

[International Day of Families 2018](#) [Focuses on Families and Inclusive Societies](#)

On May 15 every year, [International Day of Families](#) provides an opportunity to recognize and celebrate the role families play in the lives of individuals, communities and society at large. Families in Canada are diverse, unique, complex and evolving. Recognizing and celebrating family diversity is essential to building a society in which all families can fully engage and thrive – an important reality to reflect on during [this year's observance](#), which is focused on the theme of “families and inclusive societies.”

For more than 50 years, the Vanier Institute of the Family has monitored, studied and discussed trends in families and family life in Canada. From the beginning, the evidence has consistently made one thing clear: there is no single story to tell, because families are as diverse as the people who comprise them.

Parents, children, grandparents, great-grandparents, aunts, uncles, siblings, cousins, friends and neighbours across the country all make unique contributions to our lives, our workplaces and our communities. They form the constellations of relationships that make up our families, which evolve as family members react and adapt to changing social, economic, cultural and environmental forces.

To learn about family diversity in Canada, explore the resources below, which provide information and insights on families and family life in multiple formats:

[A Snapshot of Family Diversity in Canada](#) (statistical resource)

A statistical exploration of family diversity in Canada, providing an expanded and more detailed portrait of modern families in Canada, as well as some of the trends that have shaped our vibrant and evolving family landscape over the years.

[Family Diversity in Canada: 2016 Census Update](#) (infographic)

A portrait of family diversity in Canada, including data on family structures, family experiences, living arrangements, as well as the ethnocultural background, immigration status, sexual orientation and diverse abilities of family members.

[Families in Canada Interactive Timeline](#) (online resource)

An online resource from the Vanier Institute that highlights trends on diverse topics such as motherhood and fatherhood, family relationships,

living arrangements, children and seniors, work–life, health and well-being, family care and much more.

[What's in a Name? Defining Family in a Diverse Society](#) (**Transition article**)

The late Alan Mirabelli (former Executive Director of Administration at the Vanier Institute) discusses family diversity, the Vanier Institute's functional definition of family and fostering inclusion.

[Modern Couples in Canada: 2016 Census Update](#) (infographic)

A statistical two-page overview of modern couples in Canada, including data on couple types, parenthood, work and family, diversity within couples and trends in marital status.

[Andrew Solomon: Diversity, Difference, Disability and Families](#) (**video**)

Award-winning author and lecturer Andrew Solomon, Ph.D., delivers a powerful keynote presentation about diversity, difference and disability at the *Families in Canada Conference 2015*.

[The Canadian Family: Redefining Inclusion](#) (video)

A June 2017 panel discussion hosted by Roots of Empathy (featuring Vanier CEO Nora Spinks), an event that brought together leaders and educators to discuss diversity, inclusion and modern families in Canada.

[Canada's Families on the Farm](#) (infographic)

A brief portrait of farm families and how they've changed over the past several decades, including data on farm family demographics, households and evolving work–family experiences.

[A Snapshot of Military and Veteran Families in Canada](#) (**statistical resource**)

A statistical overview of military and Veteran families in Canada, including research and data on family composition, family relationships and the impact of military life on family well-being.

As reflected in the research, data and conversations in these resources, diversity is, was and *will continue to be* a key characteristic of family life for generations to come – a reality that contributes to Canada's dynamic and evolving society.

[Download this resource list.](#)

As former Governor General of Canada, His Excellency The Right Honourable David Johnston said at the [Families in Canada Conference 2015](#), "Families, no matter their background or their makeup, bring new and special patterns to

our diverse Canadian tapestry.”

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