**3 main types of abuse:**

**Physical**:

* + easiest to recognize; bruising/cuts/death.
  + 1/8 relationships involves violence
  + 50% of battered wives report that they were beaten by husband before marriage.
* **Factors**: men learn violent behaviour, violence is condoned, all about control

**Emotional abuse:**

* + Can take many forms
  + Two targets: self-esteem, independence

**Sexual abuse**:

* + Considered a crime in Canada
  + Rape is now called sexual assault
  + **Old rape law**: a man will be charged with rape when he has sexual intercourse with a woman who is not his wife.
  + Problems: women could not refuse husband sex
  + Had to be full penetration to count
  + Maximum punishment was life.
  + Low conviction rate because juries didn’t want to give life in prison, came down to his word against hers.
  + Past sexual history of women could be brought up.

**Sexual Assault Statistics in Canada**

**A Numerical Representation of the Truth**

* Of every 100 incidents of sexual assault, only 6 are reported to the police
* 1 - 2% of "date rape" sexual assaults are reported to the police
* 1 in 4 North American women will be sexually assaulted during their lifetime
* 11% of women have physical injury resulting for sexual assault
* Only 2 - 4% of all sexual assaults reported are false reports
* 60% of sexual abuse/assault victims are under the age of 17
* over 80% of sex crime victims are women
* 80% of sexual assault incidents occur in the home
* 17% of girls under 16 have experienced some form of incest
* 83% of disabled women will be sexual assaulted during their lifetime
* 15% of sexual assault victims are boys under 16
* half of all sexual offenders are married or in long term relationships
* 57% of aboriginal women have been sexually abused
* 1/5th of all sexual assaults involve a weapon of some sort
* 80% of assailants are friends and family of the victim
* The previous noted statistics have been taken from various studies across Canada. While the numbers can never been 100% accurate, a few key generalizations can made:

1. sexual assault is far more common than most would suspect
2. relatively few incidents of sexual assault are reported to the police
3. young and otherwise vulnerable women are most likely to be sexually abused
4. most sexual assaults are committed by someone close to the victim, not a stranger

**Myths and Facts of Sexual Assault, Canada**

**Dispelling Misconceptions and Promoting Awareness**

* Sexual assault and child sexual abuse are highly misunderstood crimes. Understanding the common misconceptions that are prevalent in our society along with the facts helps you better understand sexual assault and educate others:

**MYTH:** Most victims of sexual assault can prevent the assault from taking place by resisting.  **FACT:** Assailants commonly overpower victims through threats and intimidation tactics. Moreover, many victims lack the capacity to appreciate or understand they are being assaulted.

**MYTH:** Most Sexual Assaults are done by strangers **FACT:** Statistics clearly show the vast majority of sexual assaults are committed by someone close to the victim

**MYTH:** Victims can easily "get over" the effects of sexual assault or child sexual abuse  
**FACT:** The effects of sexual assault are far reaching and can severely impact an individual's emotional stability, employment, and ability to form and maintain adult relationships.

**MYTH:** Most sexual assaults are not planned in advance.  
**FACT:** As many as 3/4ths of all sexual assaults involved some pre-planning by the asailant

**MYTH:** Sexual assault is a commonly false-reported crime  
**FACT:** Most statistics show approximately 2% or less of sexual assaults reported as false reports

**MYTH:** Victims commonly dress in a way that increases their chances of being sexual assaulted  
**FACT:** This appears to be uncommon as most assailants cannot remember what the victim was wearing

**MYTH:** If a drunk girl consents to a sexual act, this consent is valid  
**FACT:** It depends on how "drunk" the individual is and whether they are capable of understanding what they are consenting to

**MYTH:** Most victims are young, attractive females  
**FACT:** The elderly are commonly victims of sexual abuse.

**MYTH:**Men are never sexual assaulted.  
**FACT:** Sexual assault is more common for men than most believe, and boys are common victims of child sexual abuse

**MYTH:** Sexual assault is a relatively rare form of abuse  
**FACT:** As many as 1 in 4 women will be sexually assaulted during their lifetime. This makes sexual assault one of the most common serious crimes.

**MYTH:**  Most assailants have a history of mental or sexual problems   
**FACT:** Many assailants appear to live highly normal/functioning lives

**MYTH:** Assailants are typically poor, uneducated, of a certain race  
**FACT:** There is no data indicating a typical profile of an assailant. Many assailants are otherwise upstanding citizens.

**MYTH:** It is not sexual assault if the assailant and the victim are married  
**FACT:** Any sexual acts that are not truly consented to constitute sexual assault regardless of the relationship between the victim and the assailant.

**MYTH:** The victim must show physical injuries for it to legally be considered a sexual assault.  
**FACT:** The presence or absence of physical injuries is irrelevant to the determination of whether an act is "legally" considered a sexual assault; however, physical injuries may be grounds for a heightened punishment or a finding of aggravated sexual assault.