



# Families

**2006**

Business Planning ● Strategic Services

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# FAMILIES

## Highlights

- **Proportion Families** - Almost 86% of Edmontonians lived in family-based households. This figure was almost the same for Calgary, Alberta and the rest of Canada.
- **Children** - Two-thirds of Edmonton's families included children.
- **Marriage** - Fewer people are getting married, more are living common-law or are not in relationships (nearly half of Canadians aged 25 to 29). If people do marry, they are waiting until they are older.
- **Divorce** - About 38% of marriages end in divorce. The rate of break-up is high during the first five to seven years, then tapers off considerably. The divorce rate in Alberta was down by 4%, although the rate for Canada as a whole showed an increase of 0.7%.
- **Common-law** (co-habitation) relationships are generally less stable than marriages, don't tend to last as long, and the partners generally do not share the same levels of health, income or sense of well-being as married persons.
- **Lone Parent Families** - Edmonton has a higher proportion of lone-parent families (18.4%) than Calgary or Alberta as a whole, and the proportion increased from just over 17% in 1996. Nearly 20% of female lone-parent mothers with young children were unemployed; the rate of low income for female-headed lone-parent families is almost double the rate for the general population. Children in lone-parent families tend to show many of the same traits as children from poor families – behaviour problems, poor performance at school, and have difficult relationships - as a considerably higher percent of lone-parent families have low incomes than do all families.
- **Birth Rate** - Canada's birth rate has declined rapidly and is relatively low compared to the United States, but still replacing itself. The Edmonton birth rate has declined from about 18 per 1,000 population in 1990 to 12 per 1,000 population in 2003. Women are also waiting until they are older to have children.
- **Adult Children** - Many adult children are still living with their parents, or have returned to the parental home following a relationship break-up. In 2001, 21% of 25 to 29-year-olds were still living with their parents.
- **Income Gap and Poverty** - The gaps between Canada's wealthy, middle class and low-income families are widening, in part because over the past 15 years the average hourly wage rose by only ten cents. While the average income of Canada's wealthiest families rose by 42.7%, families in the middle range gained only 3.4 percent, while the poorest families lost 51%. A record number of families now have dual incomes.
- While Edmonton families earned less than those in Calgary, they were still earning much more than the average Canadian family.
- The incidence of poverty is higher among couples with children (10.1%) than for couples without children (6.7%).
- Poverty among elderly couples is greatly reduced, although 45% of elderly singles in Edmonton were living with incomes below LICO. Single Albertans in general earned less (\$27,000) than families (\$64,300).
- **Spending** - Between 1980 and 2004, average household spending increased by 29%, but after-tax household incomes only rose by 4%. The average household debt is now equivalent to 125% of disposable household income. In 1990 it was 91%.
- **Family Violence** - The number of reported incidents of family violence has declined since 1998, but family violence is generally under-reported.



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# FAMILIES

## 1. INTRODUCTION

In a report prepared for the Vanier Institute of the Family, Schlesinger defines families as:

“...any combination of two or more persons who are bound together over time by ties of mutual consent, birth and/or adoption/placement and who, together, assume responsibilities for variant combinations of some of the following:

- physical maintenance and care of group members;
- addition of new members through procreation or adoption;
- socialization of children;
- social control of children;
- production, consumption and distribution of goods and services; and
- affective nurturance – love.”<sup>1</sup>

The Vanier Institute has examined the Canadian family from many aspects. Following are some of the key trends identified in 2004.

### Top 10 Trends for Canadian Families<sup>2</sup>

1. Fewer couples are getting legally married.
2. More couples are breaking up.
3. Families are getting smaller.
4. Children experience more transitions as parents change their marital status.
5. Canadians are generally satisfied with life.
6. Family violence is under-reported.
7. Multiple-earner families are the norm.
8. Women still do most of the juggling involved in balancing work and home.
9. Inequality is worsening.
10. The future will have more aging families.

Some of these trends will be explored from an Edmonton and Alberta context in the following pages<sup>3</sup>.

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<sup>1</sup> Schlesinger. 1998.

<sup>2</sup> Sauvé. 2004a.

## 2. TYPES OF FAMILIES

The following descriptions were proposed by the Vanier Institute during the International Year of the Family (1994) to classify the current variety of families:<sup>4</sup>

- **Nuclear** families – a conventional family with two parents and their one or more biological or adopted children living together.
- **Extended** families – parents, children, aunts, uncles, grandparents, and other blood relations whether living together or not.
- **Blended, recombined, or reconstituted** families – parents who have divorced their first spouses, and/or remarried someone else (for example because of death of a spouse), and formed a new family that includes children from one or both marriages, and/or from the remarriage.
- **Childless** families consisting of a couple.
- **Lone-parent** families – one parent, most frequently a mother, with a child or children.
- **Cohabiting couples** and **common-law marriages** – family arrangements similar to other types of families but without legalized marriage.
- **Gay and lesbian** parents.

Table 1, *Family sizes for Edmonton and Alberta, 2001* shows that Edmonton families have a tendency to be smaller in size than those of Alberta as a whole. 68.9% of Edmonton families are two or three person families in contrast to 66.3% for Alberta as a whole.

Table 1: Family sizes for Edmonton, and Alberta, 2001		
	Edmonton	Alberta
2-person family	46.8%	45.3%
3-person family	22.1%	21.0%
4-person family	21.2%	22.3%
5-person or more family	10.0%	11.5%
<b>Average family size</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>3</b>

Source: Canada Census

Table 2, *Selected family characteristics for Edmonton, Calgary, Alberta and Canada 2001*, shows the number and percent of selected family types, average number of persons in these family types and median income.

<sup>3</sup> Unless specifically noted otherwise, any references to Edmonton or Calgary apply to The City of Edmonton and the City of Calgary, respectively. Current data for the cities themselves are not always available. For example, some of the information provided by Statistics Canada refers to the Edmonton Census Metropolitan Area (CMA) – a conglomeration of the City proper, plus surrounding municipalities and rural areas.

<sup>4</sup> **Schlesinger. 1998.**

**Table 2: Selected family characteristics for Edmonton, Calgary, Alberta and Canada 2001**

<b>Selected Family Characteristics</b>	<b>Edmonton</b>	<b>Calgary</b>	<b>Alberta</b>	<b>Canada</b>
Total number of families	176,955	238,710	811,280	8,371,020
Number of married-couple families	123,130	174,540	600,995	5,901,425
Percent of married couple families	69.6%	73.1%	74.1%	70.5%
Average number of persons in married-couple families	3.2	3.2	3.2	3.1
Number of common-law couple families	21,305	28,035	93,765	1,158,410
Percent of common-law couple families	12.0%	11.7%	11.5%	13.8%
Average number of persons in common-law couple families	2.6	2.5	2.7	2.8
Number of lone-parent families	32,520	36,135	116,520	1,311,190
Percent of lone-parent families	18.4%	15.1%	14.3%	15.6%
Average number of persons in lone-parent families	2.5	2.5	2.6	2.5
Number of female lone-parent families	26,690	29,300	92,945	1,065,365
Average number of persons in female lone-parent families	2.6	2.5	2.6	2.5
Percent of female lone-parent families	15.1%	12.3%	11.4%	12.7%
Number of male lone-parent families	5,825	6,835	23,575	245,825
Percent of male lone-parent families	3.3%	2.8%	2.9%	2.9%
Average number of persons in male lone-parent families	2.4	2.4	2.5	2.4
Median family income, 2000 (\$) - All census families	56,212	64,603	60,142	55,016
Median family income, 2000 (\$) - Couple families	62,663	70,411	65,041	60,345
Median family income, 2000 (\$) - Lone-parent families	31,956	36,675	32,763	30,791

Source: Canada Census

### 3. THE RELATIONSHIP FOUNDATIONS OF OUR FAMILIES

There has been a trend in Canada in recent years away from traditional marriage towards *cohabitation* (living together). If people do marry, they are doing so at a later

age, and are waiting longer to have children or are not having children at all. Both Edmonton and Calgary have higher percents of common-law couples than does the province as a whole but lower percents than does Canada as a whole. Table 3 shows the number and percent of couple families by presence or absence of children. Table 4 shows that while Edmonton has a higher percent of lone-parent families, Calgary has a larger number of these families.

<b>Table 3: Couple families in private households by family structure and presence of children, Edmonton, Calgary, Alberta and Canada, 2001</b>								
	<b>Edmonton City</b>		<b>Calgary City</b>		<b>Alberta<sup>5</sup></b>		<b>Canada</b>	
	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%
<b>All couple families</b>	<b>144,435</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>202,575</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>811,285</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>7,059,835</b>	<b>100%</b>
Without children at home	69,885	48.4%	94,380	46.6%	297,655	36.7%	3,406,650	48.2%
With children at home	74,555	51.6%	108,185	53.4%	513,630	63.3%	3,653,180	51.7%
<b>Families of married couples</b>	<b>123,130</b>	<b>85.2%</b>	<b>174,535</b>	<b>86.1%</b>	<b>600,995</b>	<b>74.1%</b>	<b>5,901,420</b>	<b>83.6%</b>
Without children at home	56,040	38.8%	75,145	37.1%	241,740	40.2%	2,768,975	39.2%
With children at home	67,090	46.4%	99,390	49.1%	359,250	59.8%	3,132,445	44.4%
<b>Families of common-law couples</b>	<b>21,310</b>	<b>14.7%</b>	<b>28,030</b>	<b>13.8%</b>	<b>93,765</b>	<b>11.6%</b>	<b>1,158,410</b>	<b>16.4%</b>
Without children at home	13,845	9.6%	19,235	9.5%	55,910	59.6%	637,675	9.0%
With children at home	7,465	5.2%	8,795	4.3%	37,855	40.4%	520,735	7.4%

Source: Canada Census

<b>Table 4: Lone parent families in private households by gender of family head, Edmonton, Calgary, Alberta and Canada, 2001</b>								
	<b>Edmonton</b>		<b>Calgary</b>		<b>Alberta<sup>6</sup></b>		<b>Canada</b>	
	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%
<b>Lone-parent families</b>	<b>32,520</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>36,135</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>116,520</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>1,311,190</b>	<b>100%</b>
Female parent	26,690	82.1%	29,300	81.1%	92,945	79.7%	1,065,365	81.2%
Male parent	5,825	17.9%	6,835	18.9%	23,575	20.2%	245,825	18.7%

Source: Canada Census

While Edmonton had about the same proportion of married couple families as Calgary and the province as a whole, it had a lower proportion of common-law families and a higher proportion of lone-parent families (Tables 3 and 4). Table 5 shows the marital status of Edmontonians in 2005.

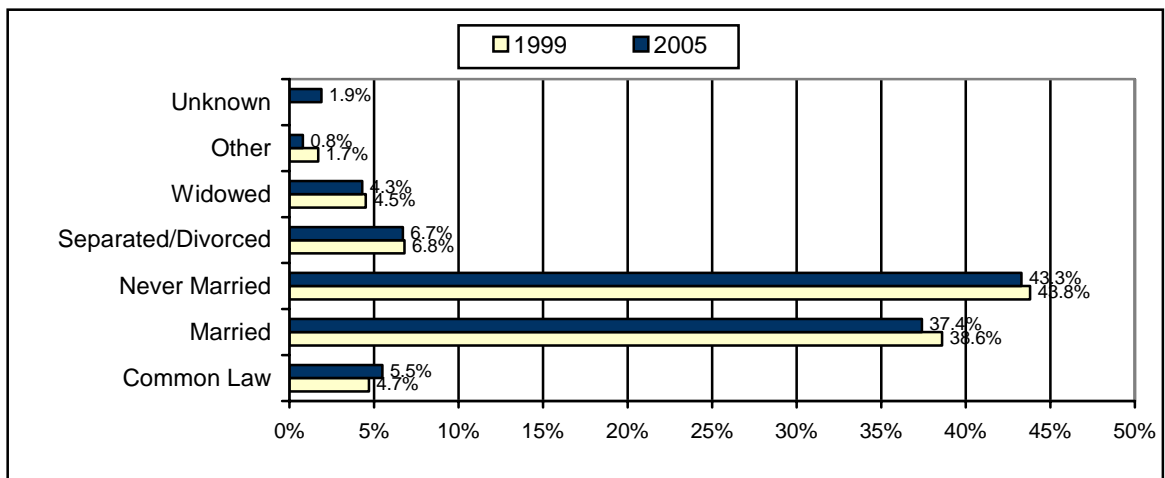
<sup>5</sup> Statistics Canada. 2004.

<sup>6</sup> Statistics Canada. 2004.

<b>Table 5: Marital status of Edmonton residents, 2005</b>			
<b>Marital Status</b>	<b>Females</b>	<b>Males</b>	<b>Total</b>
Married	133,290 (37.1%)	133,191 (37.7%)	<b>266,481 (37.4%)</b>
Widowed	24,906 (6.9%)	6,056 (1.7%)	<b>30,962 (4.3%)</b>
Separated, divorced	27,959 (7.8%)	19,712 (5.6%)	<b>47,671 (6.7%)</b>
Common-law	19,790 (5.5%)	19,742 (5.6%)	<b>39,532 (5.5%)</b>
Never Married	145,139 (40.4%)	163,271 (46.2%)	<b>308,410 (43.3%)</b>
Other	2,674 (0.7%)	3,002 (0.8%)	<b>5,676 (0.8%)</b>
Unknown	5,430 (1.5%)	8,229 (2.3%)	<b>13,659 (1.9%)</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>359,188 (50.4%)</b>	<b>353,203 (49.6%)</b>	<b>712,391 (100.0%)</b>

Source: Edmonton Census

Figure 1 shows that the proportion of Edmontonians living in common-law relationships has increased between 1999 and 2005, and that a slightly smaller percent of people were in married relationships in 2005 as well as having never been married. These trends are similar to what is observable Canada-wide (Sauvé, 2004a).

**Figure 1: Changing marital status of Edmonton residents, 1999 and 2005**

Source: Edmonton Civic Census

<b>Table 6: Marital status of residents of Edmonton, Alberta and Canada, 2005</b>			
	<b>Edmonton</b>	<b>Alberta</b>	<b>Canada</b>
Single	n/a	43.2%	41.8%
Never married	43.3%	n/a	n/a
Other	0.8%	n/a	n/a
Common-law	5.5%	n/a	n/a
Married	37.4%	48.1%	48.5%
Widowed	4.3%	3.7%	4.8%
Divorced	n/a	5.0%	4.9%
Separated or divorced	6.7%	n/a	n/a
Unknown	1.9%	n/a	n/a

Source: Statistics Canada, 2006 and Edmonton Municipal Census, 2005

Table 6 compares the marital status of Edmontonians with residents of Alberta and Canada for 2005. While direct comparisons are problematic because the Edmonton data was not gathered or presented using the same categories, it is possible to see that a lower proportion of Edmontonians were married than Albertans or Canadians as a whole.

## Marriage

In Canada, the marriage rate peaked at 10.6 per 1,000 population in 1941, declined to 7.1 by 1990 and then to 5.0 per 1,000 population in 2001. The change in the 1990s was partly driven by the low rate of marriage in Quebec, which had dropped to 3.4 per 1,000 population by 2000<sup>7</sup>. There was a very high rate of cohabitation in Quebec.

Among young adults aged 20 to 29, the proportion of those who are neither cohabiting nor married has increased. Between 1981 and 2001, the proportion of Canadians 25 to 29 in a union of any type decreased from 64 to 45% for men and from 73 to 57% for women<sup>8</sup>. Many young adults are staying single until later in life, pursuing further education, travel or careers and financial ambitions. A smaller proportion of young people will eventually marry — approximately 75% in recent years, compared to the 90% recorded in previous years.

According to the Vanier Institute of the Family the average age at which women marry for the first time is 28.2 years of age; for men it is 30.2 years of age<sup>9</sup>. Three out of four (75%) of all marriages were first-time marriages in 2001, down from 81% in 1981. Thirty-eight percent of the marriages that occurred in 2001 can be expected to end in divorce.

The Canadian marriage rate remained almost unchanged in 2002 from the record low set in 2001 (4.7 marriages per 1,000 population).<sup>10</sup> Marriage rates rose for men in the 35 to 39 age group, but decreased for all other age groups of men. The rate of marriage rose for women aged 35 to 39, and for women aged 60 to 69. Although the *number* of marriages involving both men and women in their 40s and 50s increased, the population of this age cohort increased even more, and the marriage *rate* for the cohort therefore showed a decrease.

In Alberta there were 17,452 marriages in 2004<sup>11</sup>. The largest number of marriages was in the 20-24 and 25-29 year age groups with 26.4% and 29.4% of marriages, respectively. Most marriages were between partners who had never been married previously, 67.5%. 2,063 marriages were between two people both of whom were divorced, 11.8% of Alberta marriages in 2004. The number of marriages in Alberta appears to be on a slow downward trend. The following figure shows the trend in number of marriages since 1995.

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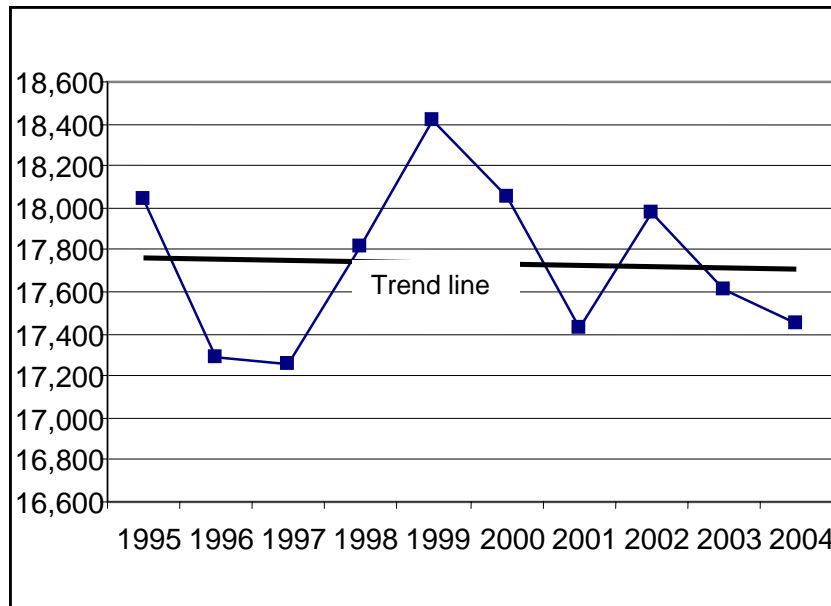
<sup>7</sup> Statistics Canada. 2003.

<sup>8</sup> Statistics Canada. 2002.

<sup>9</sup> Vanier Institute of the Family. <http://www.vifamily.ca/library/facts/facts.html>

<sup>10</sup> Statistics Canada. 2004.

<sup>11</sup> Alberta Vital Statistics Annual Review 2004. Government Services

**Figure 2. Number of Alberta marriages, 1995-2004.**

Source: Alberta Vital Statistics Annual Review 2004

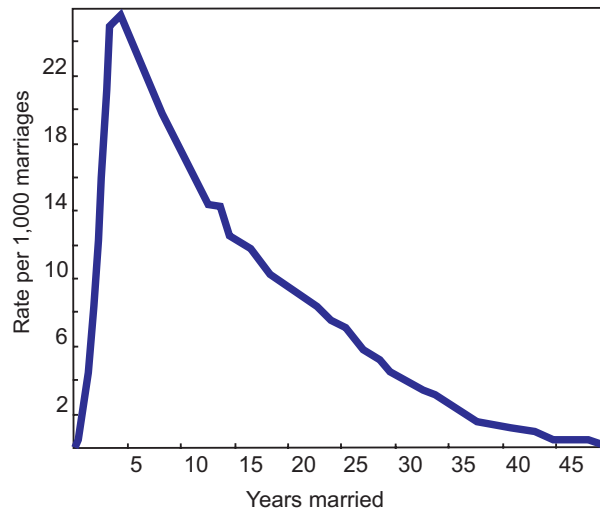
## Divorce

More and more people who have been divorced at least once before are getting divorced again. In 2003, 16.2% of all divorces in Canada involved males who had previously been divorced, 15.7% entailed repeat divorces for women. By contrast, in 1973 only 5.4% of divorces were repeat events (the figure was the same for both men and women).

In 2003, the divorce rate in Alberta fell by 4%, from 8,291 divorces in 2002 to 7,960 in 2003, in contrast to a Canada-wide increase of 0.7%. Forty percent of Alberta marriages had ended in divorce by the time of the 30<sup>th</sup> anniversary<sup>12</sup>.

As shown in the following graph, the risk of divorce is greatest during the first few years of marriage, and then decreases gradually through the succeeding years.

<sup>12</sup> Statistics Canada. 2005a.

**Figure 3: Divorce rate by length of marriage, Canada, 2002**

Source: Statistics Canada, 2004b

### Common-Law Relationships

In 2001, 16% of all Canadian couples and 8.2% of all American couples were in some form of common-law relationship. However, in Quebec, 30% of all couples were cohabiting. If the figures for Quebec are excluded, the proportion of Canadian couples cohabiting drops to 11.7%.<sup>13</sup>

**Table 7: Proportion of all couples in a common-law relationship, Canada, 2001**

	% of All Couples
Canada	16.0
Quebec	29.8
Other provinces	11.7

Source: Statistics Canada, 2002

“For its part, cohabitation is first of all a sexual and emotional relationship within the context of living together. It is often seen as entailing fewer responsibilities at the legal, economic, and even emotional levels. Some individuals choose cohabitation because it requires, in their opinion, less sexual fidelity than marriage . . . It is perceived to be a **freer lifestyle** than marriage, that is, a relationship not bound by the norm of permanency.”<sup>14</sup>

<sup>13</sup> Ambert. 2005a.

<sup>14</sup> Ambert. *op. cit.*

Living together does not require ceremonies, and may not involve members of the extended families of the partners in any way. These relationships are much easier to dissolve than marriage, especially when there are no children. The frequency of dissolution of cohabitation relationships is far higher than the 30% or so of Canadian marriages that end in divorce after 5 years. In the 1970s, about 60% of people in cohabitation relationships went on to marry their partner within 3 years of first living together. This compares to only about 35% in the early 1990s<sup>15</sup>.

Cohabitation has generally been more widespread among couples with lower levels of education and income, but as it is becoming more socially acceptable the differences between those who cohabit and those who marry are becoming less significant<sup>16</sup>.

Cohabitation may bring advantages to some. When a single mother enters a cohabitation relationship, the probability of family poverty may be reduced by as much as 30%.

Because people approach living together differently than they do traditional marriage, there are numerous implications for the relationship and for children resulting from that relationship. Ambert<sup>17</sup> summarized the recent research findings on marriage versus cohabitational relationships:

- Marriages tend to last longer than cohabitation. They entail a higher level of commitment, particularly by males, and are more secure. Marriage also usually results in more social support and cohesion with the extended families.
- Married men and women have a higher feeling of well-being than those in common-law relationships. They have fewer emotional problems, they are healthier, and live longer (although this may also be because married people generally have higher incomes, which in turn leads to better health and lower mortality).
- Married adults are more likely to maintain a healthy lifestyle and diet than nonmarried adults. They eat at home more often, make less use of alcohol and illegal drugs, and are more successful at taking care of their own basic needs.
- The research Ambert examined described a number of predictable effects of cohabitation on children in such relationships. These are presented in greater detail in the *Edmonton Social Plan* report on “Children” (prepared in 2006).
- Cohabitation may have some important advantages for older people, particularly those who are widowed or divorced. It provides companionship and economic benefits but may still allow the partners to preserve their respective children’s inheritance rights. Many older men have difficulty adapting to the loss of a spouse and welcome a new relationship. Widowed and divorced older women are perhaps less willing to surrender their newfound independence or to enter a new marriage which may result in them having to care for another ailing husband. They may therefore welcome an informal

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<sup>15</sup> Ambert. *op. cit.*

<sup>16</sup> Ambert. *op. cit.*

<sup>17</sup> Ambert. *op. cit.*

partnership. Older cohabitators experience higher levels of happiness and stability than younger ones.

### Lone-Parent Families

The proportion of Edmonton families with only one parent increased from 17.2% in 1996 to 18.4% in 2001, and the average size of all lone-parent families dropped marginally, from 2.6 to 2.5 individuals. During the same period, the proportion of lone-parent families in Alberta declined slightly, from 14.8% to 14.4%, and the average family size remained the same<sup>18</sup>.

Edmonton had a higher proportion of lone-parent families than either Calgary or the province in 2001 (Table 8). The proportion of lone-parent families also increased in the city since the previous Federal Census — from 17.2% of all families in 1996<sup>19</sup> to 18.4% in 2001.

Poverty is one of the key issues facing lone-parent families, and lone-parent families are poor more frequently than is the general population. This is discussed in greater detail beginning on page 21.

<b>Table 8: Proportion of lone-parent families in the population and average size of lone-parent families, Edmonton, Calgary and Alberta, 2001</b>			
	<b>Edmonton<sup>20</sup></b>	<b>Calgary<sup>21</sup></b>	<b>Alberta<sup>22</sup></b>
Lone-parent families (as % of all families)	18.4%	15.1%	14.4%
Average number of persons in family	2.5	2.5	2.6
Female lone-parent families	15.1%	12.3%	11.4%
Average number of persons in family	2.6	2.5	2.6
Male lone-parent families	3.3%	2.9%	2.9%
Average number of persons in family	2.4	2.4	2.5

Source: Statistics Canada, 2005e

It is noteworthy that while Edmonton has a higher percent of lone-parent families, it is Calgary that has the larger number of lone-parent families.

A report prepared for the Vanier Institute<sup>22</sup> documented some of the issues facing children in lone-parent families. While the study was quick to point out that the research to-date is incomplete and focuses heavily on the negative aspects, following are some of the characteristics, the incidence of which, the author indicated, are more likely to appear among children from lone-parent families (as compared to children in two-parent families). However, as the number of two-parent families is about five

<sup>18</sup> Statistics Canada. 2002, 2005e.

<sup>19</sup> Statistics Canada. <http://tinyurl.com/rn2xs>

<sup>20</sup> Statistics Canada. <http://tinyurl.com/mnura>

<sup>21</sup> Statistics Canada. <http://tinyurl.com/lftpm>

<sup>22</sup> Ambert. 2006.

times the number of lone-parent families, there are a greater number of children with these characteristics in two-parent families. :

- Behaviour problems,
- A record as a young offender,
- Don't do as well in school and often leave school at an earlier age, and
- Have difficult relationships

As adults, these same children are more likely to:

- Be a parent to a child born outside of marriage,
- Do poorly in school,
- Be unemployed,
- Have a lower economic status,
- Have a criminal record of serious offences, and
- Experience marital problems and divorce.

Ambert goes on to state that overall these children show many of the same traits as children raised in poverty in disadvantaged areas. As shown in the section beginning on page 20, poverty is very often a defining part of their lives.

Ambert does state, however, that these results are not the inevitable consequence of single parenthood. They are as much a function of the economic and social structure of our society, current societal attitudes towards vulnerable people, and inequality of opportunity for women in general.

### Same-Sex Relationships

While the institution of same-sex marriage legislation is still very recent and the impacts are therefore difficult to assess, informal same-sex relationships have always been a part of the Canadian family scene to some extent. The following table illustrates the proportion of Alberta and Canadian families comprised of same-sex couples. A perhaps surprisingly high proportion of these family relationships include children. Not surprisingly, same-sex relationships *with* children are much more common among female same-sex couples. Women are still more likely to retain custody of children following a break-up of a prior marriage. The number of same-sex relationships in Edmonton was estimated at 0.5% in 2001.

<b>Table 9: Same-sex couples as a proportion of all couples, and proportions of same-sex couples with children in the family, Alberta and Canada, 2001</b>		
	<b>Alberta</b>	<b>Canada</b>
% of all couples	0.4	0.5
% of male same-sex couples with children in family	4.4	3.3
% of female same-sex couples with children in family	17.4	15.2

Source: Sauvé, 2004a

## Multigenerational Families

In Canada today, the norm is for people to live in “nuclear” families and for grandparents to live in households separate from their adult children and grandchildren. However, according to the 2001 General Social Survey, nearly 4% of Canadians live in multigenerational households. While about 3.5% of individuals in the Prairie Provinces reside in this type of household, 4.9% of B.C. residents live as extended family households. Immigrants, particularly Asians, are more likely to live under such household arrangements than Canadian-born individuals (7% versus 3%).

There are benefits to such shared accommodations, such as sharing of costs, responsibilities, and child care. However, there may also be stresses resulting from conflicting values between ethnic grandparents and their children and grandchildren who are trying to adapt to Canadian ways. The middle generation, particularly women, are often saddled with the responsibilities of caring for their children *and* their aging parents.

One-third of Canadian grandparents in multigenerational settings are sharing homes with a lone parent in the middle generation, usually the mother.

Twelve percent of grandparents in shared households live only with their grandchildren; the children’s parents are unable or unwilling to care for their children, or are deceased. The grandchildren in these situations are often some of our most at risk children; many have been exposed to parental conflict, abuse, addictions, poverty and a variety of other factors.

About 35% of grandparents in shared homes are the primary financial supporter for the household; the figure rises to 50% where the middle generation is a lone parent.

In Alberta, 3.2% of all children 14 and under live in a household that includes at least one grandparent, and 0.6% of Alberta children live with just their grandparents<sup>23</sup>.

## 4. BIRTHS

Women are waiting until later in life to have children. In the early 1980s three-quarters of women were under 30 when they gave birth. By 2003, the figure was nearer one-half<sup>24</sup>. The crude birth rate (the number of births per 1,000 population) rose slightly in 2003 to 10.6, up from the all-time low of 10.5 in 2002.

Alberta has recorded an increase in the number of births in all but one of the years between 1998 and 2003. The following shows how Alberta compares with the neighbouring provinces, and with Canada as a whole<sup>25</sup>.

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<sup>23</sup> Milan and Hamm. 2003.

<sup>24</sup> Statistics Canada. 2005b.

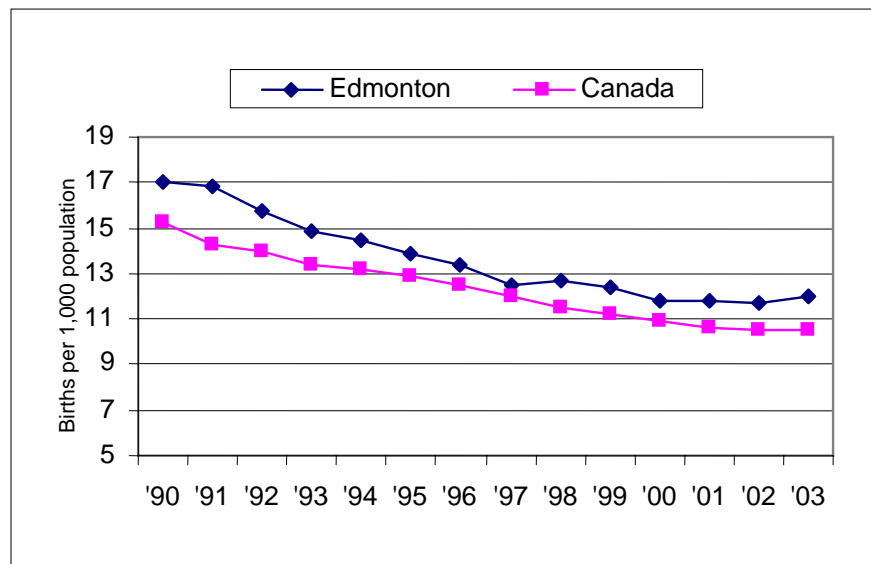
<sup>25</sup> Statistics Canada. 2004a, 2005b.

**Table 10: Average age of mothers and total fertility rate<sup>26</sup>, Alberta, Saskatchewan, British Columbia and Canada, 2003**

	Average age of mothers		Total fertility rate
	All mothers	First-time mothers	
Alberta	29.0	27.3	1.7
Saskatchewan	27.6	25.3	1.9
British Columbia	30.2	28.8	1.4
Canada	29.6	28.0	1.5

Source: Statistics Canada, 2005b

The birth rate is the number of children born per 1,000 population (both genders of all ages). It is interesting to note that the Edmonton (Capital Health Region) region has had a higher birth rate than Canada as a whole. This is perhaps because of the younger population in Alberta when compared to Canada as a whole. What is important to note is that the Edmonton birth rate has declined by about 40% between the years 1990 and 2003.

**Figure 4. Birth rate in Edmonton and Canada, 1990-2003.**

Source: Edmonton Socio-Economic Outlook

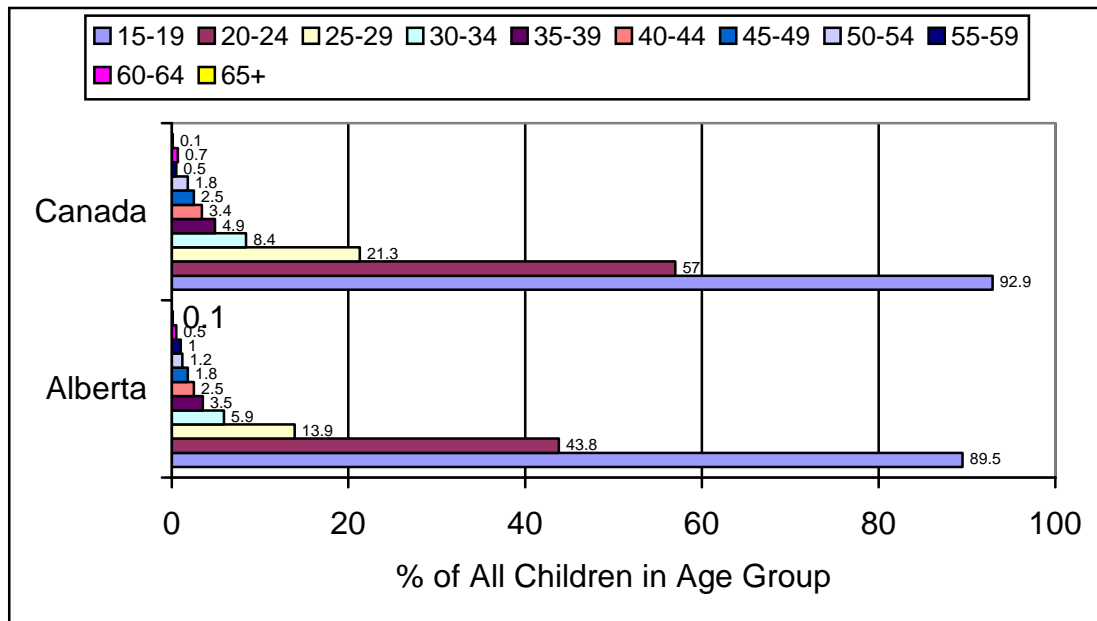
## 5. ADULT CHILDREN STILL LIVING WITH PARENTS

As young adults leave home and struggle to adjust to an increasingly complex world, many find it necessary or desirable to return to the parental home for varying lengths of time. This has become more common in recent years. In 1981, 12% of 25 to 29-

<sup>26</sup> Total fertility rate is based on the average number of children born to women age 15 to 49 over their lifetime.

year-olds were living with their parents. By 2001 the figure had almost doubled, to 21%. While the majority of young adults are fully on their own by their mid to late twenties, some never leave the home of their parents. Males stay at home longer; 29% of the 25-29 age group were still living with their parents, compared to only 19% of similar-aged women.

**Figure 5: Percentage of children age 15 and over, by age group, who live with their parents, Alberta and Canada, 2001**

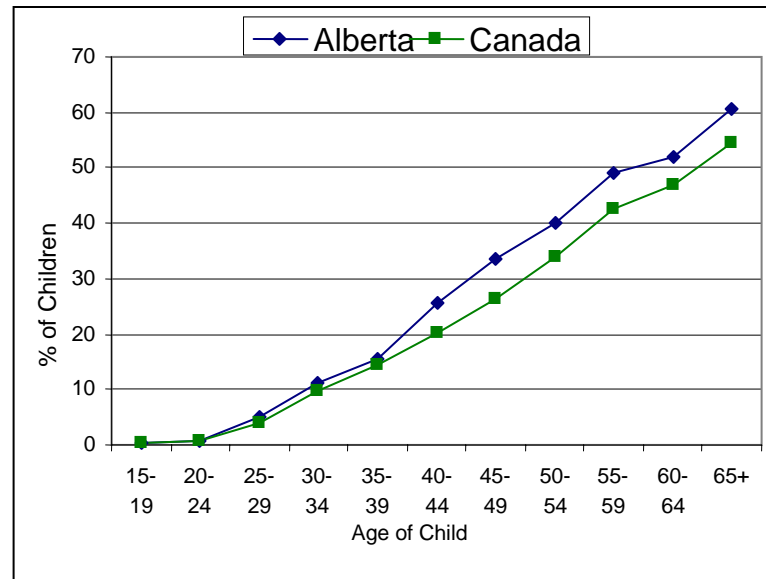


Source:

Sauvé, 2004a

A marital break-up may also result in an adult child moving back in with his or her parents, often bringing the child's child or children. As we examine older age cohorts still living with their parents, we find that an increasingly larger proportion of them have been married, or are still married.

**Figure 6: Percentage of children age 15 and over, by age group, who live with their parents, and who are legally married, separated, divorced or widowed, Alberta and Canada, 2001**



Source: Sauv , 2004a

## 6. FAMILY EMPLOYMENT AND INCOME

In a 2005 report prepared for the Vanier Institute of the Family Sauv <sup>27</sup> reports that the average hourly wage (in constant dollars) increased by ten cents over the past 15 years, while household expenditures and debt levels have increased drastically (see also page 19 for information on household expenditures). This has forced other household members to seek paid work to help shoulder the burden, resulting in record numbers of dual-income families.

More than 75% of couples with children depend on the earnings of both parents. The following summarizes who was earning employment income in Canadian families in 2001<sup>28</sup>:

- 94% of married men aged 29-64,
- 80.1% of married women,
- 83% of lone-parent fathers with school-aged children,
- 60% of lone-parent mothers with pre-schoolers,
- 76% of lone-parent mothers with school-aged children,

<sup>27</sup> Sauv . 2005.

<sup>28</sup> Vanier Institute of the Family. <http://www.vifamily.ca/library/facts/facts.html>

- 71% of wives with pre-schoolers, and
- 81% of wives with school-aged children aged 6-14.

“Busyness” is one of the major challenges facing Canadian families. Demands from work have increased and many people are working longer hours<sup>29</sup>. This has been particularly noticeable among wives with children at home. The *Top 10 Trends for Canadian Families* listed at the beginning of this report (page 22) mentioned that women are still carrying the majority of the load in balancing work and home responsibilities. Many are working full-time outside the home, and are still doing the majority of the meal preparation, child rearing and housework.

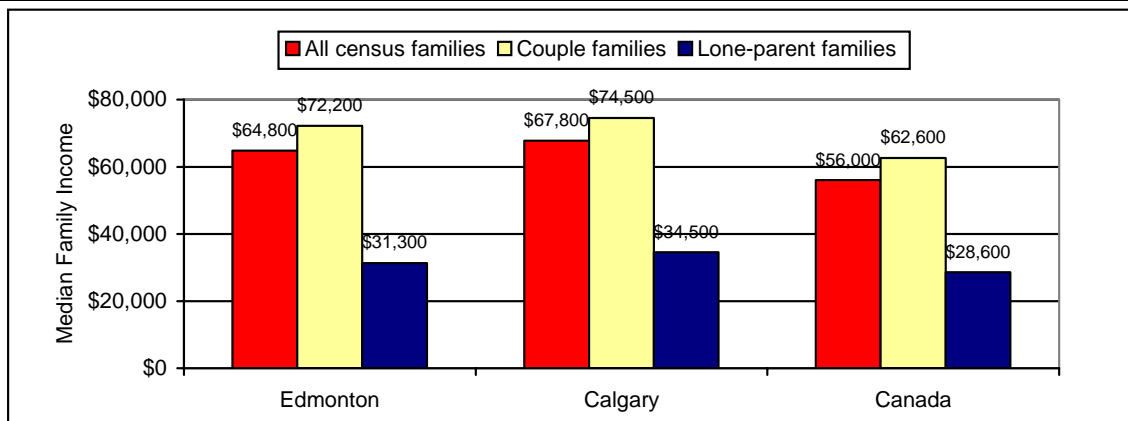
There has been considerable discussion in the media in recent years about the decreasing amounts of time that parents spend with their children — details are provided in the *Edmonton Social Plan* report on “Children”. One of the visible symptoms is that many children are spending large amounts of time in the care of adults other than their parents.

Unemployment is also an issue for many families.

- Nearly 20% of lone-parent mothers with children under five were unemployed,
- As were 5.4% of married women and 5.4% of married men with school-aged children, and also
- 8.9% of married women with pre-school-aged children<sup>30</sup>.

While 2003 median incomes for families in Edmonton are lower than those in Calgary (Figure 7), they were markedly higher than the Canadian average. Couple families had the highest median income (\$72,200), while the median income for lone-parent families was less than half that amount (\$31,000).

**Figure 7: Median family incomes, Edmonton, Calgary and Canada, 2003**



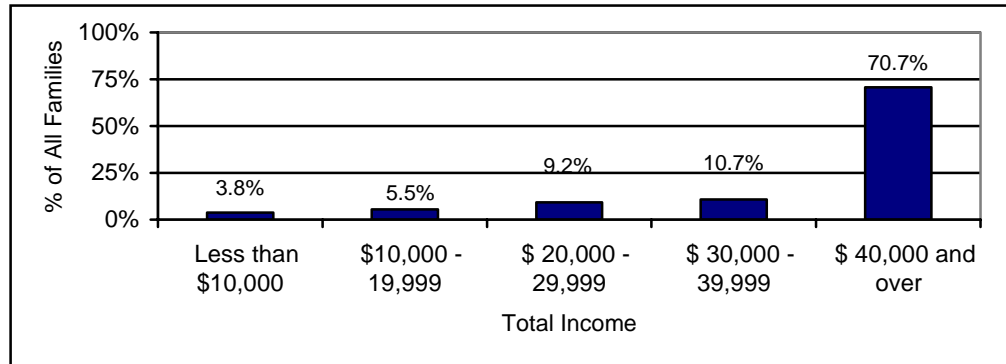
Source: Statistics Canada, 2005d

<sup>29</sup> Sauv . 2002.

<sup>30</sup> Vanier Institute of the Family. *op. cit.*

As will be seen later (page 19), total household income may not be the sole determining factor affecting household financial stability; lifestyle and spending choices have lead many Canadian families significantly into debt. Many families with relatively large total household incomes could, in fact, find themselves in severe financial straits if interest rates rise dramatically, or should they experience other setbacks like temporary job loss.

**Figure 8: Total family income for economic families, Edmonton, 2001**



Source: CCSD Urban Poverty Project, after Statistics Canada

**Table 11: Average family market incomes in \$ before and after income taxes of families of 2 or more persons, Alberta, British Columbia, Ontario and Canada, 2003**

	Alberta	B.C.	Ontario	Canada
Market income (wages, dividends, interest, etc.)	\$72,000	\$61,700	\$73,200	\$64,900
Transfers from government	6,300	7,700	7,700	7,800
Total income before taxes	78,300	69,400	80,900	72,700
Income taxes	13,400	11,200	14,300	12,800
Total income after income taxes	64,900	58,200	66,500	59,900
Government transfers as % of total income before income taxes	8.0%	11.1%	9.5%	10.7%
Income taxes as % of total income before income taxes	17.1%	16.1%	17.7%	17.6%

Source: Statistics Canada, 2005c

A Statistics Canada report<sup>31</sup> pointed out that the after-tax income of Albertans was growing significantly faster than that of the rest of Canada (19.3% growth from 1989 to 2002, compared to 12.2% for Canada overall). Albertans paid lower overall income taxes than other provinces except British Columbia (although Alberta does not necessarily have a lower total tax load), and were less reliant on government transfer payments such as Employment Insurance, child benefits, etc. than residents of the rest of Canada.

<sup>31</sup> Statistics Canada. 2002.

## 7. FAMILY EXPENDITURES

During the period 1980 to 2004, average household spending increased by 29%, but total after-tax household incomes increased by only 4%<sup>32</sup>.

<b>Table 12: Average spending per household<sup>33</sup>, Canada, 1980 and 2004, measured in constant 2002 dollars</b>			
	<b>1980</b>	<b>2004<sup>34</sup></b>	<b>% Change</b>
Food, beverages and tobacco	\$7,711	\$6,514	-15.5
Clothing and footwear	2,426	2,648	9.2
Gross rent, fuel and power	9,428	12,137	28.7
Furniture, furnishings, equipment and operation	3,717	4,717	26.9
Medical care and health services	1,652	2,782	68.5
Transportation and communications	6,565	8,486	29.2
Recreation, entertainment, educational and cultural services	3,025	6,287	107.8
All other spending	7,053	10,025	42.1
<b>TOTAL SPENDING</b>	<b>\$41,576</b>	<b>\$53,695</b>	<b>28.9</b>

Sauvé, after Statistics Canada, 2005

The increased cost of living, coupled with the temptation of high home equity levels and low interest rates have led a significant proportion of Canadian families into spending beyond their means<sup>35</sup>. The average debt per household is now close to \$71,000, up 42% in real terms from what it was in 1990. Put another way, the debt level is equivalent to 125% of personal disposable income<sup>36</sup>. This has grown from 91% in 1990 and 110% in 2000. The average family is not putting away any savings for the future; savings rates are currently in negative values. If interest rates rise, many families could find themselves in serious financial straits.

The cost of raising children is also increasing. The average cost of raising a boy to age 18 rose 2.8% from 1998 to 2002. The increase for girls was 2.9%.

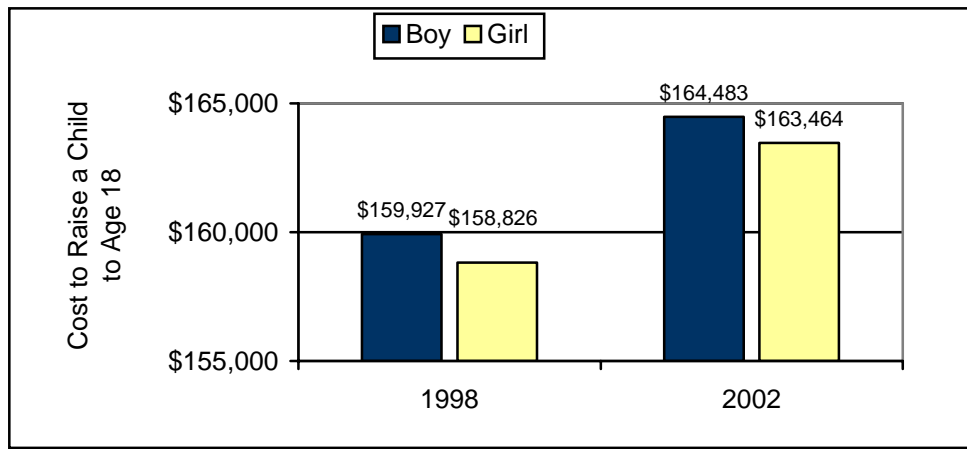
<sup>32</sup> Sauvé. 2004b.

<sup>33</sup> Households included both families and unattached individuals.

<sup>34</sup> Estimated

<sup>35</sup> Sauvé. *op. cit.*

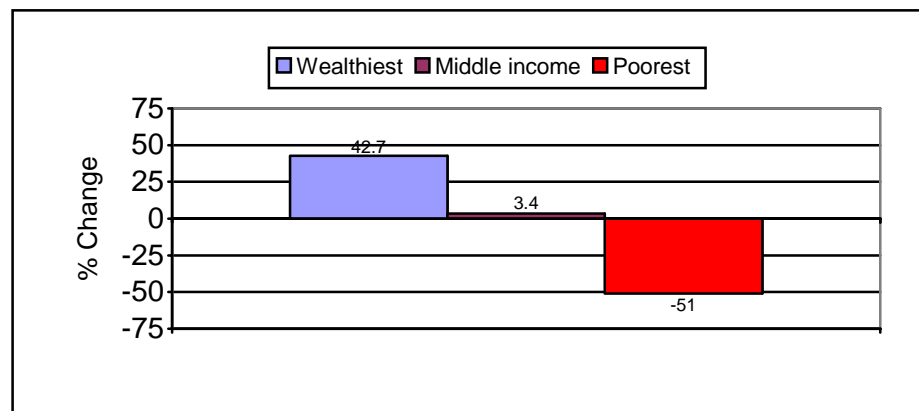
<sup>36</sup> usually regarded as the amount of money left over after all necessary expenses have been met

**Figure 9: Estimated cost to raise a child to age 18 in 2002 versus 1998**

Source: Sauvé, after Statistics Canada, 2004b

## 8. FAMILY POVERTY

The gap between rich and poor in Canada is widening, and this has serious ramifications for families and children. The following changes took place in average family net worth between 1984 and 1999:

**Figure 10: Change in average net worth for Canadian families, 1984-1999<sup>37</sup>**

Source: CCSD, 2002

Based on 2001 Census of Canada information, Edmonton has a lower proportion overall of families living in poverty than Canada as a whole, but a higher proportion than the province of Alberta (using Statistics Canada's pre-tax Low Income Cut-Off – LICO). Edmonton lone-parent families with children under 18 have a greater

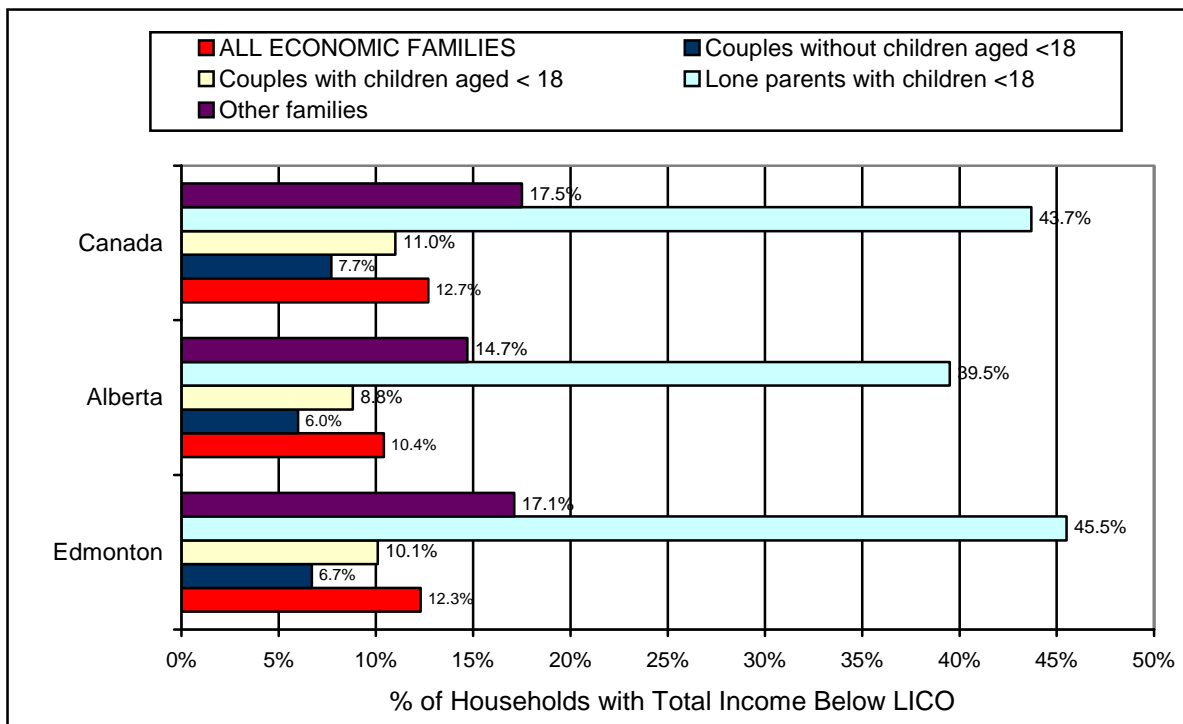
<sup>37</sup> Based on family income. The groupings used were the top 20%, the middle 20%, and the lowest 20%.

incidence of poverty than other families; over 45% are living with a total household income below LICO. Edmonton also has a higher proportion of lone-parent families living in poverty than either Alberta or Canada.

The incidence of poverty is higher among couples with children (10.1%) than for couples without children (6.7%).

There is a lower incidence of poverty (total household income below LICO) among families that include seniors over 65 years of age than among those families that do not — 10.8% versus 20.5% (Table 13).

**Figure 11: Proportions of families with total household income below LICO, by family type, for Edmonton, Alberta and Canada, 2001**



Source: CCSD Urban Poverty Project, after Statistics Canada

<b>Table 13: Proportion of Edmonton residents over 15 years of age living in economic families with a total income below LICO, 2001</b>		
	<b>Persons Living in Families with Total Income Below LICO</b>	
	<b>Number</b>	<b>%</b>
In families <b>with</b> children under 12 and <b>with</b> seniors over 65	560	10.8%
In families <b>without</b> children under 12 and <b>with</b> seniors over 65	4,615	7.1%
In families <b>with</b> children under 12 and <b>without</b> seniors over 65	21,915	20.5%
In families <b>without</b> children under 12 and <b>without</b> seniors over 65	27,575	11.3%
Total - Persons in economic families	54,660	13.0%

Source: CCSD Urban Poverty Project, after Statistics Canada

A significant proportion of Edmontonians living in family units (13%) are living below the Low Income Cut-Off (Table 13). Families that include seniors over 65 are generally faring better economically than families with young children that do not include any seniors.

Poverty among elderly couples has been greatly reduced in recent years<sup>38</sup> as government transfers are adequate to bring income above LICO for many. Figure 13 shows that 45.9% of elderly singles in Edmonton were living below LICO in 2001. The low-income rate for unattached senior women in Canada was 19% in 2003, compared with 15% for their single male counterparts<sup>39</sup>.

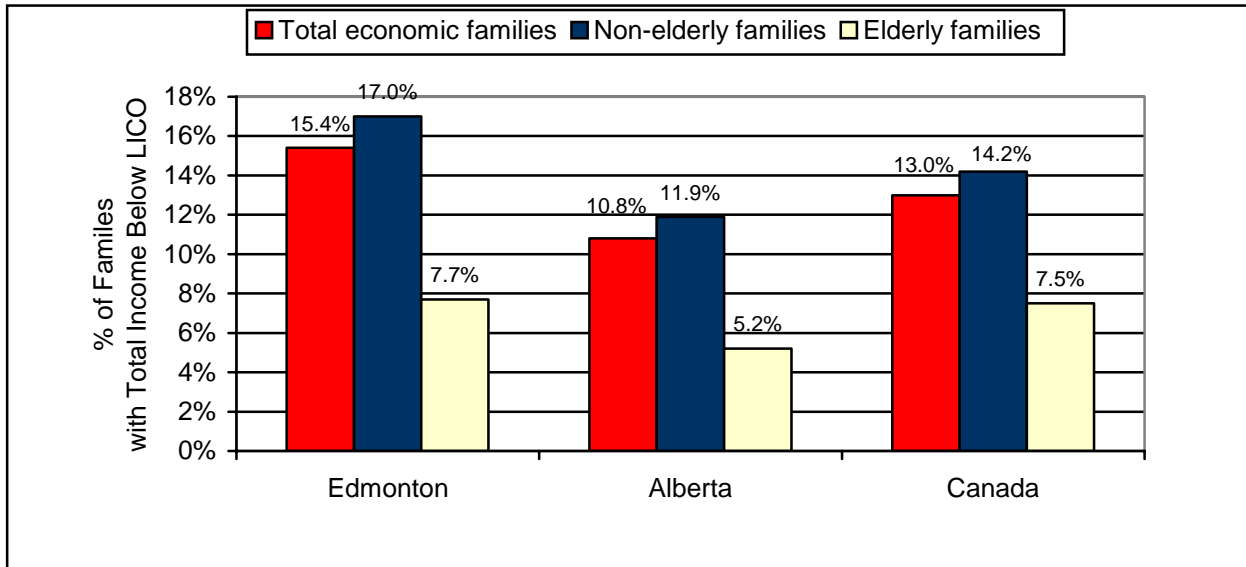
Singles (unattached individuals living alone or with someone to whom they are not related) do not enjoy the same levels of income as people living within a family. In 2002, the average single Albertan earned \$27,000, as compared to the average family income of \$64,300. Average family incomes also rose by a greater factor over the previous 13-year period than did average incomes of singles (19.3% versus 15.9%)<sup>40</sup>.

<sup>38</sup> Sauvé. 2005.

<sup>39</sup> Statistics Canada. 2005c.

<sup>40</sup> Sauvé. 2004a.

**Figure 12: Proportion of elderly<sup>41</sup> and non-elderly families with total income below LICO, Edmonton, Alberta and Canada, 2001**



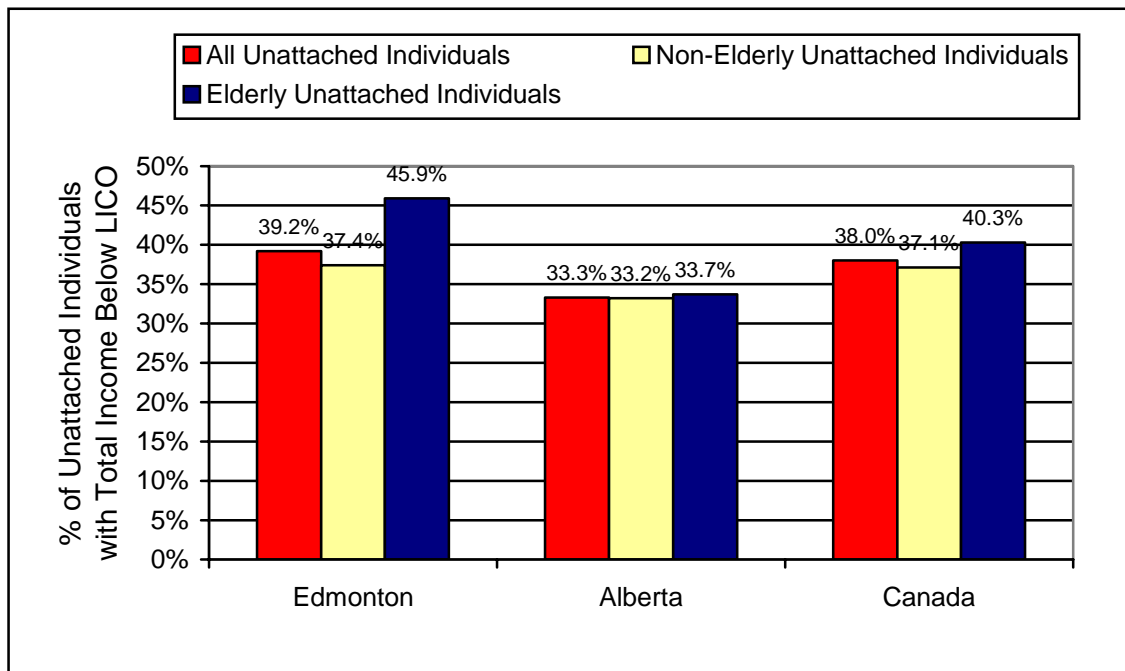
Source: CCSD Urban Poverty Project, after Statistics Canada

Table 13 showed that in 2001 only 13% of all individuals living in economic families had a total income below LICO, as compared to 39.2% of all unattached individuals. It may well be that some of the stability factors that Ambert outlined for married relationships (page 10) are coming into play here — i.e., these factors do not play as large a part in the lives of unattached individuals as they do for those in committed relationships. While this is purely speculative, perhaps there is a gradient of “strength” of these factors, from married relationships to cohabitation relationships to unattached individuals.

It is interesting to note that families with seniors have a lower rate of low income than families without a senior. However, unattached seniors have a higher rate of low income than do non-senior unattached individuals (see figures 12 and 13).

<sup>41</sup> Elderly families are those in which the age of the oldest spouse is greater than 64

**Figure 13: Proportion of unattached individuals with total income below LICO, Edmonton, Alberta and Canada, 2001**



Source: CCSD Urban Poverty Project, after Statistics Canada

## 9. FAMILY VIOLENCE

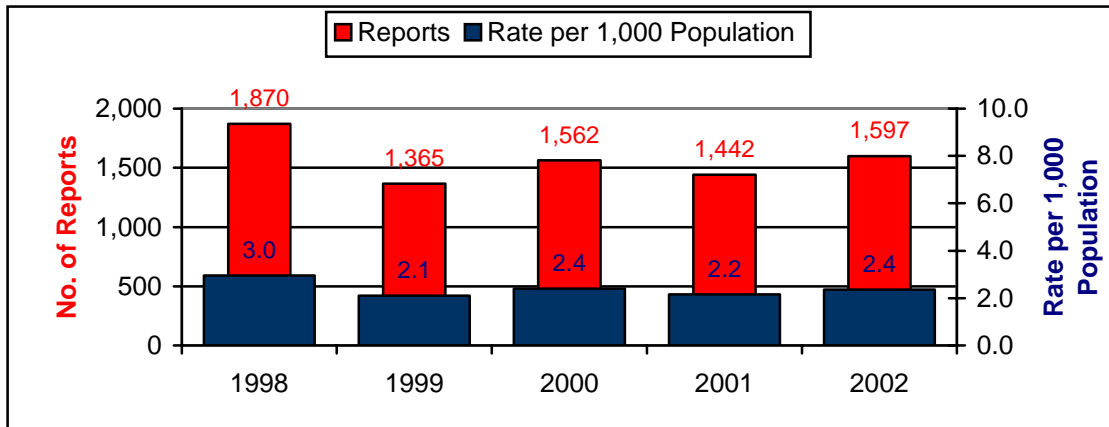
Figure 14 illustrates recent trends in reported spousal violence in Edmonton. While it shows some year-to-year fluctuation, generally the number of reports is down from 1998. It must be remembered that this reports *only* those incidents that meet the criteria laid down by Alberta Justice. If a broader definition of family violence were to be used, the figures would be higher.

In a report summarizing findings from the 2004 General Social Survey on Victimization<sup>42</sup>, AuCoin reported that the percentage of Canadian males in married or common-law relationships who reported being the victims of family violence during the previous five years remained unchanged from 1999, at 6%. Seven percent of women reported spousal violence, down from 8% in 1999. Spousal violence was more common in the western provinces. Alberta women were most likely to report being victimized (10%), followed by B.C. and Saskatchewan (both at 9%).

This is just a brief overview of the subject of family violence. A more detailed report on family violence is available on the *Edmonton Social Plan*.

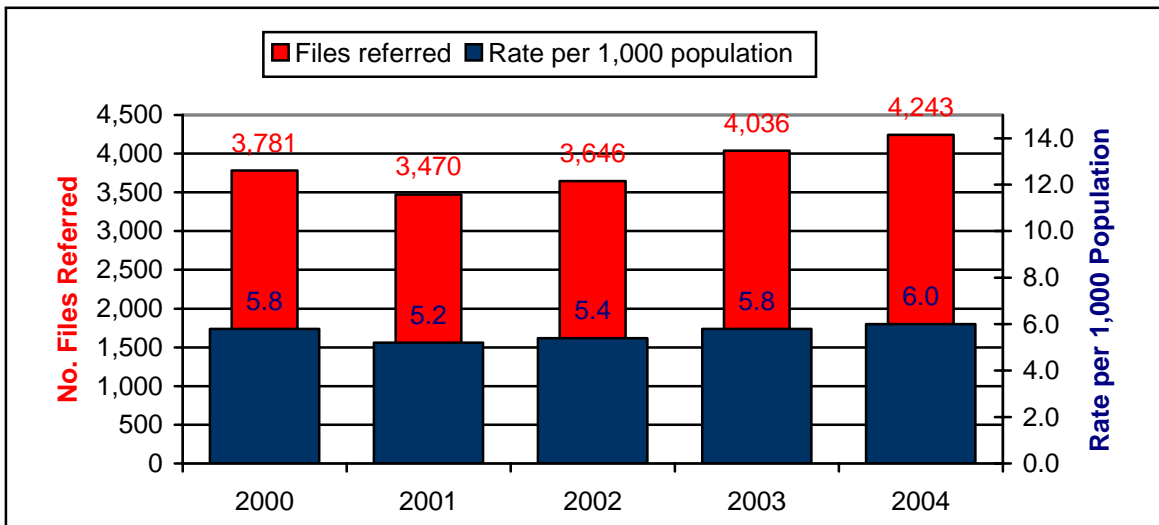
<sup>42</sup> AuCoin. 2005.

**Figure 14: Spousal violence reports<sup>43</sup>, Edmonton, 1998-2002**



Source: Edmonton Police Service, 2006

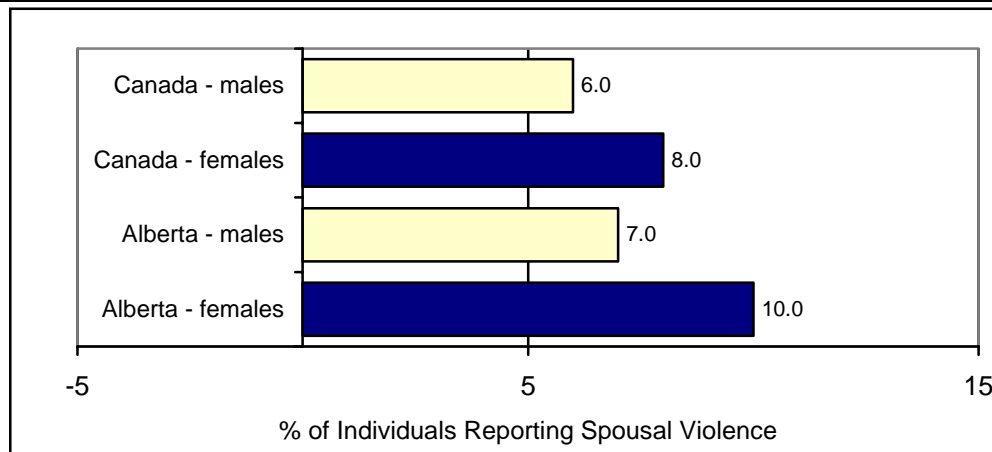
**Figure 15: Referrals to spousal violence follow-up teams, Edmonton, 2000-2004**



Source: Edmonton Police Service, 2006

<sup>43</sup> Only those cases that meet Alberta Justice Criteria are included. The criteria are: "complaints to police about harassment, intimidation or violence between a heterosexual couple who are, or were involved in, a cohabiting or marriage relationship."

**Figure 16: Proportion of individuals in married or common-law relationships reporting spousal violence during the previous five-year period, Alberta and Canada**



Source: AuCoin, 2005

Women were more likely to report repeated violence (10 or more incidents) at the hands of a spouse than men (21% versus 11% for men). Women were also more likely to report injuries from spousal violence (44%, as compared to 18% for males) and were more likely to report serious injuries (23%) than males (15%).

Spousal violence is more common at the hands of a spouse from a previous relationship. While still much higher than spousal violence within current relationships (which was 4% for both males and females in 1999, and the same in 2004), spousal violence by a spouse from a previous relationship declined among women from 28% in 1999 to 21% in 2004. For men it dropped from 22% to 16%.

Persons who are most likely to become victims of spousal violence are those between 15 and 24 years of age who have been in a common-law relationship for three years or less and whose partner is a heavy drinker. As just stated above, this violence is most commonly caused by a previous spouse.

Among older adults, almost 40% of senior women who reported being victims of violence were attacked by a family member. For senior males, the figure is much lower (20%).

Readers should bear in mind that, as mentioned in the *Top 10 Trends* (page 2), family violence is generally under-reported, and the actual figures are probably higher than those cited above.

## 10. CITY OF EDMONTON INITIATIVES

The following represents a listing of key initiatives, services, and programs currently endorsed by City of Edmonton Departments for families.

### **Families First Edmonton (FFE)**

**Families First Edmonton** is a research project conducted by the University of Alberta Community-University Partnership (CUP) to determine whether delivering health, family support, and recreation services in a coordinated way can lead to better outcomes for low-income families. The project, based in part on 2001 research in Ontario, will generate information in an Alberta context. Its mission is to improve the well-being of low-income families and their children through innovative service delivery, applied research, and well-informed public policy.

**Families First Edmonton** is a partnership with two co-leads, **Alberta Human Resources and Employment** and the **City of Edmonton Community Services**. Members include **Alberta Children's Services, Alberta Health and Wellness, Alberta Mental Health Board, Capital Health, Edmonton Aboriginal Urban Affairs Committee, Edmonton Community Foundation, Edmonton & Area Child and Family Services Authority – Region 6, Quality of Life Commission, United Way of the Alberta Capital Region, and the Partnership for the Study of Children, Youth, and Families**. The Families Matter Partnership Initiative, comprising **Bent Arrow Traditional Healing Society, Edmonton YMCA, KARA Family Resource Centre, and Multicultural Health Brokers Co-operative** will provide the necessary services to **Family First Edmonton (FFE)**.

The project randomly places 1,200 families in one of four groups that link to different kinds of health, recreation, and social services. Researchers will interview families periodically over five years to track how well each group works. At the end of the project, the researchers will have information about the outcomes in each of the groups:

- **Family Healthy Lifestyle** – Families will continue to access the same services they do now, plus a family support worker will help the family to solve problems and link them to health, social services, and child care options in their communities. (The cost of recreational services is not funded.)
- **Recreation Coordination** – Families will continue to access the same services they do now, plus a recreation coordinator will help place their children into recreational programs that will be provided free-of-charge. (Families receive \$250/child to access recreation.)
- **Comprehensive** – Families will continue to access the same services they do now, plus a family support worker will link them to a combination of the

Recreation and Family Healthy Lifestyle services above. (Funding will be provided.)

- **Self-Directed** – Families will continue to access the same services they do now.<sup>44</sup> (No funding is provided.)

Eligible families will receive a letter describing the research project and inviting them to participate.<sup>45</sup> Participation is voluntary and does not impact any other benefits or services the family is currently receiving. To be eligible, the family must:

- currently receive **Alberta Works Income Support** or **Alberta Child Health Benefits**, and have done so for at least the past six months;
- have at least one child aged 12 years or younger; and
- live in the northeast or north-central areas of Edmonton – east of 127 Street, north of Yellowhead Trail; east of 121 Street, south of Yellowhead Trail to the North Saskatchewan River.

Families are randomly placed in groups. They cannot request a particular placement, nor can they be referred by an agency to a specific group.

The project began in January 2006 and will last to 2011. The first part of the project, where families are placed in groups and interviewed from time to time, lasts two years. Researchers will then monitor the families for an additional three years.

**FFE** is family-centered and supports families in defining their family, based on their own cultural, religious, and personal experiences. This strength-based model focuses on family capacity and assets, rather than deficiencies and problems. **FFE builds on**, and *connects with*, existing service delivery organizations and recognizes the value families place on being part of their communities and having knowledge of and the ability to access community activities, services, and programs.

**FFE** findings will allow researches to determine which approach(es) most successfully achieve the following outcomes among project participants:

- reduce reliance on social assistance;
- reduce the number of children in child welfare care;
- increase attendance and achievement at school, and decrease the number of behavioural/emotional problems among children in the study;
- increase self-reliance and enhance life management (e.g., grocery shopping, appropriate childcare, etc.);

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<sup>44</sup> The self-directed group will allow researchers to compare the delivery of the three service models to how services are currently delivered.

<sup>45</sup> **Alberta Human Resources & Employment (AHRE)** generates the list of potential families. Families that participate are **NOT** identified to **AHRE**, and information collected is confidential.

- decrease use of emergency services (EMS, hospital emergency, child welfare, police, etc.); and
- increase appropriate use of health care.

**And**

- is most cost-effective by avoiding future costs or being cost-neutral, while achieving better results;
- results in more efficient use of existing resources; and
- increases the ability of agencies and organizations to work together across sectors.

**Affordable Housing**

The Mayor and City Councillors have agreed to lead specific initiatives in 2005-2007 with the goal of improving certain aspects of Edmonton's future. One such initiative envisions a *CAPITAL CITY* with vibrant neighbourhoods and a dynamic downtown which will have increased availability of affordable and social housing units with necessary support services and adequate funding and service partnerships with other government, the not-for-profit, and private sectors.

Council activities to reach this goal include:

- building on the current success of the City's **Housing Strategy** to ensure an adequate supply of affordable and social housing;
- bringing forward new initiatives to respond more adequately to affordable and social housing needs;
- developing partnerships with other orders of government to ensure all aspects of affordable and social housing are met; and
- continuing to develop a series of initiatives to address emerging affordable and social housing needs, including recommendations on the City's ongoing role and how it affects the process.

City Administration activities will centre on taking action on the **Low Income and Special Needs Housing Strategy**.

The **Edmonton Community Plan on Housing and Support Services, 2005-2009** reported that lone parent families (especially female led), persons with disabilities (including mental health problems), Aboriginal people, recent immigrants, and single people were more likely to having housing affordability problems than the general population. Any household earning minimum wage or supported by a fixed income such as **Assured Income for the Severely Handicapped (AISH)** or **Alberta Works** has not had the wage increases necessary to offset the impact of a strong economy on the cost of living.

The **2005-2009 Community Plan** supports a *Housing and Support Services Continuum* that includes Emergency Shelters, Transitional Housing, Long-Term Supportive Housing, Social Housing, and Affordable Housing with fully adapted units

for the disabled as well as prevention and intervention to meet the housing needs of Edmontonians.

The **Edmonton Cornerstones Plan** is City Council's five-year plan to help increase affordable housing and ensure adequate and decent housing for Edmontonians. Two Initiatives, the **Fee Rebate for Affordable Housing Program (FRAHP)** and **Fixed Rate Rent Supplement Pilot Project** have recently been developed as part of the implementation of **Cornerstones, Edmonton's Plan for Affordable Housing 2006-2011**.

**FRAHP** grants will be provided to rebate municipal fees and charges for designated affordable housing units comprising all or a portion of new or existing residential development project proposals. The program will help provide long-term reduced affordable rents or ownership charges to benefit the less than median income residents who will live in those units from the payments that would be required if those fees and charges were not rebated.

Developers of affordable housing projects will be required to pay all the relevant municipal fees and charges as they would with a conventional housing project. The developer will then submit an application to the City of Edmonton's Office of Housing for rebate of relevant fees and charges. The rebate will be issued based on receipts and upon issuance of an occupancy permit for the project.

Projects eligible for a **FHRAP** rebate must meet the following guidelines:

- Must be an affordable housing project as defined in the City's **Low-Income and Special Needs Housing Strategy 2001 – 2011**.
- Rents must be below the median market rent as established by **Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation**.
- The developer must demonstrate there is a mechanism in place to ensure long-term affordability.
- The developer must demonstrate how the savings from the rebate program will be passed on to tenants or homeowners.
- If the project includes market priced units, the rebate would be proportionate to the number of affordable housing units in the project.

The **Fixed Rate Rent Supplement Pilot Project** will receive a total of \$5 million to be utilized over five years. The City of Edmonton, Province of Alberta, and Government of Canada (through the **Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation** will cost-share on a 50:25:25 basis. The provincial and federal government's share will be funded through a \$2.5 million grant to the City under the Federal/Provincial **Affordable Housing Program**. The City's share will be funded under the **Edmonton Cornerstones Plan**.

Funding will be available to reduce rents by an average of \$200 per unit per month in up to 400 existing privately owned rental units in Edmonton. The project will therefore

increase affordability to households with affordability problems (paying more than 30% of income on rent) and to those earning less than median incomes.

Under the Grant Funding Agreement with the Province, the City of Edmonton will ensure that the first source of tenants for approved units is the Capital Region Housing Corporation applications wait list. In the absence of tenants from that wait list, Capital Region Housing Corporation would arrange for tenants who would qualify for placement on that wait list. Funding provided to for-profit and not-for-profit landlords under the pilot will be administered through an agreement between the City of Edmonton and the Capital Region Housing Corporation.

### **Hate and Bias Crime Initiative**

The **Hate and Bias Crime Initiative** advocates for a safe and inclusive environment for Edmonton's diverse and multicultural society. The initiative is committed to building a framework to manage issues and prevent occurrences involving hate.

**Edmonton Police Service (EPS)** defines a hate crime as an offence committed against a person or property which is motivated (in whole or in part) by the suspect's hate, bias, or prejudice towards an identifiable group based on, real or perceived, race, national or ethnic origin, language colour, religion, sex, age, mental or physical disability, sexual orientation, or any other similar factor. Examples of hate/ bias crime include:

- violence, threats of violence;
- acts of mischief or vandalism;
- distribution of hate literature, hate mail;
- threatening phone calls; and/or
- destruction of religious property or symbols.

There are three **Hate Propaganda**<sup>46</sup> sections in the Criminal Code:

- **Advocating Genocide** (Section 318): to argue or urge people to kill others because of their colour, race, religion, or ethnic origin.
- **Public Incitement of Hatred** (Section 319[1]): Everyone who, by communicating statements in any public place, incites hatred against any identifiable group where such incitement is likely to lead to a breach of the peace is guilty of an offence.
- **Wilful Promotion of Hatred** (Section 319[2]): Everyone who by communicating statements other than in private conversation, wilfully promotes hatred against any identifiable group is guilty of an offence.

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<sup>46</sup> Hate propaganda is defined as any communication, poster, and/or graffiti used by a person or group that promotes hatred based on race religion, nationality, or ethnic origin.

## **Safedmonton**

**Safedmonton** is a collaborative initiative of the City of Edmonton with representatives from health, education, law enforcement, business, security, and social services and volunteer community organizations. Its goal is to connect Edmontonians to tips, tools, and resources in order to build a safe and caring community.

**Safedmonton's** mandate is to facilitate and promote collaborative local initiatives in crime prevention and to inform the City's Senior Management about issues of urban safety. It acts as a hub, communicating, sharing information, and providing connections within the Edmonton community.

To accomplish this, the **Safedmonton Advisory Committee** has a number of working groups (e.g., Communications, Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design (CPTED), Prostitution, and Social Development) and sub committees (e.g., Edmonton Safe Streets; Drug Treatment and Community Restoration Court; Edmonton Regional Crime Prevention Network; Edmonton Stop Marijuana Grow Ops Coalition; Edmonton Community Drug Strategy [ECDS]).

**Safedmonton's** top five guiding principles are: an emphasis on crime prevention, strategic focus and priority action, civic departments working together, community involvement, and community values. The four key messages for **Safedmonton: Looking out for each other** campaign are:

- Safety is everyone's responsibility.
- There are many ways a person can contribute to his/her personal safety and a safe and caring community.
- Little everyday actions make a difference.
- A connected community is a safer community.

**Safedmonton** partners, whether from City departments or community organizations, report experiencing real life impact on their work in four ways:

- connecting with people, exchanging information and knowing whom to call or where to make referrals;
- gaining a wider perspective and thinking differently about safety;
- creating opportunities to work collaboratively; and
- developing new competencies.

## **Walkable Edmonton**

"A walkable **Edmonton** is a lively and robust place with interesting linkages between attractive places and safe walkways. The built form, land use patterns, public open

spaces, streets and circulation systems all contribute to the success or failure of neighbourhoods being walkable, sociable and safe places.”<sup>47</sup>

The **Walkable Edmonton Initiative** supports these goals by working with **Community Services** staff members, other civic departments and community partners to:

- design and develop a sustainable year round “Walkable Edmonton Strategy;”
- work with other civic departments to promote the connectivity of urban form and pattern with the use of multi-use corridors which link street systems and open space park systems to commercial and other community places; and
- work with other civic departments and other partners to facilitate infrastructure changes that increase safety for pedestrians and cyclists, reduce and calm traffic, and cut pollution.

### Community Services Department

The Community Services department has as its mandate the provision of social, recreational, and cultural opportunities; the development, management, and preservation of recreational and cultural facilities; the development, management and preservation of parks and open spaces; and the building of community capacity, in addition to the coordination of emergency services; the provision of critical patient care; and the protection of lives and property during a fire or other emergency event.

In order to ensure that Edmontonians on low-income do not face social exclusion from recreation and related departmental services, the **Access to Recreation Strategy for Low-Income Edmontonians** was developed. The resultant **Leisure Access Program** (formerly known as the Fee Reduction Program) provides eligible low-income Edmontonians with access to participating City of Edmonton recreation facilities (including community recreation centres, golf courses, special collection facilities,<sup>48</sup> and arenas.

Low-income individuals and/or families living in Edmonton are eligible if they possess a valid **Health Benefits Card** (issued by the Government of Alberta) or fall below the Low-Income Cut-off line. In the former case, the applicant may go to any participating facility and show his/her valid Health Benefits Card and current photo ID. In the latter case, the applicant must complete the Leisure Access Program Application Form that is available from (780) 496-4918 or on line at <http://www.edmonton.ca/CommPeople/LeisureAccessApplication.pdf>.

In addition to unlimited, free admission to participating facilities (excluding golf courses),<sup>49</sup> the **Leisure Access Program** offers three registered programs per year

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<sup>47</sup> [http://www.edmonton.ca/portal/server.pt/gateway/PTARGS\\_0\\_2\\_1655790\\_0\\_0\\_18/walkableedmonton.htm](http://www.edmonton.ca/portal/server.pt/gateway/PTARGS_0_2_1655790_0_0_18/walkableedmonton.htm).

<sup>48</sup> Special Collection Facilities are the City Arts Centre, Fort Edmonton Park, John Janzen Nature Centre, John Walter Museum, Muttart Conservatory, Prince of Wales Armouries, and Valley Zoo.

<sup>49</sup> One round of golf is considered one registered program. Tee times must be booked in advance.

for adults and seniors (no program restrictions) at 25% of cost (and 25% of the cost of materials where applicable) and four registered programs per year for children and youth (no program restrictions) at 25% of the cost (and 25% of the cost of materials where applicable).

Since the inception of the **Leisure Access Program** (January 2006), admissions to facilities have increased more than 100,000 over the same period in 2005 (January 1 to September 30). Also during this period, program registrations more than doubled.

**Family and Community Support Services (FCSS)** is a joint municipal/ provincial partnership that funds and supports the development and delivery of preventive social service programs in Edmonton. FCSS funding is directed to community-based social service programs that are preventive in nature and promote and enhance the well-being of individuals, families, and communities.

Table 14 shows that in 2006, there were twenty-four FCSS programs funded partially or in whole for families.

<b>Table 14: 2006 FCSS Funded Programs for Families and Program Information</b>			
<b>Agency</b>	<b>Program</b>	<b>Program Description</b>	<b>Amount</b>
ABC Head Start Society	<b>Family Services Program</b>	Provides home support, weekly parent support and education groups. Supports low-income parents in building knowledge, skills, and confidence as parents.	\$217,293
ASSIST Community Services Centre	<b>Family Services Program</b>	Consists of preventive and enhancement programs targeted for children, youth, and families to support and encourage social, physical, mental, and emotional wellness.	\$51,027
Ben Calf Robe Society	<b>Traditional Parenting Program</b>	Provides programming for parents impacted by or raised by a residential school survivor to understand its effects on their life and the demands of modern day parenting. Works with parents and children to stop and prevent the cycle of physical, emotion, and sexual abuse.	\$55,000
Bissell Centre	<b>Family Support Program</b>	Provides practical supports to socially and economically disadvantaged families in Edmonton. Includes assistance with child welfare issues, enhancing parenting skills, and providing practical assistance with food, clothing, and crisis intervention	\$107,838

Boyle Street Community Services	<b>Inner City Outreach &amp; Liaison</b>	Helps youth, families, and adults discover personal strengths, improve coping skills, build independence, become members of the community, and enhance their well-being.	\$433,042
Boys' and Girls' Clubs of Edmonton	<b>Parent Talk Program</b>	A self-help peer support program for parents challenged by their children's behaviour. In weekly meetings, parents explore solutions and strategies to keep their families together.	\$87,792
Candora Society of Edmonton (The)	<b>Community and Family Resource Centre</b>	Provides activities, programs, and events to reduce isolation for community families; promotes the development of relationships for community families, and provides enriching and nurturing experiences.	\$91,071
City West Childcare & Community Support Society	<b>Community Outreach &amp; Family Support Program</b>	Provides support, help, and referrals to services, along with various educational and personal growth workshops for families and interested community members.	\$119,115
Community Options-A Society for Children & Families	<b>Community Outreach &amp; Family Support Program</b>	Provides a variety of strength-based preventive and supportive initiatives, including parent education and support activities, nutritional support, clothing and household goods exchange, information and referral services, advocacy, and intensive individual and family support.	\$140,232
Dickinsfield Amity House	<b>Neighbourhood Drop-In and Family Resource Centre</b>	A community support centre offering a variety of preventative programs to low-income individuals and families.	\$116,000
Family Centre of Northern Alberta (Association) The	<b>Education Services Program</b>	Helps families build the understanding and skills required to develop strong relationships and raise emotionally healthy children. Over 70 courses are offered on topics relevant to helping families and communities raise healthy children, helping families and communities build and maintain effective relationships, and dealing effectively with change.	\$63,284
	<b>Roots and Wings Program</b>	A prevention program to support families at risk of moving into serious difficulty. <sup>50</sup>	\$544,891

<sup>50</sup> The program is a partnership between The Family Centre and Big Brothers Big Sisters of Edmonton and Area (BBBSE). The focus of the program is to reduce isolation and build on families' strengths to improve overall family functioning. Parents and children first receive in-home family-centred supports from the Family Centre to build the required understanding, knowledge, and skills needed to improve family well-being. Children, as well as parents, are then connected to volunteer mentor supports through BBBSE to build friendship relationships that will model and support the healthy changes the family wishes to make. Program partners

Glengarry Child Care Society	<b>Family and Community Enrichment Program</b>	An enhancement program of Glengarry Child Care Society that provides support and encouragement to families of the community and staff of the childcare centre who require resources in their roles as parents and caregivers (e.g., workshops, a resource library, access to the internet, the WECAN Food Basket).	\$75,000
Islamic Family & Social Services Association	<b>Youth Development &amp; Parenting Education Program</b>	Provides children, youth, and families with education and skills to safeguard against negative influences and behaviour.	\$65,446
Jasper Place Child & Family Resource Society	<b>Family Outreach Services</b>	Provides a range of family and child-related programs with services and assistance to families that enhance their capacity to raise their children.	\$126,405
KARA Family Resource Centre	<b>The KARA Program</b>	Three activities provide support to families with young children: <i>Caring Families</i> (a 14-week parenting and personal development program for parents and their pre-school children), <i>Outreach</i> Ongoing support for past participants of <i>Caring Families</i> , and <i>Drop-In</i> (short-term care for pre-school children).	\$170,254
Lansdowne Child Care & Family Centre	<b>Early Intervention &amp; Resource Program</b>	Offers services to meet the needs of all children and parents within the program.	\$74,500
Metis Child & Family Services Society	<b>Family Services Program</b>	Provides a wide variety of support and assistance to Aboriginal children and families who may be experiencing personal, family, or community difficulties that could lead to intrusive intervention by Children's Services and/or justice or legal authorities.	\$90,000
Mill Woods Family Resource Centre Society	<b>Family Support Program</b>	Offers information, education, and support to families in the community to help develop coping skills and to maintain independence.	\$94,846
	<b>New Parents – Parents as Teachers Program</b>	A free and voluntary early-learning program for parents with children from birth to age three.	\$67,000
Norwood Child & Family Resource Centre	<b>Family Support Services Program</b>	Provides families with the support needed to nurture and sustain the mental health and well-being of their children and the family unit.	\$68,815

also connect children and families to additional community supports relevant to family goals around enhanced family well-being.

Oliver Centre – Early Learning Programs for Children & Families Society	<b>Head Start for At-Risk Pre-School Program</b>	Provides early intervention services for children ages 13 months to 6 years. Partners with families empowering them to access community resources and remain active in their children's education and future development.	\$116,916
Primrose Place Family Centre	<b>Family Resource &amp; Support Program</b>	Partners with parents to help families reach their potential. Uses community resources and provides early intervention strategies.	\$73,585
Unity Centre of North East Edmonton	<b>Unity Centre Program</b>	Strengthens and encourages the development of healthier families and individuals by providing free preventative, educational programs.	\$114,640

Note that programs receiving FCSS funding must be registered not-for-profit organizations that have been incorporated for a minimum of a year. Programs that provide primarily for the recreation needs or leisure pursuits of individuals; offer direct financial assistance, including money, food, clothing, or shelter to an individual or family; are primarily rehabilitative; or duplicate services ordinarily provided by a government or government agency are not funded by FCSS.

**The City of Edmonton Community Investment Operating Grant program** provides operating assistance to Edmonton's non-profit organizations whose activities result in benefits to the citizens of Edmonton. Organizations are eligible for grants if they are based in Edmonton, if they primarily serve Edmontonians, and if their programs/services have a social, multicultural, or recreation/amateur sport character. Table 15 lists the organizations serving families that received Community Investment Operating Grants for 2006.

<b>Table 15: Organizations Providing Programs/Services for Families Receiving Community Investment Operating Grants for 2006</b>	
<b>Organization</b>	<b>Amount</b>
Aboriginal Youth & Family Well Being & Education Society	\$6,856
ASSIST Community Services Centre	\$15,000
Ben Calf Robe Society	\$15,000
Bissell Centre	\$15,000
Boyle Street Community Centre	\$15,000
Centre for Family Literacy Society of Alberta	\$15,000
Islamic Family and Social Services Association (IFSSA)	\$11,999
KARA Family Resource Centre	\$15,000
Mill Woods Family Resource Centre Society	\$15,000
Unity Centre of North East Edmonton	\$15,000
Wecan Food Basket Society of Alberta	\$8,917

Organizations requesting grants must be registered (under appropriate provincial or federal legislation) as a non-profit for at least one year and have open membership;

should not substantially duplicate the activities of other applicants or other government-supported organizations; and may apply for up to twenty-five percent of their total operating expenditures for the previous fiscal year (to a maximum of \$15,000).

### **Corporate Services Department**

A new program to help create greater awareness and understanding amongst Edmontonians of the City's diverse faith communities, **Celebration of Our Faiths**, opened on October 20, 2006. The program, sponsored by the City of Edmonton and the **Edmonton Interfaith Centre for Education and Action**,<sup>51</sup> allows Edmontonians and visitors to the Capital City the opportunity to view a celebration of the Hindu faith as Deepawali, a festival of lights symbolizing the victory of righteousness and the lifting of spiritual darkness, is marked.

The **Celebration of Our Faiths** will host various faith displays throughout the year. Visitors will have the opportunity to see religious symbols and read about the meaning and use of each item in the celebration of the specific faith.

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<sup>51</sup> The Edmonton Interfaith Centre for Education And Action is a co-operative of faiths working together to increase awareness and understanding of the various faiths and faith groups in the City. The faiths represented are Aboriginal, Bahai, Buddhist, Christian, Eckankar, Hindu, Jain, Jewish, Muslim, Sikh, Scientology, Taoist, Unitarian, and Zoroastrian.

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