



## INTERPERSONAL VIOLENCE AND COMMUNITY SAFETY

### QANUILIRPITAA? 2017

Nunavik Inuit Health Survey

Despite advances in knowledge and interventions, interpersonal violence experienced in childhood, adulthood or elderhood remains a worldwide endemic problem that can lead to several harmful biopsychosocial repercussions. Interpersonal violence refers to a wide variety of acts of abuse, which can be committed by family members, peers, acquaintances or strangers and range from emotional, physical, sexual or financial violence to parental neglect, property violation, bullying, or witnessing violence between parents. Violence in Inuit and Indigenous populations is recognized as a serious public health issue, and many of its characteristics are similar to those of violence in non-Indigenous populations, particularly when it comes to risk factors and health consequences. Interpersonal violence in the Nunavik context cannot be interpreted solely as an individual issue, but must be seen as a social phenomenon with multiple causes. This violence often reflects the experiences of historical traumas and is fed by past and present systemic discrimination.

This report aims to document the prevalence of sexual, psychological and physical violence and neglect in childhood, physical violence in adulthood, financial and

physical violence in elderhood, bullying, crimes against property, as well as the perception that one's own village is peaceful or affected by violence. Very little data are available on the prevalence of both bullying and elder abuse in the Inuit population, which underscores the importance of assessing these specific forms of violence in this report. Other topics covered include the way in which sex, age, and other socio-demographic and sociocultural characteristics are associated with victimization. The measures used in this survey were derived from questionnaires chosen for their psychometric quality and their cultural sensitivity. The results presented here include bivariate analyses assessing potential associations with sociodemographic and sociocultural indicators.

Results from the *Qanuilirpitaa?* 2017 survey underline the high prevalence of sexual violence experienced among Nunavimmiut in childhood (35% of women and 15% of men) and adulthood (25% of women and 8% of men). Also, 78% of the Nunavik population reported at least one form of adverse childhood experience (e.g., sexual, psychological or physical violence, psychological or physical neglect, and exposure to household

dysfunctions and stressors). Fifty-seven percent (57%) of Nunavimmiut reported having experienced during adulthood at least one form of physical violence, with current or previous romantic partners being the most frequently reported perpetrators. One out of ten (9%) people in the 55 and over age group reported having been treated with physical violence, while 34% reported financial exploitation by a family member or someone they spent a lot of time with. Among the Nunavik population aged between 16 and 30 years old, 71% reported undergoing at least one form of bullying in the year prior to the survey. In general, the prevalence of childhood sexual violence reported in 2017 was lower than in 2004. The prevalence of other forms of violence (such as sexual abuse in adulthood or being a victim of physical violence) was similar between the 2017 and 2004 surveys, highlighting how important it is to continue prevention and intervention efforts.

Additionally, 43% of Nunavimmiut perceived that their community was very peaceful to moderately peaceful, 36% felt that their community was neither peaceful

nor violent, and 21% considered their community as moderately to very violent. Nearly half of Nunavimmiut (47%) indicated feeling very or extremely safe in their daily life, 39% felt slightly or moderately safe, and 13% did not feel safe at all. Finally, 51% of the Nunavik population reported that they had been a victim of at least one form of offence against property in the past 12 months.

The prevalence of the different forms of violence is generally higher among Nunavimmiut than in the general Quebec and Canadian population, but similar to that found in other Inuit populations. Specific sociocultural indicators, such as family and community support and cohesion, are associated with lower rates of victimization.

Overall, these findings indicate a high prevalence of victimization among Nunavik residents, which highlights the importance of reducing social inequities as well as the need to enhance prevention efforts rooted in the realities and values of Nunavimmiut and to offer sufficient culturally safe services.



*Qanuillirpitaa? 2017 is a population health survey carried out in Nunavik from August to October 2017. A total of 1 326 Nunavimmiut aged 16 and over from all 14 villages participated to this survey.*

***Nakurmiik to all Nunavimmiut who contributed to this important health survey!***

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