

Families First

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Overview

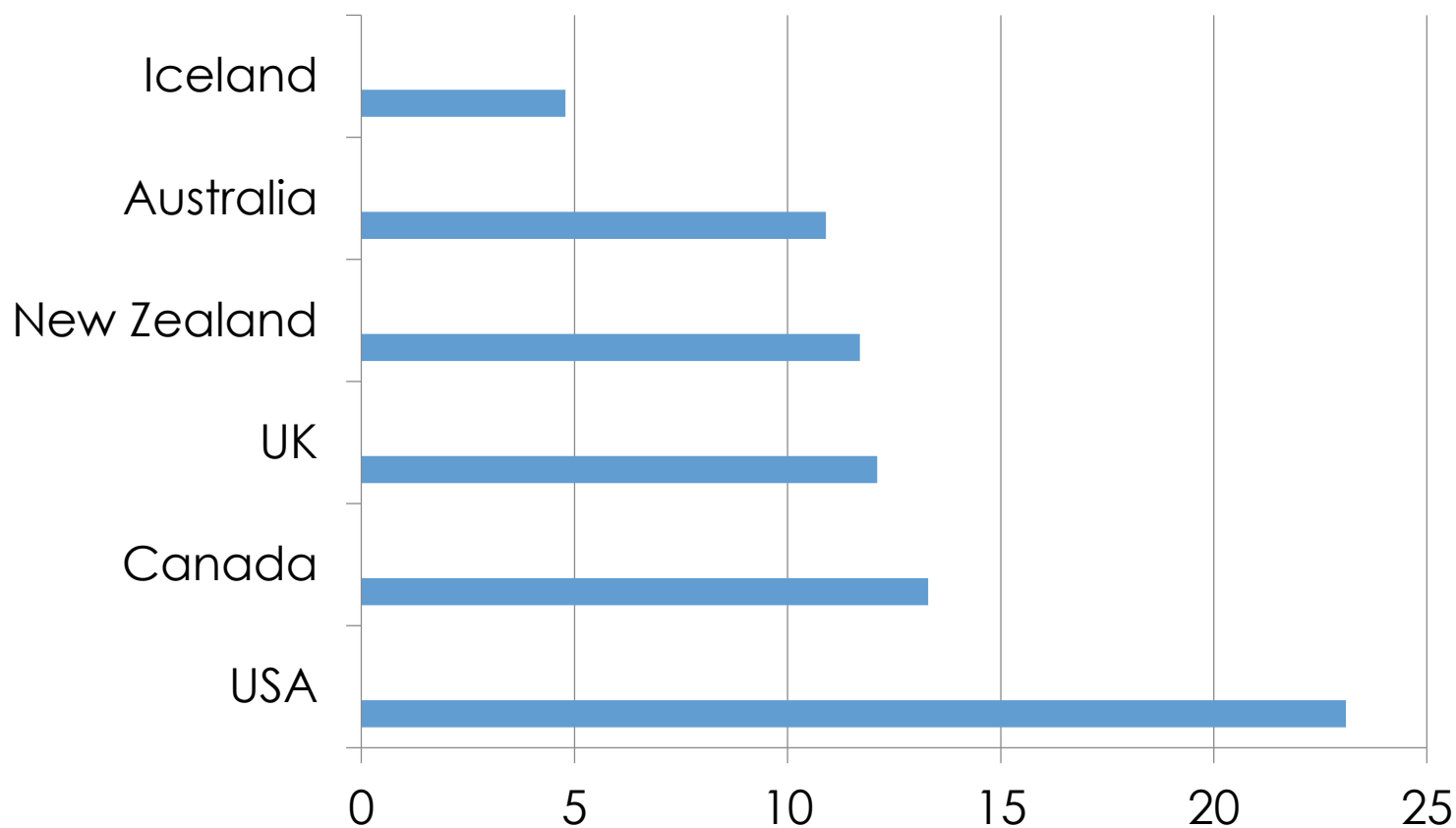
- Ottawa Canada's capital city
- Homelessness among families in Ottawa
- Families First project
 - Demographics
 - Child behaviour
 - Confidence in managing child behaviour
 - Parenting
 - Family support
 - CHAOS
- Future directions

Canada's capital city

- Population over 870,250
- Highest educated workforce in Canada
- 2011—highest median income of all Canadian cities



Percentage of children living in poverty: UNICEF report card 2012



Statistics Canada: Hardship in Ottawa

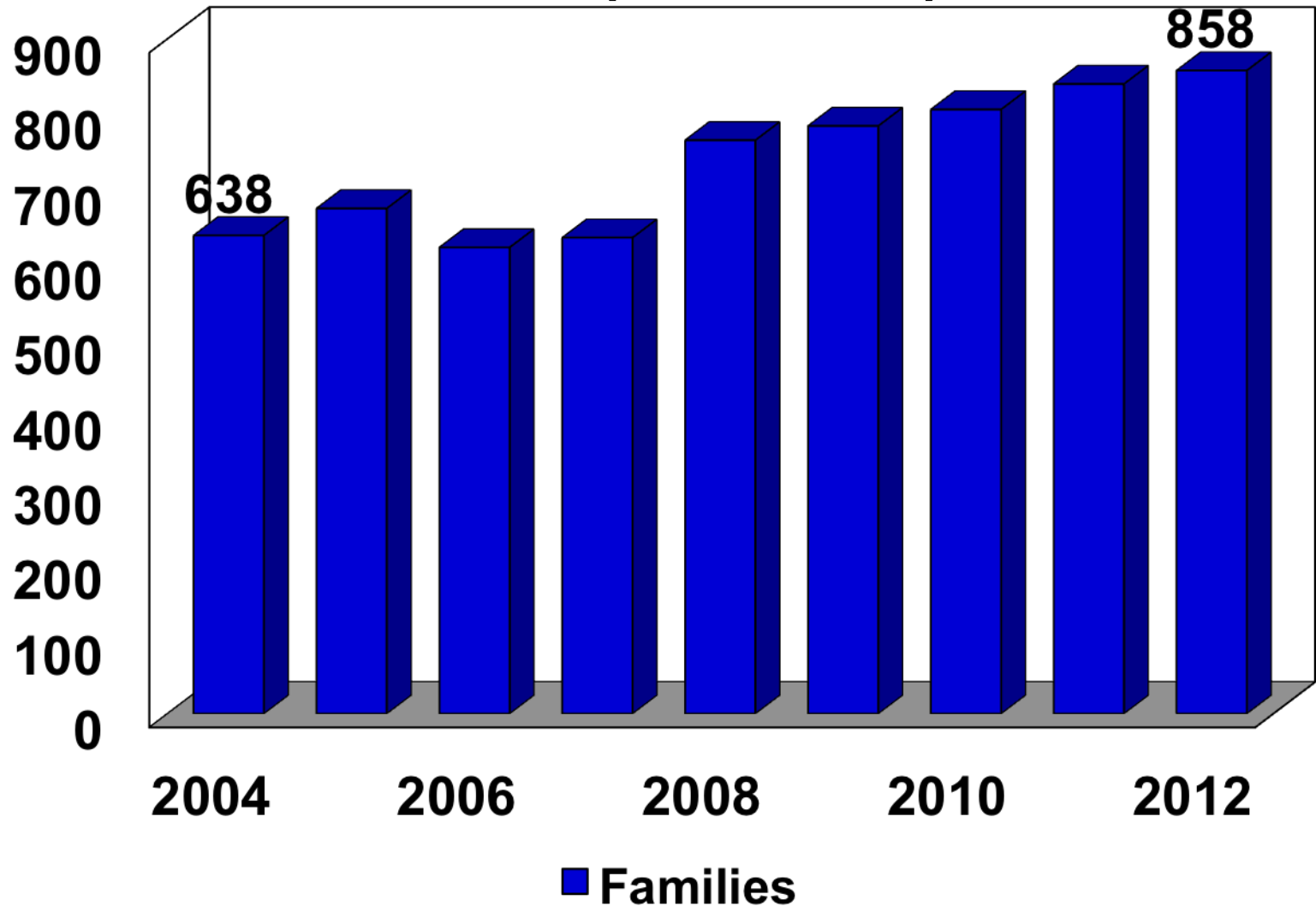
- 15.2% live in poverty
- Poverty rates are twice as high for children who:
 - Are aboriginal
 - Are from a visible minority
 - Are recent immigrants
 - Live with a single mother

What is homelessness?

....an individual or family without stable, permanent, appropriate housing, or the immediate prospect, means and ability of acquiring it.

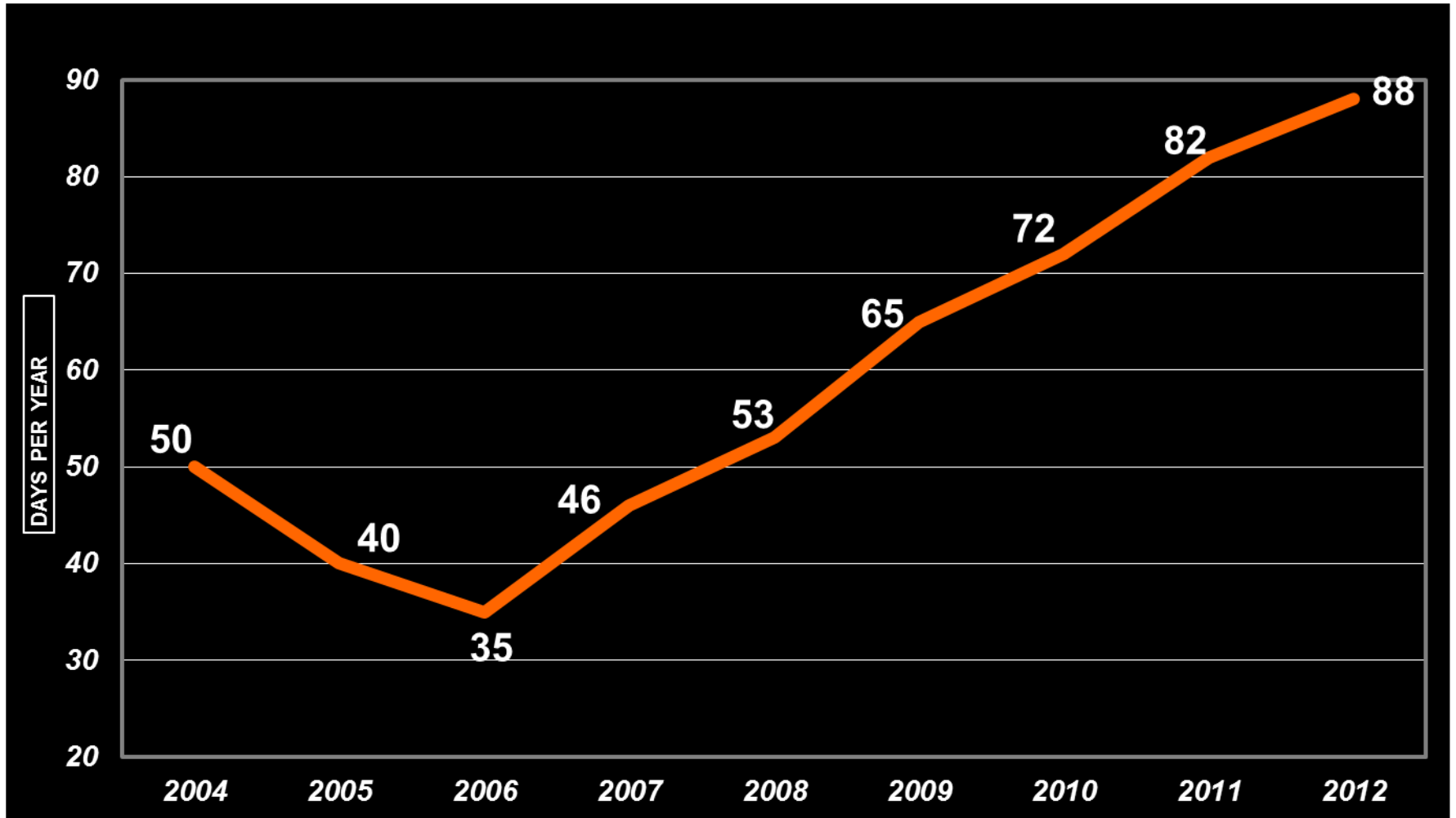
Canadian Homelessness Research Network, 2012

of Families in Emergency Shelters in Ottawa (2004-2012)



Source: City of Ottawa

Average Length of Stay for Families in Emergency Shelters in Ottawa (Days) 2004-2012



Source: City of Ottawa.





Families First

- An initiative of the city of Ottawa to support families as they make the transition from shelter-living to a new home in the community
- Goals: connecting families to community resources so that they can remain stably housed.

Families First Research



• **Methods**

- Interviews with 75 families at baseline, 6 months and 12 months
- **What are the profiles of families with complex needs and that are frequent users of family shelters in Ottawa?**

Measures

- Demographics
- Experience of violence
- Child adjustment: Child Adjustment and Parent Efficacy Scales (CAPES, Morawska, Sanders, Haslam, Filus & Fletcher, 2013)
- Parenting: Parental and Family Adjustment Scales (PAFAS, Sanders, Morawska, Haslam, Filus, & Fletcher, in press)
- CHAOS : Confusion, Hubbub and Order Scale (CHAOS' Matheny, Wachs, Ludwig, & Phillips, 1995).

Who are the families?

- **Parents:**

- Mostly **mothers** (72.0%)
- **35.6 years old** on average (*Range: 20-57*)
- Half are in couple relationships: **married/cohabiting** (49.3%), with the others **single never married** (25.3%), or **separated, divorced, or widowed** (25.4%)

- **Children:**

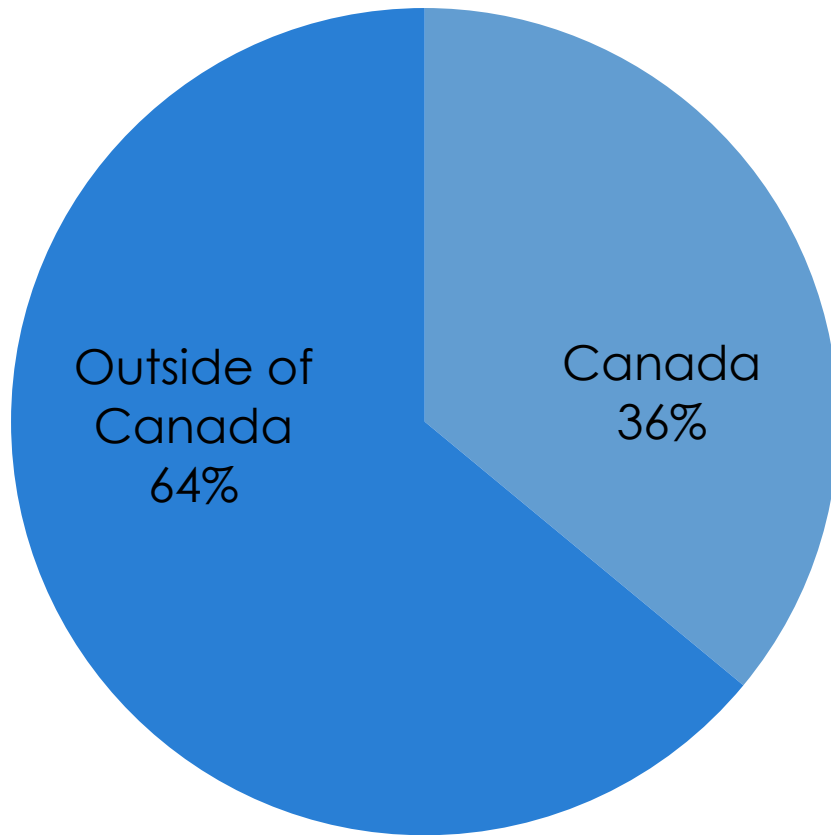
- Majority **boys** (60.3%)
- **7.85 years old** on average (*Range: 0-18*)
- 14.3% were described as having a **physical, emotional, or mental health condition****

- **Households:**

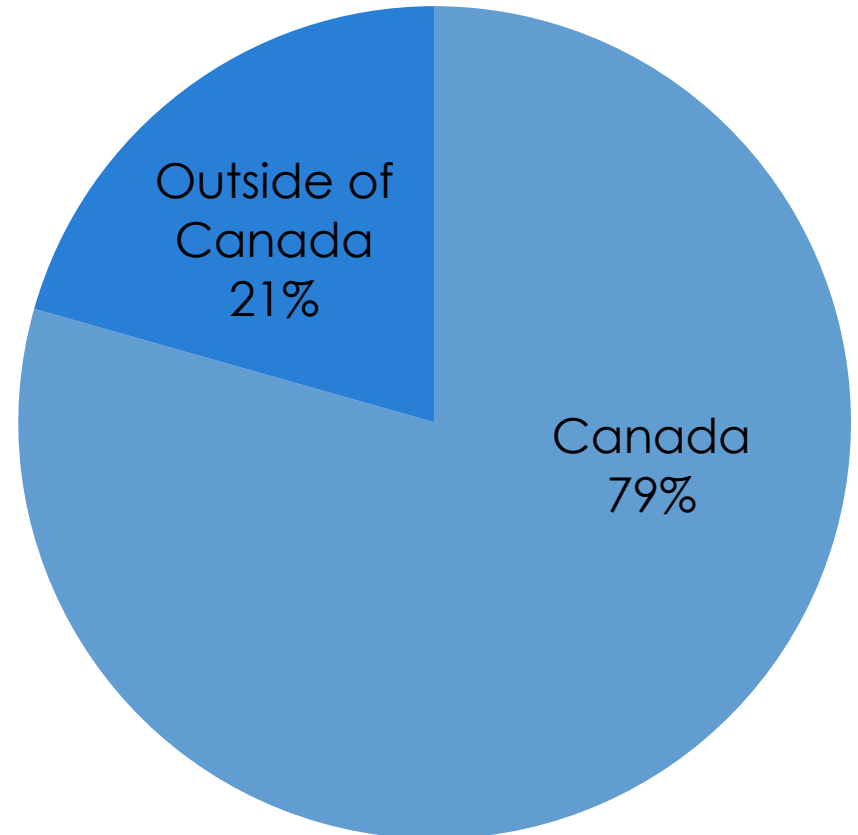
- Reported an average of **2.86 children under the age of 18** (*Range: 0-10*), and **2.48 children living in the shelter/motel** (*Range: 1-7*)

Country of Birth

Families First



Stats Canada



Parent Status in Canada

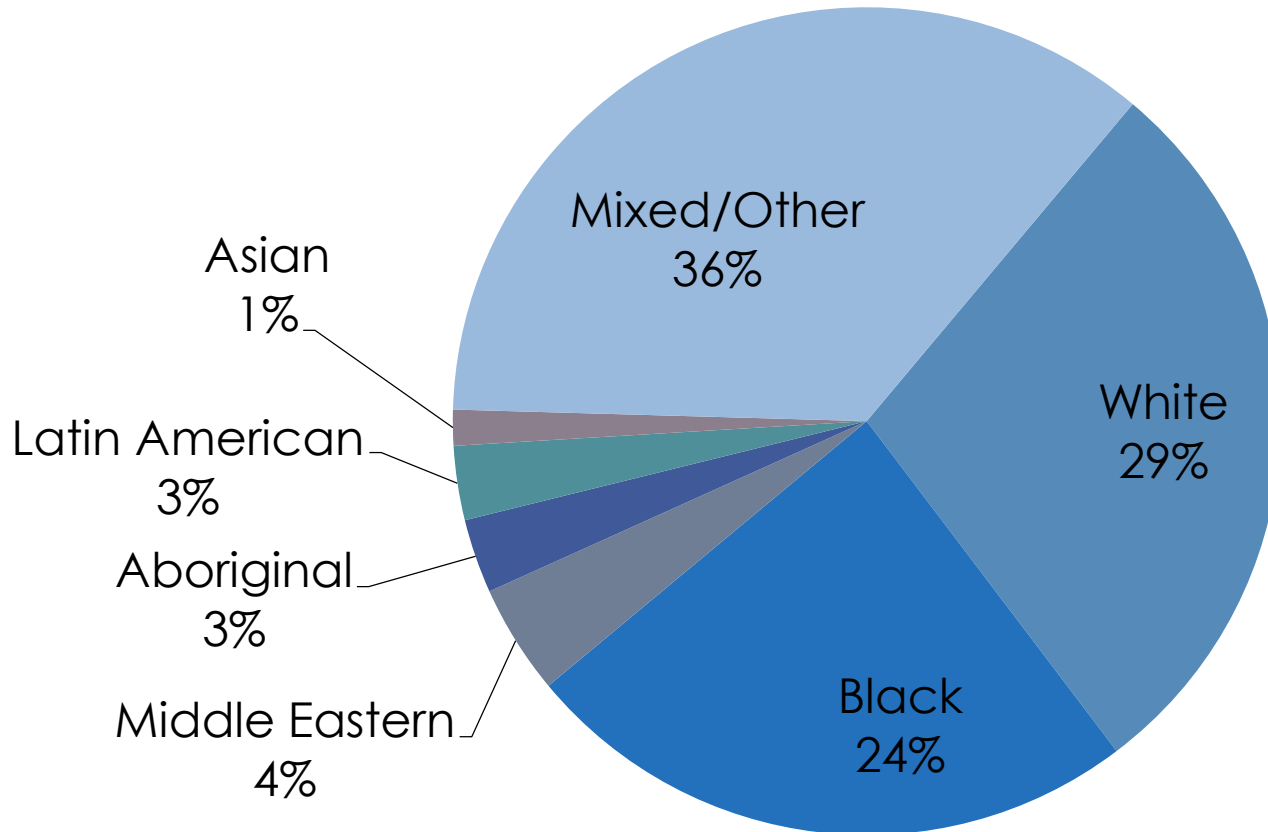
Canadian Citizens 50%.

Immigrants and refugees: 50% who have been in Canada

Less Than 1 Year 31.1%	1 to 2 Years 13.0%	2 to 5 Years 13.0%	More than 5 Years 42.2%
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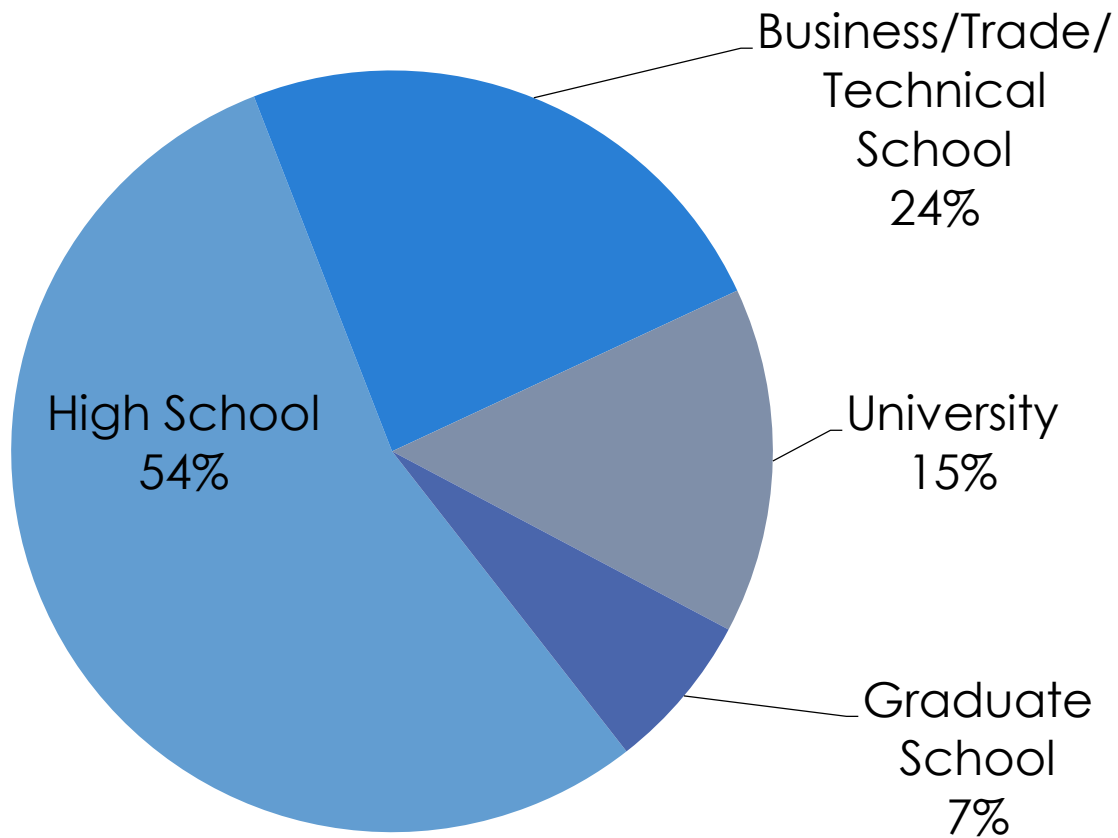
Average: 6.21 Years
(Range: 1 month – 31 years)

Parent Ethnic/Cultural Identity

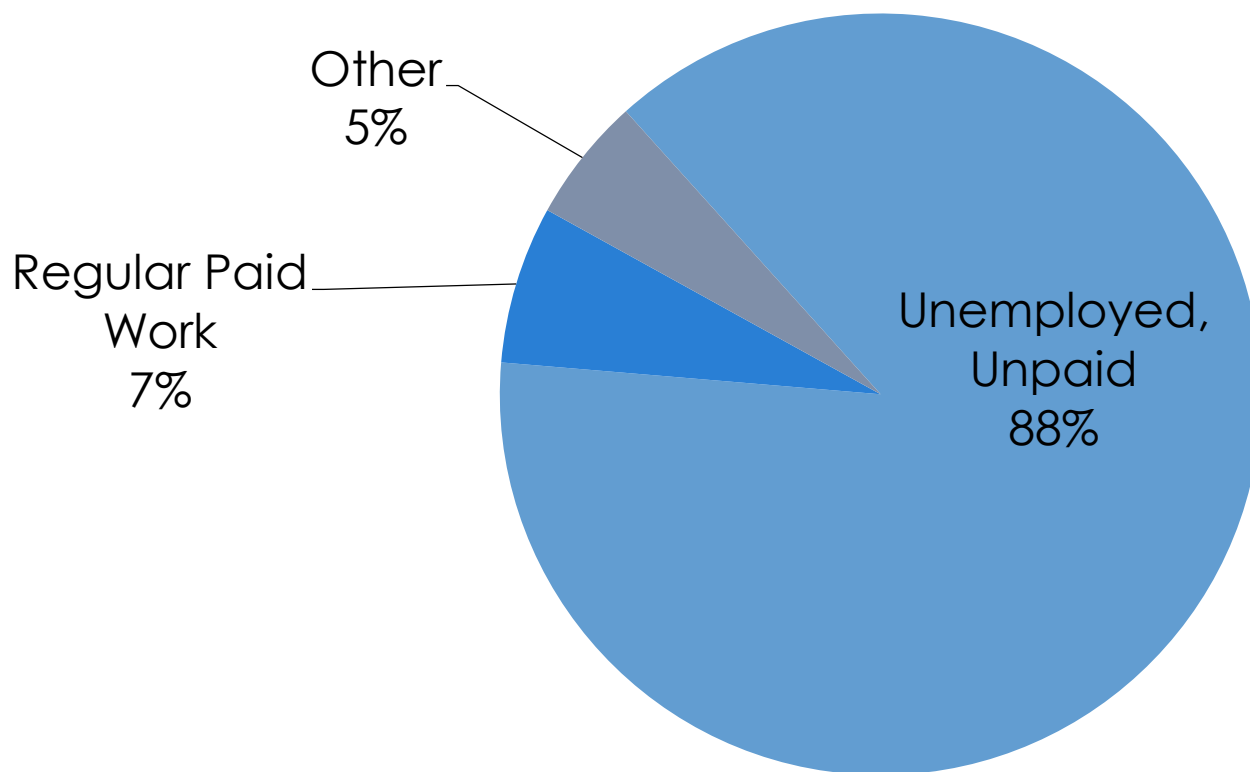


Stats Canada: 19.1% Canadians identify as non-White (compared to 71.4% in this sample)

Socioeconomic: Parent Level of Education



Socioeconomic: Parent Current Employment



Violence experienced by parents

PARENTS' EXPERIENCE OF VIOLENCE AS AN ADULT

Intimate Partner Violence

(Physically Hurt (Or Threatened To be) By A Romantic Partner)

38%

Sexual Violence

(Forced To Engage In Sexual Activity Against One's Will)

19.7%

What do they tell us about their children?

CAPES	Families First	α	IPS-C	α
Behaviour (0-69) *	27.93	.73	18.32	.88
Total (0-81) *	34.28	.72	20.78	.90

Homeless families reported more behaviour problems in their children than did parents in a recent community sample

Parental Efficacy (20-200)	180.59	.95	166.29	.97
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No differences in confidence in managing problematic child behaviours between homeless parents and the community sample

What do they tell us about their parenting?

PAFAS	Families First	α	IPS-C	α
Coercive Parenting (0-15)	3.59	.76	3.45	.68

No differences between homeless parents and a Canadian community sample in terms of coercive parenting

Do they find their homes chaotic?

CHAOS

Age Range	Families First	α	Dumas et al. (2005) Studies 1 + 2	α
4-7 years *	6.30 (Range: 0-11)	.76	3.99 (Range: 0-14)	.83
7-12 years *	5.42 (Range: 0-11)	.73	2.90 (Range: 0-15)	.81

Compared to other samples, homeless parents reported their homes were more disorganized, confusing, and noisy

How are their family relationships?

PAFAS	Families First	α	IPS-C	α
Family Relationships (0-12)	2.03	.79	2.39	.79

Higher scores indicate the presence of more problems

Next questions

- What do parents and youth say in interviews?
- Do patterns change at 6 and 12 month follow up?
- How can we distinguish between resilience and under-reporting?
- How can we reconcile rating more child problems with parental confidence—does it mean we *are doing the best we can*?
- What do families find most helpful?
- Are there factors within the sample that are associated with resilience?

For more information:

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