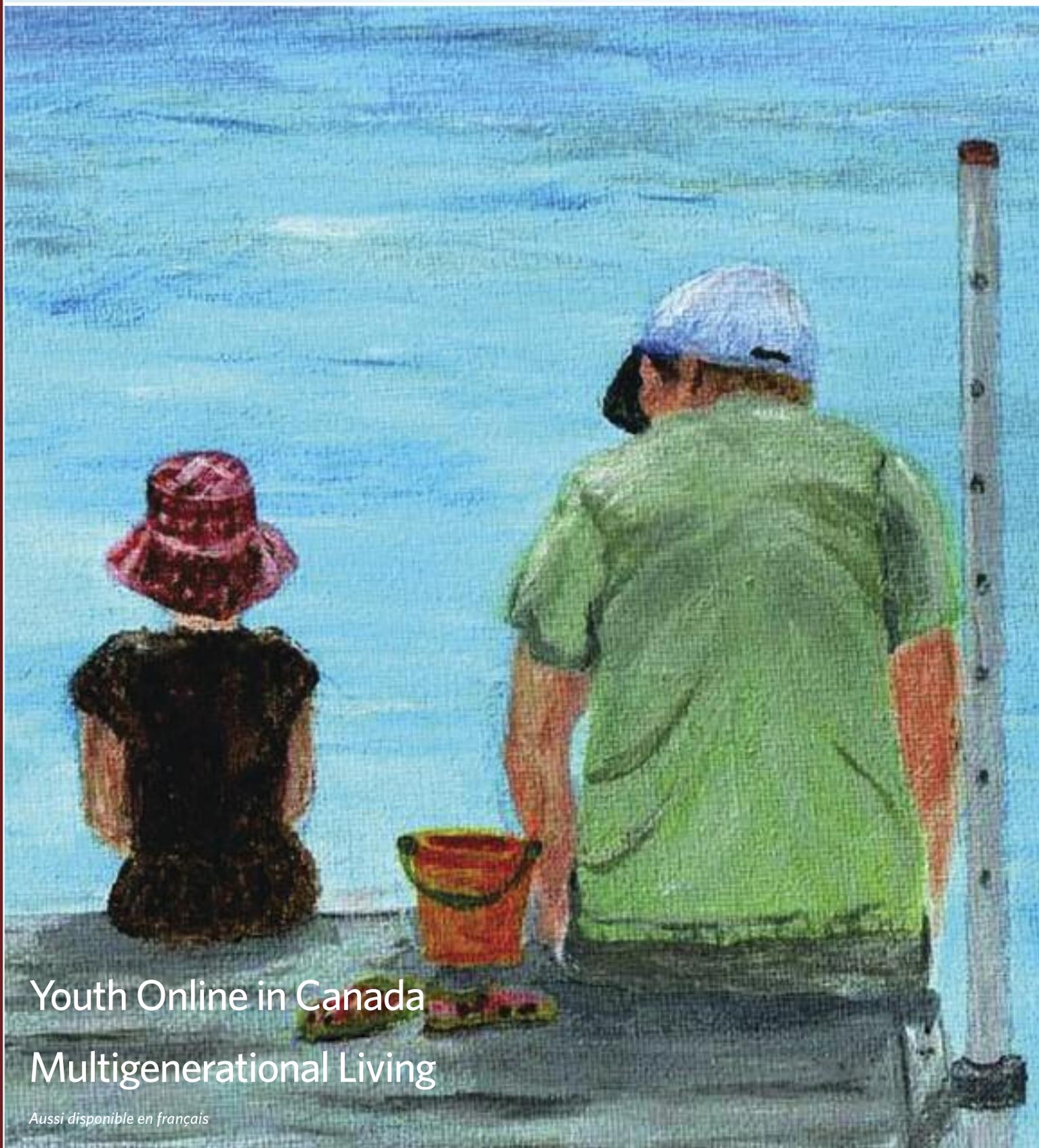


Transition

CANADIAN FAMILIES MATTER

VOLUME 43, NUMBER 3



Youth Online in Canada

Multigenerational Living

Aussi disponible en français

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About the Cover

Dock Time with Dad
Cheryl Nix, Brockville, Ontario

Dock Time with Dad is a portrait Cheryl painted at her summer cottage of her granddaughter Raechel and son-in-law relaxing by the St. Lawrence River.

Cheryl was raised in Vestal, NY, and moved to Canada in 1973. Recently retired from organizing in-home services for seniors, she is a happy mother and grandmother who is now learning new skills, including painting.

Contribute to Transition

If you would like to submit articles or cover art for the magazine, please read our *Contributors' Guidelines*, available under the "Resources" tab at www.vanierinstitute.ca.

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VOLUME 43, NUMBER 3

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Canada: CAD\$35 (individuals) and CAD\$70 (organizations/libraries) per year (plus applicable taxes)

US: CAD\$45 (individuals) and CAD\$90 (organizations/libraries) per year

International: CAD\$60 (individuals) and CAD\$95 (organizations/libraries) per year

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Please return undeliverable magazines for Canadian addresses to the Vanier Institute at the above address.

ISSN 0049-4429 (Print)
ISSN 2291-4498 (Online)

Charitable Reg. No. 10816 8337 RR0001
Publication Mail Agreement No. 0040006500

Translation
Sylvain Gagné, Services langagiers

Design and Production
Denyse Marion, RGD, Art & Facts Design Inc.

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From the Editor



As life expectancy increases, there is a growing opportunity for children to develop strong and significant intergenerational relationships with their grandparents and great-grandparents. Not only have increased mobility and ease of travel helped people connect in person more often, but advances in communications technology over the past decade have played a large role in strengthening family ties in recent years. Thanks to these factors, there has arguably never been a greater opportunity to create, sustain and enhance deep and meaningful relationships among generations in Canada.

In her regular column, CEO Nora Spinks explains the connections between generations – described by Dr. Elise Boulding as a “200-year present” – that inform our experience of family. This concept of the 200-year present guides how the Vanier Institute of the Family explores and understands families and family life.

In our first feature article, “Connected, Mobile and Social: The Online Lives of Canadian Youth,” Matthew Johnson reviews a report that debunks some widely held assumptions by exploring the online experiences of young Canadians. The report reveals what youth do online, the kinds of sites they visit, their attitudes regarding online safety and household rules.

In “Off the Vanier Bookshelf,” Nathan Battams reviews *Valuing Children: Rethinking the Economics of the Family* by Nancy Folbre, which looks at not only the costs parents incur raising children, but also the value these children bring to society.

More Canadian homes are expanding to include three or more generations under one roof as a means of dealing with an aging population, increasing household costs and evolving family relationships. In our second feature article, Nathan Battams considers the revival of a pre-Second World War lifestyle in “In It Together: Multigenerational Living in Canada.”

As Chief Economist for Imagine Canada, Brian Emmett is well-positioned to gauge the impact and contribution of the charitable and non-profit sector in Canada. In “Charities and Non-Profits: A Strategic Component of Canada’s Success,” he explores how the importance of these organizations extends well beyond the economic benefits they provide.

Death is something we will all experience, yet we tend to put off engaging in uncomfortable discussions about how we would like our lives to come to an end. In “The Canadian Death Experience,” Audrey Miller provides a synopsis of the Vanier Institute’s Contemporary Family Trends report *Death, Dying and Canadian Families* by Dr. Katherine Arnup.

In “Canada’s Military Families and the Military Family Services Program,” Roxanna Gumiela sheds light on the challenges facing military families, including housing, child care, spousal employment and more, and she describes the support services available through the Military Family Services Program.

Public transit or private vehicle, biking or walking: how do you get to work? See how your mode of transport and the time you spend compare with others in this issue’s Facts and Stats on “Commuting in Canada.”

We look forward to receiving your suggestions and comments. If you have ideas for future issues or would like to submit something you’ve written – including first-hand perspectives on family-related issues or even artwork for the cover – please write to us at editor@vanierinstitute.ca.

Veronica Schami
Editor

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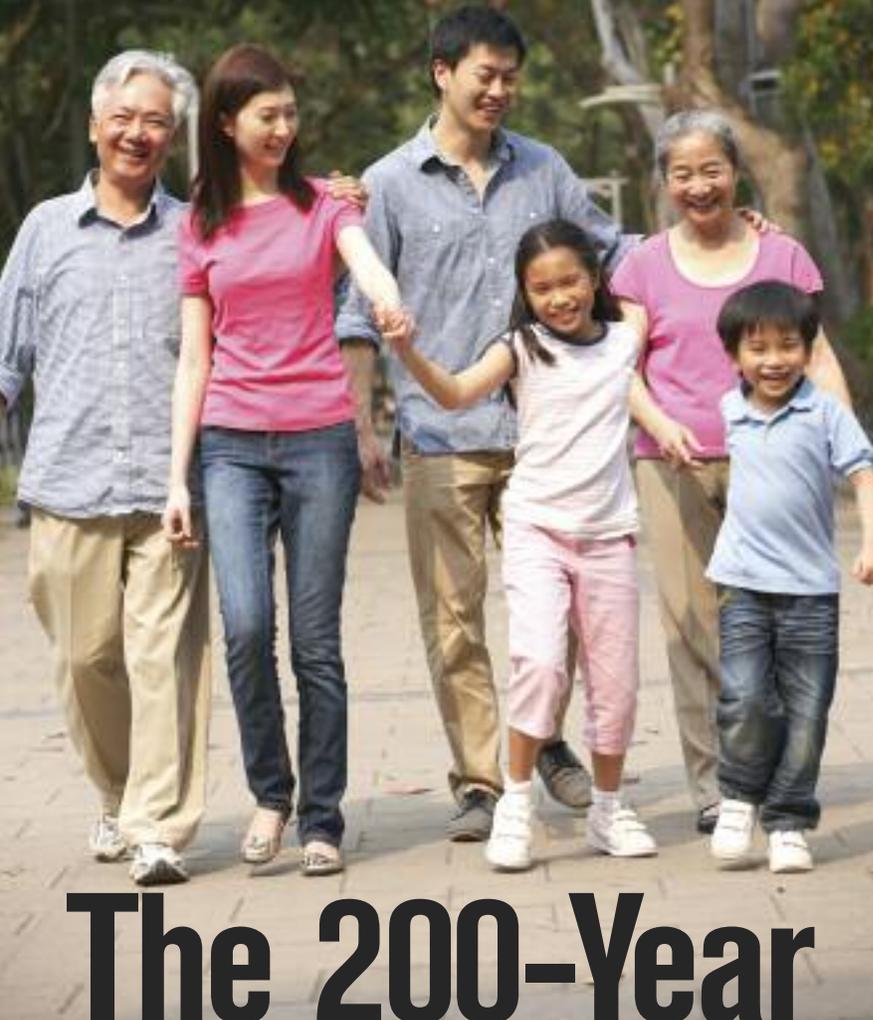
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Connections and exchanges between our generation and those that precede and follow us provide a greater lens through which we can view society.



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The 200-Year Present

NORA SPINKS

In 1981, the Vanier Institute hosted a public lecture with keynote speaker Dr. Elise Boulding, who described how our experience of family can be viewed from a “200-year present” through our grandparents (who connect us with the previous century) and through our grandchildren (who connect us with the upcoming one). Connections and exchanges between our generation and those that precede and follow us provide a greater lens through which we can view society – a perspective grounded in a diversity of experiences.

At the Institute, the concept of the 200-year present guides how we explore and understand families and family life. Recently, I spoke at the University of Ottawa to a group of about 200 students and asked how many had day-to-day contact with a parent. Almost every hand in the room went up. I then asked how many had regular contact with a grandparent (once a week or more), and two-thirds of the hands stayed up. Then, I asked how many kept in touch with a *great*-grandparent regularly (once a month or more). I expected to see just a few hands. However, the vast majority of those who had contact with their grandparents *also* had contact with their great-grandparents. Most said they maintained contact through technology, either with Skype, smartphones or social media. Some were living with their parents and/or grandparents. Some were living with *and* caring for their parents, grandparents or great-grandparents.

Curious as to whether the statistics we have on file reflect the same multigenerational experience, I pulled up our “grandparent file” when I got back to the office. Unfortunately, there is little information about great-grandparents, because Statistics Canada only collects information on grandparents and doesn’t count whether you’re a first- or second-generation (i.e. grandparent or great-grandparent). It’s hard to determine whether the group of students I had spoken with earlier in the day was unique or whether it was representative of students in their twenties across the country.

So, what we want to do at the Vanier Institute is hear about people’s experiences with multiple generations to enrich our understanding of grandparents and great-grandparents. In light of this, we would like to engage Canadians in a conversation about how they interact with multiple generations across the country and around the world – connections that are often facilitated by communication technologies.

One of the most popular and frequently requested presentations that the Vanier Institute gives is about generational diversity – in the workplace, in the community and in the home. Clearly we are not alone in wanting to learn about the intergenerational experience in Canada. Later this year, the United Nations will be holding a series of meetings about the 20th anniversary of the International Year of the Family, of which one of the three main priorities is intergenerational experiences. As one of 15 participants in these gatherings, the Vanier Institute will bring a Canadian voice, informed by our research and conversations we have had with families across the country.



Connected, Mobile and Social

The Online Lives of Canadian Youth

MATTHEW JOHNSON

Digital natives. Tech-savvy. Narcissistic. Innovative. Mean. There are a lot of assumptions about kids online, but the labels we use are often misleading and out of step with what young people are actually doing with networked technologies. In order to better understand the online lives of Canadian children and youth, MediaSmarts – a Canadian not-for-profit charitable organization for digital and media literacy – has conducted an extensive national survey of students in Grades 4 through 11 as part of the *Young Canadians in a Wired World* research series, which began in 2000.

It goes without saying that eight years is a long time on the Internet. Between 2005, when MediaSmarts published Phase II of its *Young Canadians in a Wired World* research, and 2013, when it conducted the national student survey for Phase III, the Internet changed almost beyond recognition: online video,

once slow and buggy, became one of the most popular activities on the Web, while social networking became nearly universal among both youth and adults.

Young people's online experiences have changed as well, so MediaSmarts surveyed 5,436 Canadian students in Grades 4 through 11, in classrooms in every province and territory, to find out how. The first report drawn from this survey, *Life Online*, focuses on what youth are doing online, what sites they are going to and their attitudes toward online safety, household rules on Internet use and unplugging from digital technology. (Future reports based on this data will look at students' habits, activities and attitudes toward privacy, digital permanence, bullying, commercialization, offensive content, online relationships and digital literacy in the classroom and in the home.)



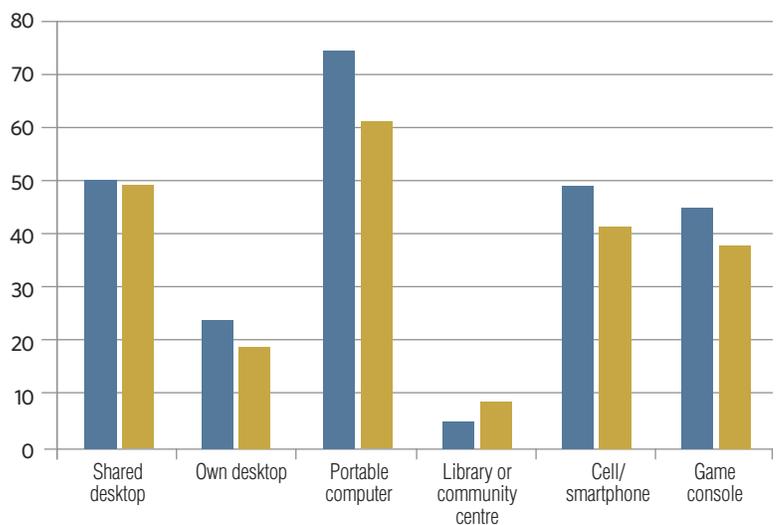
Students report looking for information on the Internet on sensitive topics such as mental health issues, sexuality, physical health issues and relationship problems.

One finding, which is unlikely to be a surprise, is that nearly all youth are going online. In fact, 99% of students surveyed have access to the Internet outside of school using a variety of devices. The biggest change

since the last survey is the proliferation of mobile and portable devices, such as tablets, smartphones and web-enabled MP3 players, which give youth constant – and often unsupervised – online access. In the previous *Young Canadians in a Wired World* report, in 2005, the majority of students accessed the Internet through shared desktop computers at home (which were often kept in the family room or kitchen so parents could keep an eye on the online activities of their children), whereas now portable and personal networked devices, such as tablets and smartphones, are the primary access point for many of these students.

Portable, private access to the Internet was found to increase with age, while reliance on shared computers has decreased: 64% of Grade 4 students report using a shared family computer to go online outside of school, but this drops to 37% by Grade 11. Ownership of cellphones and smartphones, on the other hand, is reported by 24% of students in Grade 4, 52% of students in Grade 7 and 85% of students in Grade 11. Perhaps not surprisingly, ownership of these devices is correlated with family affluence: a greater proportion of more-affluent students compared with medium-affluent students report access to portable computers (74% vs. 61%), cellphones (49% vs. 41%) and game consoles (45% vs. 38%).

Access to Networked Devices Outside of School: Affluence* (%)



*A modified version of the Family Affluence Scale was used to measure students' socio-economic status. More information can be found under *Comparing High Affluence Students and Medium Affluence Students* in the Methodology section of the *Young Canadians in a Wired World* report.

A larger percentage of boys than girls (27% and 18%, respectively) access the Internet over their own desktop computer, whereas girls are more likely than boys to access the Internet with a laptop (71% and 66%, respectively). This, in combination with the higher likelihood of boys accessing the Internet through a gaming console than girls (60% and 27%, respectively), suggests that boys are more likely to be using the Internet from a fixed location.

Not only are students getting connected, they are *staying* connected: more than one-third of students who own cellphones say they sleep with their phones in case they get calls or messages during the night. This is true of both girls and boys (39% and 37%, respectively, of those who own cellphones). The trend increases across grades to peak at just over half (51%) of Grade 11 students, but one-fifth of all students in Grade 4 also report that they do the same.

Students are well aware that they are frequently “plugged in”: 40% of girls and 31% of boys report worrying that they spend too much time online. When asked how they would feel if they could not go online for anything other than school or work for a week, just under half (49%) say they would be upset or unhappy. Interestingly, English-language students outside of Quebec are more likely to be upset than French-language students in Quebec (51% vs. 40%). However, 46% of all students indicate they would not care one way or the other and 5% report that they would be relieved or happy to go offline.

Many students try to balance their online and offline activities, saying that they sometimes choose to go offline in order to spend more time with friends and family (77%), go outside or play a game or sport (71%), read a book (44%) or just enjoy some solitary quiet time (45%). Only 4% say that they never choose to go offline to do any of these things.

What are Canadian youth doing when they are online? For many, the Internet is a tool for learning and sharing information: half (49%) of students in all grades have gone online to find information about news and current events and half of students in Grades 7-11 have sent links to news stories or current events to others. However, relatively few have participated in online debates, either by posting comments on a news site (71% of Grades 7-11 have never done so) or joining an activist group (65% of all grades have never done so).



More than one-third of students who own cellphones say they sleep with their phones in case they get calls or messages during the night.

Children and youth are not just interested in learning about news and current events, however. Many report going online to learn about health and well-being, whether it's to learn about physical health (20% of girls and 16% of boys), mental health (14% of girls and 9% of boys) or relationship problems (18% of girls and 9% of boys). The percentage of students who use the Internet as an information source increases from Grade 4 through to Grade 11. Compared with students in younger grades, a higher percentage of students in Grades 7-11 report looking for information on more sensitive topics, such as mental health issues, sexuality, physical health issues and relationship problems. However, nearly one-quarter (22%) of students report that they do not use the Internet to find information about any of these things. Close to one-third of students report having gone online to ask an expert (30%) or other kids (33%) for advice about a personal problem, although only a small percentage report frequently doing so.



Two-thirds of students report that they play online games, with this activity being significantly more popular among boys (71%) than girls (47%). Unlike other online activities, which increase with age, the proportion of students who report playing online games decreases over time, from a high of 77% in Grade 5 to a low of 42% in Grade 10. The games students play differ significantly between boys and girls: boys in Grades 4–6 choose Minecraft, a game in which players build virtual environments, while girls prefer virtual worlds such as Webkinz, Moshi Monsters and Poptropica, which contain chat and social networking features.

Not surprisingly, social networking is also a popular activity, particularly among older students in the survey. The increased participation in social media-related activities is consistent with developmental literature

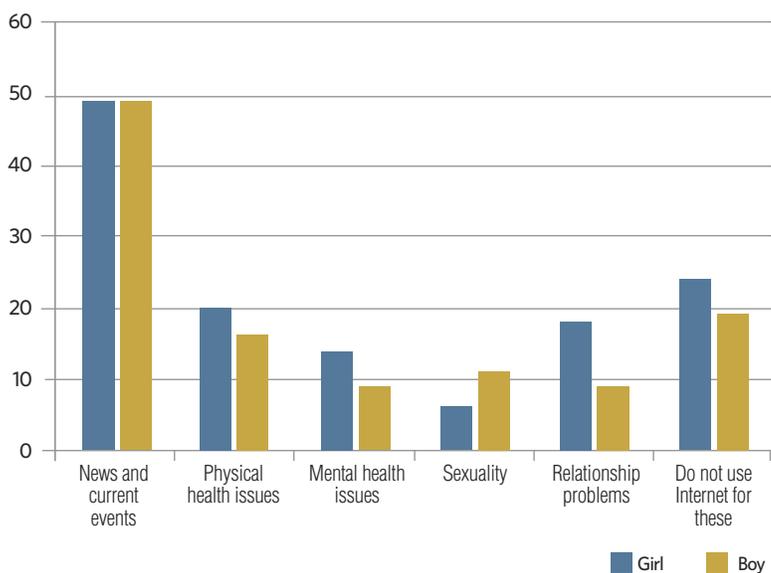
that suggests that social connection becomes more important as young people move from childhood to their teen years. Between Grade 4 and Grade 11, reading others' profiles increases from 18% to 72%, tweeting increases from 5% to 42%, following friends/family on Twitter rises from 8% to 39%, posting on one's own profile rises from 19% to 50% and following celebrities on Twitter rises from 5% to 32%. Girls are more likely than boys to report using social media to communicate with family and friends (45% posted on their own social networking site, compared with 36% of boys).

Nearly one-third (32%) of students in Grades 4–6 reported having a Facebook account and 16% have a Twitter account, in spite of terms of use agreements that bar children under the age of 13 from using these sites. Boys this age are slightly more likely than girls to have a Facebook account (36% compared with 30% of girls), but there is no gender difference regarding Twitter (17% for both boys and girls). The number of Facebook accounts rises substantially after Grade 6, from 67% in Grade 7 to 95% in Grade 11. About half of students in Grades 7–11 also have accounts on Twitter (47%), rising from about one-third (31%) in Grade 7 to almost two-thirds by Grade 11. Twitter appears to be less popular among French-language students in Quebec (8%) than English-language students in the rest of Canada (22%).

Parents have continued to be involved in their children's online lives, with 84% of surveyed students reporting that they have household rules to follow regarding their online activity. The most common rules are about posting contact information online (55%), talking to strangers online or on a cellphone (52%), avoiding certain sites (48%), treating people online with respect (47%) and getting together with online acquaintances (44%).

There have been changes involving household rules regarding online activities since the 2005 survey. Although MediaSmarts' 2012 focus groups with parents and youth showed parents were more concerned than ever about what youth were doing online, the average number of household rules has actually *declined* since 2005. For example, in the earlier survey, 74% of students had a rule at home about meeting people whom they first met online, compared with only 44% today. Regarding personal information, 69% of students in 2005 had a rule about giving personal information online, whereas 55% in 2013 had a rule about posting contact information.

Finding Information Online: Gender (%)





84% of surveyed students report that they have household rules to follow regarding their online activity.

Consistent with our previous research, household rules have a significant positive impact on what students do online, reducing risky behaviours such as posting contact information, visiting gambling sites, seeking out online pornography and talking to strangers online. In general, though, the number of household rules takes a sharp dive after Grade 7 and at all ages girls are more likely to report having rules about their online activities than boys. For example, girls are more likely than boys to report having online rules about talking to strangers (61% of girls vs. 40% of boys), getting together with someone they have met online (52% vs. 35%), telling their parents about anything that makes them uncomfortable online (46% vs. 30%) and treating people online with respect (54% vs. 40%).

The greater number of rules placed on girls may be based on a sense that girls are generally more vulnerable, but it may also relate to the fact that the Internet is a very different place for girls than for boys. Girls are less likely to agree with the statement “The Internet is a safe place for me” and more likely to agree that “I could be hurt if I talk to someone I don’t know online.” Despite these differences, both boys and girls feel confident in their ability to look after themselves, with nine out of 10 agreeing with the statement “I know how to protect myself online.”

How often students have an adult or parent in the room with them while online has also changed since the 2005 survey: this figure has risen. This comes as a surprise, considering the decline in household rules and the proliferation of mobile devices. As with household rules, the rate is higher for girls. One in five Grade 4 students never has a parent or adult with them when they are online at home, and by Grade 8 – a time when students are most at risk of encountering and getting involved in trouble online – four out of 10 students never go online with a parent or other adult in the room.

Students do see their parents as a valuable resource for learning about the Internet: nearly half (45%) of students say they have learned about issues such as cyberbullying, online safety and privacy management at home. However, parents aren’t their only source of information about online issues, with students also reporting learning about these issues from teachers (41%), friends (18%) and online sources (19%). As students get older, they are less likely to report having learned about these issues from parents and more likely to learn from teachers: for example, students in Grades 4–6 were more likely to report having learned about how to be safe online from parents (75%) than teachers (50%). A worrying number of students have not learned about these topics from any source. For example, more than half of students in Grades 4–6 have not learned any strategies for authenticating online information either at home or at school.

Life Online has raised many issues that call for more in-depth study. However, the evidence is clear at this early stage that despite their confidence with digital tools – or perhaps because of it – Canadian youth, and particularly elementary-aged children, need instruction in digital literacy skills, and parents and teachers need to be given tools and resources to help them provide that instruction.

Matthew Johnson is Director of Education at MediaSmarts, Canada’s centre for digital and media literacy.

Adapted with permission from material originally posted on the MediaSmarts website on January 22, 2014 and from the full *Young Canadians in a Wired World* report.



Available at MediaSmarts,
<http://mediasmarts.ca/ycww>

OFF THE VANIER BOOKSHELF

NATHAN BATTAMS

The cost of raising children is a hotly debated topic, not only because it touches on people's beliefs about parenting, but also because it can have implications for public policy and the relationships families have with the state and society at large. Nancy Folbre's *Valuing Children: Rethinking the Economics of the Family* provides a reconceptualization of family economics, taking a holistic economic approach to provide a clearer picture of the cost and value of children.

Folbre argues that children and child rearing – non-market factors that are traditionally overlooked in economic analyses – should be included in economic discussions. She says that children also have a high economic value for society due to their later societal contributions. Yet, despite their value, parents (particularly women) incur most of the costs of raising children while society reaps the gains. *Valuing Children* demonstrates that both children and child rearing are essential elements of a society's economic vitality.

Folbre describes children as investments – but investments that fundamentally differ from regular market investments, which do not necessarily contribute to the well-being of society. Parenting investments, after all, cultivate capabilities in children that benefit society (employers, taxpayers, etc.) in the future.

In addressing private expenditures on children, *Valuing Children* focuses not only on the cost of essentials, but also on the *time* spent on child rearing, which is rarely examined through a monetary lens. Folbre provides estimates of the value of parental time by assessing how much it would cost to purchase a substitute through the market, concluding that the economic value of parental time is much higher than the value of cash expenditures on children.

Folbre then examines how much the public spends on children, by scrutinizing direct expenditures on education and health care as well as the relative contribution of social insurance and tax policies. While she finds that the overall level of tax subsidy through deductions and credits is actually similar to the level of family allowances found in some European countries, there are notable shortcomings and inequalities in the system – shortcomings that have negative consequences for children and therefore for society.

Valuing Children: Rethinking the Economics of the Family

Nancy Folbre. Cambridge, MA:
Harvard University Press, 2008.



Valuing Children takes a holistic economic approach to provide a clearer picture of the cost and value of children.

Valuing Children closes by discussing a final question: who *should* pay for the cost of children? Folbre makes a case for public spending based on three basic rationales: children as valuable social investments, intergenerational reciprocity and moral obligations. She argues for institutional reform to mitigate the “disjuncture” between the private costs and public benefits of successful child rearing. She also argues for better methods for national income accounting and government budget development to help facilitate institutional reform.

Valuing Children brings children and parenting into traditional economic frameworks by quantifying and monetizing children and child rearing. While her estimates are limited by available data, they do provide a sense of the magnitude of the contribution that parenting and children make to the economy and society. While her focus is on the United States, the underlying idea of conceptualizing children as a *social good* is every bit as relevant in the Canadian context. *Valuing Children* is a noteworthy contribution to the discussion of family economics.

Nathan Battams is a researcher and writer at the Vanier Institute of the Family.



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The proportion of children under the age of 14 living with a grandparent increased from 3.3% in 2001 to 4.8% in 2011.



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In It Together

Multigenerational Living in Canada

NATHAN BATTAMS

Households are continuously evolving in Canada, as shifting economic, demographic and social forces shape our living arrangements. Many families are living together longer, as a number of factors are creating or increasing incentives for several generations to live under one roof. High unemployment rates among youth are leading a growing proportion to continue living in the parental home for longer (or, for students, to return after completing their studies). For seniors and elders, increasing life expectancy and the proliferation of mobility technologies have provided them with more choice over where and how to live. As a result, there has been an increase in households in Canada containing three or more generations. The 2011 Census counted 362,600 of these multigenerational households in Canada, accounting for 2.7% of all private households.^{1,2}

But the Census counts don't provide a complete picture of multigenerational living. Not included in Statistics Canada's definition of multigenerational households are those that consist solely of parents and their adult children, a living arrangement that has been steadily increasing for decades. The proportion of young adults aged 20 to 29 living in the parental home has increased from 27% in 1981 to 42% in 2011.³ This shift has reduced the stigma associated with living in the parental home, which in itself can make young adults less hesitant to live with their parents.

Census counts of multigenerational homes also overlook households comprised of seniors and elders living with their adult children, another living arrangement on the rise. The proportion of Canadians aged 65 and older is higher than ever, and as life expectancy continues to increase, this trend is set to continue into the near future. Many adult children



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have set up accessory dwelling units (ADUs) in their homes for their parents that have been designed for senior living, sometimes referred to as “granny flats” or “in-law suites.” The renovations involved in establishing these living spaces are often relatively minor and can allow seniors to navigate homes with little assistance or risk of injury.

A growing number of children in Canada now share a home with their grandparents and great-grandparents. The proportion of children under the age of 14 living with a grandparent increased from 3.3% in 2001 to 4.8% in 2011,⁴ which has created new opportunities for intergenerational bonds. Sometimes, grandparents are solely responsible for raising their grandchildren without the parents present in the household. In 2011, over 30,000 children aged 14 and under lived in these “skip-generation” families.⁵

Multigenerational households are diverse, and they vary across communities in Canada. For example, 9.1% of Aboriginal children lived in multigenerational households in 2011 (10.7% of Inuit children, 10.5% of First Nations children and 5.6% of Métis children), compared with 3.9% of non-Aboriginal children.⁶ Immigrants to Canada, who now account for more than one in five of the total population, are twice as likely as their Canadian-born counterparts to live in multigenerational households.^{7, 8}

Multigenerational living provides numerous benefits for families. Regardless of their age, having extra people in the home means there are more people

to help with household tasks and chores – “many hands make light work,” as the saying goes. Senior and elderly parents who live with their adult children *and* their grandchildren can sometimes help the “middle generation” provide care to the youngest generation – a benefit to parents who may have a hard time finding affordable, quality child care.

There are also potential benefits for adult children who provide caregiving to their senior and elderly parents and who may choose to cohabitate to avoid or reduce some of the stressors that can result from providing care to someone who lives out of town or in another province (39% of all family caregivers reported that they provided care to a parent in 2012). Long-distance caregiving contributes to emotional and financial stress for the caregiver. So, it is perhaps not surprising that nearly one-quarter (24%) of Canadians who provided care to their parents in 2012 lived with the care recipient(s).⁹ Even if senior parents in multigenerational homes aren’t care recipients, the family support that accompanies living together can enhance their well-being.

Living in multigenerational households can also have economic advantages for all residents, as the household costs can be split among a greater number of residents. These lower costs can help to reduce the risk of poverty and food insecurity. In a 2010 study of multigenerational living in the United States, researchers found that the poverty rate in multigenerational homes¹⁰ was lower than that of their

single-generational counterparts (11.5% and 14.6%, respectively). For those without jobs, the difference was far more pronounced: poverty rates for unemployed Americans was 17.5% for those living in multigenerational households, compared with 30.3% for those living in other households.¹¹ Sharing a home would likely provide similar economic advantages to residents of multigenerational homes in Canada.

Architects and homebuilders associations are taking note of the increase in multigenerational living. In fact, floor plans and building designs targeted at multigenerational living have become a selling point for this growing niche market. Often, these designs incorporate a “home within a home” – that is, a full home with a separate, private apartment attached to it. Extra living spaces can have their own separate entrance or they can share one with the primary living space. Multigenerational homes sometimes feature open floor plans and wider doorways and hallways, which can allow for better traffic flow. Generally speaking, the more generations living under one roof, the more versatile the house has to be.

In the case of senior parents living with adult children, this extra living space may also be equipped with features such as extra handrails, walk-in bathtubs, stair lifts and other accessories specifically designed for senior living. In some cases, this may even involve accessibility features, such as elevators and first-floor bedrooms and bathrooms.

As Canada’s population continues to age, and as household costs increase and families evolve, multigenerational households will likely become more common. Ultimately, this may not be an aberration from the norm but rather a return to living arrangement patterns that were dominant prior to the Second World War, when sharing a household with extended family was far more common. Regardless, this shift reflects one of the many ways in which Canadian families adapt to and impact economic, demographic and social forces. The rise in multi-



Immigrants to Canada are twice as likely as their Canadian-born counterparts to live in multigenerational households.

generational living brings with it new challenges, as family members will seek to balance their need or desire to live with more family members with their own needs for privacy and control over their living space. At the same time, it creates new opportunities to form and strengthen bonds between family members and multiple generations.

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¹ “Multigenerational households” are defined by Statistics Canada as households that contain three or more generations, and at least one census family. A census family consists of a married couple (with or without children), a common-law couple (with or without children) or a lone parent family.

² Statistics Canada, “Portrait of Families and Living Arrangements in Canada,” *Census Analytical Products*, Statistics Canada catalogue no. 98-312-X-2011001 (September 2012), accessed December 4, 2013, <http://bit.ly/1hAm7HE>.

³ Statistics Canada, “Living Arrangements of Young Adults Aged 20 to 29,” *Census Analytical Products*, Statistics Canada catalogue no. 98-312-X-2011003 (September 2012), accessed December 4, 2013, <http://bit.ly/18Frq5X>.

⁴ Statistics Canada, “Distribution (Number and Percentage) of Population Aged 14 and Under in Private Households by Selected Living Arrangements, Canada, 2001 to 2011” (table 5), *Portrait of Families and Living Arrangements in Canada*, Statistics Canada catalogue no. 98-312-X-2011001 (September 2012), accessed December 4, 2013, <http://bit.ly/1jqfKG4>.

⁵ Statistics Canada, “Portrait of Families and Living Arrangements in Canada.”

⁶ Statistics Canada, “Aboriginal Peoples in Canada: First Nations People, Métis and Inuit,” *National Household Survey (NHS) Analytical Products 2011*,

Statistics Canada catalogue no. 99-011-X2011001 (July 2011), accessed December 4, 2013, <http://bit.ly/1G4IOA>.

⁷ Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation, *Canadian Housing Observer 2012* (2012), accessed December 4, 2013, <http://bit.ly/1KN7Ft>.

⁸ Statistics Canada, “Immigration and Ethnocultural Diversity in Canada,” *NHS Analytical Products, 2011*, Statistics Canada catalogue no. 99-010-X (May 2013), accessed December 17, 2013, <http://bit.ly/1gjVgiC>.

⁹ Martin Turcotte, “Family Caregiving: What Are the Consequences?” *Insights on Canadian Society*, Statistics Canada catalogue no. 75-006-X (September 2013), accessed December 4, 2013, <http://bit.ly/1cZs0SJ>.

¹⁰ In the Pew study, multigenerational households consisted of two adult generations (e.g. a household head with an adult child or with a parent), three or more generations (e.g. a householder, adult child and grandchild) or two “skipped” generations (e.g. a grandparent and a grandchild).

¹¹ Rakesh Kochhar and D’vera Cohn, “Fighting Poverty in a Bad Economy, Americans Move In with Relatives,” *Pew Research Social and Demographic Trends*, accessed December 10, 2013, <http://bit.ly/19falxZ>.



Charities and Non-Profits

A Strategic Component of Canada's Success

BRIAN EMMETT

Charities and non-profits are employers that produce social and economic value contributing to Canada's gross domestic product (GDP): two and one-half times the contribution of agriculture and six times as much as automobile manufacturing. The sector is an important one in terms of its contribution to economic activity and jobs.

In Canada, more than 165,000 charity and non-profit organizations work in a diverse range of social realms, including health care, arts, social services, education, international development and the environment. The impact and contribution of the charitable and non-profit sector in Canada is significant: 8.1% of GDP and 10.5% of the labour force.

But the importance of these organizations goes well beyond the economic benefits they provide. Charities and non-profits are a vitally important component of our overall success as a country: a strategic driver of our quality of life and an economy that generates jobs and prosperity now and in the future.

The impact and contribution of the charitable and non-profit sector in Canada is significant: 8.1% of GDP and 10.5% of the labour force.

Canadians want to be sustainably prosperous in a highly competitive world economy in which knowledge and information are increasingly valued and important, and in which services and technology play a growing role. Increasingly, *people* – with their talent, skills and education – will be Canada's most important resource.

But information and knowledge, services and people are all highly mobile. Talented people will move to countries where they can make a meaningful contribution to their own lives and to others. People want to lead lives of value and make a difference in a country that offers not only economic opportunity but also a high quality of life.

In this view of the future, charities and non-profits are not case-by-case responses to social, cultural and environmental problems that come up from time to time; rather, they are a crucial part of what makes Canada a desirable country in which to live and contribute. This is why the sustainability of charities and non-profits is important for governments and citizens.

The sector's strategic value will increase as business, government and charities continue to develop and nurture mutually supportive and creative relationships. Equally, the value of the sector to our quality of life depends on the extent to which charities and non-profits can rise to the challenge of keeping pace with a rapidly changing modern world. This will mean demonstrating to increasingly sophisticated donors, volunteers, governments and businesses that charities and non-profits are indeed making a difference in the communities they serve. It requires these organizations to keep pace with business models that are updated continuously and to create jobs that provide the quality of work experience that allows people to be successful throughout careers in which change will be the norm.

In this vision, governments, citizens and businesses together will provide funding and a supportive environment for charities and non-profits that, in turn, will impart an essential contribution to a robust economy and quality of life. The result: a country in which Canadians will continue to be happy and productive and proud to live.

Brian Emmett is Imagine Canada's Chief Economist for Canada's Charitable and Non-Profit Sector.

Adapted from an article originally posted at blog.imaginecanada.ca on November 12, 2013.

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The Canadian Death Experience



Dignity resides in the quality and nature of the care provided and in the attitudes of both the caregiver and the recipient of care.

Summary of *Death, Dying and Canadian Families* by Dr. Katherine Arnup

AUDREY MILLER, MSW, RSW, CCRC, CCLCP

Death and dying are topics most people don't like to think about and consequently are rarely discussed in Canadian society. Yet they are important issues that affect not only how we face death, but also how we live our lives. *Death, Dying and Canadian Families*, a Contemporary Family Trends report published by the Vanier Institute of the Family, examines the historical experiences of death and dying, the changing role of families in end-of-life care and the "medicalization" of death and dying in Canada. Written by Dr. Katherine Arnup, this excellent paper provides a solid foundation for future discussions about how Canadians live their lives and face death.

Given Canadians' general reluctance to talk about death and dying, many people harbour multiple unexpressed desires and assumptions about death and dying, some of which clash with reality.

People want to live forever. Even though Canadians are living longer and more of us are reaching our 100th birthday, the natural aging of body and mind is inevitable, and the denial of this fact makes death "foreign and frightening" to many of us.

We also want to be fully able and then die suddenly in our sleep. Only 10% of us, however, experience this sort of "sudden death," while the rest of us will likely experience a slow decline. For many seniors, "old age" is accompanied by an increasing number of ailments and chronic conditions. When death finally does come, people wish to die at home; but, in reality, most Canadians die in hospital.

People want to die pain-free. Fortunately, in the past two decades, significant strides have been made in the management of pain and end-of-life care.

Moreover, people want to die with dignity. As Arnup points out, dignity resides in the quality and nature of the care provided and in the attitudes of both the caregiver and the recipient of care.

Many Canadians assume that their family can take care of them, but adult children often face many constraints that prevent them from doing so. People

want to die with some degree of control. In fact, Arnup shares that "the fear of being a burden to their family is one of the principal reasons that people consider death by suicide."

People also assume that home care will be available when they need it. This, too, is unlikely, as Arnup notes, "Home care is not an essential service guaranteed by the *Canada Health Act*; rather, it is provided on a regional and local level, with funding from provincial and territorial levels of government."

Finally, many people assume that "one big, happy family" will surround the dying person, conflict-free and sharing work equally. Often, this is not the case. Families have their own challenges, shaped by distance, unique family dynamics and differing perspectives and past experiences.

The report concludes by asking us to think about death and dying and to start the conversation with our family and with our health care providers. A 2004 Ipsos-Reid poll performed for the Canadian Hospice and Palliative Care Association and GlaxoSmithKline revealed the gap that exists between our understanding of the importance of end-of-life discussions and our willingness to engage in them: while eight in 10 surveyed Canadians agreed that people should start planning for end of life while they are healthy, only 44% said they had discussed it with a family member and only 9% had discussed it with a physician.

Most Canadians don't want to engage in discussions about death and dying. But death comes for everybody, and so it is important that we think about it, talk about it and write about it.

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Download *Death, Dying and Canadian Families* from the Vanier Institute's website at <http://bit.ly/1ksSPYF>.

Canada's Military Families and the Military Family Services Program

ROXANNA GUMIELA, RECE, BA, MPA

Canadian families have become increasingly diverse, as social, economic and demographic shifts have led to a greater recognition of the many family types that contribute to the fabric of Canadian society. One such family type is the military family, an often overlooked family model that is characterized by a multitude of challenges and unique experiences that require specialized resources and support.

While the Canadian Forces (CF) have received more attention in the past decade due to the war in Afghanistan, the efforts and sacrifices made by the *families* of CF members are often overlooked or forgotten. Little do we think about the day-to-day lives of CF families who have given up the normalcy of civilian family life so that their loved one can protect and defend that very civilian lifestyle.

History of military family support in Canada

The ability of CF members to do their job is highly dependent on the assurance that their family is cared for while they protect and serve the country. The Government of Canada's expectation that CF members "place service to country and needs of the CF ahead of

personal considerations,"¹ as well as its need for a positive image of the CF, requires that we acknowledge the importance of the unpaid work that CF family members perform on a daily basis.

To this end, the Department of National Defence (DND) initiated the Family Support Program Project (FSPP) in April 1987.² The mandate of the FSPP was to gather information, make recommendations and provide a plan that would make support and resources available to military spouses and family members.³

The findings and recommendations of the FSPP culminated in the creation of the Military Family Support Program (MFSP), which was established to assist spouses and family members in dealing with the challenges associated with the military family. Under the MFSP, Military Family Resource Centres (MFRCs) were opened as non-profit, stand-alone organizations on military bases, wings and support units across Canada.

At the core of the MFSP is the health and well-being of military families. The MFSP is built on the foundation of community development and involvement that provides the philosophical framework for the Family Resource Program (FRP) in Canada.⁴ Research on community development has indicated that communities fare better and are more enduring when community members are involved in the work of development and support.⁵ The MFSP philosophy therefore endorses and promotes volunteer involvement at all levels from the "governance/advisory capacity at the Board of Directors/Advisory Committee level, to the planning, design, delivery and evaluation of services."⁶



The ability of Canadian Forces members to do their job is highly dependent on the assurance that their family is cared for while they protect and serve the country.



Services built upon recognition of the unique needs of Canadian Forces members and their families can be tailored to help in the most effective way possible.

Unique supports for unique families

It is essential for the well-being of the Canadian Forces that we not only remember the efforts and sacrifices made by CF members and their families, but also that they are provided with adequate institutional supports. Services built upon recognition of the unique needs of CF members, their spouses/partners and their children can be tailored to help in the most effective way possible. The MFSP and MFRCs act as a service delivery mechanism, helping military families to face these obstacles while assuring CF members that their loved ones are being supported. By recognizing and helping CF families, these institutions are helping bring to life the national commitment of supporting all family types in Canada.

Roxanna Gumiela, RECE, BA, MPA, offers her services at www.developmentcoach.info, specializing in individual and group organizational coaching, and discovery, creation and delivery of individualized professional development.

¹ National Defence, "DAOD 5044-1, Families," *Defence Administrative Orders and Directives* (February 2002), accessed November 25, 2013, <http://bit.ly/19WSQhs>.

² Thunder Bay Military Family Resource Centre, *Military Family Services Program*, accessed November 25, 2013, <http://bit.ly/1fyGNwz>.

³ Military Family Resource Centres, "About Us," *MFRC Suffield* (no date), accessed November 20, 2013, <http://bit.ly/1939758>.

⁴ Director Military Family Services (DMFS), "Parameters for Practice," *Military Family Services Program* (2004), accessed November 20, 2013, <http://bit.ly/18330gP>.

⁵ Ibid.

⁶ Ibid.

Services provided by Military Family Resource Centres

As outlined in the 2013 ombudsman report *On the Homefront: Assessing the Well-Being of Canada's Military Families in the New Millennium*, the primary challenges associated with being a military family member typically relate to relocations, child care, health care, spousal employment, housing and spousal/family support while CF members are away.* To help military family members deal with these issues, MFRCs across the country provide the following services:

Personal Development and Community Integration

Provides military families with information about the community they have been posted to. Depending on the location of the base and the specific MFRC, families can find information about education, health, spiritual, recreational and shopping services located in the civilian community, and can also have access to second-language services. MFRCs also provide support for family members regarding job search strategies, resumé writing and support in accessing post-secondary education.

Child and Youth Support and Parenting Development

Includes parent and toddler drop-in programs and formal drop-off child care for parents so they can attend to personal appointments or simply have some well-deserved respite while the military member is away on training or deployed. These programs offer parents the opportunity to connect with others who understand the challenges that come with military life, including those associated with frequent moves and lone parenting. Parent education workshops and groups may also be a component of this program. Support for parents of children who have special needs has also been developed over the past several years.

Prevention, Support and Intervention

Includes mental health support for family members who may be challenged by the military family lifestyle. This program helps to deal with feelings of isolation, loneliness, abuse, deployment and/or reintegration issues for the family, operational stress injury (OSI) or post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) of the military member and the effect on the family member/spouse. Support may come in the form of referral to civilian mental health agencies, individual counselling or support groups.

Family Separation and Reunion

Offers support through something as simple as a mail program for family members to mail care packages to their deployed loved ones to the more intricate pre-deployment, deployment, reintegration and post-deployment information briefings. The information sessions are offered in coordination with information provided from the military unit to the MFRC program coordinator.

*National Defence and Canadian Forces, *On the Homefront: Assessing the Well-Being of Canada's Military Families in the New Millennium*, accessed November 18, 2013, <http://bit.ly/1iLApnQ>.

FACTS AND STATS



Commuting in Canada

15.4M Number of Canadians who reported that they commuted to work in 2011.^{1,2}

74%, 12% & 7% Proportion of Canadian commuters who drove a vehicle, used public transportation and used active transportation (walking, bicycle), respectively, to travel to work in 2011³

31%, 19% & 8% Proportion of Canadian commuters⁴ who reported travelling less than 15 minutes, 30–44 minutes and 60+ minutes, respectively, to their workplace in 2011.^{5,6}

12% Proportion of commuters in Canada who reported commuting to a location that varied from day to day in 2011 (representing 1.9 million people)⁷

66 min. Longest average commuting time per day in Canada (commuted by residents in the Greater Toronto and Hamilton Area)⁸

85% & 15% Proportion of Canadian workers who reported being satisfied (39% very

satisfied, 46% satisfied) and dissatisfied, respectively, with the amount of time it took to get to work in 2010⁹

36% & 23% Proportion of full-time workers in Canada who took 45+ minutes and less than 15 minutes to travel to work, respectively, who said that most days were quite or extremely stressful in 2010¹⁰

21% & 15% Proportion of Canadian workers who took less than 30 minutes and more than 45 minutes, respectively, to get to work who volunteered regularly in 2010.^{11,12}

33% Proportion of surveyed Canadian workers who said in 2013 that they would work an extra three hours per week in exchange for a “reasonable commute”¹³

50% Proportion of surveyed Canadian workers who said in 2013 that commuting time would be the main deciding factor in choosing one job over another¹⁴

¹ Martin Turcotte, “Commuting to Work,” *NHS in Brief*, Statistics Canada catalogue no. 99-012-X (June 2013), accessed December 12, 2013, <http://bit.ly/1aVb9UK>.

² Based on National Household Survey (NHS) 2011 data. Statistics Canada has taken steps to mitigate against the potential effects of non-response rates due to the voluntary nature of the NHS. For more details about NHS data quality, visit the Statistics Canada website: <http://bit.ly/ZPsg9D>.

³ Turcotte, 2013.

⁴ Commuters who travel to a usual place to work (i.e. excludes those who commute to a different location from day to day).

⁵ Statistics Canada, “Mode of Transportation, Commuting Type, Commuting Duration, Commuting Distance, Time Leaving for Work, Age Groups and Sex for the Employed Labour Force Aged 15 Years and Over Having a Usual Place of Work, in Private Households of Canada, Provinces, Territories, Census Metropolitan Areas and Census Agglomerations, 2011 National Household Survey,” *2011 National Household Survey*, Statistics Canada catalogue no. 99-012-XWE2011064 (December 2013), accessed December 12, 2013, <http://bit.ly/1henglt>.

⁶ See note 2.

⁷ Turcotte, 2013.

⁸ Conference Board of Canada, *The Value of Travel Time and Reliability: Commuting on 407 ETR* (December 2013), accessed December 12, 2013, <http://bit.ly/1bWGxbD>.

⁹ Martin Turcotte, “Commuting to Work: Results of the 2010 General Social Survey,” *Canadian Social Trends*, Statistics Canada catalogue no. 11-008-X (August 2011), accessed December 11, 2013, <http://bit.ly/1cp0vXB>.

¹⁰ Ibid.

¹¹ Martin Turcotte and Stéphanie Gaudet, “Social Participation of Full-Time Workers,” *Labour Statistics: Research Papers*, Statistics Canada catalogue no. 75-004-M (April 2013), accessed December 11, 2013, <http://bit.ly/1bxZdvB>.

¹² People who did an average of five or more hours of volunteer work per month in the past year are considered to have “volunteered regularly.”

¹³ Oxford Properties and Environics Research Group, *Destination Collaboration: The Future of Work* (December 2013), accessed December 11, 2013, <http://bit.ly/1HicK3>.

¹⁴ Oxford Properties and Environics Research Group.



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The vision of the Vanier Institute of the Family is to make families as important to the life of Canadian society as they are to the lives of individual Canadians.

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