



NATIVE WOMEN'S
ASSOCIATION OF CANADA

L'ASSOCIATION DES FEMMES
AUTOCHTONES DU CANADA



Fact Sheet: Missing and Murdered Aboriginal Women and Girls in Manitoba

For years, communities have pointed to the high number of missing and murdered Aboriginal women and girls in Canada. As of March 31, 2010, the Native Women's Association of Canada (NWAC) has gathered information about 582 cases from across the country. NWAC has worked hard to look at every case, yet we believe there are still many more to document. Based on five years of quantitative research drawn from NWAC's Sisters In Spirit database, this fact sheet examines the situation in Manitoba against the national context.

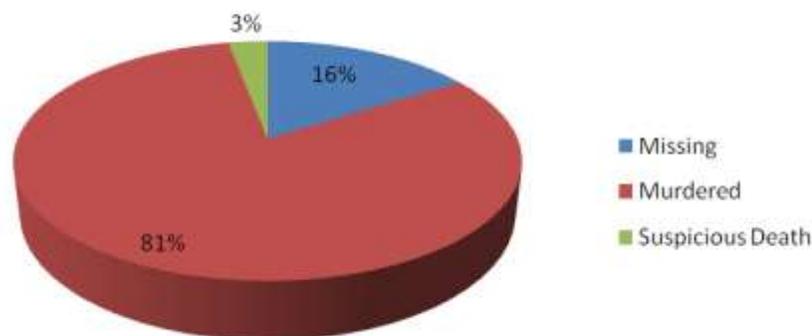
Manitoba has the third highest number of cases in Canada

NWAC has gathered information about 79 cases of missing and murdered Aboriginal women and girls in Manitoba. This accounts for 14% of all cases in NWAC's database (to date, British Columbia has the most known cases, representing 28% of NWAC's database. Alberta follows with 16% of cases).

More murder cases than the national average

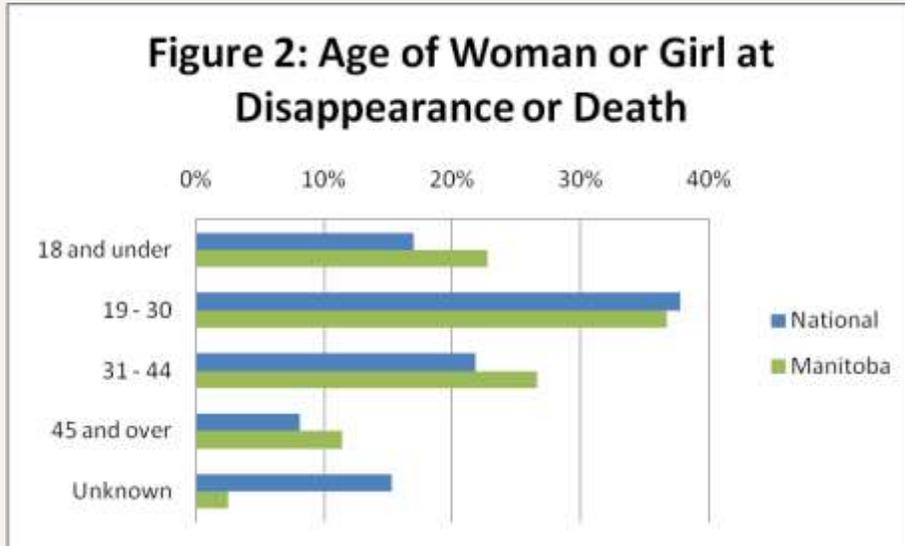
81% of cases in Manitoba are murder cases, which is considerably higher than the national average (67%). The percentage of missing cases is slightly lower—16% in Manitoba versus 20% nationally. 3% of cases in Manitoba fall under the category of suspicious death—cases that police have declared natural or accidental but that family or community members consider suspicious (Canada-wide, 4% are cases of suspicious death).

**Figure 1: Summary of Cases in
Manitoba**



More murder cases involving women over 30

Compared to the national situation, Manitoba has more cases involving women aged 31-44 and women 45 and older—38%, compared to 30% Canada-wide (see Figure 2). Overall, however, most of the cases in Manitoba involve women and girls under the age of 31 (60%). In fact, the percentage of cases involving women 18 and under is higher than the national average.



Source: Calculations by NWAC using data from Sisters In Spirit (SIS) database, 2010.

Further differences can be seen when looking at cases of missing women and girls, compared to cases of murder. For example, 41% of murder cases in Manitoba involve women over 30, compared to 33% nationally. We also see that Manitoba has more missing cases involving girls 18 and under than national average.

	Missing		Murdered	
	National	Manitoba	National	Manitoba
18 and under	24%	31%	17%	19%
19 - 30	36%	38%	44%	38%
31 - 44	21%	23%	24%	28%
45 and over	10%	8%	9%	13%
Unknown	10%	0%	7%	3%
Total	100%	100%	100%	100%

Source: Calculations by NWAC using data from Sisters In Spirit (SIS) database, 2010

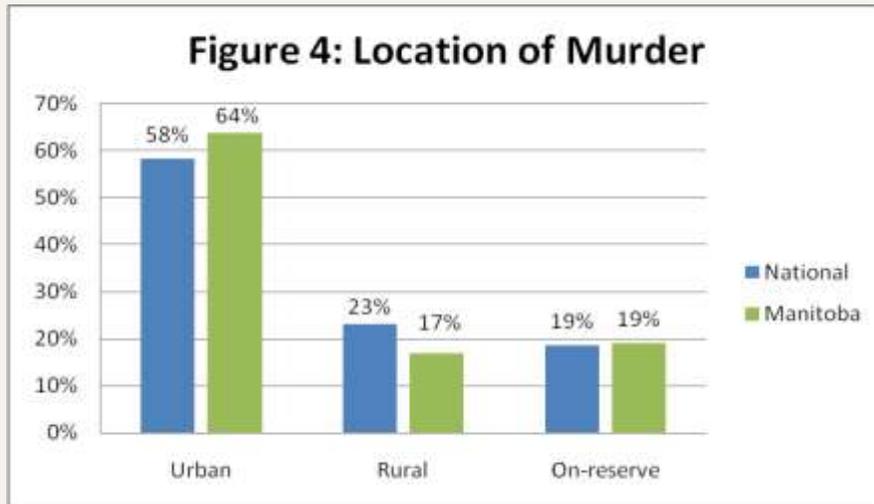
Larger family sizes in Manitoba—many children are impacted

Where this information is known, the vast majority of cases in Manitoba involve mothers (86%). This is very similar to the national situation (88%). However, NWAC’s research indicates larger family sizes in Manitoba. 17% of women in Manitoba had five children or more, versus 9% nationally. Overall, almost half of women (49%) had three or more children, compared to 33% Canada-wide.

The number of women that were mothers speaks to the intergenerational impact of this issue. There is a dire need to support family and community members who assume care for the children of missing and murdered women. Collectively, there is a responsibility to ensure these children remain connected to their communities and receive the necessary supports for healing. Perhaps even more importantly, supports and resources for mothers must be understood as integral to any violence prevention strategy.

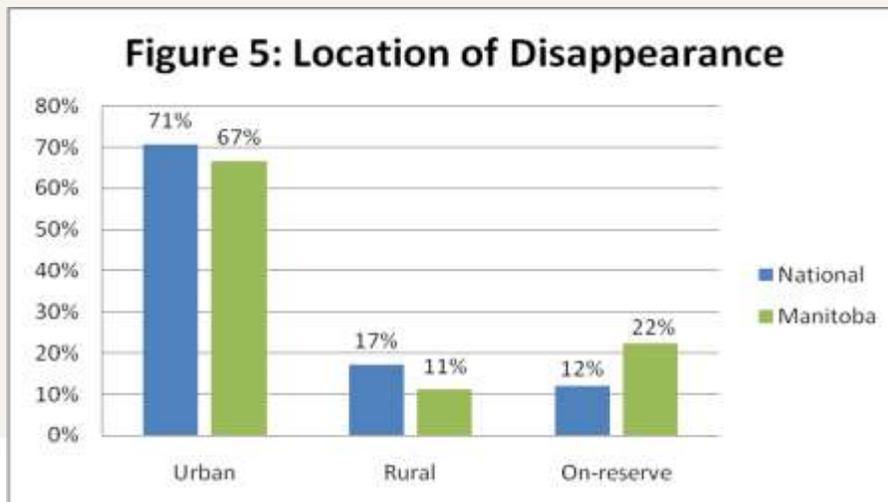
More disappearances on-reserve than the national average

Overall, most of the known cases in Manitoba occurred in urban areas, particularly Winnipeg. 64% of murder cases in Manitoba occurred in urban areas, compared to 58% nationally. Fewer cases in Manitoba were found to have occurred in rural areas.



Based on cases in SIS database where this information is known.
Source: Calculations by NWAC using data from Sisters In Spirit (SIS) database, 2010.

However, NWAC’s research also indicates a higher percentage of missing cases on-reserve. In Manitoba, 22% of women and girls disappeared on a First Nations community, versus 12% nationally. In contrast to the national situation, slightly fewer women and girls disappeared for an urban or rural area.



Based on cases in SIS database where this information is known.
Source: Calculations by NWAC using data from Sisters In Spirit (SIS) database, 2010

Almost half of murder cases remain unsolved

The percentage of unsolved murder cases in Manitoba is higher than the national average—45% in Manitoba, compared to 39% Canada-wide (see Figure 6).

Figure 6: Clearance Rates, SIS Database 2010		
	National	Manitoba
Cleared by charge	53.2%	51.6%
Cleared by suicide	3.3%	1.6%
Cleared Otherwise	0.3%	0.0%
Not Cleared	39.4%	45.3%
Unknown	3.8%	1.6%
Total	100.0%	100.0%
Source: Calculations by NWAC using data from Sisters In Spirit (SIS) database, 2010		

Majority of deaths occurred in residences, followed by streets, roads and highways, and public places

Like the national situation, most incidents in Manitoba took place in a residence (either the woman's home or another residential dwelling). Greater differences are seen when looking at cases that occurred outside a residence. In Manitoba, most of these cases took place along a street, road or highway, or in a public place. This is different from the national situation, where more cases occurred in open areas.

Figure 7: Location of Murder or Suspicious Death in SIS Database, 2010		
	National	Manitoba
Residence	59.4%	58.8%
Public place	6.8%	11.8%
Vehicle (including public transportation)	0.4%	0.0%
Street, road, highway	13.7%	20.6%
Open area	14.5%	8.8%
Other	5.1%	0.0%
Total known locations	100.0%	100.0%
Based on cases in SIS database where this information is known.		
Source: Calculations by NWAC using data from Sisters In Spirit (SIS) database, 2010		

More cases found to involve an intimate partner

In cases where charges have been laid, NWAC's research to date indicates more homicides involving a current or ex-partner than the national average—31% in Manitoba versus 22% Canada-wide. Fewer cases in Manitoba were found to involve a stranger or acquaintance (26%, compared to 33% nationally). It should be noted, however, that NWAC is still working to determine the nature of relationship in 40% of cases—this means our findings might change with more information.

Figure 8: Relationship of Offender in Murder Cases, SIS Database 2010		
	National	Manitoba
Partner	17%	23%
Ex-Partner	5%	8%
Family, including all types of family relationships	6%	5%
'John' or criminal relationship	2%	0%
Acquaintance	17%	13%
Stranger	16%	13%
Unknown	36%	40%
Total	100%	100%
Note: Total represents the number of cases in the SIS database for which charges were laid.		
Source: Calculations by NWAC using data from Sisters In Spirit (SIS) database, 2010		

To date, there are no Manitoba cases in NWAC's database involving a criminal relationship or 'John.' As noted above, this may change with more information. It must be emphasized, however, that prostitution is not a 'cause' of violence; rather, many women experience prostitution in the context of limited options and after experiencing multiple forms of trauma and violence.

Winnipeg Police Service responsible for more than half of all known cases

Policing in Manitoba includes municipal police services, First Nations police services and the Royal Canadian Mounted Police (RCMP). Where this information is known, 56% of Manitoba cases in NWAC's database were handled by the Winnipeg Police Service, followed by the RCMP (40% of cases). A small number of cases (5%) were found to involve multiple jurisdictions.

For more information, read What Their Stories Tell Us: Research findings from the Sisters In Spirit initiative. This report presents demographic and statistical evidence from NWAC's Sisters In Spirit database, while situating the issue within the larger context of root causes and ways forward. The report can be found on NWAC's website at www.nwac.ca.

Native Women's Association of Canada

Head Office:

Six Nations of the Grand River
1721 Chiefswood Rd, PO Box 331
Ohsweken, ON NoA 1M0

Satellite Office (Correspondence to this address):

1 Nicholas Street, 9th Floor
Ottawa, ON K1N 7B7

T: 613.722.3033

F: 613.722.7687

Toll Free: 1.800.461.4043

www.nwac.ca

For further information about Sisters In Spirit, please
contact the NWAC satellite office.