

STATE OF LEARNING IN CANADA

Toward a Learning Future

WHAT WE'VE LEARNED SINCE 2007

STATE OF LEARNING 2008— AN UPDATE OF THE INDICATORS

The Canadian Council on Learning's inaugural report, *State of Learning in Canada: No Time for Complacency (2007)*, brought Canada's learning landscape into focus by taking a life-course approach to measuring the learning progress of Canadians.

Using a series of detailed indicators, the 2007 *State of Learning in Canada* report examined many of the factors that contribute to successful lifelong learning within five key learning domains:

- early childhood learning;
- learning in school;

- post-secondary education;
- adult learning; and
- Aboriginal learning.

As a follow-up, this 2008 update of the indicators provides further insight into Canada's progress in learning through newly released or recently analyzed data.

Timely and relevant information allows us to continue monitoring Canada's progress in learning, and advances our efforts to establish clear learning objectives and identify possible areas for societal action.

The Canadian Council on Learning

Who we are

The Canadian Council on Learning (CCL) is an independent, not-for-profit corporation funded through an agreement with Human Resources and Social Development Canada.

What we do

CCL is committed to improve learning outcomes for Canadians and to foster the growth of a pan-Canadian "learning architecture" by:

- informing Canadians about the state of learning;
- fostering quality research on learning;
- facilitating evidence-based decisions about learning through knowledge exchange; and
- becoming Canada's authoritative resource on learning issues.

Monitoring Canada's Performance

The importance of lifelong learning is widely acknowledged, yet there is no comprehensive or pan-Canadian monitoring of Canada's performance in this area.

CCL is helping to close this gap in our understanding by:

- operating five knowledge centres in regions across Canada that focus on critical learning themes: Aboriginal Learning, Adult Learning, Early Childhood Learning, Health and Learning, and Work and Learning;
- working with provincial and territorial governments and non-government organizations (NGOs) to establish networks, identify research priorities and support the exchange of knowledge related to structured learning;

- performing and commissioning research on learning-related topics;
- developing the Composite Learning Index to measure Canada's performance in lifelong learning;
- supporting knowledge exchange activities such as conferences, forums, expositions and roundtables;
- developing new networks for the exchange of information, best practices and success stories;
- partnering with other organizations to pursue strategic learning initiatives of mutual interest; and
- publishing annual reports on various learning themes, as well as more regular reports.

Canadian Council on Learning Publications

The Canadian Council on Learning is committed to producing a series of publications intended to help learning professionals, policy-makers and individual Canadians understand the challenges we face and the progress we are making in various areas of lifelong learning across the country.

These publications include:

- *Composite Learning Index (CLI)*
- *State of Learning in Canada*
- *Post-secondary Education in Canada*
- *Survey of Canadian Attitudes Toward Learning (SCAL)*
- thematic reports on learning.

For more information, visit www.ccl-cca.ca

What We've Learned since 2007

EARLY CHILDHOOD LEARNING

To understand the state of early childhood learning in Canada, we need to examine four main areas of development: physical, cognitive, language and communication, and emotional and social development.

Measurements of motor skills, vocabulary, emotional control and social interactions, for example, tell us about how Canadian children are developing and maturing. We also need to know about the environmental factors that influence early childhood learning. The most effective measurements are those that, when repeated at regular intervals, reveal trends.

Key indicators of early childhood learning:

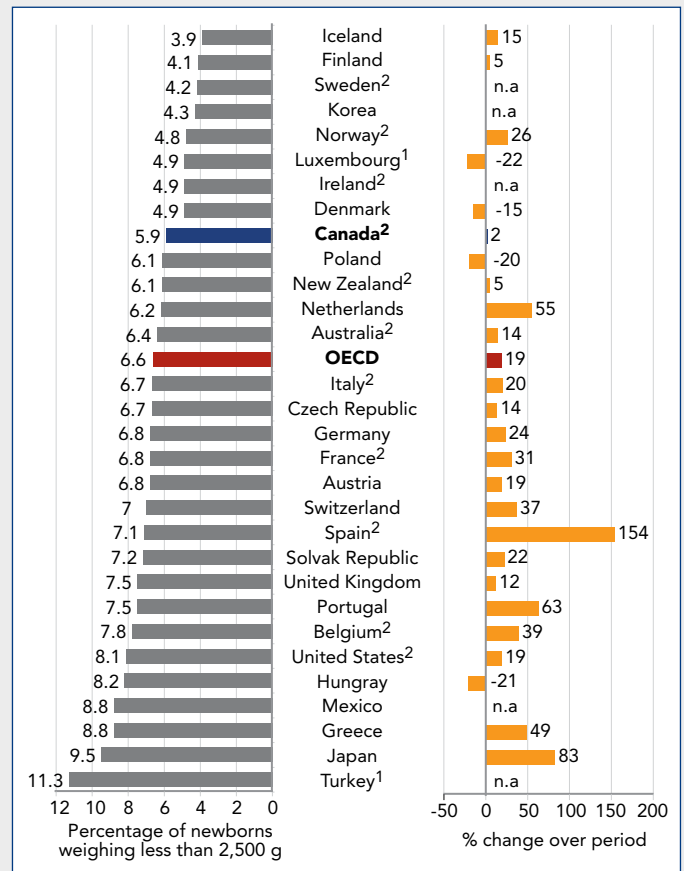
- birth weight
- physical development
- cognitive development
- language and communications skills
 - receptive vocabulary
 - communication skills
 - read-to daily
- emotional and social development
 - physical aggression
 - indirect aggression
 - personal and social skills
- early childhood education and care.

Birth Weight

The link between low birth weight and risks to later development and learning has been well established. Infants born weighing less than 5.5 pounds are at a greater risk of having poor health as infants and later in life. They are also more likely to develop significant disabilities.

- Although the low birth weight rate has been fairly constant for the past 25 years, it has increased slightly in the last five. In 2005–2006, about one in 16 babies (6.1%) born in Canadian hospitals was underweight, up from 5.7% in 2001–2002.¹

Figure 1: Infants with low birth weights, 2005, and the change in proportion of infants with low birth weights, 1980 to 2005



1. Data from 2003.
2. Data from 2004.

Source: Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development. *Health at a Glance 2007*. Paris: 2007.

Physical Development

Physical development in the early years includes the development of the body, the senses and motor development—which affect exploration, play and interaction with peers. These in turn influence cognitive, language and social development.

- In 2004–2005, 87% of those five years old and younger were considered to have average or above-average fine motor skills. More boys (15%) were delayed in their development than girls (11%).²
- No update was available for Gross Motor Skills.

STATE OF LEARNING IN CANADA

Toward a Learning Future

Table 1:
Comparison of fine motor skills in children 5 years and under, in 2002–2003 and 2004–2005

	2002–2003		2004–2005	
	4- to 5-year-olds		0- to 5-year-olds	
	Average or above	Delayed	Average or above	Delayed
Boys	85.6%	14.4%	84.6%	15.4%
Girls	91.1%	8.9%	88.8%	11.2%
Both sexes	88.3%	11.7%	86.7%	13.3%

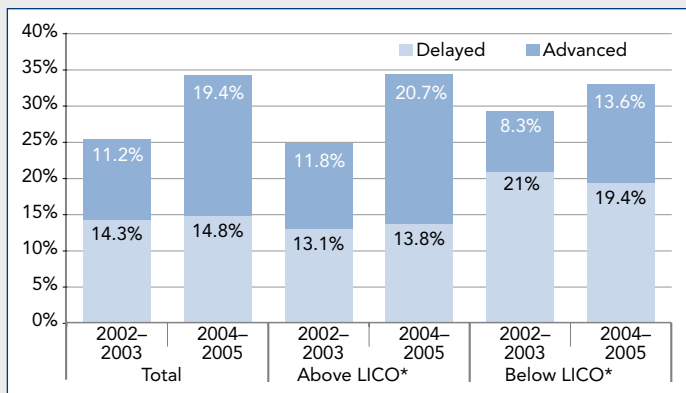
Source: Adapted from Statistics Canada. Special tabulation. National Longitudinal Survey of Children and Youth, Cycle 5, 2002–2003 and Cycle 6, 2004–2005. Unpublished data.

Cognitive Development

Cognitive development involves mental processes such as thinking and reasoning. The *National Longitudinal Survey of Children and Youth* (NLSCY) uses two tests to assess cognitive development among children aged four and five: the Who Am I? Test assesses a child's ability to conceptualize and understand symbols, and the Number Knowledge Assessment examines a child's early comprehension of numbers.

- In 2004–2005, the Who Am I? Test indicated that 19% of children from low-income families were considered to have delayed development, compared with 14% of other children.³
- The Number Knowledge Assessment found that in 2004–2005, 28% of children from low-income families showed delayed development, compared with 14% of other children.⁴

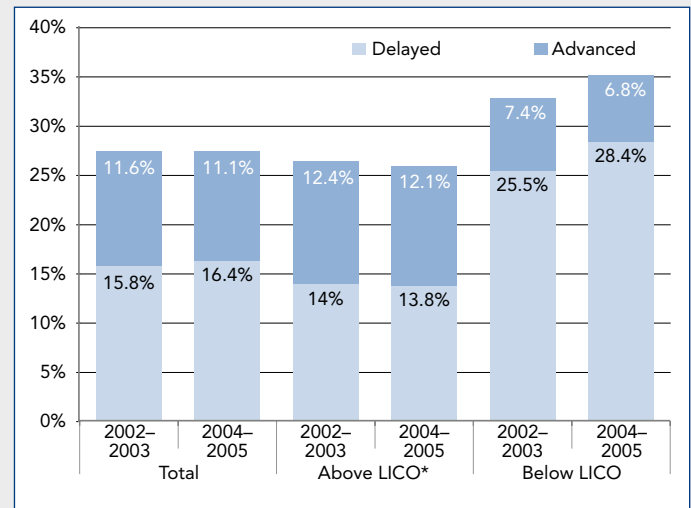
Figure 2:
Comparison of cognitive development in 4- and 5-year-olds in 2002–2003 and 2004–2005, by family income, using Who Am I? Test



* Low income cut-off (LICO)

Source: Adapted from Statistics Canada. Special tabulation. National Longitudinal Survey of Children and Youth, Cycle 5, 2002–2003 and Cycle 6, 2004–2005. Unpublished data.

Figure 3:
Comparison of cognitive development in 4- and 5-year-olds in 2002–2003 and 2004–2005, by family income, using Number Knowledge Assessment



* Low income cut-off (LICO)

Source: Adapted from Statistics Canada. Special tabulation. National Longitudinal Survey of Children and Youth, Cycle 5, 2002–2003 and Cycle 6, 2004–2005. Unpublished data.

Language and Communication Skills

Language is a crucial component of healthy child development and has an impact on a child's capacity to read and write,⁵ socialize,⁶ and understand information and situations.⁷

Receptive vocabulary

- In 2004–2005, 14% of children were in the delayed range and approximately one-quarter of children from low-income families were considered to have delayed receptive vocabulary development, compared with 11% of other children.⁸

Communication skills

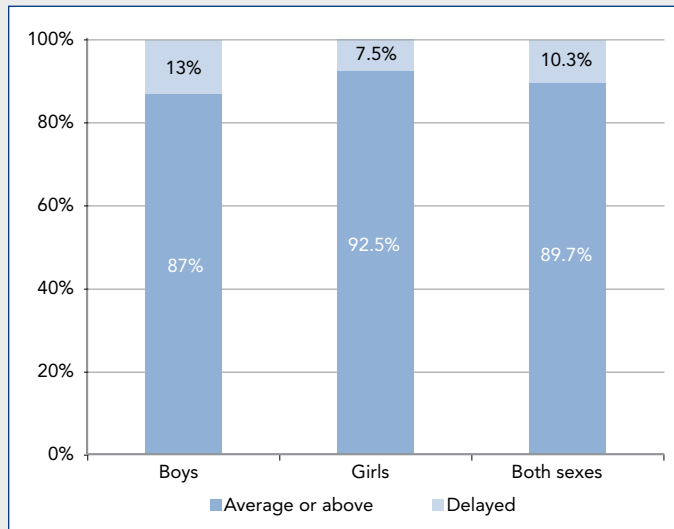
- Almost 90% of children had average or better communication skills in 2004–2005. More boys (13%) than girls (7.5%) exhibited delayed development.⁹

Read-to daily

- 65% of children under the age of six were read to daily in 2004–2005, a slight decrease from 67% in 2002–2003. In 2004–2005, 57% of children in low-income families were read to daily, compared with 67% of other children.¹⁰

What We've Learned since 2007

Figure 4:
Communication skills of preschool children, ages 3 and under, 2004–2005



Source: Adapted from Statistics Canada. Special tabulation. National Longitudinal Survey of Children and Youth, Cycle 6, 2004–2005. Unpublished data.

Emotional and Social Development

The emotional and social development of children includes the ability to control emotions, integrate with peers, and develop social and emotional bonds. A child's social and emotional development is measured by the level of physical aggression, indirect aggression and personal and social skills.

Physical aggression

- In 2004–2005, more boys (16%) than girls (12%) between the ages of two and five showed high levels of physical aggression.¹¹

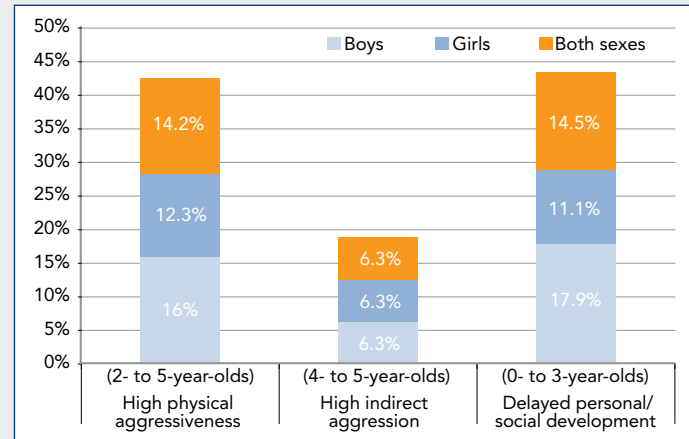
Indirect aggression

- The proportion of children aged four to five displaying high degrees of indirect aggression decreased from 11% in 1994–1995 to 6% in 2004–2005.¹²

Personal and social skills

- The proportion of girls three years old and younger demonstrating delayed development in personal and social skills was 11.1%, compared with boys in the same age group (17.9%) in 2004–2005.¹³

Figure 5:
Level of emotional and social development in children aged 5 and under in 2004–2005



Source: Adapted from Statistics Canada. Special tabulation. National Longitudinal Survey of Children and Youth, Cycle 6, 2004–2005. Unpublished data.

Early Childhood Education and Care

The 2008 *State of Learning in Canada* explores early childhood learning in the child-care environment.

CCL's 2007 *Report on the State of Early Childhood Learning* addressed these key indicators for Early Childhood Learning and is available at www.ccl-cca.ca/CCL/Reports/StateofLearning/EarlyChildhood.htm?Language=EN.

LEARNING IN SCHOOL

During the elementary and secondary school years, children and youth develop the skills and knowledge they need to become successful adults. These years form a critical period in which children and youth develop attitudes about the value and purpose of learning, and learn how to learn. Learning in school sets the stage for lifelong learning, which has an impact on all aspects of children's adult lives.

School is a place where children need to feel safe and secure. It is also a place to learn about good health and responsible lifestyle choices, and to practise the social skills that bring individuals and communities together.

Key indicators of learning in school:

- student skills
- citizenship education
 - political participation

STATE OF LEARNING IN CANADA

Toward a Learning Future

- political and historic knowledge
- student health and safety
 - general health
 - eating breakfast
 - overweight and obese
 - school safety and bullying
- student engagement

Student Skills

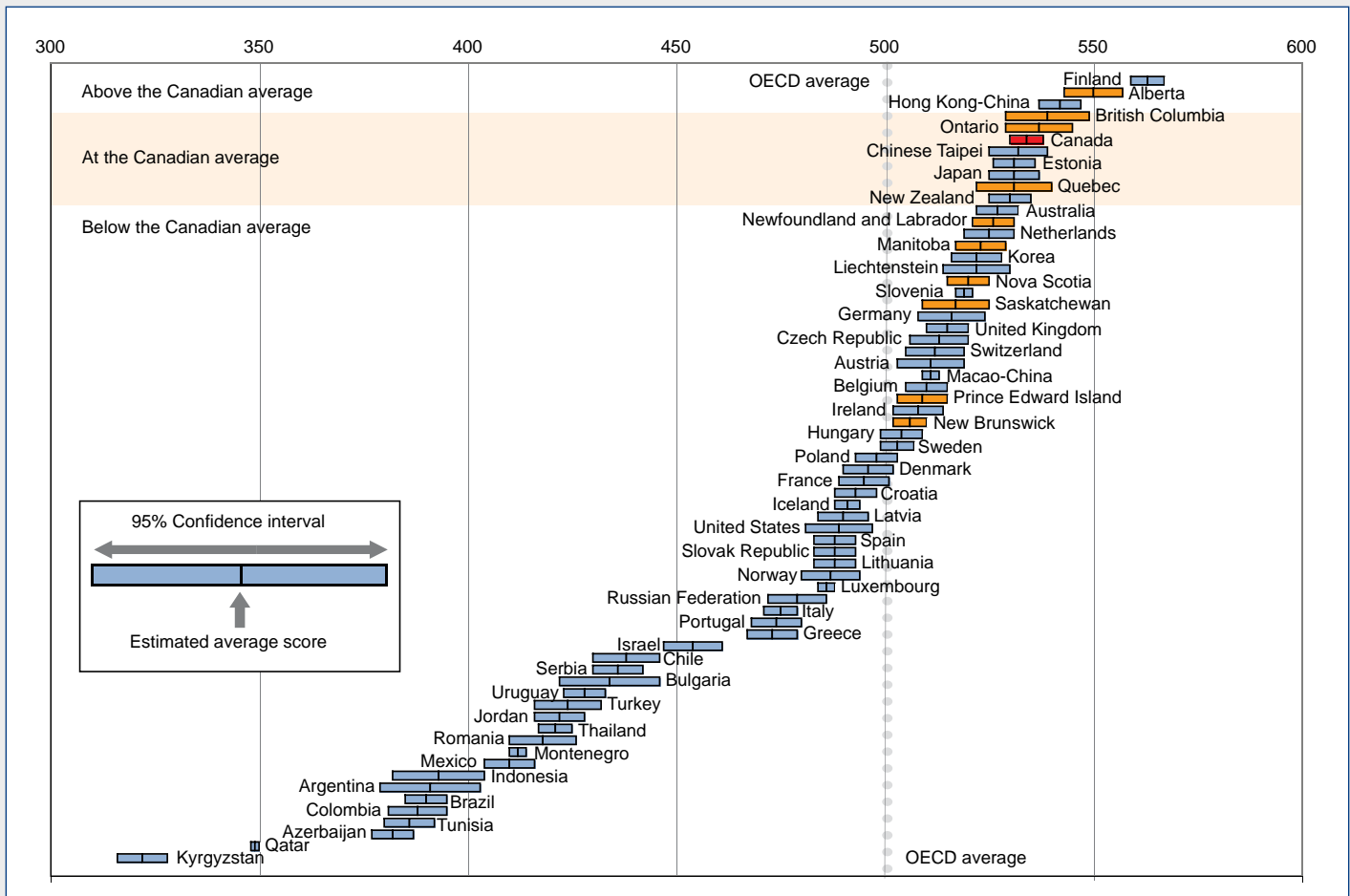
In elementary and secondary school, Canadian youth must develop basic skills in reading, mathematics, problem solving and science. These skills are assessed for 15-year-

olds through the *Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA)* of the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD).

- According to the 2006 PISA, 15-year-olds in Canada scored above OECD averages in three literacy areas: reading, math and science. PISA 2006 represents the first full assessment of science literacy around the world. Canada's science scores put it in the top seven of 57 countries for 2006, significantly behind Finland and Hong Kong-China, roughly at the same level as Chinese Taipei and Japan, and significantly above Australia, Germany and the United States.¹⁴

PISA results are discussed in more detail in Chapter 2.

Figure 6:
International comparisons of science scores (including Canadian provinces), 15-year-olds, 2006



Note: The Canada average is 534 with a standard error of 4 points.

Source: Bussière, Patrick, Tamara Knighton and Dianne Pennock. *Measuring Up: Canadian Results of the OECD PISA Study, The Performance of Canada's Youth in Science, Reading and Mathematics. 2006 First Results for Canadians Aged 15*. Catalogue no. 81-590-XWE, no. 3. Ottawa: Statistics Canada and Human Resources and Social Development Canada, 2007.

What We've Learned since 2007

Citizenship Education

Society and individuals benefit from an informed and engaged citizenry. A grasp of history and politics helps young people understand their rights and responsibilities as members of a democracy. History and civic education in school is especially important in a culturally diverse population because it unites Canadians around a shared knowledge of their country.

Political participation

- Younger adults are less likely to vote than older adults. The voter turnout rate of 37% for the youngest voters in the 2004 election compares with an overall turnout rate of 61%. Although there is a percentage turnout gap of 32 between the youngest and oldest voters,¹⁵ young adults (to the age of 24) are 1.2 times more likely to engage in non-voting political activity than older Canadians.¹⁶

Political and historic knowledge

- A 2007 Dominion Institute quiz found that knowledge of political history has declined over the past 10 years. More than 80% of Canadians aged 18 to 24 failed the quiz's basic Canadian history exam.¹⁷

Student Health and Safety

Mental and physical health play a role in a student's ability to learn at school. Children learn better when they are healthy and feel safe at school.

General health

- According to a 2007 study by the United Nations Association in Canada (UNA—Canada), 60% of Canadian youth aged nine to 12 reported their health as either "very good" or "excellent," while just under one-quarter said their health was "good." Very few rated their health as "fair" or "poor."¹⁸
- In 2005, 59% of teenagers aged 15 to 18 participated in some form of sport, a decline from 77% in 1992.¹⁹
- In 2005, young people appeared to be more physically active than older age groups, with 58% of males and 44% of females aged 12 to 17 reporting levels of leisure-time activity comparable to walking an hour a day or jogging 20 minutes a day. By comparison, 24% of men and 23% of women aged 35 to 44 reported similar levels of activity.²⁰

Eating breakfast

- Statistics Canada's Census at School 2006–2007 study revealed that 90% of elementary school students eat breakfast compared with 82% of secondary school students.²¹

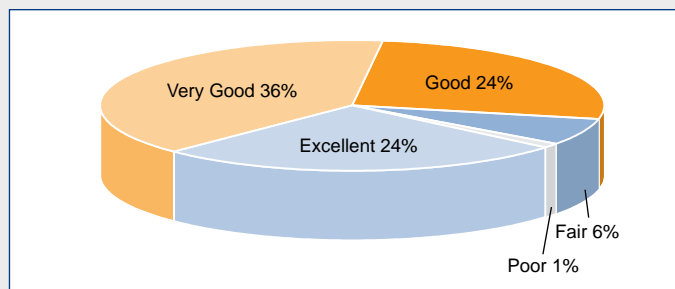
Overweight and obese

- Data for the last decade show that approximately 25% of young Canadians, aged 17 and under, were overweight or obese.²² In 2006, Canada had the fifth highest rate among 34 countries in terms of the proportion of overweight and obese children.²³

School safety and bullying

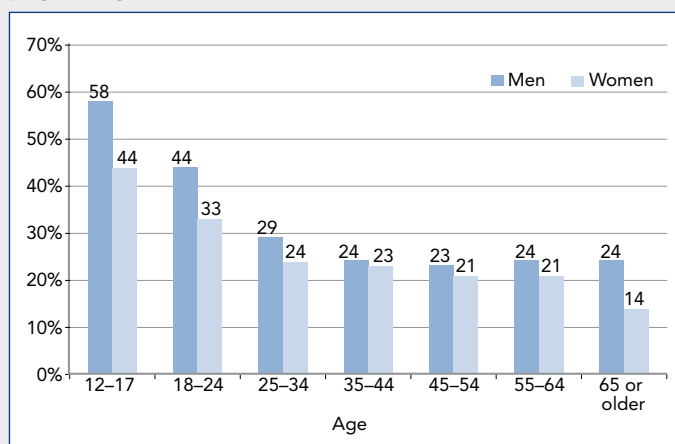
- According to the UNA—Canada survey, 80% of 9- to 12-year-olds felt safe at school, and 80% felt safe going to and from school in 2006–2007.²⁴ Statistics Canada's Census at School 2006–2007 reported that 23% of elementary and 15% of secondary school students reported having been bullied one to three times in the month prior to the survey.²⁵

Figure 7:
Self-reported health of children aged 9–12, 2007



Source: White, Kathryn, Maria Sterniczuk, Gabriel Ramsay and Alison Warner. *Talking Back to Grownups: Healthy Children, Healthy Communities*. Ottawa: United Nations Association in Canada, 2007.

Figure 8:
Percentage of Canadians 12 and older who are physically active in their leisure time, 2005



Source: Statistics Canada. "Physically active Canadians." *Health Reports* 18, no. 3 (Ottawa: August 2007). Catalogue no. 82-003-XWE.

STATE OF LEARNING IN CANADA

Toward a Learning Future

Student Engagement

A higher proportion of young people who reported high social and academic engagement during high school attended post-secondary education (PSE).

- In 2005, more than 20% of youth who attempted a bachelor degree in university reported being very engaged in high school, compared with 7% of those who did not pursue PSE. This figure increased to 31% for students who undertook graduate studies.²⁶

Table 2:
Post-secondary attendance of 24- to 26-year-olds in 2005, by high-school activities (percentage)

	PARTICIPATION RATE		TYPE OF INSTITUTION ATTENDED		
	Never attended PSE	Attended PSE	Attended university	Attended college/CEGEP	Attended other PSE
General high-school engagement (%)					
Not very engaged	39	61	36	38	27
Engaged	19	81	49	34	17
Very engaged	10	90	66	26	8
Academic high-school engagement (%)					
Not very engaged	39	61	35	39	26
Engaged	19	81	50	34	17
Very engaged	12	88	64	26	10
Social high-school engagement (%)					
Not very engaged	37	63	38	38	24
Engaged	19	81	50	33	17
Very engaged	12	88	60	30	10

Source: Shaienks, Danielle, and Tomasz Gluszynski. *Participation in Postsecondary Education: Graduates, Continuers and Drop Outs, Results from YITS Cycle 4*. Ottawa: Statistics Canada, November 2007. Catalogue no. 81-595-MIE2007059.

CCL's annual Survey of Canadian Attitudes toward Learning (SCAL) provides a unique opportunity to gauge the opinions, perceptions and beliefs of Canadians about various aspects of learning in Canada.

The results of the CCL report 2007 *Survey of Canadian Attitudes toward Learning: Results for elementary and secondary school learning* indicate that Canadians hold a complex set of attitudes toward structured learning in Canada's elementary and secondary schools. For more information, visit www.ccl-cca.ca/CCL/Reports/SCAL/.

POST-SECONDARY EDUCATION

The term *post-secondary education* (PSE) refers to academic, technical and vocational courses and programs beyond secondary school levels and provided by colleges, Collège d'enseignement général et professionnels (CEGEP), universities and university colleges. While most of these institutions are public, some are private. Graduates from PSE programs receive diplomas, certificates or undergraduate or graduate degrees.

While the pursuit of knowledge is a worthy goal in itself, many people undertake PSE primarily for employment purposes. As the majority of occupations today require higher skill levels, the ability to meet labour-market demands is critical to Canada's competitiveness and economic performance. Knowledge is now the currency of the global economy, making a skilled and adaptable workforce a vital component of a productive and prosperous country.

A growing number of jobs are going unfilled for lack of qualified candidates with PSE. Employers are reporting labour and skills shortages in numerous fields, including engineering, health professions, high technology and many of the highly skilled trades. PSE institutions play a vital role in addressing such gaps.

Key indicators of PSE:

- attainment in PSE
 - university enrolment
 - participation in and graduation from PSE
 - apprenticeship training
- a skilled and adaptable workforce
- quality PSE
- access
- affordability and sustainability

Attainment in Post-secondary Education

Canada has had a positive record of improving the educational attainment of its working population. Educational expenditures that have been steadily increasing for almost two decades have yielded strong results for those with PSE. Continuing support for a high-level PSE sector will ensure the sufficient and timely supply of highly skilled workers that a successful economy demands.

What We've Learned since 2007

University enrolment

- Canadian university enrolment is expected to grow nationally by between 70,000 and 150,000 full-time students over the next decade, according to a recent report by the Association of Universities and Colleges of Canada (AUCC).²⁷
- An estimated 1,047,700 students registered for university classes in 2005–2006, an increase of 3% from 2004–2005.²⁸

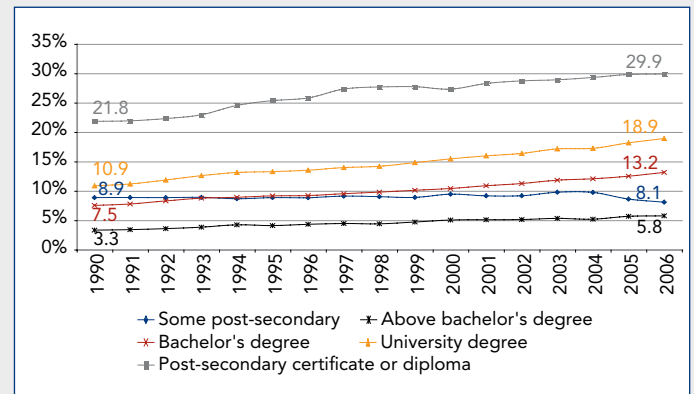
Participation in and graduation from PSE

- Almost 80% of young adults aged 24 to 26 were attending PSE in 2005, up two percentage points from 2003.
- Of these young people, 40% were attending university, double the rate of 21% six years earlier (1999). Participation in college, or CEGEP in Quebec, and other post-secondary institutions, increased by three percentage points, from 23% in 1999 to 26% in 2005.²⁹
- Among those who attended PSE since 1999, 75% had graduated by 2005. Of those, 16% were pursuing further studies. However, 15% had dropped out and did not graduate.³⁰
- Canadian universities granted a record 215,400 degrees, diplomas and certificates in 2005, up 2.3% from 2004, and an increase of more than 43,000 over the number granted in 1998.³¹
- In 2005, 62% of all university undergraduate completers were female and 38% were male—a change from 1992, when 58% were female and 42% were male.³²

Apprenticeship training³³

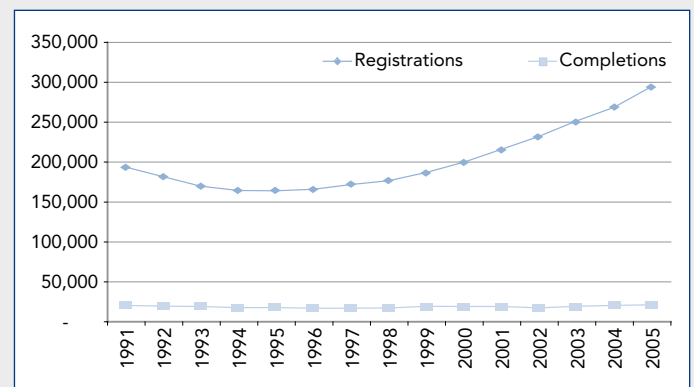
- Registrations for apprenticeship training programs increased in all major trade groups in 2005. The largest gains occurred in the building construction trades.
- In 2005, total registrations in apprenticeship training reached 293,835, a 9.7% increase over 2004, and the biggest single-year increase since 1995.
- Completions of apprenticeship training have also been on the rise, reaching a high of 20,555 in 2005, an increase of 4.3% over 2004.
- In 2005, women accounted for 9.8% of total apprentices, more than double the proportion (4.5%) in 1992.

Figure 9:
Distribution of population by level of post-secondary education, 15 and older, Canada, 1990–2006



Source: Statistics Canada. Labour Force Survey. Ottawa: 2006.

Figure 10:
Number of apprentices, by registrations and completions, Canada, 1991–2005



Source: Statistics Canada. "Registered apprenticeship training programs, 2005." *The Daily* (Nov. 15, 2007). Available at www.statcan.ca/english/dai-quo.

A Skilled and Adaptable Workforce

- There is unprecedented demand for post-secondary graduates in the job market. In the decade leading up to 2015, about two-thirds (65.9%) of all job openings are expected to be in occupations that usually require post-secondary education (university, college or apprenticeship training) or in management, up slightly from 63% over the previous 10-year period.³⁴

STATE OF LEARNING IN CANADA

Toward a Learning Future

Table 3:
Job openings by skill level, 2006–2016

	EXPANSION DEMAND (NON-STUDENT)		RETIREMENTS		SHARE
	Level (000s)	Rate (AAGR ¹)	Level (000s)	Rate (AAR ²)	
Total skill level ³	1,697	1.1%	3,801	2.4%	100%
Management	170	1.2%	433	2.8%	11%
Occupations usually requiring:					
University education	445	1.6%	726	2.5%	21.3%
College education or apprenticeship training	560	1.1%	1,288	2.4%	33.6%
High-school diploma	425	0.9%	1,035	2.2%	26.5%
Only on-the-job training	97	0.6%	320	2.1%	7.6%

1. AAGR: average annual growth rate.

2. AAR: annual average retirement rates, which correspond to the ratio of retirement level to employment for each forecast year.

3. Skill levels are based on the 2001 National Occupational Classification Matrix, in which occupations are grouped according to the education and training normally required.

Source: Lapointe, Mario, Kevin Dunn, Nicolas Tremblay-Côté, Louis-Philippe Bergeron and Luke Ignaczak. *Looking Ahead: A 10-year Outlook for the Canadian Labour Market (2006-2015)*. Ottawa: Human Resources and Social Development Canada, 2006, p. 56.

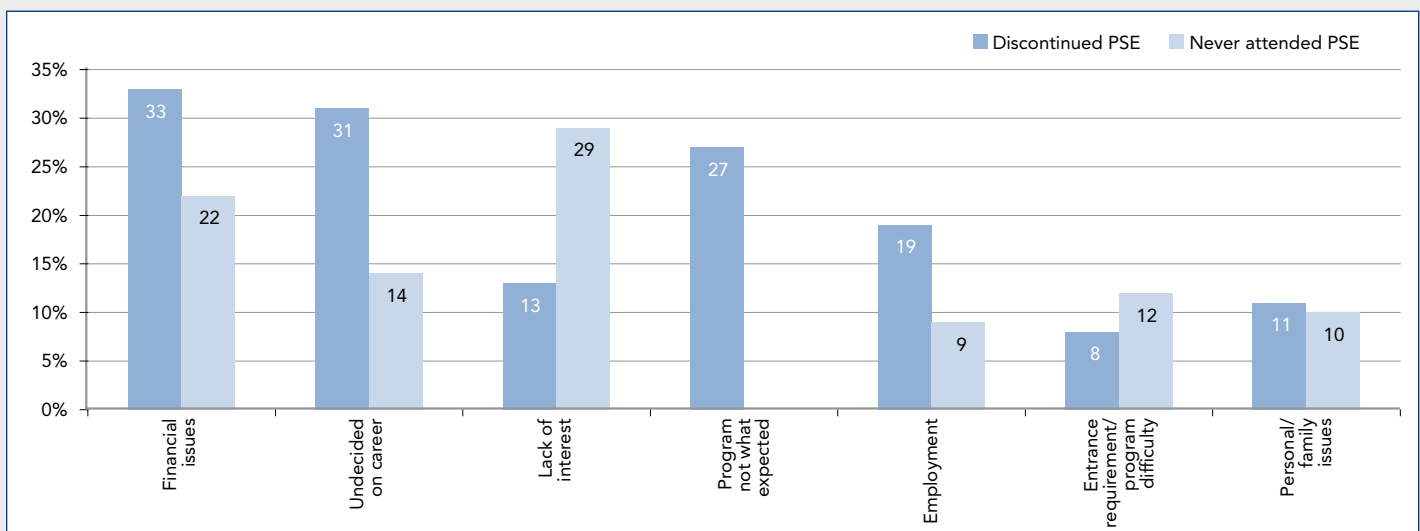
Quality PSE

- A 2003 study on retention and attrition by the Canada Millennium Scholarship Foundation (CMSF) found that 20% to 25% of first-year students do not proceed to second year. An additional 20% to 30% leave PSE in subsequent years.³⁵

Access

- Canada has one of the highest educational attainment rates in the world. According to the OECD (2007), Canada placed second internationally in overall post-secondary attainment (ahead of Japan, the United States and Australia) and seventh in the proportion of citizens with a university degree, behind top-ranked Norway, Israel and the United States.³⁶
- Demographic projections indicate that PSE's traditional age group (18 to 24) will peak in 2013 and decline over the following two decades.³⁷
- The most significant barriers to access are informational and motivational, both related to perceptions about the costs and benefits of PSE. These barriers were cited by 44% of survey respondents as the reasons for not attending PSE.³⁸

Figure 11:
Top barriers to post-secondary education



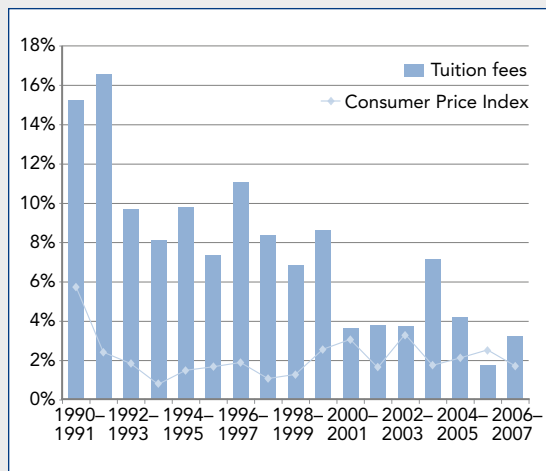
Source: Berger, J., A. Motte and A. Parkin. "Barriers to Post-Secondary Education." *The Price of Knowledge: Access and Student Finance in Canada-Third Edition*. Canada Millennium Scholarship Foundation. Montreal: 2007, p. 7.

What We've Learned since 2007

Affordability and Sustainability

Tuition fees, which are not learners' only costs associated with PSE, have increased on average at a faster rate than that of inflation (as measured by the Consumer Price Index) from 1990–1991 to 2006–2007.³⁹

Figure 12:
Rates of increase in undergraduate tuition fees versus inflation, Canada, 1990–1991 to 2006–2007



Note: Consumer Price Index annualized by taking averages from September to August.

Source: Statistics Canada. *Tuition and Living Accommodation Costs for Full-time Students at Canadian Degree-granting Institutions*. Ottawa: 2007

Strategies for Success, CCL's second annual post-secondary education report (2007), describes the conditions required to move from challenges to solutions and proposes strategies for success.

A lack of data hinders the ability to report on the state of PSE in Canada. *Strategies for Success* proposes an approach for gathering and utilizing the data required to fill the information gaps about Canada's PSE. Only with a solid base of information will we know whether our investments in PSE are meeting the needs of learners.

ADULT LEARNING

Adult learning refers to all education and training taken by adults for professional or personal reasons within a lifelong learning perspective.⁴⁰ Adult learning can take many forms, including returning to formal education, and non-formal and informal learning activities—such as taking courses for work or for pleasure, volunteering or participating in community activities, or pursuing interests and hobbies.

Adult learning plays a critical role in enabling Canadians to maintain the skills and knowledge needed to make informed decisions and lead successful lives as workers, citizens, and as members of families and communities. It can occur in many contexts, including in the home, at the workplace and in the community.

CCL's examination of Canada's workplace learning revealed many challenges, including labour and skills shortages in some regions of the country and sectors of the economy. Many adults are not able to access the learning opportunities they need to succeed in today's economy and to contribute to their communities.

Key indicators of adult learning:

- adult literacy
- health literacy
- work-related learning
- personal and community learning
 - volunteering
 - internet use

Adult Literacy

Literacy encompasses a spectrum of skills ranging from basic literacy—knowing how to read and write—to multiple literacies, which describe the ability to decode, identify, communicate and evaluate information in many forms, delivered through various media.

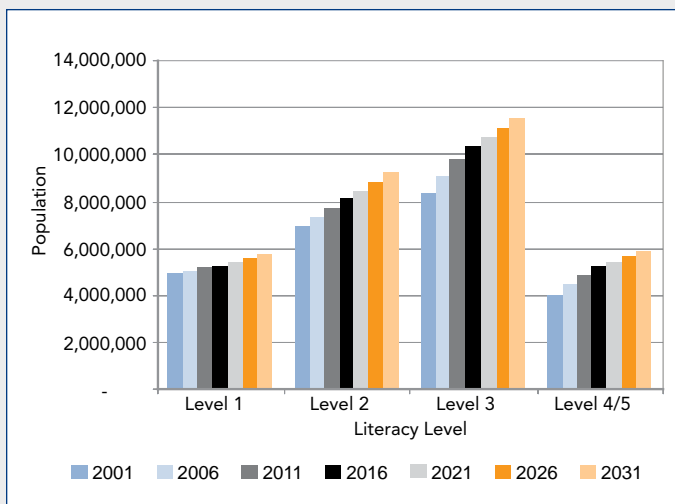
- The proportion of Canadian adults who lack the literacy skills needed to succeed in today's economy has remained unchanged over the past decade.
- New research⁴¹ shows that the proportion of adults whose skills fall below prose literacy Level 3 will remain relatively unchanged over the coming decades, with a projected decline of only one percentage point in the proportion of adults (aged 16 and over) at this level by 2031, from 48% to 47%.

STATE OF LEARNING IN CANADA

Toward a Learning Future

- However, because of population growth, the absolute number of low-skilled adults (below Level 3) will increase from 12.4 million in 2006 to 15 million by 2031, an increase of 2.6 million.
- Canada invests heavily in formal education, an average of 7% of gross domestic product (GDP) annually, and now boasts one of the highest levels of educational attainment in the world.⁴² However, findings from the 2003 *International Adult Literacy and Skills Survey (IALSS)* and the 2003 *Adult Literacy and Life Skills Survey (ALL)* suggest that significant levels of adult literacy skills are being lost during later adulthood.

Figure 13:
Literacy levels of all Canadians in a population projection from 2001 to 2031



Note: Canadians of all ages, all education levels and all immigration status are included in this projection.

Source: Canadian Council on Learning. *Reading the Future: Planning to Meet Canada's Future Literacy Needs*. Ottawa: 2008

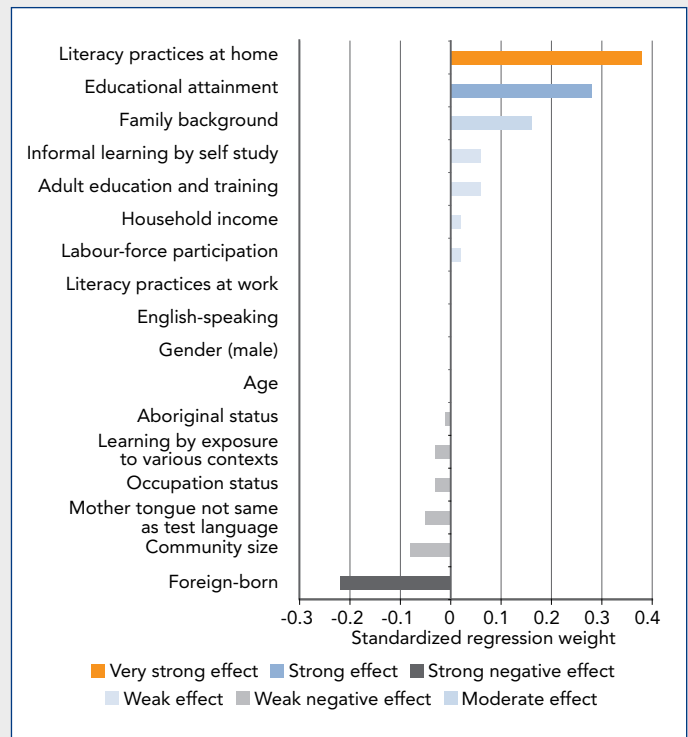
Health Literacy

Many Canadians do not have the level of health literacy needed to read nutrition labels, follow medication directions, understand safety instructions, or make informed and appropriate choices for their own healthy living. Health literacy is a composite of skills, dependent on, but different from, general literacy. To master health-literacy tasks, adults usually need all three literacy skills—prose literacy, document literacy and numeracy—simultaneously.⁴³

- Daily reading is the strongest factor in predicting higher levels of health literacy.⁴⁴

- The simple act of reading every day is associated with improved health literacy scores: 38% higher for those aged 16 to 65, and 52% higher for those aged 66 years and older.⁴⁵

Figure 14:
Factors predicting health literacy, ages 16–65



Source: Canadian Council on Learning. *Health Literacy in Canada: A Healthy Understanding*. Ottawa: 2008

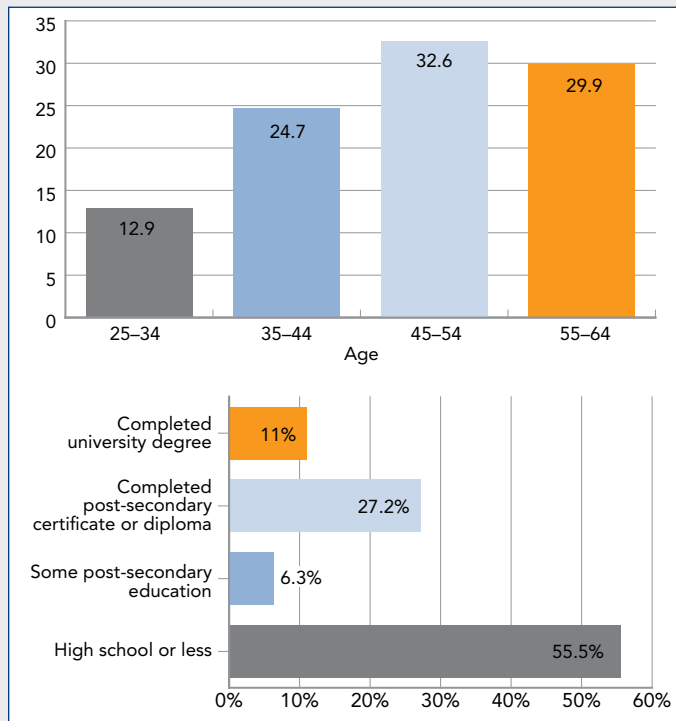
Work-related Learning

Work-related learning comprises the acquisition, upgrading and updating of job-specific skills, as well as soft skills such as communication, critical thinking and problem solving. The learning can be formal or informal. Of particular concern here is a group of individuals described as *long-term non-trainees*. These workers have not participated in any formal job-related training for a period of four years and have little intention of participating in the coming three years.

- In 2002, 2.2 million Canadian adult workers (16% of the adult workforce) were considered long-term non-trainees, of which males comprised a larger proportion (54%) than females (46%). More than half (56%) of this group had no education above the secondary school level while those with some post-secondary education were less likely to be non-trainees (6.3%).⁴⁶

What We've Learned since 2007

Figure 15:
Distribution of long-term non-trainees, by age and education level, ages 25–64, 2003



Source: Valerie Peters. *Working and Training: First Results of the 2003 Adult Education and Training Survey*. Ottawa: Statistics Canada, 2004.

Personal and Community Learning

The learning activities that adults engage in beyond their formal education occur in a variety of contexts and may include participation in interest courses, using the internet to gain useful information, or volunteer work in the community.

Volunteering

- CCL's 2007 Survey of Canadian Attitudes toward Learning (SCAL) found that 62% of adults, 18 and older, report having volunteered at least once or twice within the last year; and 16% report having volunteered at least once a week during the previous year.

Internet use

- In 2005, only 58% of residents living in rural areas and small towns accessed the internet, well below the national average. The urban-rural digital divide persists, with urban residents almost 1.5 times more likely to use the internet than rural and small-town residents.

- Individuals who are older, those with lower levels of education and those living in households with lower incomes were less likely in 2005 to have used the internet.⁴⁷
- Just over one-quarter (26%) of adult Canadians 18 years and older, about 6.4 million people, went online during 2005 for education, training or school work.⁴⁸

Table 4:
Individuals using the internet for education purposes, 2005

SOCIO-ECONOMIC CHARACTERISTIC	EDUCATION USERS	OTHER USERS	NON-USERS
Average age	34	45	58
Per cent			
Sex (% male)	50	49	49
Marital status (% married)	43	62	55
Education (% university degree)	33	26	7
Labour force (% employed)	77	74	43
Family type (% with children under age 18)	45	41	21
Location (% urban)	83	78	69
Household income greater than \$80,000	43	39	13

Source: Larry McKeown and Cathy Underhill, "Learning online: Factors associated with use of the Internet for education purposes," *Education Matters: Insights on Education, Learning and Training in Canada* 4, no. 4 (October 2007), Statistics Canada Catalogue no. 81-004-XIE.

Unlocking Canada's Potential, CCL's 2007 report on the state of workplace and adult learning, describes a country where training, which can be a powerful lever for workplace productivity, is not a priority for many adults and countless Canadian businesses.

The report compiles evidence that adults who learn and upgrade their skills enjoy many benefits, from improved job prospects to making better decisions, to increasing the likelihood that their children will succeed in learning.

However, the report also notes that while much attention is focussed on the one-third of employees who receive training, there is little understanding of those who do not participate in learning and training activities, particularly those who say they are unlikely to do so in the future.

The report is available at www.ccl-cca.ca/CCL/Reports/StateofLearning/UnlockingCanadasPotential.htm.

STATE OF LEARNING IN CANADA

Toward a Learning Future

ABORIGINAL LEARNING

First Nations, Inuit and Métis Learning

To appreciate what is meant by Aboriginal learning, it is important to understand that Aboriginal peoples in Canada encompass hundreds of communities with diverse cultures, languages and nation-based governance and treaty-related rights. Aboriginal peoples in Canada comprise three main groups: First Nations, Inuit and Métis.*

More than one million people identified themselves as Aboriginal in the 2006 Census, or 3.8% of the Canadian population. The Aboriginal population increased by 45% between 1996 and 2006, nearly six times the rate of non-Aboriginal Canadians (8%). Almost half (48%) of the Aboriginal population was below the age of 24.⁴⁹

The following indicators reflect a step toward the development of a national, holistic measurement framework that will redefine how we measure success in Aboriginal learning (see *Redefining How Success is Measured in First Nations, Inuit and Métis Learning*, on page 30). CCL will continue to work with its partners to identify the indicators required to assess Aboriginal learning through the development of an Aboriginal Learning Data and Information Strategy for Canada.

Key indicators of Aboriginal learning:

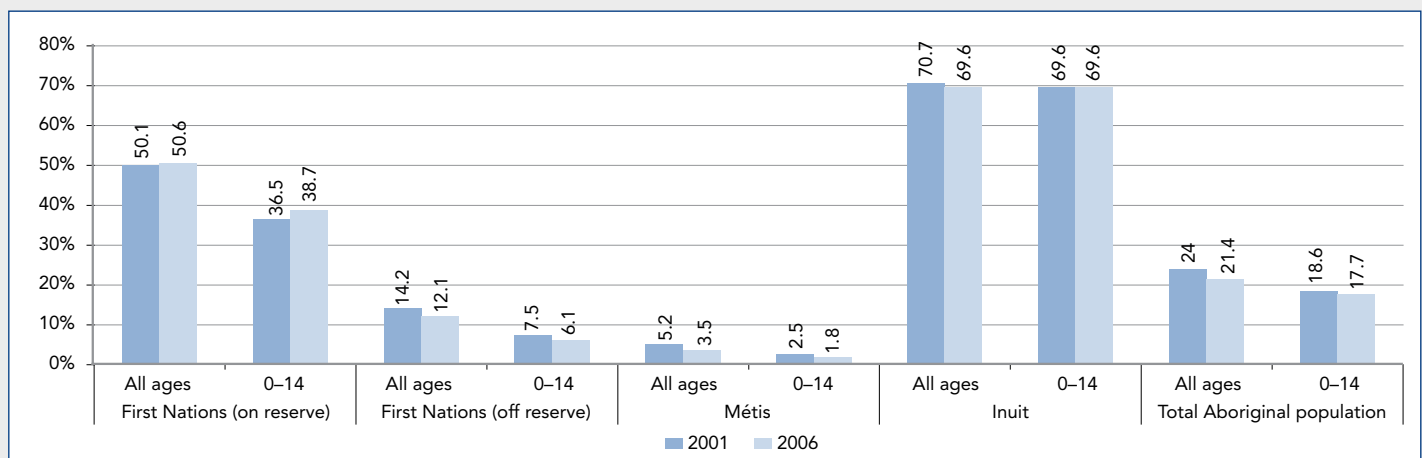
- Aboriginal languages and cultures
 - community-based education
 - learning in the community
 - Aboriginal governance of learning
- post-secondary education and skills training
- adult literacy

Aboriginal Languages and Cultures

Aboriginal language and culture play a pivotal role in successful Aboriginal learning. However, as the 2006 Census reports,⁵⁰ the number of Aboriginal language speakers is declining.

- Approximately one in five Aboriginal people (21%), more than 251,000 individuals, speaks and converses in an Aboriginal language. This percentage is lowest for children under the age of 14 (18%) and has been declining steadily over the last decade.
- However, knowledge of Aboriginal languages remained steady over the last five years for First Nations people living on reserve (51%) and Inuit (70%), even among younger generations.
- In 2006, more Aboriginal people indicated they could speak an Aboriginal language than reported an Aboriginal language as their mother tongue, suggesting that some are learning Aboriginal languages as a second language.⁵¹

Figure 16:
Ability to speak and converse[†] in an Aboriginal language, by age, 2001–2006



[†] Also referred to as “knowledge” of Aboriginal language.
Source: Statistics Canada. Census 2001 and Census 2006 (Ottawa)

* The term *First Nations* is used to refer to Status and non-Status Indians. Status Indians are those who are registered as Indians under the *Indian Act* and may or may not live on a designated Indian reserve. Non-status Indians are those who identify culturally with Indian people and/or an Indian community but who are not registered as Indians under the *Indian Act*.

What We've Learned since 2007

Community-based Education

Learning in the community—New indicator

Learning through experience, including learning from the land, Elders, traditions and ceremonies, is a widespread and vital form of learning for Aboriginal peoples. Although data on a wide array of experiential learning opportunities for Aboriginal people are not available, the *2001 Aboriginal Peoples Survey* found that:

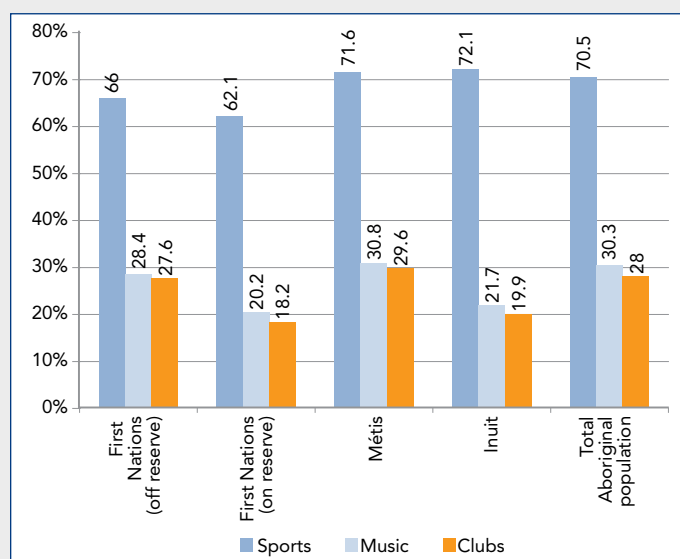
- 28% of Aboriginal children frequently participated in a social club or group after school, 71% in a sports or recreation program and 30% in an arts or music group.

Aboriginal Governance of Learning

Community-based Aboriginal learning is built on two key principles—local governance, and parental and community engagement.⁵² A 2003 survey of more than 1,400 First Nations people living on reserve found that 71% agreed that “providing the tools for good governance will improve conditions for economic and social development.”⁵³

- One in three (31%) said First Nations education systems (school boards) should decide what is to be taught and how, while 28% said such systems should be in charge of determining minimum standards.

Figure 17:
Aboriginal children, aged 14 and younger, who participate in community programs after school and at least once a week, 2001



Source: Statistics Canada. Adapted from Aboriginal Peoples Survey, 2001. Special tabulation, unpublished data

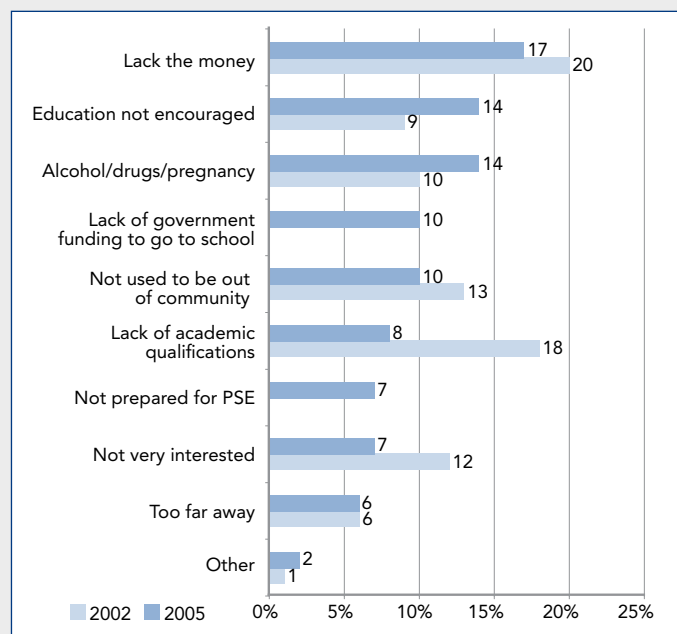
Post-secondary Education and Skills Training

Although more than 170,000 Aboriginal people had completed a post-secondary education by 2001, non-Aboriginal Canadians were 1.4 times more likely to possess a post-secondary degree, diploma or certificate. Research is needed to identify why post-secondary attainment rates, specifically university attainment rates, are lower than that of non-Aboriginal Canadians.

- A 2005 survey of First Nations people living on reserve found that 70% of young people aspire to complete a post-secondary education.⁵⁴ Only 32% attained a post-secondary degree in 2001.⁵⁵

When asked why the participation rates are lower for First Nations, 27% of young people and parents identified the lack of financial resources as the predominant barrier. Slightly smaller numbers felt that lack of encouragement, problems with alcohol, drugs and pregnancy, and cultural barriers were also significant.

Figure 18:
First Nations living on reserve who identified barriers to post-secondary education, 2002 and 2005



Sources: EKOS Research Associates Inc., *Survey of First Nations People Living On-Reserve, 2002* (Ottawa: Indian Affairs and Northern Canada, 2002); and EKOS Research Associates Inc., *Survey of First Nations People Living On-Reserve 2005—Wave 2*, as cited in Michael Mendelson’s *Aboriginal Peoples and Postsecondary Education in Canada* (Ottawa: Caledon Institute of Social Policy, 2006). p. 41.

STATE OF LEARNING IN CANADA

Toward a Learning Future

Adult Literacy

Comprehensive Canada-wide data on literacy rates among Aboriginal adults are not available. A recent analysis of the 2003 *International Adult Literacy and Skills Survey* provides some information on literacy rates among Aboriginal adults living in cities in Manitoba, Saskatchewan, the Northwest Territories and Yukon, as well as the Inuit in Nunavut.⁵⁶

- On the prose literacy scale, more than six in 10 urban Aboriginal adults in Manitoba and Saskatchewan scored below Level 3, considered a minimum for success in a knowledge-based economy. This compared with 45% of non-Aboriginal adults in Manitoba and 39% of non-Aboriginal adults in Saskatchewan.
- Over half (55%) of Aboriginal adults in Yukon, about 69% in the Northwest Territories, and 88% of Inuit in Nunavut scored below Level 3. This compares with 48% for all non-Aboriginal adults in Canada.

Other Indicators for Aboriginal Learning

There have been no relevant updates to the indicators for:

- Early development and learning
- School-based learning

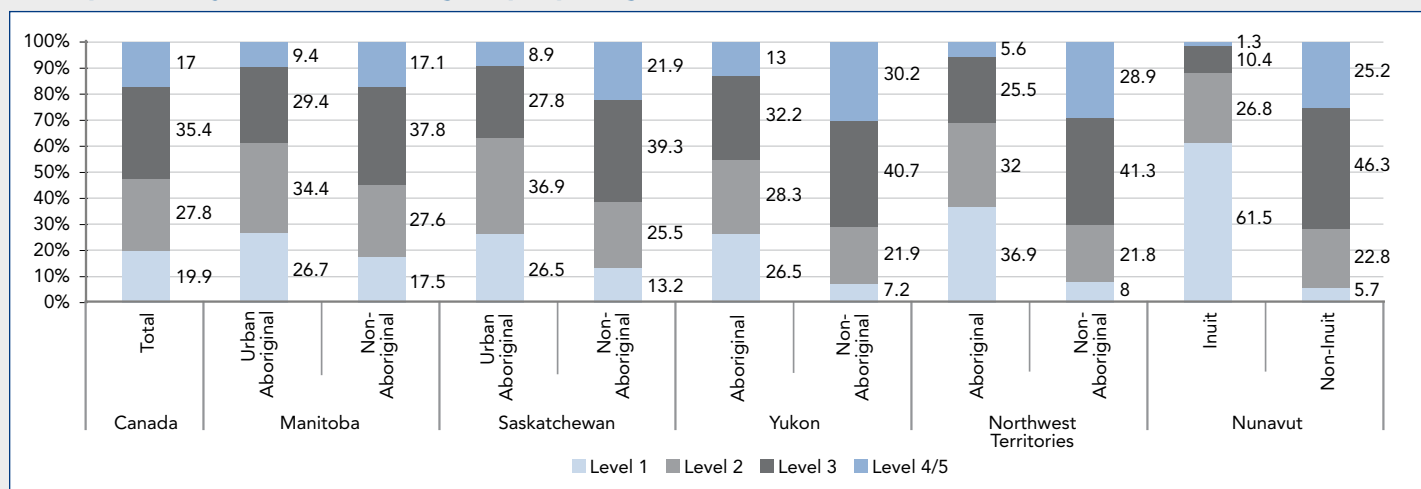
Redefining How Success is Measured in First Nations, Inuit and Métis Learning

As the *State of Learning in Canada: No Time for Complacency* (2007) concluded, existing information does not convey a comprehensive picture of the state of First Nations, Inuit and Métis learning in Canada. There is an urgent need to broaden the current indicators to reflect the holistic, lifelong nature of Aboriginal learning, and the values and aspirations of Aboriginal communities.

To this end, CCL and the Aboriginal Learning Knowledge Centre launched the "Redefining How Success is Measured in Aboriginal Learning" initiative. Through partnerships and consultations with First Nations, Inuit and Métis learning professionals, community practitioners, researchers and governments, three draft *Holistic Lifelong Learning Models* were developed to be used as the basis for a national, holistic framework for measuring lifelong learning.

The models, and a report on this initiative, *Redefining How Success is Measured in First Nations, Inuit and Métis Learning*, is available on CCL's website at www.ccl-cca.ca/CCL/Reports/RedefiningSuccessInAboriginalLearning.

Figure 19:
Prose proficiency levels* for Aboriginal people, aged 16 and over, 2003



*IALSS is limited to select cities and territories in Canada, was conducted only in English and French, and was not available in any Aboriginal language.

Source: Statistics Canada. *Building on our Competencies: Canadian Results of the International Adult Literacy and Skills Survey 2003*. Ottawa: 2005. Catalogue no. 89-617-XIE.

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