministry of Attorney General spent \$1.7 million in 1995/96 on assaultive men's treatment programs in addition to the funding from Women's Equality.[\[92\]](#) Total spending on these treatment programs for assaultive men thus totalled \$2.2 million in 1995/96.

Not included in this total is the \$3.5 million spent by the Ministry of Health on treatment for sex offenders (whose victims may have been children as well as women or young men).[\[93\]](#) The Ministry of Attorney General also spent \$500,000 on programs for "known abusers" whose victims were children.

F.11.3 Limitations of the Estimate

It is probable that, in addition to the expenditures identified above, there is federal, municipal and private funding to provide treatment for assaultive men. Also not included in the above totals are expenditures for mental health and substance abuse treatments for abusive men. There may also be family counselling or other child welfare services provided by the Ministry of Social Services or private agencies which assist children affected by wife abuse.

F.11.4 Comparison with Other Studies

These expenditure categories are not explicitly costed in the Greaves study, but are included in the total of \$293 million shown as the costs of counselling and prevention.

G. CONSEQUENCES EXAMINED BUT NOT QUANTIFIED

G.1 Emergency Medical Care

Although we were unable to estimate the portion of emergency medical costs attributable to violence against women, it is clear from the following discussion that if such costs were known they would be substantial.

Inquiries were made of various officials of the Ministry of Health. We also had discussions with representatives of the Domestic Violence Program at the Vancouver General Hospital, analyzed data from Statistics Canada's Violence Against Women Survey, and reviewed numerous articles and reports dealing with the issue.

According to Ministry of Health staff, patient-specific data is collected on all in-patients, but it is not collected on outpatients or emergency department visits. It was also stated that whether a woman is a victim of violence is not a medical diagnosis.

It appears that the only systematic assessment of the violence experienced by women seeking treatment at hospital emergency departments in Canada has been carried out by the Vancouver General Hospital's Domestic Violence Program. The research carried out as part of this program has several components. In the first study, in October 1993, triage nurses at the entrance to the emergency department asked women the following question (or a paraphrase of it): "We know that violence is a problem for many women, so we routinely screen all women for abuse or violence in their lives. Is this a problem for you in any way?" The intent was to ask this question of as many women as possible of those seeking treatment during the one week study period.

Of the 252 women screened during the study period, 6% disclosed abuse. The triage study was repeated in March 1994, with essentially the same results. An additional study was carried out by randomly selecting 1089 records of women with surgical injuries seen in the emergency department during a 3-year period and examining the records for evidence of physical abuse. In almost 9% of the cases, it was judged that the record showed positive or probable indications of abuse. This rate of abuse was about one-third the rate reported in a U.S. study by Stark et al (1979).

The Vancouver General's Domestic Violence Program also conducted a Canada-wide survey of hospital emergency departments which asked about hospital procedures for identifying and dealing with cases of domestic violence. Hospitals were asked to estimate what percentage of female patients seen in the emergency department were experiencing problems related to domestic violence. For the 34 hospitals responding to this question, the average estimate was 5.5% of female patients. There was a wide range of estimates, and it may be coincidence that

the average estimate is so close to the results of the VGH triage screening and patient chart studies.

In the Vancouver General Hospital retrospective chart study, women identified as abused had shown long histories of illness and repeated emergency department visits and hospital admissions. A variety of health problems related to physical injuries and to problems stemming from alcohol and drug abuse were noted. Overall, women identified as abused had 2.5 times as many emergency department visits and admissions to hospital as did women who were not identified as abused.⁹⁴

Of the abused women seen by the VGH Domestic Violence Program in its first year of operation (from November 1992), 81% had been kicked, bitten or hit, 60% had been pushed, grabbed or shoved, 55% had been threatened and 30% had been choked. The distribution of injuries and patients by type of injury was as follows:

Proportion of Injuries and Patients by Type of Injury^[95]

Type of Injury	Injuries	Patients ^[96] %
contusion (bruise)	56.8	59.0
laceration	14.4	224.1
abrasion	9.4	13.9
abrasion/contusion	3.6	6.6
closed fracture	3.6	6.6
avulsion (separation)	1.4	2.4
contusion/laceration	1.1	1.8
penetrating wound	.6	1.2
burn	.8	1.2
other	8.3	13.3

According to the principal investigator of the VGH Domestic Violence Program, there has not yet been an analysis of the hospital's costs associated with treating women who have identified themselves as experiencing domestic violence.

Of women who seek medical attention for injuries experienced due to violence, it is not known what proportion go to individual physicians rather than to hospitals. According to the Ontario Medical Association, battered women frequently use emergency department services rather than private physicians for episodic care. This pattern of use may reflect the higher frequency of assaults which occur from 10pm to 5am and on weekends, and the woman's reluctance to

inform her family doctor of the abuse, especially in smaller communities.[\[97\]](#) In one U.S. study of battered women, the proportion of women who reported visiting private physicians (8%) was about one-third as great as the number who reported having visited a hospital for help after an abusive episode (22%). (Some women may have visited both.)[\[98\]](#)

A U.S. government study reported that one third of the abused women who went to emergency rooms did not tell the true cause of their injuries because of fear of retaliation from the abusers.[\[99\]](#)

Ghent et al (1985)[\[100\]](#) noted that many health care providers do not think of woman abuse as a health issue.

Morrison (1988)[\[101\]](#) reported that using current diagnostic techniques, medical personnel were identifying one battered woman in 25. Morrison identified three reasons for this:

- the personal bias of health professionals reinforces sexual, racial and economic inequities through their own attitudes and practices,
- the medical profession defines disease as something organic occurring in the body and merely influenced by social factors,
- emergency room care emphasizes highly technological interventions in life-threatening situations and that the perception of an emergency differs between women and physicians.

Hendricks-Matthews (1992)[\[102\]](#) observed that medical literature agrees that medical personnel (physicians, in particular) are still not identifying battered women. She suggested that medical personnel may not ask women about abuse because:

- they feel they lack the training to help,
- they want to avoid dealing with violence in their own lives,
- they think that violence is out of their domain and belongs to the social, legal or judicial systems.

An Ontario Medical Association report[\[103\]](#) also noted that repeated abuse leads to emotional distress which may bring the battered woman to her family doctor's office with various chronic physical and psychosomatic complaints such as insomnia, backache, fatigue or palpitations. The O.M.A. report added that many women who present with substance abuse problems or suicidal behaviour may be battered women. It advised that physicians must begin to consider

wife abuse if they observe that certain children repeatedly present with vague physical or psychosomatic complaints or behaviour problems at home or at school.[\[104\]](#)

Hanvey and Kinnon's 1993 report "Health Care Sector's Response to Woman Abuse" concluded that prevention and health promotion models have not yet been applied to woman abuse, so that health care providers lack a framework in which to understand and respond to abuse as a health issue.

A man may start to batter a woman when she becomes pregnant or may increase the violence then. Assaults are often directed at the pregnant woman's abdomen. In one American study, pregnant, battered women experienced twice as many abdominal injuries as non-pregnant battered women. In one Canadian study of battered women, 30% of the women were pregnant when assaulted and 40% said the violence became more severe when they were pregnant.[\[105\]](#) The Violence Against Women Survey found that 21% of battered women were assaulted during pregnancy, and that in 40% of these cases, the violence began at that time. Men who assaulted their wives during pregnancy were among the most violent: their wives were four times as likely as other abused women to say they had been beaten up, choked, threatened with a gun or knife, or sexually assaulted. Just over 100,000 women who were assaulted during pregnancy suffered a miscarriage or other internal injuries as a result.[\[106\]](#)

The Ontario Medical Association pointed out that "unlike injuries from other accidents, battering injuries are often bilateral and typically involve the head, neck and trunk. Pregnant women are at particular risk, especially for injuries to the chest, breasts, and abdomen."[\[107\]](#)

Women with a history of abdominal injuries are more likely to experience pregnancy complications than other women, and abused women are twice as likely to miscarry as women not subjected to this violence.

Abuse can have direct detrimental effects on the development of the fetus, and indirect effects such as through alcohol or drug consumption by the assaulted woman. The economic costs resulting from the birth of a damaged baby are undoubtedly considerable.

Comparison with Other Studies

The Greaves study estimates partial costs of medical treatments resulting from wife assault in Canada to total \$12.7 million annually (including \$7.4 million for emergency room visits, \$2.6 million for casting broken and fractured bones, and \$2.7 million for visits to doctors to have casts removed).

The Day[\[108\]](#) study estimates total annual costs in Canada to be \$7.6 million for immediate medical attention, \$1.3 million for dental repair work, and \$255 million for additional medical

service consultations.

G.2 Intergenerational Effects of Violence

Due to a lack of available data, we were unable to estimate the costs of intergenerational effects of violence against women. It is apparent from the following discussion, however, that such costs are enormous.

The analysis included a review of literature dealing with the effects of wife abuse on the children of the abused women. Data from the Violence Against Women Survey were also examined.

The children of abused women are often profoundly affected by the abuse directed at their mothers. In this section, we first provide data concerning children growing up in families where the mother is assaulted. We then look at men and women in relationships, and examine the links between violence in these adult relationships and the childhood experiencing of a household where the mother was abused. Finally, we touch on the evidence provided by girls in abusive dating relationships in their early teens, where demonstrations of apparent intergenerational consequences may surface.

Children of Abused Mothers

Men who abuse their wives are much more likely to abuse their children than men who are not abusive toward their wives. One Canadian study found the children to be directly abused in one-third of wife abuse families.[\[109\]](#) An Edmonton project found that 87% of the children of abused women at an emergency shelter had been abused and/or neglected, with 67% having been sexually abused.[\[110\]](#) Thus it is extremely difficult to isolate (and then cost) the effects on children who witness violence against their mothers, although it is increasingly recognized that these children are profoundly affected emotionally and psychologically by the abuse. In some families, the father has the children watch their mother's victimization as a lesson in control and what may happen to them if they disobey him.[\[111\]](#)

Many parents deny the presence of children during incidents of wife assault. Interviews with children in households with wife abuse, however, found that almost all could describe details of violent behaviour that the mother or father did not realize the children had witnessed.[\[112\]](#)

A Toronto study indicated that 68% of 2,910 wife assault cases had children present.[\[113\]](#) A further report by Jaffe[\[114\]](#) stated that children who live in a family where the man abuses the woman have an 80% chance of witnessing the abuse. A Quebec study of abused women found that "three quarters of the women's children were present for episodes of battering".[\[115\]](#)

Of B.C. women who reported violence in their current or previous marriage (including common-law) and who had children, more than half (54%) thought that the children had witnessed the violence. [\[116\]](#) From the references above, it seems likely that a significant number of children whose mothers thought they did not directly witness violence would actually have witnessed it or at least been aware of it and affected by it.

Children who witness abuse of the mother tend to suffer more physical, psychological and behavioural problems than children who have not. One study of children brought to shelters found 70% exhibited mood-related disorders. [\[117\]](#)

In B.C., psychologist Ruth Anderson has said that children who witness domestic violence will show regressive behaviour and are more prone to depression, stress disorders and delinquency [\[118\]](#).

Psychologist Peter Jaffe has said "children who witness violence are traumatized. The vast majority who live with violence in their homes show signs of post-traumatic stress disorders - nightmares, withdrawal, flashbacks, hyper-sensitivity. They're basically growing up in a war zone." [\[119\]](#) Serious behaviour problems are 17 times higher for boys and 10 times higher for girls who have witnessed battering. [\[120\]](#)

Some other consequences of wife abuse for the children are as follows:

- Infants can be particularly vulnerable to injury (being hit, pushed or dropped) during the course of an assault on the mother. [\[121\]](#)

- Children may also be at risk of neglect or abuse by their assaulted mothers. [\[122\]](#)

- Children learn that violence is an appropriate way of resolving conflict in human relationships; girls may learn that victimization is inevitable and no one can help change this; and boys may become more aggressive. [\[123\]](#)

- Older children may victimize their siblings as a result of the violence they have witnessed. [\[124\]](#)

- Education may be disrupted if behaviour problems are externalized, or if the children change schools. One study showed children of battered women living in shelters scored significantly lower in reading and mathematics. [\[125\]](#)

- Children may be the only witnesses to their mother's abuse and may have to testify in court against their father, resulting in a sense of divided loyalties.

-Most women who leave an abusive partner suffer significant adverse economic consequences. Becoming poor compromises a child's physical and psychological development, thus compounding the effects of the violence itself.[\[126\]](#)

-Adolescents may run away.[\[127\]](#)

-Adolescents may act out in ways that result in delinquencies and the involvement of the juvenile justice system.[\[128\]](#)

-Some adolescent boys follow the model of their fathers by assaulting the mother.[\[129\]](#)

In sum, both clinical case descriptions and empirical studies indicate that children of all ages who have witnessed wife abuse exhibit elevated behavioural problems at home and in other settings.[\[130\]](#)

In February 1996, a Justice of the Ontario Court (General Division) ordered an abusive father to pay his son for pain and suffering caused when the mother was assaulted. Lawyers reportedly said the case was significant because it finally recognizes the impact of spousal violence on children and offers them financial compensation.[\[131\]](#)

The Children as Adults: Intergenerational Transfer of Violence

Retrospective studies on battered wives and abusive husbands repeatedly document that high proportions of these populations have either witnessed their own mothers beaten by her partner or they have been the direct recipient of physical abuse as children. Thus the children witnessing violence against women to-day may become the next generation's victims and abusers.[\[132\]](#)

The Statistics Canada Violence Against Women survey shows that women in marital (including common-law) relationships are much more likely to experience violence from their partners if either partner was raised in a household where wife abuse took place.

The probability of a woman's current or previous husband being violent towards her was 21% if her husband's father had not been violent towards his wife. The probability of a woman's husband being violent towards her jumped to 57% if the husband's father was a wife abuser.

Of Canadian women whose own father was not violent towards the woman's mother, 13% reported experiencing violence from a current or previous spouse. Of women raised in households where the father had been violent towards the wife, 25% reported that their own current or previous spouse had also been violent towards them.

Thus it appears that men who had witnessed wife abuse when they were children were almost three times as likely to become wife abusers as were men whose fathers were not violent to their wives. Women from families where wife abuse was present were twice as likely to experience wife abuse themselves as were women raised in families where wife abuse was not present. These findings suggest that there is a strong tendency toward the intergenerational transmission of wife abuse. It should be noted, however, that 69% of all violent husbands reportedly had fathers who were not wife abusers.

The Violence Against Women Survey data showed that wife abusers who are the sons of wife abusers are more violent than men who are violent towards their wives but whose fathers were reportedly not wife abusers.[\[133\]](#) Wives of the former group were attacked more often and were more likely to be injured than were the wives of the latter group.

Young Women and Dating Violence

Some researchers believe that proof of the intergenerational transfer of violence against women by children who have grown up in violent households first emerges in early teen dating relationships as young people repeat the behaviours of their parents. Violence in dating relationships is a relatively new research area. The extent of abuse in dating relationships is unknown; one survey found that many young women did not consider certain behaviours of dating partners to be abusive e.g. control of who she talks to or spends time with.

A 1987 Toronto study[\[134\]](#) showed that 20% of female teens experienced physical or emotional abuse in a dating relationship. A rural Nova Scotia survey found that 40% of girls reported being in an abusive relationship. One third of this group said that someone in their family had experienced abuse and 63% of this one third reported the abused person as their mother. Of the 11% of teen males who said they had been abusive in a dating relationship, 29% said someone in their family had experienced abuse, and for over half, this was the mother.[\[135\]](#) This same survey found that the abuse was a regular pattern of behaviour in most cases and that young women who had been in an abusive relationship were "very likely to get involved in another".

The forms and frequency of abuse are not much different in dating than in married relationships.[\[136\]](#) Half of the women in a shelter for battered women indicated that they had been physically abused in a dating relationship at some time.[\[137\]](#) A significant number of the 800-1200 daily calls to the Canadian Kids Help toll-free phone line were from young girls who had experienced dating violence in their present or past relationships.[\[138\]](#) A University of Manitoba study found 40% of male university students were abusive in their current dating relationships.[\[139\]](#)

The longer term economic costs of this abuse of young women in a dating relationship may be

very high, particularly if the young woman's academic potential is curtailed or a pregnancy results.

Children who grow up with role models who endorse the use of violence and aggression may be at particularly high risk of using or accepting violence in both dating and marital relationships.

Comparison with Other Studies

There is no costing of these consequences in the Greaves or Day studies.

H. SOME FUTURE RESEARCH DIRECTIONS

The estimates provided in this paper are preliminary and provide only a partial quantification of the costs of violence against women. With additional research, it would be possible to improve on the estimates provided above and to fill in some of the gaps regarding costs which we have not quantified in this study.

Areas, not quantified in this report, where we believe significant additional costs could be identified include:

- incremental medical services,
- expenditures on alcohol and on legal and illicit drugs,
- increased tax expenditures (e.g. child tax benefits),
- housing costs,
- legal and court costs,
- social services costs,
- child care costs,
- intergenerational effects

medical costs: There is interest, on the part of those running the Domestic Violence Program of the Vancouver General Hospital, to study costs associated with treating women identified as

experiencing violence, and to compare these costs with the average costs of providing medical services to women who are not victims of violence. An analysis of province-wide inpatient costs could also be conducted using an approach suggested by Ministry of Health staff.

Costs related to birth defects and other direct and indirect damage to babies resulting from violence to pregnant women may be substantial. It might be possible to assess the incidence and cost of some of these consequences.

A more in-depth review of the literature on links between violence against women and mental health and substance abuse problems could assist in improving estimates of the costs resulting from this violence. Closer study of data gathered by B.C. treatment centres, could also help improve these estimates.

Some of the data sources identified in the national studies by Greaves and Day reports might be used to produce additional estimates of British Columbia medical costs related to violence against women.

alcohol and drug expenditures: It may be possible to estimate some of the incremental expenditures on alcohol and drugs by women who have been victims of violence (compared to women who have not experienced such violence).

tax expenditure increases: Marital breakdowns resulting from wife abuse undoubtedly lead to increased tax expenditures in the form of child tax benefits.

housing costs: B.C. Housing's policy of priority placement for women and children who are victims of domestic violence means that at least some of the increased housing costs resulting from this violence are paid by government. Most of the additional costs of housing are, however, likely paid by the women themselves. The B.C.-Yukon Society of Transition Houses identified this as an important cost to quantify.

legal and court costs: It is not known to what extent court and legal aid records could allow estimation of costs associated with violence against women. It is likely that these costs are substantial - including not only costs resulting from criminal charges, but also costs associated with separation and divorce, restraining orders to prevent harassment of former spouses etc. It is apparent from the Greaves study that at least some B.C. data on legal aid expenditures can be obtained.

Some press reports suggest that there may in future be an increase in the numbers of women who successfully sue perpetrators of violence. Although the following examples deal with violence women experienced in childhood, they may point toward greater compensation for a broader range of violence against women.

In July 1995, a B.C. Supreme Court Justice awarded a 19-year-old woman damages of \$234,393 to be paid by her father for sexual assaults he committed when she was 11 to 15 years old. This judge recognized that emotional trauma interferes with the victim's ability to work and the award included \$100,000 for loss of earning capacity. [\[140\]](#)

An Edmonton woman was awarded a \$600,000 judgement against her father for childhood sexual assault, and then access to money he is owed from the Alberta Teachers' Retirement Fund, an exception to the provincial law protecting this fund from creditors and legal action. [\[141\]](#)

In Vancouver, a civil jury of the B.C. Supreme Court awarded damages totalling \$650,000 to a woman against her stepfather for childhood sexual abuse. [\[142\]](#)

At the federal level, a bill introduced last year will empower judges to order people convicted of crimes to compensate their victims for such things as damage to property or loss of income, and now to order compensation for victims of domestic violence for "reasonable expenses" incurred in moving out of the abuser's home including temporary housing, food, child care and transportation. [\[143\]](#)

social services costs: It is likely that there are significant costs of providing various social services to women who have been victims of violence and to their children. There are also costs for children removed to foster care. The Greaves study lists \$245,000,000 in federal spending on counselling and prevention but does not provide additional detail. It seems likely that some of these expenditure would have been for services in British Columbia.

child care costs: Marital breakdowns caused by wife abuse likely result in a greater reliance on paid child care. Some of the additional costs would be paid by the women, and some by government.

intergenerational effects: Although it is difficult to quantify costs relating to the intergenerational effects of violence against women, we believe that, through more work to summarize and synthesize existing research in this area, it would be possible to obtain a better appreciation of the magnitude of related costs.

It may be possible to develop a "life cycle of an assaultive male" approach to illustrate some of the intergenerational costs resulting from wife (and child) abuse and to indicate the enormous costs that can be generated by an individual male's violence towards women.

Data are available that quantify some of the increase in violence exhibited by children from families where wife abuse occurs and by these children as adults. The Ministry of Education, individual school boards or the B.C. Teacher's Federation may be able to assist in quantifying some of these effects. There has also been some academic research in this area.

poverty effects: Many women and children fall below the poverty line following marital breakdown. In addition to whatever adverse effects there may be due to the experience or witnessing of violence, the experience of poverty itself has negative effects on the future development of children. Some of these costs can be identified from analysis by the National Council on Welfare and others.

other criminal costs: It might be possible to estimate social costs resulting from other criminal and self-abusive actions of the men who commit violence against women and to identify common factors which prevention programs could address.

training costs: The costs of programs to train physicians, nurses, social workers, police, court workers, dentists, teachers, and other professionals to identify and respond to woman abuse could be estimated.

Improving our estimates

It would also be useful to discuss the estimates presented in this paper with respect to **policing, incarceration, and probation and parole** estimates with senior police officers, corrections administrators and program analysts, and to refine the methodology, based on the additional information and opinions obtained.

It is probable that there is existing research on the link between marital breakdown and wife abuse, which we have not identified. This data could be used to refine the estimate of **social assistance costs** produced in this paper. It could also contribute to estimation of other expenditures on social services, housing, child care, legal and court costs and tax losses that may be linked to marital breakdown.

The estimates of the **value of lost work time** derived in this paper could be improved by matching the age and marital status characteristics of female victims of violence with labour force, earnings and time use data. Alternative methods of valuing the loss of unpaid work time could also be explored. Additional data sources could be sought regarding the average loss of work time due to violence against women. The value of earnings lost due to deaths could be estimated as it was in the Greaves study.

Expected improvements in the **Criminal Injury Compensation Program's** information management system may permit more detailed analysis of the costs related to violence against women.

Statistics Canada's Violence Against Women Survey microdata file could be used to gain a much better understanding of the characteristics and effects of violence against women. This analysis could be of use in further quantification of the costs of violence and in design of

programs to prevent violence.

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