

MIYKIWAN TOOLKIT  
FACT SHEET

# CHILD VIOLENCE

## WHAT IS ....

If a child is subjected to any form of physical, psychological, social, emotional or sexual mistreatment, this is child violence. This includes the endangerment of the child's survival, safety, self-respect, self-esteem, growth and development.

While there remains much more research to be conducted on family violence towards Aboriginal children, it is well known that they continue to suffer as a long-reaching consequence of their parents traumatic experiences with the residential school system and the 60's Scoop.



*“Over the longer term, experiencing family violence during childhood can increase the risk of delinquent behaviour in later years and has been shown to be linked to problems related to drug and alcohol consumption and mental health issues in adolescence and adulthood “*

Family Violence in Canada:  
A Statistical Profile, 2013

## KEY THINGS TO KNOW

- When Aboriginal people who were victims of domestic violence had a child with their ex-spouse, it was estimated that over half of these children (58%) had actually been a witness to the abuse (2009)
- In 2008, there were 18, 510 substantiated child maltreatment investigations for Aboriginal children compared to 66, 930 investigations for non-Aboriginal children
- 28.1% of Canadian children displayed physical aggression after witnessing family violence as opposed to 11.3% of those who did not (1998-1999)
- 20.7% of Canadian children committed delinquent acts against property after witnessing family violence as opposed to 9.0% of those who did not (1998-1999)
- Physical assault was the most commonly reported type of family violence against children and youth, while sexual assault was the second most common type (2013)
- Parents (60%) were most often accused of violence against children and youth, mainly involving children under the age of four (2013)
- Seniors abuse and assault children, physically and sexually
- Children physically and sexually assault other child family members.

## FORMS OF CHILD VIOLENCE

Child violence is committed by any member of a family: parents, seniors, youth members and other children. The most common are:

- **Physical Abuse:** use of force against a child which results any injury or harm
- **Sexual Abuse:** involving or subjecting a child to inappropriate touching, fondling, sexual activity, or rape
- **Emotional Abuse:** attacks in the form of insult, humiliation or harassment that brings down a child's self-esteem or self-worth
- **Neglect:** failure on the part of a parent or caregiver to give the basic needs of food, clothing, shelter, love and attention

## INDICATORS OF CHILD VIOLENCE

While there are a number of signs that can make you aware of child abuse, here are some of the most significant ones:

- Frequent and unexplained absences from school
- Habits such as sucking, biting, rocking, etc.
- Unusual and pronounced fearfulness
- Child may feel that they are deserving of punishment
- Frequently poor hygiene
- Physical or medical needs are consistently remaining unattended
- Child's injuries end up being inconsistent with their explanation
- There are numerous injuries in varying stages of recovery or healing

## STRATEGIES & NEXT STEPS

If you know that a child is in need of protection you have a legal obligation to call child welfare.

To learn about how to talk to your child about child sexual abuse and exploitation contact Canadian Centre for Child Protection at 1-866-543-8477 or visit: [www.protectchildren.ca](http://www.protectchildren.ca)

## WHAT CAN YOU DO FOR YOUR CHILD?

If you know someone who is being subjected to child violence:

- Believe in the child. The commonly held belief that children draw or stretch out the hurt, particularly when they are telling you about how they have been hurt, is a myth
- Listen openly and calmly. While it may be both difficult and uncomfortable to hear the details of abuse, the child may be feeling hurt, confused and most of all, scared. Allow them a comfortable environment to be able to tell their story
- Reassure the child and be supportive. Comfort is what a child needs the most after being abused
- Write down the child's exact words. This will greatly help when getting in touch with victim services and the local law authorities

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If you need help or someone to talk to please contact the National Office for Victims Services Center, toll free at: **1-866-525-0554** or Kids Help Phone, toll free at: 1-800-668-6868, [www.kidshelpphone.ca](http://www.kidshelpphone.ca)

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To obtain more information regarding the CAP Family Violence Prevention Awareness Toolkit, please contact the Congress of Aboriginal Peoples at [www.abo-peoples.org](http://www.abo-peoples.org) or call 1-613-747-6022.

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