

## Article

# Métis Children Under Six Years Old

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The Aboriginal Children's Survey (ACS) provides an extensive set of data about Aboriginal (Métis, Inuit, and off-reserve First Nations) children under six years of age in urban, rural, and northern locations across Canada. The Aboriginal Children's Survey was designed to provide a picture of the early development of Aboriginal children and the social and living conditions in which they are learning and growing.

The survey was developed by Statistics Canada and Aboriginal advisors from across the country and was conducted jointly with Human Resources and Social Development Canada.

## Métis Children Under Six Years Old

This fact sheet provides information on the families and communities of Métis children under six years old, as reported in the Aboriginal Children's Survey and the Census in 2006.

In 2006, the Census enumerated about 35,000 Métis children under the age of six.

The majority of young Métis children were in the provinces of Alberta (25%), Manitoba (21%), Ontario (15%), Saskatchewan (15%), and British Columbia (14%).

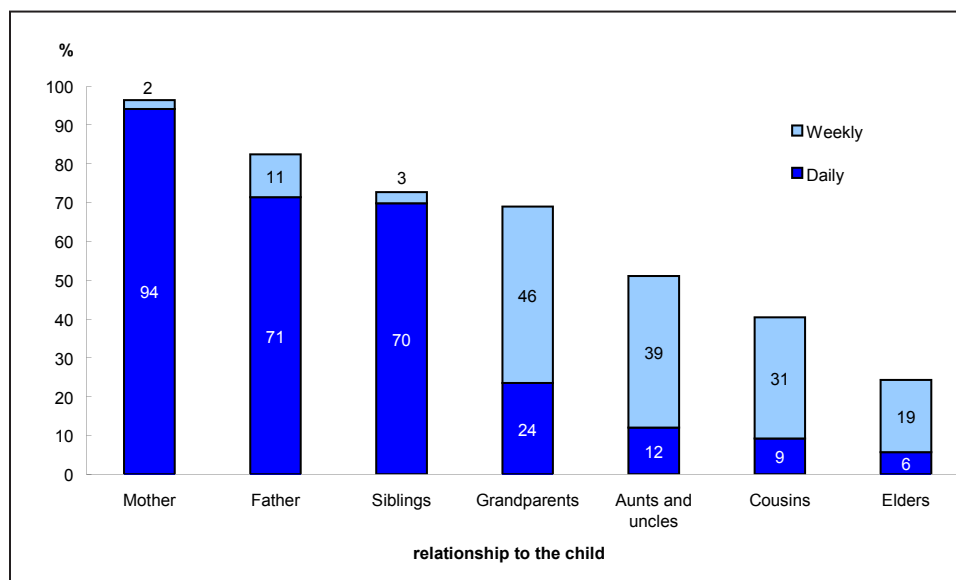
In 2006, 27% of young Métis children were living in rural areas compared to 18% of non-Aboriginal children. The remaining 73% of Métis children were living in urban areas.

### Young Métis children and their families

The 2006 Aboriginal Children's Survey found that 91% of Métis children were being raised by more than one person. Mothers were most commonly reported as being involved (94%) followed by fathers (78%), grandparents (41%) and other relatives (aunts, uncles, cousins and siblings) (21%). About 17% of Métis children had non-relatives involved in raising them, for example, child care providers or teachers.

The 2006 Aboriginal Children's Survey asked how often the child talked or played together with different people, focusing attention on each other for five minutes or more. Métis children were most likely to receive focused attention at least once a day from their mothers (94%), followed by fathers (71%) and siblings (70%).

**Chart 1**  
Percentage of Métis children under six years old who talked or played together with different people, focusing attention on each other for five minutes or more, 2006



**Note(s):**

'Daily' includes the response categories 'More than once a day' and 'Once a day'. 'Weekly' includes the response categories 'More than once a week' and 'Once a week'.

'Mother' includes birth, step, adoptive or foster mothers. 'Father' includes birth, step, adoptive or foster fathers.

**Source(s):** Statistics Canada, *Aboriginal Children's Survey, 2006*

Many Métis children received focused attention from extended family at least once a week: 69% from grandparents, 51% from aunts and uncles, 40% from cousins and 24% from Elders.

According to the 2006 Census, 32% of young Métis children were living in families with 3 or more children, compared to 25% of non-Aboriginal children. Métis children in rural areas were more likely to live in families with 3 or more children than Métis children in urban areas (39% versus 30%).

In 2006, 30% of Métis children were living in lone parent households compared to 13% of non-Aboriginal children. Métis children living in urban areas were more likely than those in rural areas to live with a lone parent (33% versus 22%).

Métis children are being raised by younger parents than non-Aboriginal children. According to the 2006 Census, 22% of Métis children under six years old had mothers between the ages of 15 and 24; this is compared to 8% of non-Aboriginal children.

## Socio-economic status

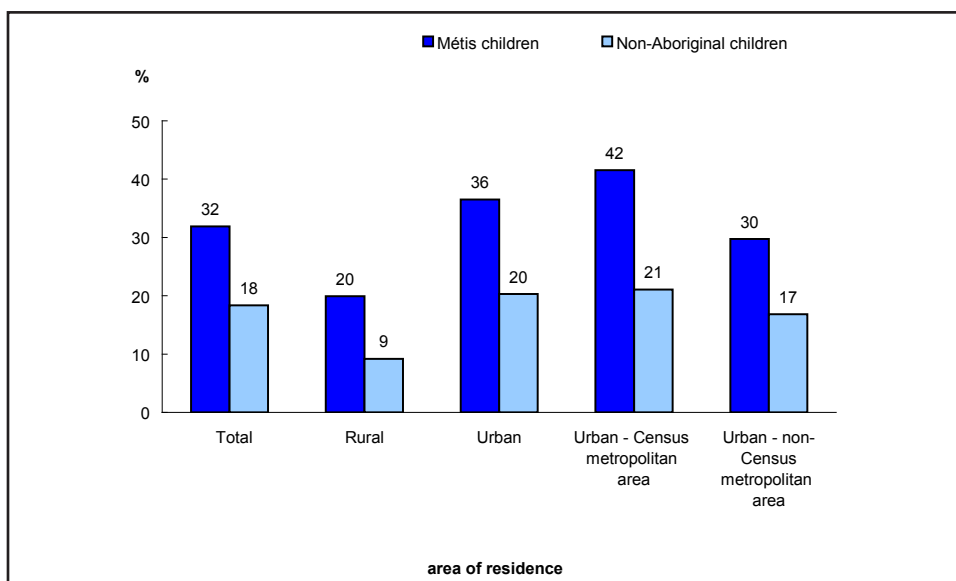
According to the 2006 Census, almost one-third (32%) of Métis children under the age of 6 were in low-income families, compared with 18% of non-Aboriginal children (chart 2). Low income was measured by the low income cut-offs (LICOs), which refer to income levels at which families are expected to spend 20 percentage points more than average of their before tax income on food, shelter and clothing. The low income cut-offs are not applicable in the Yukon, Northwest Territories and Nunavut and on Indian reserves.

The percentage of Métis children living in low-income families was higher in urban areas than in rural areas (36% compared to 20%).

Métis children living in low-income families were at least twice as likely to have parents or guardians who were 'dissatisfied' or 'very dissatisfied' with their finances and housing situation than those who were not living in low-income families.

Chart 2

Percentage of Métis children and non-Aboriginal children under six years old who are members of low-income families, 2006



**Note(s):**

Census metropolitan areas (CMA) are formed by one or more adjacent municipalities centred on a large urban area (known as the urban core).

A CMA must have a total population of at least 100,000 of which 50,000 or more must live in the urban core. Urban non-census metropolitan areas (non-CMAs) are smaller urban areas with a population of less than 100,000.

Low income before tax cut-offs (LICOs) – Income levels at which families are expected to spend 20 percentage points more than average of their before tax income on food, shelter and clothing. LICOs are not applicable in the Yukon, Northwest Territories and Nunavut and on Indian reserves.

**Source(s):** Statistics Canada, *Census, 2006*

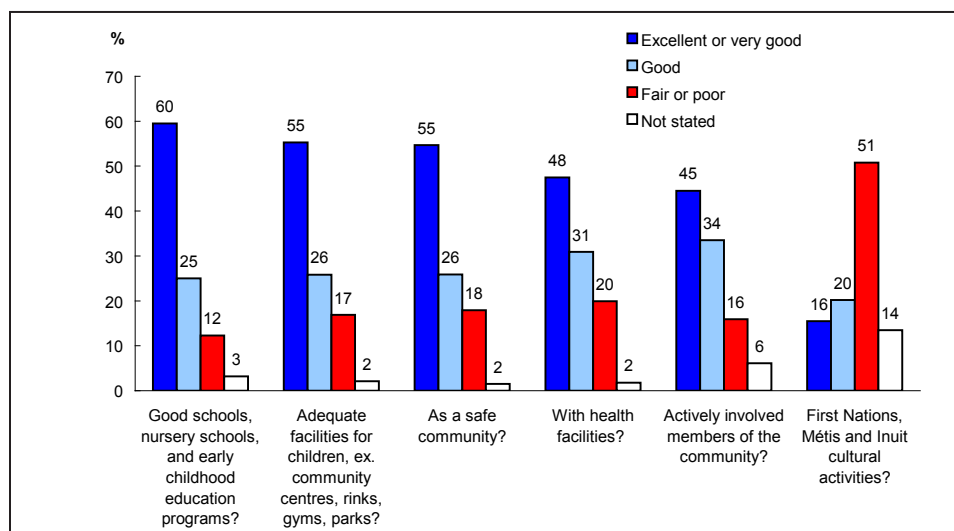
The majority of Métis children (93%) had parents or guardians who reported that they were 'very satisfied' or 'satisfied' with their support network (support from family, friends, or others).

## Feelings about community

The 2006 Aboriginal Children's Survey found that parents or guardians of Métis children were generally satisfied with many aspects of their community as a place to raise children. About six in ten Métis children lived in a community rated by their parent or guardian as 'excellent' or 'very good' in terms of 'good schools, nursery schools and early childhood education programs' (60%); 'adequate facilities for children for example, community centres, rinks, gyms, parks' (55%); and being 'a safe community' (55%).

By comparison, 16% of young Métis children lived in a community rated as 'excellent' or 'very good' in terms of being a place with Aboriginal cultural activities. About half (51%) lived in communities rated as 'fair' or 'poor' as a place with these cultural activities.

**Chart 3**  
**Métis children under six years old.**  
**How parents or guardians rated their feelings about their community as a place with...**



Source(s): Statistics Canada, *Aboriginal Children's Survey, 2006*

Métis children in urban areas were more likely than those in rural areas to have parents or guardians who rated their community 'excellent' or 'very good' as a place with health facilities and facilities for children (community centres, rinks, gyms, and parks).

## Cultural activities

According to the 2006 Aboriginal Children's Survey, 28% of young Métis children had participated in or attended 'traditional First Nations, Métis, or Inuit activities such as singing, drum dancing, fiddling, gatherings or ceremonies'.

About one third (31%) of Métis children had someone who helped them to understand Aboriginal history and culture. Many of these children were being taught by their parents (56%) and grandparents (46%).

In 2006, 48% of Métis children under six years old were in some kind of child care arrangement. This refers to regular care arrangements by someone other than a parent, including daycare, nursery or preschool, Head Start, before or after school programs, and care by a relative or other caregiver.

Of those children receiving regular child care, 14% were in an arrangement that promoted traditional and cultural values and customs. About 6% were in child care arrangements where Aboriginal languages were used.

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### How to obtain more information

Specific inquiries about this product and related statistics or services should be directed to: Social and Aboriginal Statistics Division, Statistics Canada, Ottawa, Ontario, K1A 0T6 by telephone: 613-951-5979 or by e-mail at [sasd-dssea@statcan.gc.ca](mailto:sasd-dssea@statcan.gc.ca).

### Statistics Canada National Contact Centre

Toll-free telephone (Canada and the United States):  
Inquiries line 1-800-263-1136

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