

State of the Child Report

Nanaimo 2015

Greater Nanaimo Early Years Partnership



The Greater Nanaimo Early Years Partnership, who focus on prenatal care to children 6 years and under, have produced the Nanaimo State of the Child Report to build on the awareness of the value of the early years. We all need to take action when and where we can. This report highlights how well our young children in the Nanaimo area are doing. This report builds on the 2013 State of the Child Report and adds comparisons.



Success By 6
Helping all children succeed for life.



United Way Success By 6® Partners

www.nanaimoearlyyears.org



Family and Economic Wellbeing

Demographics

2014 BC Stats estimates the Nanaimo Local Health Area population is 107,120. Of this, 20,089 were less than 18 years of age. Since 2011 the total population of Nanaimo has increased by 3%. The 2011 Census noted that one-third of families are lead by a lone parent, of which 81% are single mothers. The rate of lone parents has increased by 7% since 2006.

6.2% of the total population of Nanaimo is under the age of 6 and has decreased slightly since 2011. This downward trend is not expected to continue. BC Stats projects the population of infants will increase by 2% for the next three years.

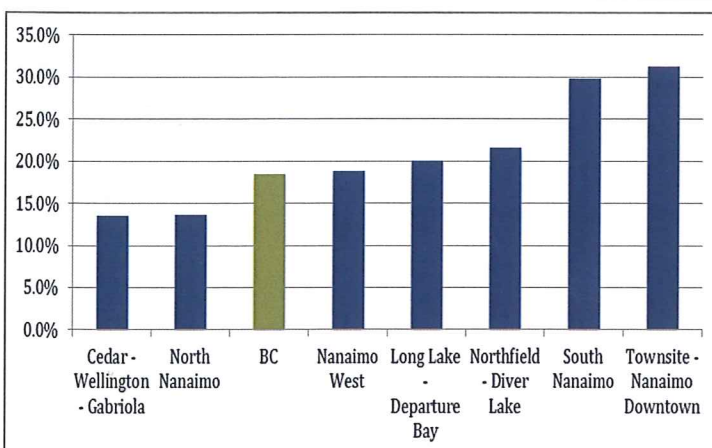
Family Economics

Relative to 2006, the 2011 Census showed the average annual family income in Nanaimo increased by 13.3% to \$67,417.

30% of families had an annual income greater than \$80,000. The proportion of families earning less than \$20,000 annually went from 7.8% in 2006 to 15.7% in 2011. The percentage of people living in poverty* worsened from 11.3% in 2006 to 17.6% in 2011. The average lone-parent family income decreased to \$38,946 in 2011.

Yet, the proportion of children under 15 years of age in families receiving income assistance has decreased from 7.8% in 2010 to 6.2% in 2013.

Children under 6 living in poverty by HELP school neighborhood (NHS 2011, HELP UBC).



Education

In 2006 87.8% of adults had a high school certificate or equivalent, by 2011 that number has improved to 90.2%. The graduation rate for 18 year olds also improved by 6% in 2012 to 71.2%.

*Statistics Canada defines poverty as living below the low income median.

Housing

The percentage of people spending more than 30% of their income on housing increased in 2011, to 23% of homeowners and 52% of renters.

Food Security

Loaves and Fishes reports 8,452 people used the Nanaimo Food Bank at least once in 2014, one-third were children.

There are currently 5 community gardens operating in partnership with the City of Nanaimo, as well as 11 operated by private organizations within the Nanaimo area.

The cost of food continues to increase. It cost \$948 to feed a family of four each month in 2013; 9% higher than the cost of the same food basket in 2011 and 33% higher than in 2007.



Children in Need of Protection and Children in Care

Fifteen of every 1,000 children newborn to 18 years old were living in care as of 2012, with 12 of every 1,000 children from newborn to 18 years old were reported to be in need of protection. These rates are 60-80% higher than the BC rates.

Aboriginal

There are two First Nation communities in the Nanaimo area: Snuneymuxw and Snaw-naw-as. 4.4% of the population of Nanaimo and 11.2% of children aged 0 to 18 identified as Aboriginal in the 2011 Census. Mid Island Metis Nation represents 32% of the Nanaimo Aboriginal population.

In October 2014, 2,041 Aboriginal students were enrolled in Nanaimo-Ladysmith Public Schools. There were 135 kindergarten students enrolled in October 2014, which is down slightly from previous years.

The Nisaika Kumtuks Elementary Centre, located in Nanaimo, opened in September 2014 and offers Early Years Childcare and Primary Education programs (kindergarten to grade 4). It is the first Vancouver Island urban Aboriginal public school.

Health and Wellness

Prenatal Health

Island Health hosted 21 prenatal classes with 277 attendees in 2014, as compared to 48 classes with 464 attendees in 2013.



90% of pregnant mothers reported being smoke free during their pregnancy in 2013/14, an improvement from 86.7% in 2011/12.

Newborn Health

930 babies were born at NRGH in 2013; 5.9% of these babies had low birth weight (less than 2.5 kilograms).



The percent of premature births improved to only 7.5% of births in 2013. 25% of the babies were born via cesarean section. This is below the provincial average of 32%.

78% of mothers were within the age range of 20-35 where healthiest baby outcomes are expected.

55% of mothers exclusively breastfed their babies initially until 4 to 6 months of age.

Child Development

In 2014, 589 children under 6 years were referred to the Nanaimo Child Development Centre (CDC) for a variety of programs, such as: speech/language, physiotherapy, occupational therapy, infant development and family development. 32% of the referrals were infants to 1 year of age and 22% were between 2 to 3 years of age.



While over 1,200 children and youth received services at the CDC in 2014, over 256 remained on the waiting list, some for up to 10 months.

186 children under 6 years were referred to the Island Health Speech Language Pathology department in 2014. This is a 24% increase from 2011. Just over half of the referrals were under 4 years of age.

Aboriginal Health

In 2014, 22% of referrals to the Nanaimo CDC self-identified as Aboriginal.

Tillicum Lelum Aboriginal Friendship Centre offers health programs for families with children 6 years and under, including Breastfeeding Support Group, Creating Healthy Families, Moms Dads and Babes, and Building Better Babies (BBB). BBB offers services to families from prenatal up to 6 months, 222 children were served in 2014. 109 people participated in the Moms Dads and Babes program in 2014. The group focuses on building parents knowledge and understanding of healthy child rearing practices.

The Snuneymuxw and Snaw-naw-as Health Centres provide immunization, prenatal health, breastfeeding and diet services to members of their communities.

Immunization Rates



The rate of children aged 2 with complete immunizations has decreased from 61% to 58%. Some parents of 2 year olds are refusing some or all immunizations (15% and 4.2% respectively).

Physical Activity

The 2013 McCreary Adolescent Survey reported findings on adolescents in the Central Island. It was found that 17% of males and 13% of females were overweight. These rates were similar to the 2008 results.



More kids are exercising: In 2013, 7% of students did not exercise, this is an improvement from 9% in 2008. On average younger students exercised more than older students. 29% for 12 years and younger compared to 12% of 17 year olds.



Between 2008 and 2012 the City of Nanaimo has noted a 35% decrease in the use of recreational facilities (pools and arenas) and a 1.5% increase in the use of recreation programs for children 3 to 11 years of age.

Child Health



The 2012/2013 hospitalization rates for children with respiratory disease were 7.9 per 1,000, a 14% improvement from 2010/2011 rates.

Rates stayed the same at 4.4 per 1,000 for children hospitalized for injury and poisoning.



24% less children are being hospitalized for dental surgery; 11.95 per 1,000 in 2010/2011 down to 9.01 per 1,000 in 2012/2013.

Acknowledgments

The success of this State of the Child Report is due to our community partners at the Greater Nanaimo Early Years Partnership with financial support from Success by 6 and Children First.

For more information about this report, please contact Amber Bruner, Children First Early Years Community Coordinator at nanaimoearlyyears@telus.net or 250.816.1699.


For more information regarding community resources the Greater Nanaimo Early Years Partnership website can be located at: www.nanaimoearlyyears.org.




Early Learning and Child Care

Early Development Instrument

The EDI measures children's development up to kindergarten using 5 domains: *physical health and wellbeing, social competence, emotional maturity, language and cognitive development and communication skills.*

 In 2013, the proportion of children considered to be vulnerable worsened by 1.5% to 34%. Physical health and well-being continues to have the highest level of vulnerable children at 18% and emotional maturity vulnerability worsened to 16%.

 Improvements were seen in the 2011-2013 EDI results. 89% of children were not vulnerable for language and cognitive development, a 21.4% improvement. 89% of children were not vulnerable for communication and general knowledge, a 8.3% improvement.

Family Resource Centres

There are currently 7 StrongStart programs in the Nanaimo area that provide free daily drop-in programs during the school year for families with children 5 years and under. In 2014, the average monthly attendance was 1,100 children. Every elementary school hosts a Ready Set Learn event for 3 and 4 year olds that supports early learning and development. Nanaimo-Ladysmith Public Schools hosts a Healthy Start to Learning event and 3 free evening information sessions on parenting in the early years.

35.8% of parents felt "I am unaware of services in my community" prevented them from accessing resources/supports in the community. Resource and support information for Nanaimo can be found at www.nanaimoearlyyears.org.

Child Friendly Environments

Parks and Playgrounds

Nanaimo offers a number of public outdoor spaces with over 631 hectares of City parks. This includes 13 destination parks and 90 neighbourhood parks. There are 65 playgrounds (some feature paved training routes for children learning to ride bikes), 26 sports fields, 4 waterparks, 2 outdoor amphitheatres, 2 skateboard parks and over 140 kilometers of trails.



Low-Cost Recreation

The City of Nanaimo continues to offer a Leisure Economic Access Pass to eligible residents. The LEAP program offers a 50% discount for up to 4 courses and 50 free admissions to City pools, arenas and gyms. The City offered 17 programs/events throughout 2015 that are less than \$5 per child. Programs included skating, swimming, gymnastics, fishing and concerts.

Licensed Child Care

There are currently 2,467 licensed day-care spots available in the Nanaimo area, an increase of 6.7% from 2013. Of those 2,467 spots, 653 were designated as preschool/school age, 710 as before and after school care and 60 on reserve group daycare.

30.1% of parents felt "Child Care not available to me" prevented them from accessing resources/supports in the community.

PacificCARE Child Care Resource & Referral Program supports families and caregivers. Family referrals to child care providers increased 9% in 2014 from 2013. Information can be found at www.pacific-care.bc.ca.

Aboriginal Communities

The two First Nation communities each have childcare and early learning/Aboriginal Head Start programs. The Hul'qumi'num language is taught in all early childhood education programs.

Tillicum Lelum offers an Island Treasure Box program that provides weekly boxes of books and resources to families with children 6 and under, 258 children were provided boxes in 2014. Qeq College Kindergarten Transition enhances school readiness for children and their families, with 50 children enrolled in 2014. 1,289 children were provided child minding while their families attended Tillicum's programs.

Nanaimo Aboriginal Centre offers a free drop-in Aboriginal Early Literacy program for preschoolers and their parents. The Aboriginal Early Years Outreach program provides early development and learning for families with infants and children.

Kw'umut Lelum's 4 Seasons Early Years Program in partnership with local Elders offers culturally based, community driven Playgroups and Parent Gatherings based on the 4 Seasons of Life and Traditional Teachings. 45 children participated in 2014.

Library Statistics

In 2014, 10,527 children attended just over 500 programs held by the three branches, including the new North Nanaimo library. A total of 331,402 children's books and media were borrowed in 2014. There are a total of 9 educational early literacy computer stations, which were logged onto by children 11,891 times.

Aboriginal Communities

Tillicum Lelum offers a Walking with Elders program for children, with 121 participants in 2014. 140 participants took part in Tillicum's Family Camp program in 2014. Tillicum's Zone program offers families with children dinner, followed by recreational activities.

Nanaimo Aboriginal Centre offers an Aboriginal Family Morning drop-in program free to families with young children. A monthly Aboriginal Family Night is also offered to everyone.

Sources:

Source information is available at www.nanaimoearlyyears.org.

