

ANNUAL REPORT

VANIER INSTITUTE EXECUTIVE REPORT 2019–2020

Families in a Pre- and Post-COVID Canada

Marie Vaillancourt, Board Chair; and Nora Spinks, President and Chief Executive Officer

It's hard to remember what life was like in the first eight months of our fiscal year.

In a pre-COVID Canada, life and work at the Vanier Institute of the Family included engaging *in person* with those who study, serve and support families and sharing evidence-based insights at diverse events such as the Families in Canada Conference, satellite events, roundtables and listening tours.

Life and work during COVID have been (and will continue to be) primarily online, virtual and remote as we continue to adapt how we gather data, conduct analysis, report results, provide insights and share stories on what families are doing, how they are feeling and what they are thinking – all while sharing many of the same experiences ourselves and navigating this ongoing flux in our personal lives.

This fundamentally unique experience has transformed how we live, how we connect with others, how we work and how we engage in our communities. It has changed and continues to evolve day over day as COVID-19 has magnified, amplified and intensified the strengths and vulnerabilities of systems within our society, including its cornerstone: families. Families in Canada have been reacting and responding; adjusting and adapting; and shifting and evolving – and they will continue to do so. COVID-19 provides us with an opportunity to reflect on what is important to us as individuals, families, communities and a nation as we envision a future for all families in a post-COVID Canada.

The Vanier Institute has been engaged in a number of activities to learn about the experiences of families in Canada, understand the impacts and implications of COVID-19 on family life, and share insights with people who study, serve and support families so we can optimize family well-being across the country and around the world.

To that end, the Vanier Institute has:

- Partnered with **Statistics Canada**, working closely with five senior analysts seconded to the Institute, to assess what families are doing, how they are feeling and what they are thinking. We worked with StatCan as they conducted crowdsourcing surveys, such as *Impacts of COVID-19 on Canadians: Data Collection Series – Parenting During the Pandemic*; advised them on web panel surveys; and helped to link as many questions in our own surveys to pre-COVID StatCan surveys, such as the General Social Survey (GSS) on Family and on Caregiving and Care Receiving.
- Engaged with the **Association of Canadian Studies (ACS)** and **Leger** in a collaboration to study families in a week-over-week poll since mid-March 2020. Since we began physical distancing, staying “safe at home” and working remotely, we have been collecting, analyzing and synthesizing data collected in weekly phone polls involving approximately 1,500 people, with targeted sub-populations in some weeks (immigrants, youth, Indigenous Peoples).
- Participated in **online conferences** hosted by or co-hosted with ACS, including *The Impact of the COVID-19 Pandemic on Family Well-Being in Canada*, *The Economic and Social Impacts of COVID-19 on Newcomers to Canada*, *COVID-19: Managing Mental Health in Canada* and *Understanding Systemic Racism in Canada: Concept and Data*.
- Partnered with **ACS** and **Experiences Canada** to conduct and report on the *COVID-19 Social Impact Youth Survey*, in which children and youth aged 12 to 17 shared their thoughts and experiences during COVID-19.
- Collaborated with **The Canadian Association for Marriage and Family Therapy** and the **Canadian Counselling and Psychotherapy Association** to survey their members to determine the impact of COVID-19 on their practice.

- Conducted the *COVID-19 IMPACTS: Veteran Families Survey*, funded by the **True Patriot Love Foundation**.
- Participated in a **United Nations Expert Group Meeting** presenting *COVID-19 and Parenting in Canada* and published the paper on our site.
- Collaborated with our colleagues at the **Australian Institute of Family Studies and Families and Work Institute** in the U.S. to develop survey instruments that facilitate cross comparisons across countries.
- Collaborated with our colleagues at the **Department of National Defence** (DND) to align their study of active military members with the Institute's survey of Veteran families.
- Advised and supported several scholars and academics in their COVID-related studies, including **York University** and **Carleton University**.
- Engaged with Canadian COVID-19 researchers, clinical collaborators and healthcare stakeholders in **CanCOVID**, an expert-led network created by Canada's Chief Science Officer to expedite communication and collaboration between the scientific, healthcare and policy communities during the COVID-19 crisis.

We continue to form partnerships and engage in collaborations to increase our understanding of families in Canada, family life, family experiences, expectations and aspirations. We are currently working with others to assess and capture the impacts of *COVID-19 on families in recovery* with treatment facilities and more.

All of this was possible through strong teamwork within the Vanier Institute and a shared interest and dedication with our partners and friends, established *and* new.

Looking forward this year and in the years to come, the Vanier Institute will build on the success of the 2019–2020 Families in Canada Conference and satellite events with the **Family Research Consortium**, the **Families in Canada Knowledge Hub** and the **Canadian Family Well-Being Index**; will work with Statistics Canada to analyze the data from the upcoming 2021 Census, produce tools for online learning and continue to listen to family stories; and will continue to focus on optimizing **Family Well-Being** in a post-COVID Canada as we prepare to celebrate the 30th Anniversary of International Year of the Family in 2024 and the Vanier Institute's 60th anniversary in 2025.

Financials (highlights) *Year ended June 30, 2020*

	2020	2019
Revenue	\$558,924	\$1,841,012
Expenses	\$1,642,670	\$1,693,253
(Deficiency) excess of revenue over expenses	(\$1,083,746)	\$147,759

Full financial statements are available on the Vanier Institute [website](#).

THANK YOU!

This unforgettable year has revealed and highlighted the importance and impact of gratitude and giving. As we have been researching the impacts of COVID-19 and sharing insights and stories, our team has *also* been experiencing these impacts and navigating difficult transitions ourselves. We simply could not do what we do without the talents, generosity, expertise, hearts and minds of a large and growing community of people and organizations that study, serve and support families and family well-being.

THANK YOU to all those who gave their time, energy and resources to our projects, research and publications.

THANK YOU to the diverse families from across Canada and around the world who shared their stories, experiences and insights in our panels, polls and surveys.

THANK YOU to those who hosted, supported or facilitated our events, whether in person before COVID-19 or virtually and online ever since.

Contributors and Partners

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- Jennifer Kaddatz
- Ana Fostik, PhD
- Laetitia Martin
- Edward Ng, PhD
- Nadine Badets

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- Algonquin College
- Association for Canadian Studies
- Building GRAND-Families Inc.
- Calian
- Canadian Association for Marriage and Family Therapy (CAMFT)
- Canadian Counselling and Psychotherapy Association (CCPA)
- Canadian Institute for Military and Veteran Health Research (CIMVHR)
- COVID-19 Social Impacts Network
- Experiences Canada
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THANK YOU! continued

Partners, Hosts and Co-Hosts

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- One Youth Canada (UNICEF)
- University of Calgary
- University of Prince Edward Island
- University of Victoria

Alumni Association

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- Al MacKay, Co-Chair
- Shelagh M'Gonigle, Co-Chair

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Vanier Institute Board of Directors and Alumni Association

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Throughout this unforgettable year, we have continued to grow, learn and adapt as we envision a Canada where families engage and thrive in a caring and compassionate society, with a robust and prosperous economy, in an inclusive and vibrant culture, and in a safe and sustainable environment. Relationships are at the heart of this momentum, and we look forward to continuing to strengthen this caring community in the coming year!

Marie Vaillancourt
Board Chair

Nora Spinks
President and Chief Executive Officer

Annual Report 2019–2020 (July 1, 2019 to June 30, 2020)

RECENT PUBLICATIONS



- 82 Vanier Institute publications



MEDIA AND CITATIONS



- 268 media mentions
- 46 citations in papers and reports

268
media mentions



WEBSITE



- 231,000 pageviews
- 90,000 downloads



SOCIAL MEDIA



Vanier Twitter network

- Approx. 11,000 followers total
- 2,310 engagements (retweets, likes, mentions)



Facebook and LinkedIn

- 433 posts, reaching more than 28,000 people
- 1,041 engagements (reactions, shares)

433
posts



e-Newsletter

- 3,080 subscribers

3,080
subscribers



OTHER HIGHLIGHTS



- Canadian Family Policy Monitor (resource)
- Families "Safe at Home": The COVID-19 Pandemic and Parenting in Canada (report)
- Canadian Studies in Population: Special Issue on Families in Canada (journal)
- COVID-19 Social Impacts Network (partnership)
- Families in Canada Conference: Concordia University (satellite event)