

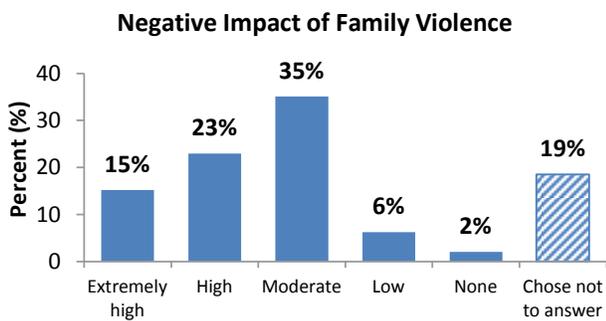
# Our Health Counts Toronto

An inclusive community-driven health survey for Indigenous peoples in Toronto

## Violence and Abuse

Indigenous peoples in Canada continue to experience unfair treatment and marginalization due to the ongoing processes of colonization.<sup>1</sup> Examples of these processes include displacement from traditional territories, removal of children from their families, and discrimination. Policies of assimilation that attempt to eliminate culture, language, traditional knowledge and values and skills contribute to the disruption of community life that led to the conditions Indigenous people face today.<sup>2</sup> Despite the high rates of household and external violence Indigenous peoples have experienced, community strength and connection to place, identity and culture have paved the way for resilience.<sup>2</sup> The Truth and Reconciliation Commission's Calls to Action 39 and 55 call for governments to develop national plans to collect and publish data related to the victimization of Indigenous peoples and to reduce the rate of criminal victimization experienced by Indigenous peoples.<sup>3</sup>

### Impact of Family Violence

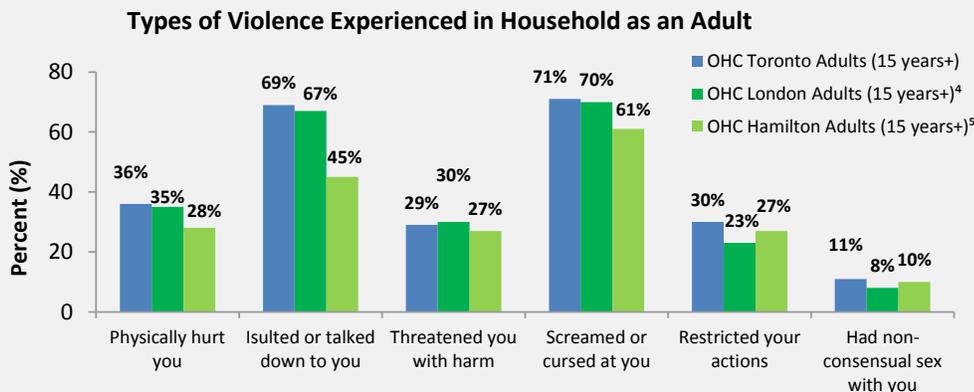


**Almost 3 in 4** Indigenous adults in Toronto rated the negative impact of family violence and/or neglect in the Indigenous community in Toronto as moderate, high, or very high.

**19%** of Indigenous adults chose not to answer this question.

### Types of Household Violence

Due to the sensitive nature of this topic only **53%** of Indigenous adults chose to share their experiences of household conflict. Thus, the statistics presented are likely to be under-representative.



**83% of Indigenous adults** in Toronto experienced at least one type of household violence as an adult.

Of those who experienced household violence as an adult:

- 25%** had been physically hurt in the past year
- 61%** had been insulted or talked down to in the past year
- 55%** had been threatened with harm in the past year
- 75%** had been screamed or cursed at in the past year
- 73%** had their actions restrained in the past year
- 37%** had non-consensual sex in the past year

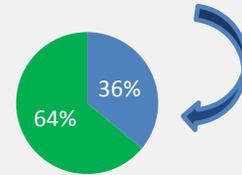
## Violence and Abuse

Indigenous adults who experience any household violence, face a substantial burden of stressors including:

- **82%** lived below the before tax low income cut-off
- **58%** were currently unemployed
- **51%** had some high school education or less
- **41%** had at least one parent or grandparent attend residential school

Similar rates of these stressors were experienced by non-violent households. As a result, more work is needed to understand factors that protect families experiencing stressors from violence.

**36%** of Indigenous adults think there are inadequate resources for family violence in Toronto.



## Positive Relationships and Resilience



**86% of Indigenous adults in violent households vs. 82% of Indigenous adults in non-violent households** felt in balance in the four aspects (physical, mental, emotional and spiritual) of their life some, most, or all of the time.

**73% of Indigenous adults in violent households vs. 85% of Indigenous adults in non-violent households** felt strong in their relationship to the land/Mother Earth some, most, or all of the time.

**67% of Indigenous adults in violent households vs. 78% of Indigenous adults in non-violent households** felt confident to think or express their own ideas and opinions every day or almost every day in the past month.

Statistically, these rates were not significantly different, again indicating that we need to better understand what is protecting individuals and households from violence.

## Policy Implications

### Implement TRC Call to Action 19:

We call upon the federal government, in consultation with Indigenous peoples, to establish measurable goals with Indigenous communities to identify and close the gaps in health outcomes between Indigenous and non-Indigenous communities.

### Implement TRC Call to Action 21:

We call upon the federal government to provide sustainable funding for existing and new Indigenous healing centres to address the physical, mental, emotional, and spiritual harms.

### Additional Recommendations:

City of Toronto, provincial and federal policy makers work in partnership with urban Indigenous peoples and organizations to:

- Develop and implement research funding opportunities for longitudinal research to better understand what is protecting some households from experiencing household violence.
- Develop and implement culturally relevant services to address family, domestic and household violence.

#### Definitions

Indigenous adults: persons self-identifying as Indigenous such as First Nations, Métis, Inuit, or other Nation aged 15 years and older living or using services in the City of Toronto.

Population based estimates were created using respondent driven sampling (see Methods and Design Factsheet for more details)

#### Sources

Ian and Smylie (2015); 2. Holmes & Hunt (2017); 3. Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada (2015); 4. Smylie et al. (unpublished); 5. Smylie et al. (2011)



