

CANADIAN OBSERVATORY ON THE JUSTICE SYSTEM'S RESPONSE TO INTIMATE PARTNER VIOLENCE

What is the Canadian observatory?

- A growing network of academics, governments, and community-based organizations,
 - ❖ Emphasizing in-depth research on the justice system response to intimate partner violence;
 - ❖ Creating standardized data sets on the justice system response to intimate partner violence, including specialized responses (police, prosecutions, sentencing) and civil legislation;
 - ❖ Developing regional, national and international forums for dissemination of research results; and,
- International in scope with partners from all Canadian provinces and territories, Australia, the United Kingdom, and the United States.

Why a Canadian observatory is needed?

- To work to continually improve the criminal and civil justice responses to the widespread problem of intimate partner violence, and to reduce the consequences for victims and the costs to society;
- To encourage a coordinated effort to reduce and eliminate intimate partner violence and help establish effective justice system responses;
- To address current issues in the justice system as they apply to intimate partner violence.

Activities of the Canadian observatory

- Develop quantitative and qualitative offender- and victim-based data collection instruments to assess justice responses;
- Conduct a policy audit to understand policy development and intent, policy implementation into practice and procedure, and policy impacts;
- Carry out an extensive annotated bibliography and critical review of the literature on the justice system's response to intimate partner violence;
- Engage federal/provincial/territorial governments in dialogue to share data collection strategies and to better understand the obstacles facing researchers;
- Develop standardized instruments to assess effectiveness of specialized domestic violence court processes versus non-specialized court processes in four countries.

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Benefits of the Canadian observatory

- Research can provide data to support clear and consistent policies;
- Examinations of justice responses from different jurisdictions can provide an enhanced understanding of how justice responses operate and the critical ingredients of success;
- Data collection practices can provide data on what constitutes effective justice response;
- Creating comparable data sets and undertaking comparative cross jurisdictional analysis can assist stakeholders (courts, government, correction, probation, victim services) improve their monitoring capabilities;
- Identifying the effects of justice system policies and practices can clarify promising practices.