



Living in Niagara – 2023 Report Community Safety

Our perception of safety in our surroundings contributes to well-being, and helps us to be connected to others.

This Sector aligns with UN SDGs #3 – Good Health and Well-Being; #5 - Gender Equality; #11 – Sustainable Cities and Communities; #16 – Peace, Justice and Strong Institutions.

Happening Now

- Niagara continues to experience a high incidence of human trafficking, as an international and domestic tourist destination, with proximity to multiple international border crossings. In 2022, the Ontario Ministry of Education issued a directive for all school boards to establish and follow a protocol for response to suspected sex trafficking occurrences. The Niagara Region Emergency Human Trafficking Protocol, updated in 2023, maps out emergency services for those experiencing human trafficking in Niagara.
- In September, 2023, Niagara Region joined more than 47 municipalities in Ontario, in declaring intimate partner violence an epidemic. There were 62 femicides in Ontario in 2023, with 3 of those being in Niagara.
- A 2022 Red Dress Day article by Wendy Sturgeon of Niagara Chapter Native Women challenges allies of Indigenous groups to take action toward true reconciliation. Six of every ten Indigenous women will experience physical or sexual assault in their lifetime, from age 15 onward. A 2022 Statistics Canada report states that 56% of Indigenous women have experienced physical assault, compared to about 1/3 (34%) of non-Indigenous women; and 46% of Indigenous women have experienced sexual assault in their lifetime, compared to about 1/3 (33%) of non-Indigenous women.
- The 2021-2025 Niagara Region Community Safety and Well-being Plan aims to strengthen Niagara as a community where everyone is safe; has a sense of belonging; has access to services; and is able to meet their needs for education, health care, food, housing, income and cultural expression.
- A 2021 CAMH (Centre for Addiction and Mental Health) policy paper calls on governments for drug decriminalization; an increase in treatment and harm-reduction services; and replacement of the unregulated, toxic drug supply. In 2020, St. Catharines Council endorsed the Canadian Association of Chiefs of Police recommendation for decriminalization of personal possession of illicit drugs; and Niagara Region Council asked the federal government to study decriminalization of all drugs for personal use.

What's Emerging

- Early evidence is showing that, throughout the COVID-19 pandemic, many Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs)-related risk factors increased, while protective factors decreased. ACEs are defined as stressful or traumatic events that occur in childhood



(0–18) that have been found to increase the risk of engaging in health harming behaviours and developing chronic health problems.

- The Coalition to End Violence Against Women (CEVAW) in Niagara is mapping existing referral pathways between agencies working toward ending gender-based violence against all women, and their children. The intent is to create a more coordinated and integrated crisis system, improving overall access for individuals being served.
- The Niagara Regional Police Service is seeing a rise in criminal activity in Niagara, by Greater Toronto Area (GTA)-based street gangs. Transient gang members are involved in drug trafficking, human trafficking, firearms-related offences, robberies and major assaults (e.g. drug house takeovers).
- Investment in mental health and trauma supports for those working on the front lines in agencies serving victims of crime is seen to be absolutely necessary, especially considering workloads and the complex issues being experienced by clients.

Suggested Community Action Steps

- Incorporate the declaration of Intimate Partner Violence being an epidemic into the update of the Niagara Region Community Safety and Well-being Plan.
- Acknowledge that overall community safety is directly linked to poverty, and the effects of vulnerable individuals and families struggling to meet basic needs such as housing, food and mental health services.
- Focus on preventive measures in programming and responses. Acknowledge that we have more impact on crime prevention by aligning our work, and ensuring we are directly educating and providing supports for vulnerable people - e.g., provide human trafficking training to educators, to help children and youth learn how to safely use technology.
- Describe changes to volunteering brought about by the COVID-19 pandemic, and the extent to which this has affected the work of agencies in our community.
- Address the challenge of adverse childhood experiences by providing programs and services for children and families that are affordable and accessible.
- Increase understanding of the impact of cultural diversity on interventions with families who are new Canadians. Build cultural competencies, and sensitivity to differences, into interventions.

Indicators

- **Crime in Niagara**
- **Emergency Services**
- **Feeling Safe and Secure in Niagara**
- **Motor Vehicle Collisions and Fatalities**
- **Special Victims**



Indicator: Crime in Niagara

Overall Crime Rates and Violent Crime Rates

In 2022, in Canada, the Crime Severity Index (CSI)* increased for the second consecutive year, up 4%. Increases in breaking and entering, robbery and other types of theft drove the relatively large increases in some census metropolitan areas (CMAs). Note: In 2022, the CSI for the St. Catharines-Niagara CMA (which does not include Grimsby and West Lincoln), decreased by 9%, among the 5 largest decreases for CMAs in Canada.

FIVE LARGEST increases and decreases in the CSI by census metropolitan area (CMA)	↑ INCREASES		↓ DECREASES	
	Increases in breaking and entering, robbery and other types of theft drove the relatively large increases in some CMAs.	1. Gatineau	+20%	1. Windsor
2. Winnipeg		+20%	2. St. Catharines–Niagara	-9%
3. St. John’s		+19%	3. Lethbridge	-8%
4. Toronto		+14%	4. London	-8%
5. Ottawa		+10%	5. Moncton	-6%

* The CSI measures both the volume and severity of crimes. To determine severity, all crimes are assigned a weight based on actual sentences handed down by courts in all provinces and territories. More serious crimes are assigned higher weights, while less serious crimes are assigned lower weights. As a result, more serious offences have a greater impact on changes in the index.

In 2022, there were 874 victims of homicide in Canada, 78 more than in 2021. Gang-related homicides continued to account for about 1/4 of all homicides; 82% of these were committed with a firearm, most often a handgun. The proportion of women who were killed by their spouse or intimate partner was approximately 11 times higher than the proportion of men (this excludes 30% of homicides where the accused was not identified).

Source: Statistics Canada, Police-Reported Crime in Canada, 2022

Retrieved From: <https://www150.statcan.gc.ca/n1/daily-quotidien/230727/dq230727b-eng.htm> and https://publications.gc.ca/collections/collection_2023/statcan/11-627-m/11-627-m2023041-eng.pdf

Reported Number of Violent-Criminal Code Incidents per 100,000 Population in Niagara: The violent crime rate includes the category of violent offences which involve the use of force or threat against a person, as defined by the Canadian Centre for Justice Statistics. The table on the following page illustrates the reported number of violent criminal code incidents per 100,000 population in Niagara and three comparison municipalities.





Reported Number of Violent-Criminal Code Incidents per 100,000 Population			
Municipality	2020	2021	2022
Niagara	757	859	838
Durham	622	647	695
Halton	353	334	421
Hamilton	1033	1128	1134
Statistics Canada National Average	1265	1332	1365

Source: 2022 MBNCanada Performance Measurement Report

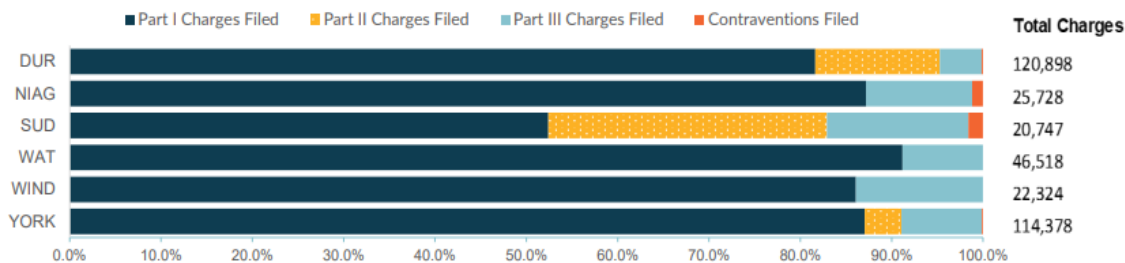
Retrieved from: <https://niagaraknowledgeexchange.com/wp-content/uploads/sites/2/2023/11/2022-MBN-Canada-Performance-Report.pdf>

Provincial Offences Act Charges refer to the “ticketing” process for less serious offences.

Provincial Offences Act (Court Services)

PCRT810 - Total Number of Charges Filed by Type - Percent Distribution

This figure identifies 4 types of charges filed: Part I Charges Filed (PCRT810A): Often referred to as a “ticketing” process and is used for less serious offences. The defendant has 3 options: pay the fine, meet with prosecutor/walk-in guilty plea or request a trial. Part II Charges Filed (PCRT810B): Applies exclusively to parking offences. The defendant has 2 options: pay the fine or request a trial. Part III Charges Filed (PCRT810C): Used for more serious offences. The defendant must appear before a Justice of the Peace and has 2 options: resolve the charge(s) or request a trial. The charge cannot be resolved through the payment of a set fine. Contraventions Filed (PCRT810D): Violations of minor federal laws that can be ticketed using provincial ticketing procedures.



MUNICIPALITY	Part I Charges Filed			Part II Charges Filed			Part III Charges Filed			Contraventions Filed		
	2020	2021	2022	2020	2021	2022	2020	2021	2022	2020	2021	2022
DUR	65,266	75,257	96,652	8,176	13,046	19,959	4,406	4,383	4,214	223	142	73
HAM	85,272	85,146		N/A	N/A		2,785	3,368		0	0	
NIAG	24,234	23,287	21,679	N/A	N/A	N/A	3,074	3,106	3,407	43	315	642
SUD	8,602	5,586	8,132	2,635	3,251	10,974	1,947	1,651	1,574	163	170	67
WAT	39,806	43,289	42,315	N/A	N/A	N/A	4,940	4,188	4,199	0	0	0
WIND	20,014	17,661	19,568	N/A	N/A	N/A	3,853	2,857	2,756	0	0	0
YORK	93,786	98,010	99,508	1,799	4,526	3,994	7,763	9,916	10,744	86	147	132
MEDIAN	39,806	43,289	31,997	2,635	4,526	10,974	3,853	3,368	3,803	43	142	70

Hamilton: Not reporting 2022 data.

Source: 2022 MBNCanada Performance Measurement Report

Retrieved from: <https://niagaraknowledgeexchange.com/wp-content/uploads/sites/2/2023/11/2022-MBN-Canada-Performance-Report.pdf>





The Nature of Crime and Crime Investigations

The Niagara Regional Police Service 2022 Annual Report provides Statistics on pages 58 - 59. The tables, reproduced on the following pages, include: Total, All Criminal Code Violations; Total Violent Crime Violations; Total Property Crime Violations; Public Complaints; Total Other Criminal Code Violations; 3-Year Crime Severity Index (CSI) and Rank Among the Big 12 Police Services; Crime Against Persons – Selected Offences.

TOTAL, ALL CRIMINAL CODE VIOLATIONS

	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022
Actual Incidents	18,885	19,882	18,388	21,352	21,347
Rate per 100,000	4,000.1	4,157.7	3,817.1	4,403.9	4,303.3
Percent Change	+7.2	+3.9	-8.2	+3.69	+2.48

TOTAL VIOLENT CRIME VIOLATIONS

	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022
Actual Incidents	3,188	3,260	3,648	4,166	4,158
Rate per 100,000	675.3	681.7	757.3	859.2	838.2
Percent Change	+15.4	+0.9	+11.1	+7.0	-2.36

TOTAL PROPERTY CRIME VIOLATIONS

	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022
Actual Incidents	13,003	14,465	12,148	13,140	13,382
Rate per 100,000	2,754.2	2,825.6	2,521.8	2,710.2	2,697.7
Percent Change	+4.8	+2.6	-16.0	+7.96	-0.23

Source: Regional Municipality of Niagara Police Services Board Annual Report, Crime Analysis January 1 - December 31, 2022.

Source: Niagara Regional Police Service 2022 Annual Report
Retrieved from: <https://www.niagarapolice.ca/en/who-we-are/resources/2022-Annual-Report-DRAFT--v15-spreads.pdf>





PUBLIC COMPLAINTS

COMPLAINT TYPE	2020	2021	2022
Conduct Complaints	115	136	153
Service Complaints	4	13	9
Total Public Complaints	119	149	162
Complaint Conclusions			
Other- No Investigation conducted as per the decision of the OIPRD – Not in the public interest, complaint more than 6 months old, frivolous/vexatious, no PSA breach, insufficient information provided – use other forum (i.e., Court)	51	70	91
Withdrawn	19	14	8
Early Resolution (Before Investigation)	3	7	10
Informal Resolution (During Investigation)	10	9	2
Unsubstantiated Complaints (Following Investigation)	29	34	37
Substantiated Complaints	7	4	7
Pending/Open Investigation	0	0	0
Substantiated Complaint Resolutions		4	
No Further Action	0	10	1
Action Taken	0	1	0
Informal Resolution	2	1	6
Disposition Without a Hearing	2	2	3
Awaiting Disposition	3	0	2
Disciplinary Hearing	0	1	0
Total Substantiated Complaint Resolutions	7	5	11

Source: Niagara Regional Police Service Professional Standards Unit January 1 - December 31, 2022.



Source: Niagara Regional Police Service 2022 Annual Report

Retrieved from: <https://www.niagarapolice.ca/en/who-we-are/resources/2022-Annual-Report-DRAFT--v15-spreads.pdf>





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TOTAL OTHER CRIMINAL CODE VIOLATIONS

	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022
Actual Incidents	2,694	3,110	2,592	2,233	2,974
Rate per 100,000	570.6	650.4	538.1	460.6	599.5
Percent Change	+10.4	+13.9	-17.2	-15.05	+30.46

Source: Regional Municipality of Niagara Police Services Board Annual Report, Crime Analysis January 1 - December 31, 2022.

3-YEAR CRIME SEVERITY INDEX (CSI) AND RANK AMONG THE BIG 12 POLICE SERVICES

NIAGARA	TOTAL CSI	RANK	VIOLENT CSI	RANK	NON-VIOLENT CSI	RANK
2022	56.9	7	66.5	7	53.5	6
2021	62.4	6	64.2	8	62.2	5
2020	58.8	6	58.8	7	58.7	5

A rank of "1" is the **safest** community, while a rank of "12" is the **least safe** community across the Big 12 Police Services (Durham, Greater Sudbury, Halton, Hamilton, London, Niagara, Ottawa, Peel, Toronto, Waterloo, Windsor, York). Violent CSI includes: homicide, murder assault, manslaughter, criminal negligence cause death, all assaults – 1, 2 and 3) all sexual assaults – 1, 2 and 3, negligence cause death, sexual violations against children, internet luring of child, pornography, endangerment, robberies, utter threats, kidnapping (abduction), extortion, harassment, assault peace officer, etc. Non-Violent CSI includes fraud, theft over \$5,000, theft under \$5,000, shoplifting over and under \$5,000, breaking and enter, weapons violations, possess stolen property, mischief, disturbing the peace, etc.



Source: Niagara Regional Police Service 2022 Annual Report
Retrieved from: <https://www.niagarapolice.ca/en/who-we-are/resources/2022-Annual-Report-DRAFT--v15-spreads.pdf>





CRIME AGAINST PERSONS- SELECTED OFFENCES

SELECT INCIDENTS	2021 INCIDENTS	2022 INCIDENTS	CLEARED BY CHARGE	CLEARED OTHERWISE
Murder – 1st Degree	5	2	0	0
Murder – 2nd Degree	1	4	3	0
Manslaughter	--	2	2	0
Criminal Negligence Cause Death	2	1	1	0
Murder – Attempt	5	8	8	0
Sexual Assault – Aggravated	1	1	0	0
Sexual Assault – Weapons/ Bodily Harm	3	5	2	0
Sexual Assault	379	372	36	9
Sexual Interference	83	92	33	9
Total Sexual Violations Against Children	96	110	46	12
Invitation to Sexual Touching	4	8	6	2
Sexual Exploitation	--	3	2	0
Lure Child Via Computer	5	5	4	0
Assault – Aggravated	50	44	36	0
Assault – Weapon or Cause Bodily Harm	432	484	328	28
Assault – Minor Harm	1,071	1066	576	161
Assault – Police/ Peace Officer	107	117	103	10
Criminal Negligence Cause Bodily Harm	3	1	1	0
Assault – Other	32	58	31	5
Robbery	177	196	93	5
Extortion	128	160	2	1
Criminal Harassment/ Stalking	333	294	93	15
Threats – Person Death/ Harm	682	689	236	69
Indecent/ Harassing Communication	537	415	21	23
Total Crimes Against Persons (All Incidents)	4,177	4,158	1,695	344
Arson	47	53	22	1
Break & Enter	1,846	1,390	293	33
Theft Over \$5000	117	148	17	5
Theft Under \$5000	2,269	2,453	149	117
Theft of Motor Vehicle	882	894	95	9
Shoplifting Under \$5000	1,081	1,269	268	254
Shoplifting Over \$5000	12	10	3	0
Possession Stolen Property	165	126	100	12
Fraud	1,892	2,172	295	50
Fraud – Identity Theft	36	40	4	0
Fraud – Identity Fraud	722	575	28	3
Mischief	1,952	2,220	305	114
Total Crimes Against Property	13,156	13,382	1,611	625

Source: Regional Municipality of Niagara Police Services Board Annual Report, Crime Analysis January 1 - December 31, 2022.

Source: Niagara Regional Police Service 2022 Annual Report

Retrieved from: <https://www.niagarapolice.ca/en/who-we-are/resources/2022-Annual-Report-DRAFT--v15-spreads.pdf>



Hate Crimes in Niagara

In Canada, the number of hate crimes reported by police rose from 3,355 incidents in 2021 to 3,576 in 2022, a 7% increase. This followed two sharp annual increases, resulting in a cumulative rise of 83% from 2019 to 2022. In general, self-reported experiences of discrimination also increased during the first several months of the COVID-19 pandemic.

Nationally, hate crimes motivated by race or ethnicity increased 12% in 2022, rising for the fourth year in a row. After peaking in 2021, overall police-reported hate crimes motivated by religion were down 15% in 2022, with a slight increase reported for those targeting the Jewish population. Hate crimes motivated by sexual orientation rose 12% in 2022. The majority of police-reported hate crimes remained non-violent in 2022; with non-violent hate crimes rising 3%, while violent hate crimes were up 12%.

In Ontario, the number of hate crimes totaled 1,916 in 2022, an increase of 292 from 2021.

The following table compares Police-Reported Hate Crimes per 100,000 Population from 2020 to 2022, for Canada and 3 Census Metropolitan Areas (CMA's), including St. Catharines-Niagara*. (*St. Catharines-Niagara CMA does not include Grimsby and West Lincoln)

Police-Reported Hate Crimes per 100,000 Population, 2020-2022 St. Catharines-Niagara Census Metropolitan Area (CMA)			
	2020	2021	2022
Canada	7.0	8.8	9.2
St. Catharines-Niagara CMA	2.1	4.7	6.7
Hamilton CMA	9.9	15.3	20.6
Kitchener-Cambridge-Waterloo CMA	8.9	12.6	22.7

Source: Statistics Canada

Retrieved from: <https://www150.statcan.gc.ca/n1/daily-quotidien/240313/t005b-eng.htm> and <https://www150.statcan.gc.ca/n1/daily-quotidien/240313/dq240313b-eng.htm> and https://www150.statcan.gc.ca/n1/en/pub/11-627-m/11-627-m2024006-eng.pdf?st=6O_qEmSQ





Youth and Adult Crime

This table compares crime rates for youth (aged 12-17), adults (aged 18 & older), and the total population in the St. Catharines–Niagara CMA* (*does not include Grimsby and West Lincoln).

Crime Rates – Youth, Adults, Total Population St. Catharines – Niagara CMA, 2019-2022				
	2019	2020	2021	2022
Total, persons charged	6,188	5,481	5,272	6,218
Rate, total persons charged per 100,000 population aged 12 years and over	1,458.36	1,281.57	1,221.37	1,413.93
Total, adults charged	5,901	5,279	5,056	5,985
Rate, adults charged per 100,000 population	1,494.95	1,346.57	1,258.52	1,462.43
Total, youth charged	287	202	216	233
Rate, youth charged per 100,000 population	970.15	679.29	722.31	763.51

Source: Statistics Canada. Incident-based crime statistics, by detailed violations, Canada, provinces, territories and Census Metropolitan Areas and Canadian Forces Military Police Retrieved from: <https://www150.statcan.gc.ca/t1/tbl1/en/tv.action?pid=3510017701>

Gang Violence in Niagara

In 2022, the Niagara Regional Police Service (NRPS) received provincial funding to purchase CCTV technology and video analytics software to address gang violence. The NRPS states,

- *Traditionally gang members who attend the Niagara Region stay for frequent and brief stays to participate in criminal activity and then return to the greater Toronto area. The potential for violence exists in order to establish control of territory.*
- *Traditional rivalries from the greater Toronto area carry over to Niagara as we have already previously seen in firearm related incidents. Recent major drug investigations from the level of intelligence to district street crime units have involved identified Toronto gang members where firearms are often seized. The expectation of a firearm has become the norm and is synonymous with drug trafficking and securing territorial advantage.*
- *Moreover, the increase and pervasiveness of human trafficking, particularly in our tourist areas pre-COVID was significant. The physical and psychological violence that these gangs inflict on their human trafficked victims is egregious. Now that we appear to be in a semi-post COVID period the government has lifted the lock down sanctions over the last six months, we expect to see a significant increase in human trafficking, drug trade activity, along with the associated territorial violence in our community and tourist areas.*

Source: Niagara Regional Police Service, Police Services Board Report, 2022-09-20

Retrieved from: <https://pub-niagarapolice.escribemeetings.com/filestream.ashx?DocumentId=1880>





Indicator: Emergency Services

Calls to Police, Ambulance and Fire

► The Niagara Regional Police Service (NRPS) is the Primary Public Safety Answering Point (PPSAP) for the Region of Niagara. When a call comes into the NRPS emergency dispatch for a response, there are three options for dispatch: Fire, Police, and EMS. In 2022, NRPS received a total of 493,732 calls for service. This included: 291,058 non-emergency calls; 202,674 emergent 911 calls; and 122,674 calls were 911 calls requesting police.

In total, NRPS responded to 148,348 calls in 2022 (includes non-emergency, officer generated and walk-ins). Additional detail is available in the 2022 NRPS Annual Report.

Source: Niagara Regional Police Service 2022 Annual Report

Retrieved from: <https://www.niagarapolice.ca/en/who-we-are/resources/2022-Annual-Report-DRAFT--v15-spreads.pdf>

► Niagara Emergency Medical Services (EMS) receives 80,000 calls annually, and makes 54,000 patient contacts each year. Niagara EMS operates out of 19 bases and a community response unit. Response Time Standards, and Standard Results for the years 2013 to 2022 are available on the Niagara Region website at:

https://www.niagararegion.ca/living/health_wellness/ems/operations.aspx

Source: Niagara Region

Retrieved from: https://www.niagararegion.ca/living/health_wellness/ems/operations.aspx

► Local municipalities across Niagara provide statistics about calls for fire service. For example, statistics for Niagara Falls and Welland include:

In 2021, the Niagara Falls Fire Department (NFFD) responded to 78 structure fires; this includes miscellaneous fires (car, hydro poles). The increase in structure fires, from 2019 to 2021 is attributed to the pandemic and the increase in time spent at home by residents.

Fire Investigations, 2021 – Niagara Falls Fire Department			
Year	Total Calls	Fire Incidences	Per cent of Calls
2019	5,198	75	1.4%
2020	2,9898	94	3.1%
2021	4,136	78	1.9%

Source: Niagara Falls Fire Department

Retrieved from: <https://niagarafalls.ca/pdf/fire/2021-annual-fire-report-city-of-nf.pdf>

In 2022, Welland Fire & Emergency Services responded to 2,330 Fire Calls, an increase from 2,252 Fire Calls in 2021.

Source: City of Welland

Retrieved From:

<https://www.welland.ca/AnnualReport/AnnualReport2022.asp#communications>



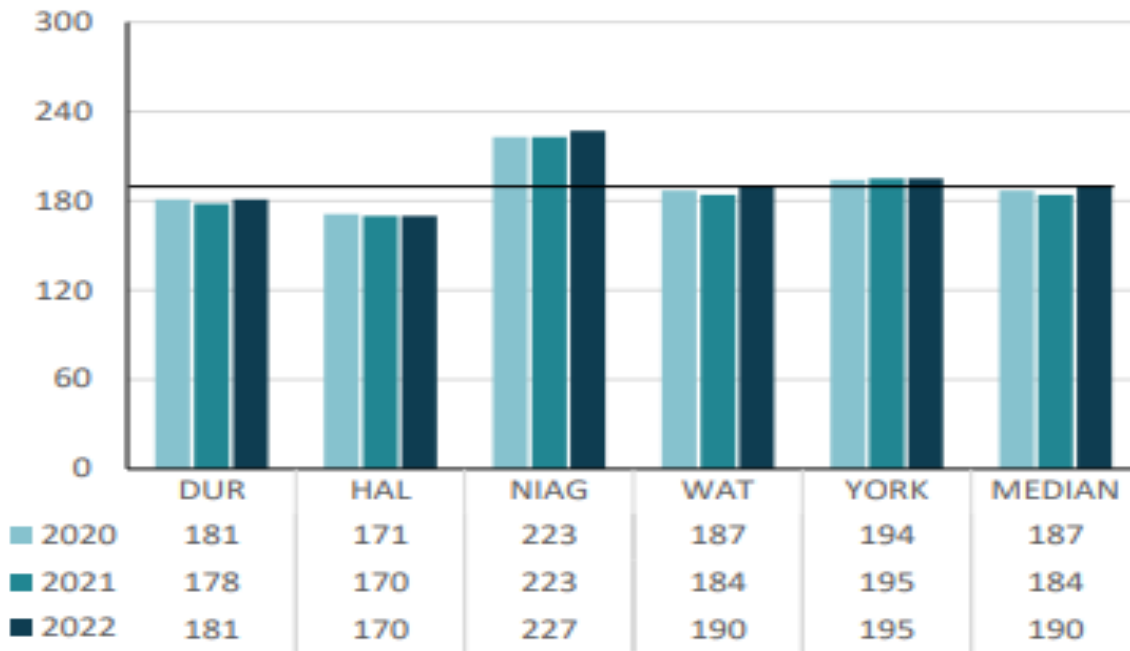


Police Officers Per 100,000 Population in Niagara

This chart shows the number of police staff (officers and civilians; both unionized and non-unionized police staff) per 100,000 population, for the “Upper Tier” Regions of Durham, Halton, Niagara, Waterloo, and York, for 2020, 2021, and 2022. The Median is the middle value of figures in the data set.

Number of Police Staff (Officers and Civilians) per 100,000 Population

Upper Tier



Source: Municipal Benchmarking Network Canada Performance Report, 2022

Retrieved From: <https://niagaraknowledgeexchange.com/wp-content/uploads/sites/2/2023/11/2022-MBN-Canada-Performance-Report.pdf>

EMS Response Times

► Response Time Standards for Niagara Emergency Medical Services (EMS) are provided by Niagara Region. Targets for emergency medical response times are legislated by the province and set annually by local municipalities. In Niagara, targets are based on previous response times and are approved by Regional Council. Response Time Standard Results for Niagara EMS are provided on the Niagara Region website, at:

<https://www.niagararegion.ca/government/departments/health/ems-response-times.aspx>

Source: Niagara Region

Retrieved from: https://www.niagararegion.ca/living/health_wellness/ems/default.aspx





► Emergency Medical Services - Percent of Ambulance Time Lost to Hospital Turnaround is a table included in the 2022 Municipal Benchmarking Network (MBN) Canada Performance Report. In 2021 and 2022, offload delays, patient flow and hospital turnaround times caused an increase in Ambulance Time Lost for most municipalities. This table shows statistics for 2020, 2021 and 2022 for Niagara Region EMS as well as Durham Region, Halton Region, Hamilton, Sudbury, Waterloo Region, Windsor, Winnipeg and York Region

Emergency Medical Services

EMDS150 - Percent of Ambulance Time Lost to Hospital Turnaround

Time spent in hospital includes the time it takes to transfer a patient, delays in transfer care due to lack of hospital resources (off-load delay), paperwork and other activities. The more time paramedics spend in the hospital process equates to less time they are available to respond to calls. NOTE: In 2021 and 2022 offload delays, patient flow and hospital turnaround times have caused an increase in Ambulance Time Lost for most municipalities.



Source: 2022 Municipal Benchmarking Network (MBN) Canada Performance Report
Retrieved from: <https://niagaraknowledgeexchange.com/wp-content/uploads/sites/2/2023/11/2022-MBN-Canada-Performance-Report.pdf>

► Niagara EMS Mobile Integrated Health Model of Care

Mobile Integrated Healthcare provides patient-centered health care visits that are delivered in the patient's home or where they're at; based on the patient's needs and preventive services; and available 24 hours per day, seven days a week

The purpose of this model is to: enable vulnerable, at-risk individuals and older adults to live safely in their own homes; reduce avoidable use of ambulance and emergency services; reduce the number of patients in the emergency department with non-life-threatening concerns; and reduce or delay critical care hospital stays or long-term care wait time.

Source: Niagara Region

Retrieved from: https://www.niagararegion.ca/living/health_wellness/ems/mobile-integrated-health.aspx





Indicator: Feeling Safe and Secure in Niagara

Information and Safety Programs in Schools and the Community

► Situation Tables in Niagara – In 2018, Port Cares and the Niagara Regional Police Service, along with several community agencies, launched the first Situation Table in the Niagara region. In January, 2024, [the model is being expanded to cover the entire region](#).

Situation Tables bring together service providers from a variety of sectors to: Identify risk; Coordinate wraparound supports to community members in need; Prevent crisis; and Better support vulnerable individuals living in the community. Region-wide expansion of the Situation Table model is a key priority of [Niagara's Community Safety and Well-Being Plan 2021-2025](#).

The [Ontario Ministry of the Solicitor General's Risk-driven Tracking Database](#) collects information from Situation Tables or similar multi-sectoral risk intervention models, which are regular meetings of frontline workers from a variety of government and community partners. They identify individuals, families, groups or locations that are at an Acutely Elevated Risk of harm, and work together through a multi-sectoral risk intervention to reduce those risks.

Source: Situation Table – A Risk Intervention Model for Community Safety and Well-being in the Niagara Region (2023)

Retrieved from: <https://niagaraknowledgeexchange.com/resources-publications/situation-table-a-risk-intervention-model-for-community-safety-and-well-being-in-the-niagara-region/>

► The Ontario Federation of Indigenous Friendship Centres (OFIFC) Indigenous Community Justice Program (ICJP) is an initiative developed in response to needs expressed by Indigenous people who have been involved in the court system (youth and family, and criminal); and to the broad over-representation of Indigenous peoples in the mainstream justice system. The Goal of the ICJP is to implement and maintain a culturally-based pre- and post-charge diversion program for Indigenous youth and adults who come into conflict with the law and to provide meaningful alternatives and where possible address the needs of victims.

The ICJP is built on the Aboriginal Court-worker Councils' Support Coordinator Program, and is available where communities have undergone a comprehensive needs assessment, and funding has been made available. This service can be found at both the Niagara Regional Native Centre (in Niagara-on-the-Lake), and the Fort Erie Native Friendship Centre.

Source: Ontario Federation of Indigenous Friendship Centres

Retrieved from: <https://ofifc.org/program/indigenous-community-justice-program/>

► The Fort Erie Native Friendship Centre Indigenous Criminal Courtwork Program assists accused offenders to better understand their rights, options and responsibilities when appearing before the courts, through the guidance of a Courtworker. Indigenous Courtworkers are not Lawyers and do not give legal advice. Priorities for Courtwork are advocacy at the time of bail and sentencing for accused Indigenous people.

Source: Fort Erie Native Friendship Centre

Retrieved from: <https://www.fenfc.org/crime>



► The Indigenous Infant/Family Advocate Program is a unique, joint initiative between the Niagara Chapter-Native Women Inc., and Family and Children's Services Niagara (FACS), funded by the Ontario Ministry of Children, Community, and Social Services.

The program goal is to increase culturally appropriately services to First Nations children and families who come into contact with FACS Niagara. Specific program objectives strive to:

- increase the number of First Nations placement options i.e., Kinship, Customary Care and Indigenous Foster Homes;
- increase cultural awareness for FACS staff and to improve the delivery of culturally appropriate services;
- promote liaison services for children and youth who are in the care of Family and Children's Services Niagara (FACS) with Indigenous communities to promote cultural integrity, collaboration and connection for children and their families;

Source: Niagara Chapter-Native Women Inc.

Retrieved from: <https://ncnw.ca/programs/indigenous-childfamily-advocate-program/>

► Birchway Niagara (formerly Women's Place of South Niagara) encourages people in crisis, or just starting to suspect they could use some help, to call, text or email Birchway, whether it is an intimate partner (e.g. husband, boyfriend or girlfriend), a parent, an adult child or another person in their life that is being abusive. Birchway serves Niagara Falls, Fort Erie, Welland, Wainfleet, Port Colborne, Pelham & surrounding areas. All services are free and confidential.

In fiscal year 2022-2023, Birchway Niagara [reports](#) that:

- 2571 calls and texts were received on the 24hr support line (approx 7/day)
- 133 women stayed in shelter
- 106 children stayed in shelter
- 607 clients benefitted from transitional housing support
- 252 clients worked with Birchway's Family Court Support Worker/Legal Advocate

Source: Birchway Niagara

Retrieved from: <https://birchway.ca/>

► Gillian's Place (GP) provides safe refuge and non-residential programs that enable women, non-binary individuals, and their children in the St. Catharines and North Niagara area to break the cycle of violence. The GP team provides confidential and compassionate counselling, legal advice, and transitional support to women, children, Two-Spirit, genderqueer, trans and non-binary people facing gendered violence in our community. GP offers services and spaces where all survivors can come without reservation, knowing they will be welcomed, respected, and provided with hope, support, and choices.

The GP [2023 annual report](#) provides service numbers, including:

- 10,383 crisis calls and texts answered
- 12,740 life-changing supports provided
- 293 individuals lived in shelter (166 adults, 127 children)



- 2,017 total served through community outreach services
 - 260 received transitional housing support
 - 386 attended counselling appointments
 - 681 obtained legal advice and support
 - 630 received help from GP's Domestic Violence Consultants at FACS Niagara
 - 107 children were seen by GP's Child & Youth Counsellors for exposure to abuse

Source: Gillian's Place

Retrieved from: <https://gilliansplace.com/>

► The Niagara Sexual Assault Centre offers programs for schools, community agencies and workplaces. The Centre provides public education to help increase understanding and awareness of sexual assault related issues. School programs are tailored to elementary schools, high schools and post-secondary schools. Community Agency and Workplace programs are offered for diverse community groups, and professional development/staff training/presentations on various topics upon request.

The Centre operates a Crisis Support Line, which offers someone for callers to talk to if the caller or someone they know has experienced sexual violence either recently or in the past. Callers can speak directly to a support counsellor who will offer non-judgmental support, understanding, information and options specific to the caller's concerns. Emergency Response care and treatment information for individuals who have been sexually assaulted is provided at: <https://www.niagarasexualassaultcentre.com/emergency-response>

Source: Niagara Sexual Assault Centre

Retrieved from: <https://www.niagarasexualassaultcentre.com/public-education>

► Victim Services Niagara (VSN) utilizes trained staff and volunteers to deliver crisis intervention, information and referral services to victims of crime and tragic circumstances, 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. VSN provides victims with support, information and referrals at no cost. Victim Services can be accessed by all agencies and emergency service providers, on behalf of victims, and the services are available throughout the Niagara Region. VSN is a community-based, non-profit organization made up of over 100 dedicated volunteer crisis responders. VSN's work is shaped by ongoing support from the residents of Niagara region, local businesses, non-profit organizations and funders to ensure VSN has the capacity to continue its work. Programs include: Safety Planning; Victim Crisis Assistance Ontario; Victim Quick Response Program; and Mobile Tracking Emergency Response System.

Source: Victim Services Niagara

Retrieved from: <https://victimservicesniagara.on.ca/>

► The Kristen French Child Advocacy Centre (KFCAC) provides a safe place to help, heal, and end child abuse for Niagara's children and youth who have experienced alleged physical abuse, sexual abuse, become the targets of internet luring, or were the unwilling witness of violence. The environment at the KFCAC is child-focused and private, providing a safe and



non-threatening place for children and youth to disclose their experience of abuse to specially trained teams from the Niagara Regional Police Service and Family and Children's Services Niagara who respectively, investigate to determine criminal charges and protection needs. Mental health professionals from Family Counselling Centre Niagara provide much needed follow-up counselling support at no cost and without a wait list.

The KFCAC provides school presentations and workshops to empower children and youth to think and act positively, while building skills and abilities needed to lessen their vulnerability to victimization. Presentations are available for children as early as JK all the way to Grade 12.

Source: Kristen French Child Advocacy Centre

Retrieved from: <https://www.kristenfrenchcacn.org/about-us/mission-vision-values/>

► The John Howard Society of Niagara (JHS) offers the REWIND program, which uses a proactive and collaborative approach to addressing harmful incidents in schools, across all four school boards in Niagara. The goal is to provide a safe, open environment to achieve restorative justice.

JHS partners with several community agencies to offer Strengthening Families for the Future, a prevention program for families with children of all ages who may be at risk for substance misuse, depression, violence, delinquency, and school failure. The program aims to reduce children's or adolescents' intention to use alcohol and/or other drugs, reduce other behaviour problems, increase children's resilience and life skills, increase positive and effective parenting, and increase family communication.

Source: John Howard Society of Niagara

Retrieved from: <https://www.jhs-niagara.com/programs/project-rewind/> and <https://www.jhs-niagara.com/programs/strengthening-families-for-the-future/>

► The Niagara Safety Village (NSV) is a non-profit educational facility located on the Niagara College Campus in Welland, Ontario. NSV's mission is to create a safe and controlled environment in which to provide safety education to the residents of the Niagara region, with the priority being the school-aged children of our communities. NSV works in partnership with the Niagara Regional Police Service, Regional Fire Services and Niagara Emergency Medical Services. NSV instructors are professional emergency personnel who deliver dynamic life-saving lessons in both classroom and practical settings. NSV's unique facility ensures that students of all ages are given the opportunity to practice what they have learned in a safe, controlled environment and will therefore retain valuable lessons once they leave the Village.

The NSV teaches over 6,000 students each year in accordance with standards set by the Ontario Ministry of Education. Schools that want their students to be part of the NSV in-class learning experience are encouraged to reach out to NSV by phone or email.

Source: Niagara Safety Village

Retrieved from: <https://www.niagarasafetyvillage.com/>



Mental Health and Addictions

► Pathstone Mental Health offers a range of dedicated services tailored to the needs of children, youth, and families in the Niagara region. The services are designed to address the unique needs of the youth and families in Niagara, ensuring a compassionate and accessible approach to mental health support. Pathstone provides a [Crisis and Support Line and 10 Walk-in Clinics across Niagara](#).

Pathstone's High Risk Services include:

- Sexualized Treatment Outpatient Program (STOP) is a mental health treatment- based program for children/youth over the age of 12 who are exhibiting sexual behaviour problems or have been charged with a sexual offence. STOP also treats children and youth who have been victims of sexual assault/abuse.
- TAPP C-Fire Involved Program is the mental health portion of the Arson Prevention Program for Children (TAPP-C) as developed by the Centre for Addictions and Mental Health in Toronto. The program is available to children and youth prior to their 18th birthday. Fire setting behaviours need to be treated very seriously as these behaviours can lead to severe property damage, injury and even death. The Fire Involved Program primarily addresses these behaviours as well as co-existing concerns.
- High Risk Suicidal and High Risk Violence Program serves children and youth identified at an elevated risk of self-harm or harm to others. Typically referred by community partners like police, schools, hospitals, or child welfare, these youth receive intensive, individualized services aimed at reducing imminent risks. Once risk levels decrease, a referral to a more suitable and less intense service or program follows.

Source: Pathstone Mental Health

Retrieved from: <https://pathstonementalhealth.ca/services/?vcv-filter-e0fdcbcd=23#grid-e0fdcbcd>

► The Early Psychosis Intervention service is administered by Niagara Region Public Health. Psychosis affects approximately three in every 100 people. The sooner someone seeks treatment, the better the outcome. First episode psychosis is the first time someone experiences psychotic symptoms such as: false beliefs; paranoia; hallucinations; disorganized thoughts/speech. The service provides assessment and treatment for those experiencing a first episode of psychosis. It also provides a free education group to those who are supporting a family member with psychosis.

Eligibility criteria for the service include:

- Age 14 to 35 years of age
- Suspect they're experiencing symptoms of psychosis or have been diagnosed with first episode of psychosis
- Less than six months of antipsychotic medications or no prior use of antipsychotics

Source: Niagara Region Public Health

Retrieved from: <https://www.niagararegion.ca/health/early-psychosis-intervention.aspx>



► The Niagara Justice Collaborative, consisting of approximately 30 agencies, created an evidence-informed intervention that involves a coordinated community response for youth with mental health and/or addiction issues in the court system. The Collaborative also supported development of a dedicated youth court as part of their intervention.

The Niagara Youth Court Screening Initiative (NYCSI) involves a cross-sector team of service providers who are present at either the St. Catharines or Welland court house on days that Youth Court is held. All youth appearing in court for the first time are invited to participate in the screening process to identify potential mental health, addictions, and other needs (e.g., employment, housing, etc.). Based on youth needs and interest in receiving services, the NYCSI team connects youth with organizations in Niagara that can help provide support. They also assist transitions between different systems (justice, health, social, education) with the goal of improving outcomes for youth and families. The NYCSI team offers screening in French, and includes a community service provider from the First Nations, Inuit and Métis sector.

The team also collects basic, non-personal information about the types of youth seen in court as well as their self-identified needs, and runs quarterly reports to ensure the intervention continues to be working.

Source: Youth Resources Niagara and CAMH

Retrieved from: <https://yrn.ca/index.php/community-engagement/> and <http://improvingsystems.ca/projects/niagara-youth-court-screening-initiative-1>

► The Mobile Crisis Rapid Response Team (MCRRT) is a partnership between CMHA Niagara Branch and the Niagara Regional Police Service (NRPS) responding to 9-1-1 calls related to mental health. It has proven to be an effective approach to de-escalating crisis situations, immediately assessing individuals' mental health care needs, and connecting people with appropriate support services in the community.

A mental health worker and a specially trained police officer work as a team to:

- Assess, triage, de-escalate and provide resources to individuals in a mental health or addictions-related crisis
- Divert individuals from unnecessary hospital emergency department visits and involvement with the justice system
- Mitigate strain on police resources
- Determine appropriate links to community services
- Improve individual and caregiver experiences
- Decrease stigma of individuals living with mental health and/or addictions issues
- Build & maintain effective partnerships between police services & health care agencies.



MCCRT responds to 9-1-1 calls related to mental health from 12 p.m. (noon) – 12 a.m. (midnight), 7 days/week in Niagara Falls, Niagara-on-the-Lake, St. Catharines and Thorold. In 2022, the program began a pilot expansion for the City of Welland and Town of Pelham. In 2022, MCRRT responded to a total of 1,883 calls (671 in St. Catharines; 714 in Niagara Falls; 498 in South Niagara). A total of 78% of the calls were diverted from hospital.

Source: Niagara Regional Police 2022 Annual Report; and CMHA Niagara Branch Retrieved from: <https://www.niagarapolice.ca/en/who-we-are/resources/2022-Annual-Report-DRAFT--v15-spreads.pdf> and <https://niagara.cmha.ca/brochure/cmha-partnering-in-our-community/>

Mobile Crisis Rapid Response Team (MCRRT) Canadian Mental Health Association (CMHA) Niagara Branch Statistics						
Year	Contacts	Individuals Served	Referrals	Connections to Service	Diversions from Hospital	Average Response Time
2015-16	540	427	497	357	379	7 min 38 sec
2016-17	824	596	985	604	537	8 min 14 sec
2017-18	1074	737	1006	813	700	9 min 1 sec
2018-19	903	623	907	678	625	9 min 54 sec
2019-20	884	582	868	629	620	9 min 19 sec
2020-21	801	549	653	402	509	10 min 33 sec
2021-22	816	674	703	386	590	9 min 49 sec
2022-23	635	495	554	325	415	10 min 15 sec
2023-24	673	549	682	302	539	10 min 46 sec
Mobile Crisis Rapid Response Team District 2 (MCRRT2) Canadian Mental Health Association (CMHA) Niagara Branch Statistics						
Year	Contacts	Individuals Served	Referrals	Connections to Service	Diversions from Hospital	Average Response Time
2021-22	809	487	641	410	581	10 min 3 sec
2022-23	709	502	621	380	497	11 min 12 sec
2023-24	578	487	595	328	456	11 min 2 sec

Source: [CMHA Niagara Files]





COAST (Crisis Outreach and Support Team) Niagara is a mobile crisis outreach and intervention service that offers immediate telephone counselling and on-site crisis outreach intervention as needed. It operates seven days a week, 24-hours a day for individuals 16 years and older experiencing a mental health crisis. Information is collected over the phone by a qualified health professional. If needed, the mobile team will assess the person in crisis in their community. Ongoing telephone support and/or referral to appropriate follow up services may be recommended to prevent further crisis. COAST is not a rapid-response service. For life-threatening emergencies call 9-1-1. Call COAST 24/7 at 1-866-550-5205.

Source: Canadian Mental Health Association Niagara Branch (CMHA Niagara)

Retrieved from: <https://niagara.cmha.ca/brochure/i-am-in-crisis/>

COAST (Crisis Outreach and Support Team) Niagara CMHA (Canadian Mental Health Association) Niagara Branch Statistics									
Most Frequent Referral Sources	Number of Referrals/Occurrences								
	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24
Police	1658	2348	2709	2273	1431	510	590	558	301
Client/Family	986	955	713	650	624	791	519	590	394
Clients' Community	65	76	210	231	222	147	98	123	428
Hospital	6	9	17	10	13	363	87	3	3
Total Referrals	3388	4125	3649	3164	2290	1811	1387	1274	1126
Number of unique clients served	2719	3408	1757	1572	1308	1610	1294	1176	1108

Source: [CMHA Niagara Files]

► The Overdose Prevention and Education Network of Niagara (OPENN) consists of members from prevention, harm reduction, treatment, and enforcement agencies. They are working together to decrease opioid overdoses in Niagara.

Niagara Region Public Health provides Opioid Usage – Statistics in Niagara, including:

- In Niagara in 2023, there were 734 suspected opioid overdoses responded to by EMS (Niagara Region Emergency Medical Services).
 - 68% of EMS calls related to suspected opioid overdoses occurred in males
 - 59% of EMS calls related to suspected opioid overdoses occurred in individuals aged 25-44





- 52% of EMS calls related to suspected opioid overdoses occurred in St. Catharines while 25% occurred in Niagara Falls
- In Niagara, from January to September, 2023, there were 419 opioid-related emergency department visits. This is approximately 47 emergency department visits per month.
- In Niagara, from January to September, 2023, there were 73 opioid-related hospitalizations. This is approximately 8 hospitalizations per month.

Source: Overdose Prevention and Education Network of Niagara (OPENN)

Retrieved from: <https://211centralsouth.ca/openn/> and

https://www.niagararegion.ca/living/health_wellness/alc-sub-abuse/drugs/opioids.aspx

A 2021 CAMH (Centre for Addiction and Mental Health) [policy paper](#) calls on governments for drug decriminalization; an increase in treatment and harm-reduction services; and replacement of the unregulated, toxic drug supply. In 2020, St. Catharines Council [endorsed](#) the [Canadian Association of Chiefs of Police recommendation](#) for decriminalization of personal possession of illicit drugs; and [Niagara Region Council](#) asked the federal government to study decriminalization of all drugs for personal use. Niagara Region Council reaffirmed this ask of the federal government in February, 2023.

Source: CAMH (Centre for Addiction and Mental Health); and City of St. Catharines; and Canadian Association of Chiefs of Police; and Niagara Region

Retrieved from: <https://www.camh.ca/-/media/files/pdfs---public-policy-submissions/CAMH-Statement-on-decriminalization-sep2021-pdf.pdf> and

<https://stcatharines.civicweb.net/document/78430/> and

https://www.cacp.ca/index.html?asst_id=2189 and [https://pub-](https://pub-niagararegion.escribemeetings.com/filestream.ashx?DocumentId=30049)

[niagararegion.escribemeetings.com/filestream.ashx?DocumentId=30049](https://pub-niagararegion.escribemeetings.com/filestream.ashx?DocumentId=30049)

**Indicator: Motor Vehicle Collisions and Fatalities**Motor Vehicle Collisions

► The Ontario Ministry of Transportation provides Ontario Road Safety Annual Reports. The following table shows the number and type of motor vehicle collisions that occurred in Niagara in 2020. Collisions are divided into class of collision and fatalities or injuries. Also included are the number of registered vehicles in Niagara that year.

Place of Collision, Persons Killed, Injured and Motor Vehicle Registrations, 2020							
Place of Collision	Total Collisions	Class of Collision			Persons		Motor Vehicle Registrations
		Fatal	Personal Injury	Property Damage	Fatality	Injury	
Fort Erie	195	0	34	161	0	44	
Grimsby	166	0	29	137	0	38	
Lincoln	190	2	26	162	2	34	
Niagara Falls	893	6	119	768	6	160	
Niagara-on-the-Lake	151	1	24	126	1	48	
Pelham	100	1	12	87	1	16	
Port Colborne	107	0	21	86	0	29	
St.Catharines	1,221	2	178	1,041	2	211	
Thorold	181	1	28	152	1	39	
Wainfleet	21	0	3	18	0	3	
Welland	438	0	67	371	0	87	
West Lincoln	135	1	25	109	1	36	
Provincial Highway	904	1	123	780	1	168	
Other Areas	0	0	0	0	0	0	
Niagara Total	4,702	15	689	3,998	15	908	375,525

Source: Ministry of Transportation. Ontario Road Safety Annual Report 2020

Retrieved From: <https://files.ontario.ca/mto-orsar-ontario-road-safety-annual-report-2020-en-2023-06-23.pdf>



► Niagara Regional Police Service publishes data about fatal and life-threatening collisions in Niagara in their annual report.

Fatal and Life-Threatening Collisions

COLLISION TYPE	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022
Fatal Collisions	15	17	19	21	19
MTO Reportable Deaths	13	13	16	21	18
Non-Reportable Deaths	2	4	3	0	1
Life Threatening Injuries	16	12	8	11	4

Source: Regional Municipality of Niagara Police Services Board Annual Report, Traffic Management, Enforcement, and Road Safety January 1 - December 31, 2022.

Source: Niagara Regional Police Service

Retrieved from: <https://www.niagarapolice.ca/en/who-we-are/resources/2022-Annual-Report-DRAFT--v15-spreads.pdf>

The above tables are also included in the Transportation and Mobility Sector of this report

Impaired Driving

The following table illustrates trends in impaired driving violation rates in Canada, Ontario, the St. Catharines-Niagara CMA*, and two other Ontario centres, for comparison. *The St. Catharines-Niagara CMA does not include Grimsby and West Lincoln.

Impaired Driving Violations, per 100,000 Population					
	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022
Canada	191.10	228.19	204.80	187.85	181.32
Ontario	99.42	104.58	102.97	110.77	105.19
St. Catharines-Niagara CMA*	93.20	104.79	101.31	106.67	107.4
Hamilton CMA	103.05	100.04	102.03	100.31	94.01
Kitchener-Cambridge-Waterloo CMA	92.37	86.51	86.16	72.81	73.84

Source: Statistics Canada. Incident-based crime statistics, by detailed violations

Retrieved from:

<https://www150.statcan.gc.ca/t1/tbl1/en/tv.action?pid=3510017701&pickMembers%5B0%5D=1.16&pickMembers%5B1%5D=2.149>



Indicator: Special Victims

Domestic Violence

Trends in police-reported family violence and intimate partner violence in Canada, 2022 is an article provided by the Canadian Centre for Justice and Community Safety Statistics at Statistics Canada. It states:

“After several years of increase, rates of reported family violence and intimate partner violence were unchanged in 2022. Rates decreased to a small degree for women and girls (-1% for family violence and -1% for intimate partner violence), while they increased slightly for men and boys (+1% for family violence and +2% for intimate partner violence). Regardless, rates for both types of violence were higher for women and girls than for men and boys.”

The article points to the release of 2022 data that presents high-level national trends in police-reported family violence and intimate partner violence. *“It should be noted that the findings in this release reflect only incidents of family violence and intimate partner violence that came to the attention of the police, and past research has highlighted that these types of violence are often not reported to authorities. As such, the data presented here likely underestimate the full scope of these types of violence”.*

Source: Statistics Canada

Retrieved from: <https://www150.statcan.gc.ca/n1/en/daily-quotidien/231121/dq231121b-eng.pdf?st=seW6iwEW>

► The Niagara Regional Police Service (NRPS) Domestic Violence Unit conducts criminal investigations involving persons connected through past or present intimate partnerships.

NRPS Domestic Violence Investigations in 2022	
Classification	Number of Incidents
Investigations - Total	1,143
Domestic Violence Investigations – Criminal Charges	954

Source: Niagara Regional Police Service

Retrieved from: <https://www.niagarapolice.ca/en/who-we-are/resources/2022-Annual-Report-DRAFT--v15-spreads.pdf>

► In September, 2023, Niagara Region joined more than 47 municipalities in Ontario, in declaring intimate partner violence an epidemic. There were 62 femicides in Ontario in 2023, with 3 of those being in Niagara.

Retrieved from: <https://pub-niagararegion.escribemeetings.com/filestream.ashx?DocumentId=33890> and <https://www.youtube.com/embed/dwDdZaDqnKg?si=DDZ9-6Q21IMdOeSF?rel=0&autoplay=1>





► A 2022 Red Dress Day article by Wendy Sturgeon of Niagara Chapter Native Women challenges allies of Indigenous groups to take action toward true reconciliation. Six of every ten Indigenous women will experience physical or sexual assault in their lifetime, from age 15 onward. A 2022 Statistics Canada report states that 56% of Indigenous women have experienced physical assault, compared to about 1/3 (34%) of non-Indigenous women; and 46% of Indigenous women have experienced sexual assault in their lifetime, compared to about 1/3 (33%) of non-Indigenous women.

Source: Wendy Sturgeon, Niagara Chapter Native Women; and National Centre for Truth and Reconciliation; and Statistics Canada

Retrieved from: <https://niagaraknowledgeexchange.com/community-blog/the-way-i-see-it-statscan-catches-up-with-what-we-knew-all-along-every-day-is-red-dress-day-and-a-chance-to-work-on-reconciliation/>; and <https://nctr.ca/records/reports/> and <https://www150.statcan.gc.ca/n1/pub/85-002-x/2022001/article/00004-eng.htm>

► The Coalition to End Violence Against Women (CEVAW) is a diverse collective voice of organizations from the Niagara region, working toward ending gender-based violence against all women, and their children, by raising public awareness, educating, sharing information, networking, and identifying and breaking down systemic barriers that perpetuate violence. CEVAW highlights resources available for victims of domestic violence, including:

- Crisis phone support
- Shelter and housing
- Help for victims of sexual assault, child abuse and elder abuse
- Native women support services
- Services for men
- Counselling
- On-scene crisis intervention
- Health services
- Financial support
- Legal assistance
- French language support services
- Multicultural services
- Transition support services

Source: The Coalition to End Violence Against Women

Retrieved from: <https://cevaw.com/>

Human Trafficking

► In its Trafficking in Persons in Canada, 2022 article, Statistics Canada states, “Trafficking in persons, or human trafficking, is a serious human rights violation that can occur domestically or transnationally with the crossing of international borders. Human trafficking involves the recruitment, transportation or harbouring of a person and includes controlling or influencing their movements with the goal of exploiting, or facilitating the exploitation of, a person. Despite



legislation prohibiting all forms of human trafficking both within and outside Canadian borders, it is difficult to detect and measure due to its hidden nature. Victims of human trafficking are generally isolated and concealed from the public, and many may experience barriers or be unwilling to report to authorities for various reasons, including a general distrust of authorities, feelings of shame, fear of consequences, language barriers, or a lack of human rights knowledge”. The article also states:

- Rates of human trafficking in Nova Scotia and Ontario are higher than the national average. “Ontario is made up of various population centres that may be used by human traffickers to avoid detection while increasing profits. The accessibility of international border crossings may further appeal to traffickers.”
- Majority of incidents or police-reported human trafficking are in urban centres
- One in four human trafficking incidents involved at least one other type of violation, most often related to sex trade
- Vast majority of police-reported human trafficking victims are women and girls
- One in four victims of human trafficking are children and youth
- Men greatly outnumber women among adult accused, higher proportion of girls among youth accused
- Just over one-third of victims were trafficked by a current or former intimate partner

Police-Reported Incidents of Human Trafficking, by CMA (Census Population Area), and for Ontario and Canada, 2012 to 2022		
Geography	Human Trafficking Incidents	
	2022	2012 to 2022
St. Catharines-Niagara* CMA	17	136
Hamilton CMA	23	160
Toronto CMA	154	911
Ontario	353	2,585
Canada	528	3,996

*St. Catharines-Niagara CMA does not include Grimsby and West Lincoln.

Source: Trafficking in Persons in Canada, 2022. Statistics Canada, December 4, 2023.

Retrieved from: <https://www150.statcan.gc.ca/n1/pub/85-005-x/2023001/article/00002-eng.htm>

► The Canadian Human Trafficking Hotline is available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, and in over 200 different languages, including 27 Indigenous languages. It can be accessed toll-free by phone at 1-833-900-1010 or online at [Canadian Human Trafficking Hotline](#).

Source: The Canadian Centre to End Human Trafficking

Retrieved from: <https://www.canadianhumantraffickinghotline.ca/>





► The YWCA Niagara Region provides an Anti-Human Trafficking web page with a downloadable Human Trafficking Prevention Guide. It also provides information about the YW Safe House, “Home: to New Beginnings”, where up to 6 survivors of human trafficking can access secure housing and resources in a healing environment - the first of its kind in Ontario.

Source: YWCA Niagara Region

Retrieved from: <https://www.ywcaniagararegion.ca/our-work#anti-human-trafficking>

► The Niagara Anti-Human Trafficking website provides contact information for organizations to which individuals who are victims of human trafficking, or think someone else may be, can reach out. It is accessible at: <https://niagaraantihumantrafficking.com/>

► Niagara Regional Police Service (NRPS) Human Trafficking Unit investigators work closely with community partners, in accordance with the Niagara Region Emergency Response Protocol to Human Trafficking. Investigations are referred from calls for service, local community agencies, other Police services, and the Canadian Human Trafficking Hotline. The overarching goal of human trafficking investigations is support for survivors and an end to exploitation of vulnerable victims. The unit works with community to increase public awareness of the pervasiveness & devastating effects of human trafficking on our communities.

Human Trafficking Unit Investigations in 2022

CLASSIFICATION	2022
Investigations – Total	114
Arrested- Total	10
Charges Total	65

Source: Niagara Regional Police Service Special Victims Unit January 1 - December 31, 2022.

Source: Niagara Regional Police Service 2022 Annual Report

Retrieved from: <https://www.niagarapolice.ca/en/who-we-are/resources/2022-Annual-Report-DRAFT--v15-spreads.pdf>

► In 2022, the Ontario Ministry of Education issued a directive for all school boards to establish and follow a protocol for response to suspected sex trafficking occurrences. The intent of the Keeping Students Safe policy is to ensure every school board has a plan with core components in place to protect students and empower school communities to play a key role in fighting sex trafficking and keeping children and youth safe from sexual exploitation.

Source: Ontario Ministry of Education

Retrieved from: <https://www.ontario.ca/document/education-ontario-policy-and-program-direction/policyprogram-memorandum-166>





► The District School Board of Niagara (DSBN) Anti-Sex Trafficking Protocol supports coordinated action by all community partners to recognize, identify and prevent sex trafficking and develop responses to facilitate early and appropriate intervention. The DSBN continues to strive to build safer schools and support students, parents, caregivers, and the school community to prevent sex trafficking and sexual exploitation.

Source: District School Board of Niagara

Retrieved from: https://www.dsbni.org/docs/default-source/safe-schools/dsbni-anti-sextraffickingprotocol.pdf?sfvrsn=26554e1f_1

► The Niagara Catholic District School Board (NCDSB) Anti-Sex Trafficking Protocol supports coordinated action by all community partners to prevent, identify and recognize sex trafficking and develop responses to facilitate early and appropriate intervention. The NCDSB is committed to building safer schools and supporting students, parents/guardians/caregivers, and the school community to end sex trafficking and sexual exploitation of all.

Source: Niagara Catholic District School Board

Retrieved from: <https://cdn.niagaracatholic.ca/wp-content/uploads/2022/03/Anti-Sex-Trafficking-Protocol-w-Cover-and-TOCFeb2022.pdf>

Child Abuse

► Suspected or actual child abuse or neglect can be reported to Family and Children’s Services (FACS) Niagara 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. Reports must be made in person or by phone. FACS Niagara will assess the information, make referrals to other helping community agencies and/or investigate further. In addition to Child Protection, FACS Niagara offers a variety of programs and services for families in Niagara, including child care, consultation regarding child development, family counselling, and support for youth transitioning from foster care to living independently in the community. The Family Counselling Centre (FCC) is a fully accredited family service agency, offering Adult Protective Services in addition to counselling programs. In 2022-2023, the FCC provided 5,221 scheduled counselling sessions.

FACS Niagara annual report statistics	2021-2022	2022-2023
Number of child protection referrals	6,116	6,504
Number of investigations	2,701	3,550
Percentage of children served within their family homes/community	93%	95%
Monthly average of children in foster care	398	437
Number of youth participating in youth programs	175	140

Source: FACS Niagara

Retrieved from: <https://www.facsniagara.on.ca/publications/facs-niagara-annual-report-2021-2022/> and <https://www.facsniagara.on.ca/wp-content/uploads/2023/06/Annual-Report-2023.pdf>





► The Kristen French Child Advocacy Centre Niagara (Kristen French CACN) provides a safe place to help, heal and end child abuse for Niagara’s children and youth who have experienced alleged physical abuse, sexual abuse, become the targets of internet luring, or were the unwilling witness of violence.

Under the umbrella of the Kristen French CACN, the Centre’s three partner organizations streamline and integrate services, creating a one-stop, child-focused facility for children and their families. Niagara Regional Police Service and Family and Children’s Services Niagara conduct forensic child abuse investigations on site. Counselling is offered through the Family Counselling Centre Niagara at no cost and without a waiting list.

Source: Kristen French Child Advocacy Centre Niagara

Retrieved from: <https://www.kristenfrenchcacn.org/>

► PECAN (Partners to End Child Abuse Niagara) is a group of Niagara not-for-profit agencies who have created a website that provides the community with a convenient hub to reduce the time spent searching for help and connect people with the right program or agency. It highlights community programs and facilitators to help implement programs that are available from local agencies, as well as links to other trusted organizations.

Source: Partners to End Child Abuse Niagara (PECAN)

Retrieved from: <http://endchildabuseeniagara.com/about-pecan/>

► Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACES) are defined as stressful or traumatic events that occur in childhood (0–18) that have been found to increase the risk of engaging in health harming behaviors and developing chronic health problems. The Niagara Children’s Planning Council (NCPC) is paying attention to early evidence from local, provincial and national sources showing that many ACES-related risk factors have increased, while protective factors have decreased, throughout the COVID-19 pandemic.

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) National Center for Injury Prevention and Control, based in Atlanta, Georgia provides 6 recommendations for addressing ACES:

- Teach Skills
- Connect youth to caring adults and activities
- Ensure a strong start for children
- Lessen harms and prevent future risk
- Promote norms that protect against violence and adversity
- Strengthen economic support

Source: Niagara Children’s Planning Council and Niagara Region Public Health

Retrieved from: <https://niagaraknowledgeexchange.com/resources-publications/aces-informed-pandemic-recovery-fostering-resilience-in-niagara/>



Elder Abuse

► This chart provides 2022 statistics about the rate of senior victims of police-reported family and non-family violence in the St. Catharines-Niagara Census Metropolitan Area (CMA*), with two other CMAs for comparison. *Note: the St. Catharines-Niagara CMA does not include Grimsby and West Lincoln.

Rate of Family and Non-Family Senior (65 years and older) Victims of Police-Reported Family and Non-Family Violent Crime, by CMA, 2022		
Census Metropolitan Area (CMA)	Family Violence	Non-Family Violence
	Rate per 100,000	Rate per 100,000
St. Catharines-Niagara	38.98	139.46
Hamilton	76.67	224.54
Toronto	85.22	168.58
Canada	87.44	159.21

Source: Statistics Canada

Retrieved from:

<https://www150.statcan.gc.ca/t1/tbl1/en/tv.action?pid=3510020001&pickMembers%5B0%5D=1.1&pickMembers%5B1%5D=3.11&pickMembers%5B2%5D=5.2&cubeTimeFrame.startYear=2022&cubeTimeFrame.endYear=2022&referencePeriods=20220101%2C20220101>

► The Niagara Elder Abuse Prevention Network works with agencies and seniors to prevent elder abuse and create a safe community where older adults are valued and respected within the Niagara region. Guiding Principles include:

- Promote awareness and provide education and information exchange on elder abuse and its prevention.
- Advocate for changes in the service delivery system based on identified gaps and relevant research.
- Develop strategies to improve the identification, prevention and response to elder abuse.

Source: Alzheimer Society of Niagara Region, Niagara Elder Abuse Prevention Network

Retrieved from: <https://alzheimer.ca/niagara/en/help-support/programs-services/resources/niagara-elder-abuse-prevention>

► Crime Stoppers of Niagara and the Niagara Elder Abuse Prevention Network provide “Be Aware Take Care: A Safety Guide for Our Community”. It provides information about Frauds & Scams and how to protect yourself, Powers of Attorney, and Elder Abuse.

Source: Alzheimer Society of Niagara Region

Retrieved from:

<https://alzheimer.ca/niagara/sites/niagara/files/documents/elder%20abuse%20booklet%20final.pdf>





► Niagara Gatekeepers is a phone line that anyone in the community can call to help connect at-risk older adults with programs and services.

The Niagara Gatekeeper program works with local partner agencies, and referrals are made by the program to the most appropriate partner agency. Upon consent from the older adult, the partner agency will provide education around local programs and help coordinate referrals to a range of services and supports. Services are intended to help individuals remain safe and independent at home for as long as possible.

Signs of an at-risk senior include:

- Difficulty communicating, including confusion, memory loss, becoming withdrawn, hostile or angry
- Changes to personal appearance, including poor hygiene, grooming, wearing dirty or inappropriate clothing
- Deteriorating home conditions, including extreme neglect or disrepair, bad odours, excessive clutter, neglected pets, lack of food
- Deteriorating health such as difficulty seeing, speaking or hearing, poor mobility or balance, recent falls, significant weight loss, injuries or untreated wounds
- Decreased ability to handle money or pay bills; unusual transactions
- Inability to cope with the recent loss of a spouse or family member, friend or pet
- Neglect or abuse (emotional, financial, sexual or physical), isolation, wandering

Source: Niagara Gatekeepers

Retrieved from: <https://www.niagararegion.ca/living/seniors/gatekeepers.aspx>