

**Profile of Low-Income Families:
The Families First Edmonton (FFE) Research Study**

A Report
For
The Fulfilling Alberta's Commitment to Children and Families (FACT) Initiative

Prepared by:
Qi Guo, Nyla de Los Santos, Sylvia So, Laura Templeton
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II. Introduction

This report examines a range of social, cultural, health and economic information for 1,279 low-income families who took part in the Families First Edmonton (FFE) research study.¹ This report is a summary of the information that families provided during baseline (initial) interviews between 2006-2008. Following research protocol, one adult in the family who self-identified as the most knowledgeable person about the child(ren) answered questions on behalf of the rest of the family members.² While this person was, more often than not, the biological parent of the child(ren), in some families this person was an adoptive parent, step-parent, grandparent, aunt, or elder sibling. Given the context of what is being discussed, we refer to this adult as either parent 1 or primary caregiver. While the majority of the FFE families were single parent (“lone-parent”) families, at times the primary caregiver identified another adult in the family as someone who shared care giving responsibilities (“dual-parent families”). We refer to this person as parent 2 or the co-caregiver. We use certain terms in this document that take on a specific meaning for the purpose of this report only; their descriptions can be found in the glossary in Appendix B.

As the main contact during the study and the main respondent during interviews, primary caregivers answered most of the questions regarding themselves and their family members. All told, this report summarizes information for 1,782 caregivers and 2,945 additional family members.

This report serves three purposes. First, it explores the main variables collected in the study as an initial step toward further in-depth analysis. Second, it paints an informative picture of families with children living with low income in the City of Edmonton between 2006-2008. Last but not least, the information is presented in such a way that it communicates the diverse nature of these families, both in terms of socio-cultural background and level of low income. Analyzing and discussing the data in this fashion is revealing. While all of the families can be described as ‘low-income’, we are able to show the variation that exists within this group.

¹ For more information on the FFE study including eligibility criteria please refer to Appendix A.

² While this did not happen often, at times the primary respondent may not have been the most knowledgeable person about the child(ren). In some families the person who was most knowledgeable was not always available to meet with researchers. Sometimes an adult male acted as a spokesperson for the family, regardless of his level of involvement with care for children in the home.

A. Distinguishing between low-income and depth of poverty

While the original FFE study defined low-income using a services-approach (see Appendix A), this report uses Statistics Canada's **Low Income Cut-Offs (LICO)**ⁱ to place the families on a low-income continuum. At times referred to as "the poverty line", a LICO is an income threshold "below which a family will likely devote a larger share (at least 20 percentage points more) of its income to the necessities of food, shelter and clothing than an average family would." The advantage to using a LICO over other measures of low-income, is that it takes into consideration the size of the community and size of the family; following the logic that families with more members who live in larger (urban) communities will require higher incomes to keep within a 20 percentage point margin of the average family in terms of expenditures on food, shelter and clothing. For the City of Edmonton there are 7 different LICOs, which reflect different cut-offs depending on household size: from a single member all the way up to households with 7 or more members. Families are deemed low-income if their incomes are lower than the LICO that corresponds to the size of their family.

Of the 1,279 families that participated in the FFE study, 71% had incomes that placed them below LICO at the time first interviews were conducted.

Depth of Poverty: Given that a family's actual income is compared to a threshold income, we can also consider a family's depth of poverty (DOP), how far under (or over) LICO a particular family is. This continuous scale indicates the relative degree of low income that families experience.³ Families with incomes that are at or above LICO have a DOP score that is $\geq 100\%$ while families with incomes that place them under the poverty line have DOP scores that are $< 100\%$.

³ Appendix C provides examples of how depth of poverty is calculated.

B. Three levels of low income

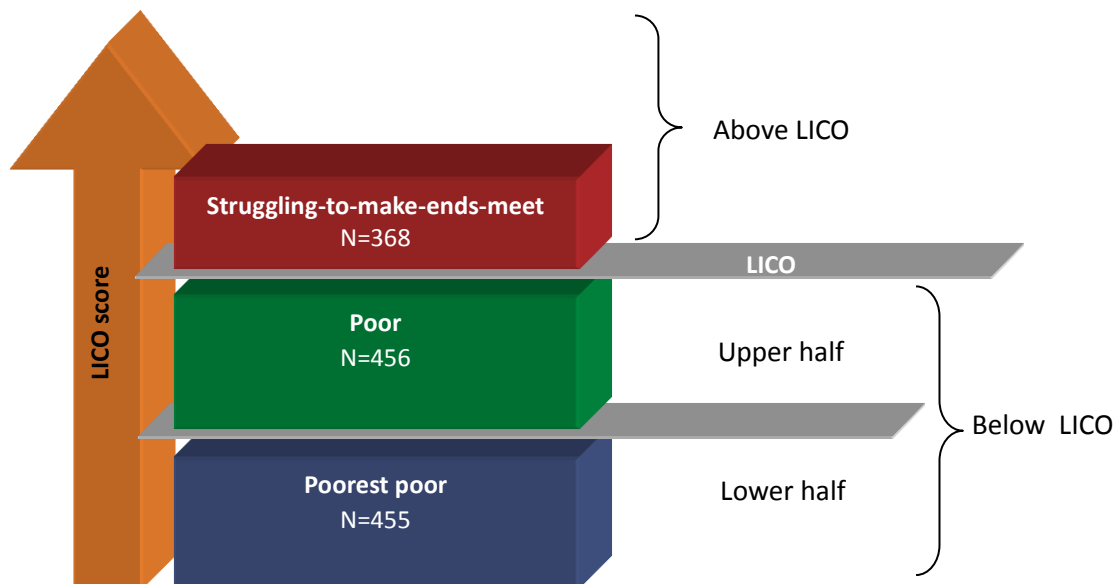
This report groups the families into three different income levels: families who are above or at LICO, families who are within the upper half of the continuum below LICO and families who are within the lower half of the continuum below LICO (Figure 1). The DOP score that separates the two groups under LICO is 64% (families who have incomes that are 64% of LICO).

Group 1: Families with incomes at or above LICO at the time of the first interview are described as “*Struggling-to-make-ends-meet*”. There are 368 families in this category.

Group 2: Families who fell within the upper half of the continuum below the LICO threshold are referred to as the “*Poor*” income group. There are 456 families in this category.

Group 3: Families who fell within the lower half of the continuum below the LICO threshold are referred to as the “*Poorest poor*” income group. There are 455 families in this category.

Figure 1. Families grouped by income level



III. Demographic characteristics

A. Gender of the caregivers

Regardless of income level, parent 1 was predominately female (86%). In about 2% of lone-parent families (no co-caregiver reported), a grandmother self-identified as parent 1. The breakdown of parents by gender and income level is shown in Table 1.

Table 1. Percentage of caregivers by gender and income level

Female	Parent 1	Parent 2	Total
Poorest poor	386 (35.2%)	97 (31.3%)	483
Poor	387 (35.3%)	86 (27.7%)	473
Struggling-to-make-ends-meet	324 (29.5%)	127 (41.0%)	451
Total	1,097 (100%)	310 (100%)	1,407
Male	Parent 1	Parent 2	Total
Poorest poor	69 (37.9%)	75 (38.9%)	144
Poor	69 (37.9%)	56 (29.0%)	125
Struggling-to-make-ends-meet	44 (24.2%)	62 (32.1%)	106
Total	182 (100%)	193 (100%)	375
Total caregivers (both genders)	1,279	503	1,782
Percentage female	85.8%	61.6%	79.0%
Percentage male	14.2%	38.4%	21.0%

B. Lone versus dual-parent households

According to Statistics Canada, one of the primary risk factors to being low-income is to be a lone parent. Indeed, two out of every three FFE families were lone-parent families (61%) (Figure 2).

Looking across the three income levels we can see that when compared to the struggling-to-make-ends-meet families, the poorest poor and the poor were more likely to be lone-parent families (Figure 3). However, we would expect to find

more dual-parent families within the struggling-to-make-ends-meet group, as a second income earner would give these families an economic advantage over families with only one income earner.

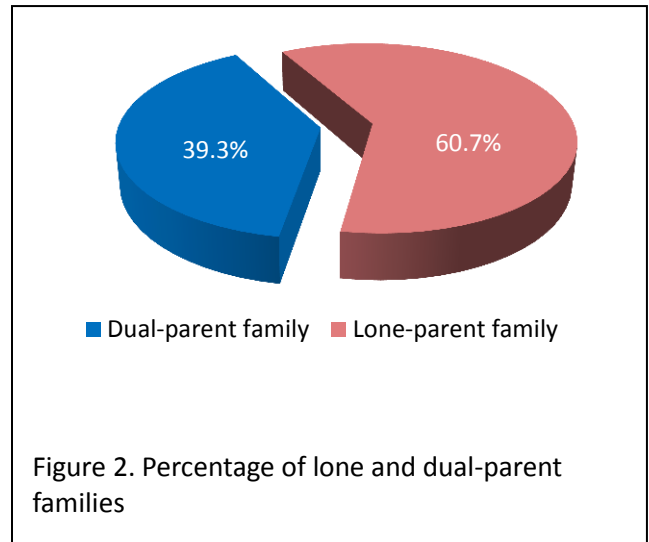
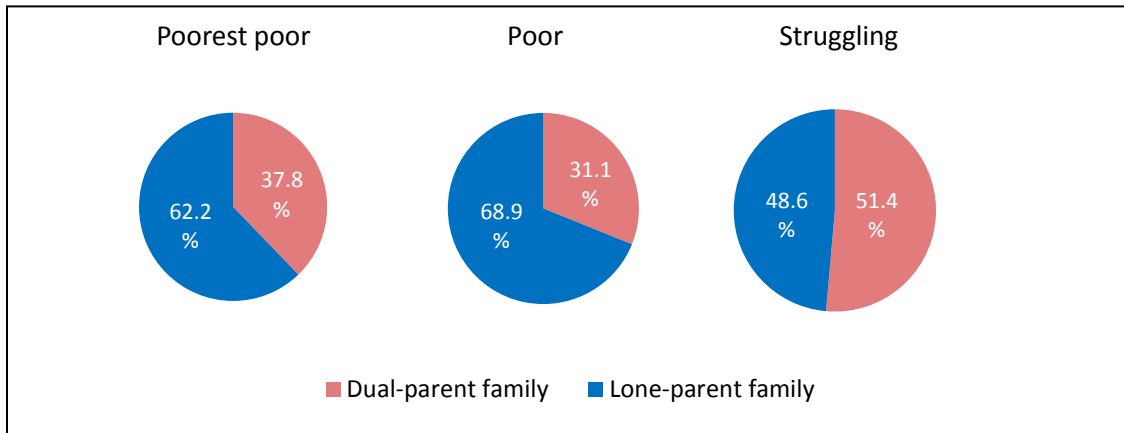


Figure 2. Percentage of lone and dual-parent families

Figure 3. Percentage of lone and dual-parent families by income level



The 776 lone-parent families in the FFE study were predominately headed by women (95%). Regardless of income level, the predominance of women as single parents persists across the three income levels, with male-headed, lone-parent families comprising only 7% of the poorest poor families, 5% of the poor families and 3% of the struggling-to-make-ends-meet families (Figure 4). According to the 2006 Canadian Census, 80% of lone-parent families in Edmonton were headed by females.ⁱⁱ The over-representation of single parent mothers in the FFE study speaks to the economic vulnerability of this group, as recruitment for the FFE study targeted low-income families generally.

Figure 4. Percentage of male and female caregivers in lone-parent families

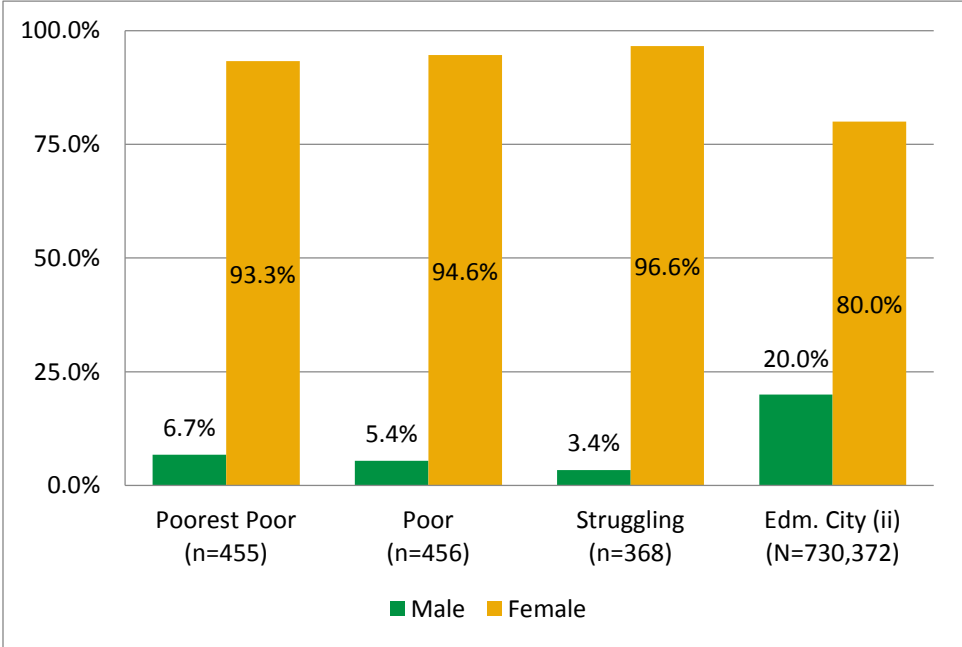




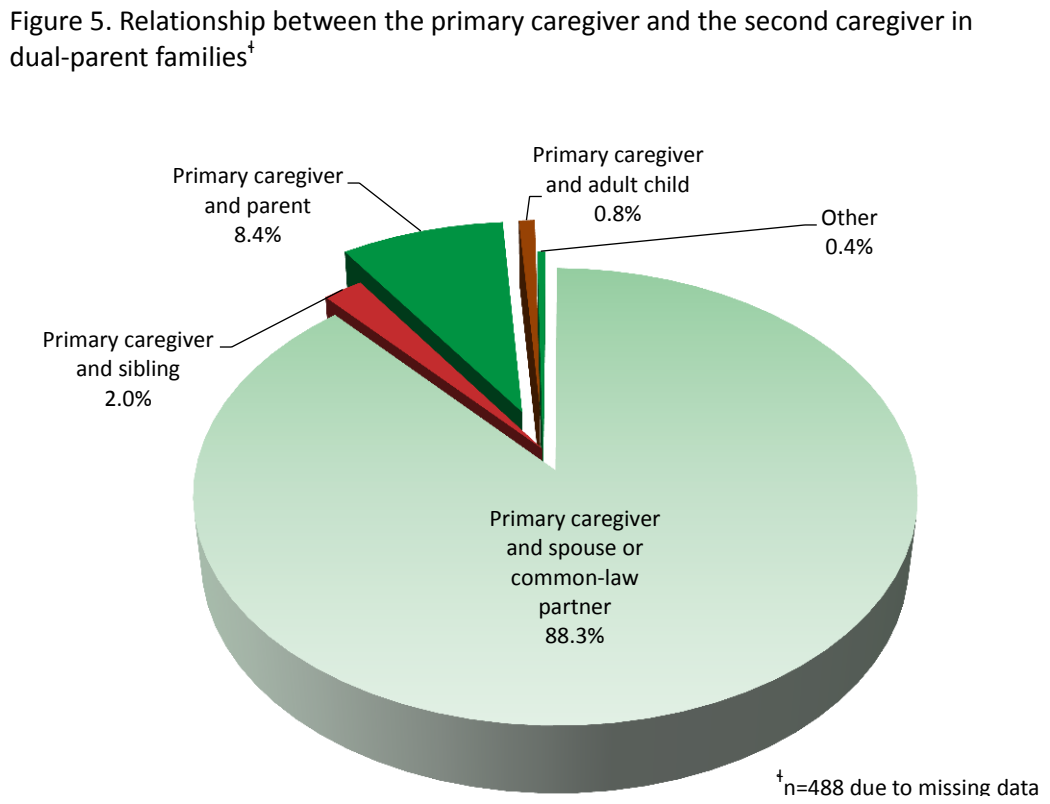


Table 1 provides a detailed breakdown of male and female-headed families by income level and lone- versus dual-parent status. One notable finding found in Table 2 is that regardless of gender, when men or women are lone parents they are less likely to be in the struggling-to-make-ends-meet group (the highest income group) and more likely to be in the poor or poorest poor groups.

Table 2. Percentage of lone and dual-parent households by gender of parent 1 and income level

	Lone-parent families			Dual-parent families			Level Total
	 Female-headed	 Male-headed	Total	 Female as Parent 1	 Male-as Parent 1	Total	
Poorest poor	264 (36.0%)	19 (45.2%)	283	122 (33.6%)	50 (35.7%)	172	455
Poor	297 (40.5%)	17 (40.5%)	314	90 (24.8%)	52 (37.1%)	142	456
Struggling-to-make-ends-meet	173 (23.6%)	6 (14.3%)	179	151 (41.6%)	38 (27.1%)	189	368
Total	734 (100%)	42 (100%)	776	363 (100%)	140 (100%)	503	1279

The majority of dual-parent homes (88%) are families in which the caregivers are spouses or common-law partners. However, this traditional arrangement is not the case for approximately 12% of dual-parent homes. In about 8% of dual-parent families the children are cared for by their parent and their grandparent. Another 2% of dual-parent families are homes in which the child is cared for by his/her parent and a sibling of the parent (the child's aunt or uncle).



C. Aboriginal identity and immigrant status

The FFE study incorporated a set of questions to identify the immigrant status and Aboriginal identity of Parent 1 and Parent 2. The set of questions leading to the Aboriginal identity and immigrant status of the caregivers (1,782 in total) are detailed in Figure 6.

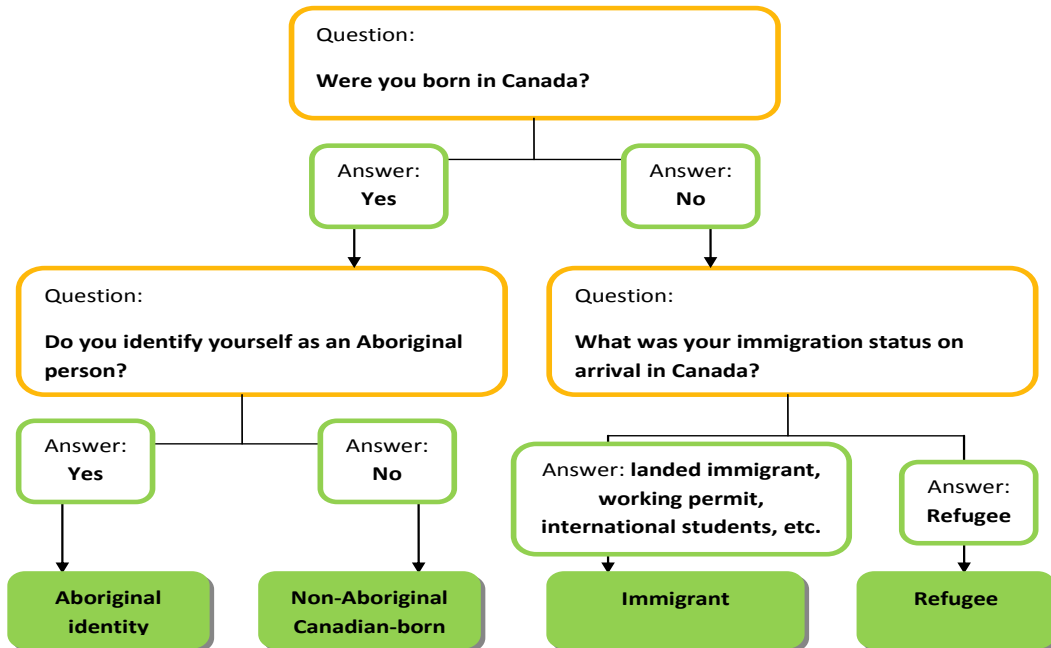


Figure 6. Flowchart of questions leading to Aboriginal identity and immigration status

i. Aboriginal, non-Aboriginal, immigrant and refugee caregivers

Based on the answers from these questions, parent 1 and parent 2 were each categorized into one of four categories: 1.) Aboriginal 2. non-Aboriginal (Canadian-born) 3.) immigrant and, 4.) refugee. It is important to note that while most of the foreign-born (immigrant or refugee) caregivers had Canadian citizenship, some did not.

Table 3 presents the four identity and status groups by income level for all of the caregivers. If parent 1 and parent 2 are considered together, 14% of caregivers are Aboriginal, 41% are non-Aboriginal (Canadian-born), 39% are immigrants and, 7% are refugees.⁴ When we look at the different identity and status groups by income level we can see some interesting patterns. Refugee primary caregivers are more likely to be in the poorest poor group when compared to the other identity/status groups (54%). Non-Aboriginal (Canadian-born) primary caregivers are least likely to be in the poorest poor group (29%) and are instead more likely to be in the struggling-to-make-ends-meet group (34%).

Table 3. Percentage of caregivers by identity/status group and income level

	Parent 1									Parent 2										
	Canadian-born				Foreign-born					Total	Canadian-born				Foreign-born					Total
	Aboriginal		Non-Aboriginal		Immigrant		Refugee				Aboriginal		Non-Aboriginal		Immigrant		Refugee			
	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%		n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%			
Poorest poor	86	41.7	169	29.1	157	38.0	43	53.8	455	18	48.6	40	26.5	97	35.0	17	44.7	172		
Poor	79	38.3	215	37.1	135	32.7	27	33.8	456	5	13.5	41	27.2	82	29.6	14	36.8	142		
Struggling	41	19.9	196	33.8	121	29.3	10	12.5	368	14	37.8	70	46.4	98	35.4	7	18.4	189		
Total	206	100%	580	100%	413	100%	80	100%	1,279	37	100%	151	100%	277	100%	38	100%	503		
TOTAL: Parents 1 & Parents 2																	1,782			

ii. Foreign-born caregivers by time since arrival and income level

Since most of the programs and policies targeting immigrants and refugees focus on the first five years after arriving in Canada, Table 4 compares recent newcomers (have lived in Canada for less than five years) to immigrants and refugees who have lived in Canada for five years or more. When compared to those who have lived in Canada for ≥ 5 years, recent newcomers are more likely to be in the poorest poor group (47% compared to 34% for parent 1 and 39% compared to 29% for parent 2).

⁴ Percentages total 101% due to rounding error.

Table 4. Percentage of foreign-born caregivers by time since arrival

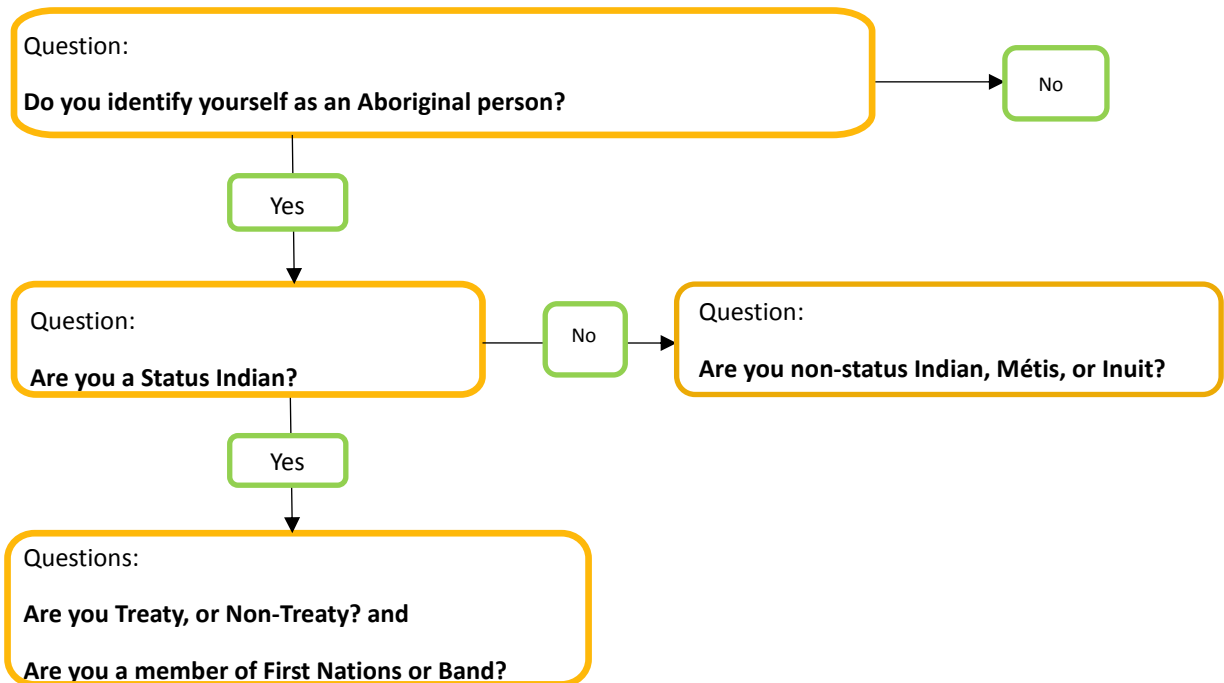
	Parent 1					Total	Parent 2				
	Foreign-born				Total		Foreign-born				Total
	Recent		Non-recent				Recent		Non-recent		
	n	%	n	%			n	%	n	%	
Poorest poor	127	46.5	71	33.8	198	87	39.2	27	29.0	114	
Poor	68	24.9	88	41.9	156	64	28.8	32	34.4	96	
Struggling	78	28.6	51	24.3	129	71	32.0	34	36.6	105	
Total	273	100	210	100	483 [†]	222	100	93	100	315	
TOTAL, Parents 1 & Parents 2										798	

[†] n=483 due to missing data

iii. Aboriginal caregivers

Primary caregivers were also asked the following series of questions to determine Aboriginal identity. In the case of dual-parent families, the primary caregiver also answered the same set of questions on behalf of the co-caregiver.

Figure 7. Flowchart of questions leading to band membership of First Nations caregivers



Over half of the caregivers (Parent 1 and Parent 2 combined) who identified as Aboriginal have treaty status (55%) with an additional 38% identifying as Métis. Of those with status, 90% provided band membership information (Table 5). The majority of band affiliations are with bands located in Alberta (72%). Outside of Alberta, the most commonly reported affiliation is with bands located in the province of Saskatchewan. Two-thirds of those who reported band information are either affiliated with a band outside of the province or with one of the eight Alberta bands listed in Table 5.

Table 5. Most commonly reported band affiliations within Alberta

Bands in Alberta	Count	Percentage
Saddle Lake First Nation	13	11.0%
Bigstone Cree Nation	9	7.6%
Mikisew Cree First Nation	5	4.2%
Whitefish Lake First Nation	5	4.2%
Cold Lake First Nations	4	3.4%
Ermineskin Tribe	4	3.4%
Samson Cree Nation	4	3.4%
Sucker Creek First Nation	4	3.4%
Subtotal	48	40.6%
Bands outside of Alberta	Count	Percentage
First Nations Band in Saskatchewan	21	16.1%
First Nations Band in Ontario	5	4.2%
First Nations Band in British Columbia	4	3.4%
Subtotal	30	25.4%
Total	78	66.1%

iv. Family-level identity/status

In most dual-parent families (n=503), both Parent 1 and Parent 2 are of the same identity or status group. However, there are 84 dual-parent families in which the parents have different identities or status. Given the relatively rare occurrence of “multiple-identity” families (7%) within the overall sample, the identity of Parent 1 is used throughout this report to represent the family identity/status. However, a complete breakdown of the 1,279 families by same versus multiple-identities has been made available in Appendix D.

Using the identity/status of parent 1 as a proxy for family identity/status we can see in Table 6 that the largest percentage of families identify as non-Aboriginal Canadian-born (45%), followed by immigrant (32%), Aboriginal (16%) and refugee (6%). Considering the entire sample by identity/status, number of parents in the home, and level of income simultaneously we can see that the households that are most likely to be among the poorest poor are, lone-parent non-Aboriginal (Canadian-born) homes (9.6%), dual-parent immigrant homes (6.9%), lone-parent immigrant homes (5.4%), and lone-parent Aboriginal homes (5.2%).

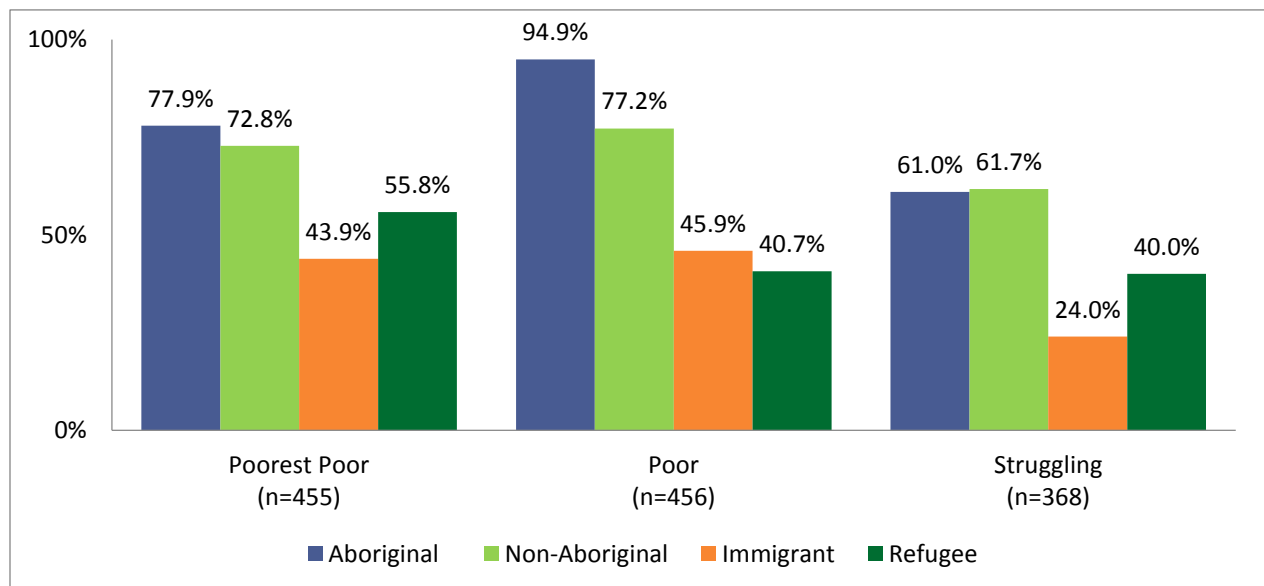
Table 6. Percentage of different identity/status groups

All families N=1,279	Dual-parent families (n=503)				Subtotal
	Aboriginal	Non-Aboriginal	Immigrant	Refugee	
Poorest poor	1.5%	3.6%	6.9%	1.5%	13.4%
Poor	0.3%	3.8%	5.7%	1.3%	11.1%
Struggling	1.3%	5.9%	7.2%	0.5%	14.8%
subtotal	3.0%	13.3%	19.8%	3.2%	39.3%
	Lone-parent families (n=776)				
Poorest poor	5.2%	9.6%	5.4%	1.9%	22.1%
Poor	5.9%	13.0%	4.8%	0.9%	24.6%
Struggling	2.0%	9.5%	2.3%	0.3%	14.0%
subtotal	13.1%	32.1%	12.5%	3.0%	60.7%
	N=1,279				
Total	16.1%	45.4%	32.3%	6.2%	100%

v. Lone parents by identity/status group

As previously mentioned, lone-parent homes are more likely to be in the poor and poorest poor groups than in the struggling-to-make-ends-meet. However, we can see in Figure 8, that foreign-born primary caregivers are less likely to be lone parents when compared to Canadian-born primary caregivers, regardless of income level. For example, 44% of immigrant caregivers in the poorest poor group are lone-parent families. Similarly, less than half of immigrant caregivers in the higher income groups are lone parents (46% in the poor group and 24% in the struggling group). In contrast, well over half of Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal primary caregivers are lone parents (78% and 72% in the poorest poor group; 95% and 72% in the poor group; and 61% and 62% in the struggling-to-make-ends-meet group).

Figure 8. Percentage of lone-parent households by identity/status group and income level

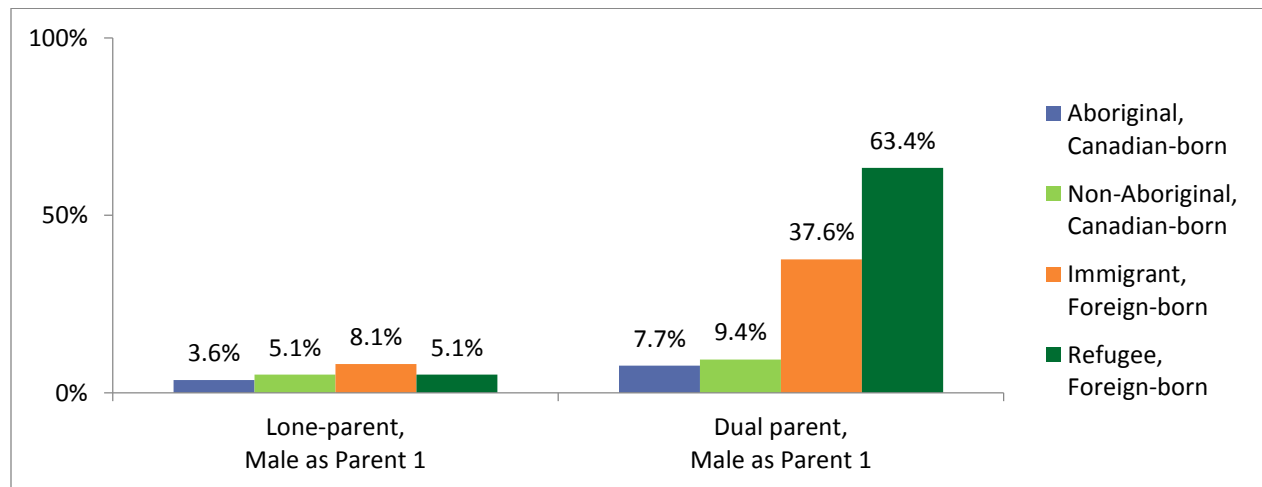


i. Male-headed households

Earlier we saw that regardless of income level, lone parents are almost always female (Figure 4). Figure 9 shows that regardless of status/identity group, lone parents are still almost always female.

In dual-parent homes, the primary parent is also predominately female except for in refugee families (and to a lesser extent in immigrant families). For refugee families men are more often reported as parent 1. However, as mentioned in the introduction to this report, we suspect that in the case of refugee families, and to a lesser extent immigrant families, the greater percentage of men identifying as the primary parent is because in some cultures men are more likely to act as a spokesperson for the family. However, we suspect that the care of children in the home is still predominately performed by a female. Regardless, it is important to note this discrepancy as it may impact the interpretation of other sections (e.g., employment, education).

Figure 9. Percentage of households headed by a male



D. Country of birth

The question “since you were born outside of Canada, in which country were you born?” was asked of all caregivers born outside of Canada. In response to that question, foreign-born caregivers reported a total of 100 different birthplaces (See Appendix E).

Question:
In which country were you born?

Overall, immigrant caregivers were born in 90 different countries. According to Table 7, the top five reported birth countries account for almost half (44%) of all reported birthplaces. The three most commonly reported birthplaces of immigrant caregivers are China (27%), Pakistan (9%) and the Philippines (7%). Refugee caregivers, on the other hand, were born in 30 different countries. Again, the top five reported birth countries represent the birthplaces of approximately half of the refugee caregivers. The three most commonly reported birthplaces of refugee caregivers are the Sudan (16%), Afghanistan (12%) and Colombia (11%). Some countries are listed as a birthplace for both immigrants and refugees. These countries are highlighted in Appendix E.

Table 7. Most commonly reported birth countries of foreign-born caregivers[†]

Birth Country	Parents 1 & 2	Parent 1	Parent 2
Immigrant			
China	26.8%	25.5%	28.7%
Pakistan	8.5%	7.6%	9.8%
Philippines	7.0%	7.8%	5.8%
India	6.9%	6.4%	7.6%
Sudan	2.6%	*	*
Somalia	*	2.9%	*
Vietnam	*	2.9%	*
Lebanon	*	*	3.3%
Total	51.8% (n=683)	53.2% (n=408)	55.3% (n=275)
Refugee			
Sudan	16.2%	16.5%	15.8%
Afghanistan	12.0%	11.4%	13.2%
Colombia	11.1%	10.1%	13.2%
Congo	5.1%	*	7.9%
Iraq	5.1%	5.1%	*
Somalia	5.1%	*	7.9%
Ethiopia	*	6.3%	*
Liberia	*	5.1%	*
Total	54.7% (n=117)	54.4% (n=79)	57.9% (n=38)

*The country reported is not represented in the top-five list.

[†]n=800 due to missing data

E. Language first learned and still understood

Given that primary caregivers were born in 100 different countries, it is not surprising that many learned and still speak a language other than Canada's official languages. In response to the question “What language did you first learn in childhood at home and still understand?”, 91 different mother tongues (including English) were identified by a total of 1,782 caregivers. While certainly a minority, it is worth noting that 8% of immigrant and refugee caregivers report English as their mother tongue.

Question:

What language did you first learn in childhood at home and still understand?

The five most frequently reported mother tongues for the foreign-born are listed in Table 8. Unlike birth countries, two languages were listed in the top five lists for both immigrants and refugees: Spanish and Arabic. Similar to birthplaces, the five most frequently reported mother tongues account for approximately half of the immigrant and refugee totals. Appendix F details all mother tongues of the caregivers.

Table 8. Most commonly reported mother tongues of foreign-born caregivers

Mother tongue	All foreign-born	Parent 1	Parent 2
Immigrant			
Mandarin	23.4%	22.0%	25.0%
English	9.7%	11.1%	7.6%
Arabic	7.0%	5.6%	9.1%
Spanish	5.5%	6.3%	*
Urdu	4.5%	4.4%	4.7%
Tagalog	*	4.4%	*
Cantonese	*	*	4.7%
Total	50.1% (N=690)	53.8% (N=413)	50.9% (N=277)
Refugee			
Spanish	15.3%	16.3%	13.2%
Farsi	11.9%	11.3%	13.2%
Arabic	10.2%	8.8%	13.2%
Swahili	6.8%	6.3%	7.9%
Nuer	5.9%	5.0%	7.9%
Somali	*	*	7.9%
Kurdish	*	*	7.9%
Dinka	*	5.0%	*
Total	50.1% (n=118)	52.5% (n=80)	71.1% (N=38)

*The language reported is not represented in the top-five list.

While only 8% of the foreign-born list English as their mother tongue, 91% of Canadian-born caregivers reported English as their mother tongue (see Table 9). Still, the Canadian-born caregivers reported 19 different mother tongues. For the Aboriginal caregivers (Parent 1 and 2), approximately 13% reported an Aboriginal language as their mother tongue with Cree being the most common.

Table 9. Top four mother-tongue languages reported by Canadian-born caregivers

Mother tongue	Parent 1	Parent 2
<i>Aboriginal, Canadian-born</i>		
English	86.9%	86.5%
Cree	10.2%	13.5%
Saulteux	1.0%	-
Dene	1.0 %	-
Total	99.1% (n=206)	100% (n=37)
<i>Non-Aboriginal, Canadian-born</i>		
English	93.3%	90.7%
French	2.6%	4.0%
German	1.2%	-
Ukrainian	0.9%	2.0%
Total	98.0% (n=580)	96.6% (n=151)

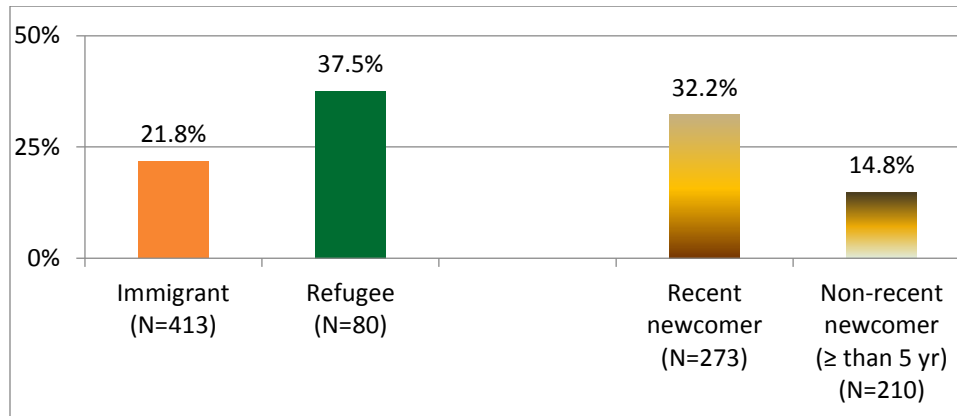
Note: '-' language not reported.

E. Need for interpreter services

While English proficiency is difficult to quantify, a study participant would have to have a solid command of the English language to be able to complete the complex and lengthy questionnaires that were administered without the assistance of an interpreter.

Given the diverse backgrounds of the foreign-born caregivers, some needed the help of an interpreter while participating in the study. As shown in Figure 10, more refugee primary caregivers required interpreters compared to their immigrant counterparts (38% compared to 22%). Moreover, interpreter services were more commonly needed for those who had lived in Canada for less than five years (32%) when compared to those who had lived in Canada longer (15%).

Figure 10. Percentage of immigrant and refugee primary caregivers requiring interpretation services



IV. Number and age of children in the household

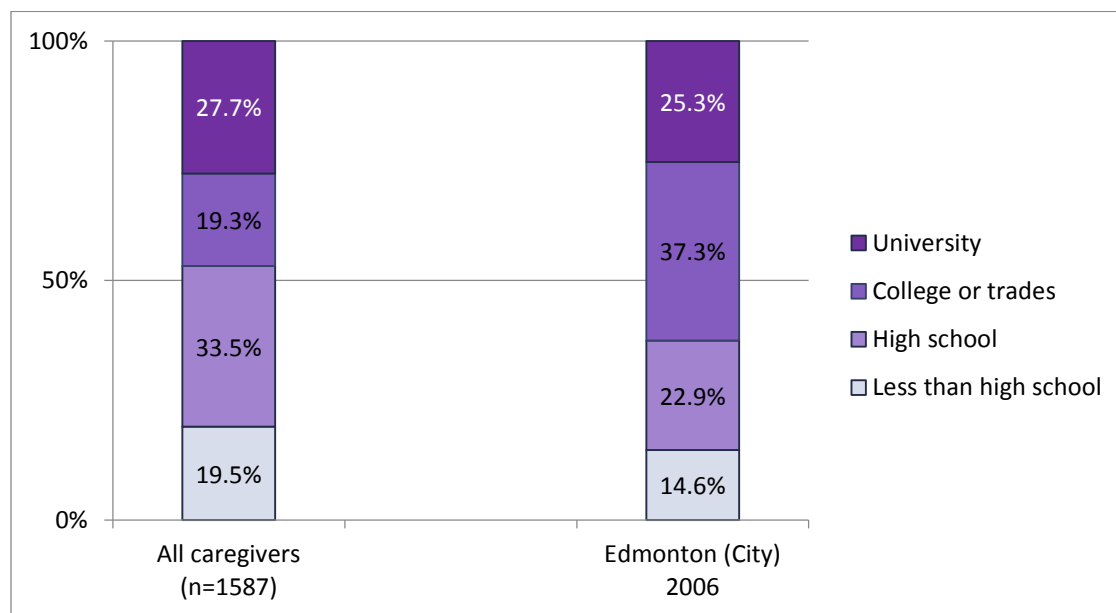
In this section, children in the household are defined as the primary caregivers' biological, adopted, foster, step or grand-children who were younger than 18 years and living in the household at least 50% of the time. According to this definition, a total of 2,613 children were in the FFE households, with an average of 2.1 children per family. It is important to note the poor group had slightly more children (2.2 children per family) than the poorest poor group (2.0 children per family) and the struggling-to-make-ends-meet group (2.0 children per family). Also, Aboriginal (2.5 children per family) and refugee (2.6 children per family) families tended to have more children than non-Aboriginal and immigrant families (2.0 children per family).

Forty percent of the 2,613 children were under 6 years of age, 21% were ≥ 6 years and < 9 years of age, and 39% were 9 years of age or older at baseline. This pattern is relatively stable across the three income groups. However, it is important to note that Aboriginal and refugee families tend to have more children under 6 years of age, and more children 9 years of age or older when compared to immigrant and non-Aboriginal (Canadian-born) families.

V. Education levels and additional training

The highest level of education^{5,6} obtained by caregivers varied greatly. Overall, 21% had less than a high school education, 29% had a high school diploma, 25% had a college or trade diploma or certificate, and 25% had at least one university degree. To be able to compare the education level of the caregivers to the general Edmonton population (2006 Canada Census), we consider caregivers between the ages of 25 and 64 years (Figure 11).

Figure 11. Comparison of education levels between FFE caregivers and the 2006 general Edmonton population (n=1,587)



Compared to the general Edmonton population the FFE caregivers had a smaller percentage with college diplomas or trades certificates (19% versus 37%) and a larger percentage reporting a high school diploma as their highest educational certificate (34% versus 23%) or no degree at all (20% versus 15%).

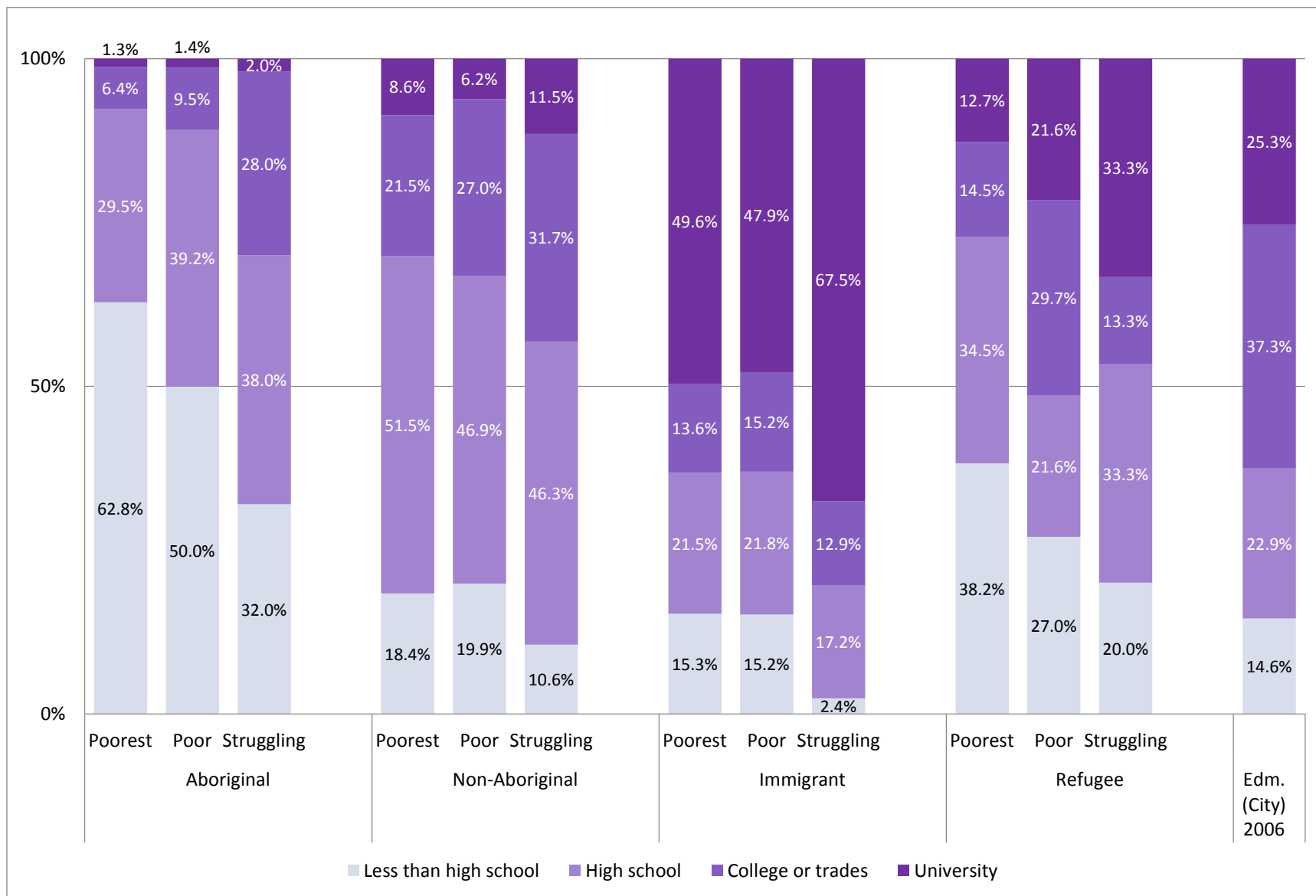
Interestingly, while most of the indicators of educational attainment favour the general Edmonton population, the FFE caregivers had a greater percentage with university credentials (28% versus 25%).

We elaborate on this finding in the next section.

⁵ Educational attainment includes foreign credentials. The majority of foreign-born caregivers obtained their highest level of education outside of Canada.

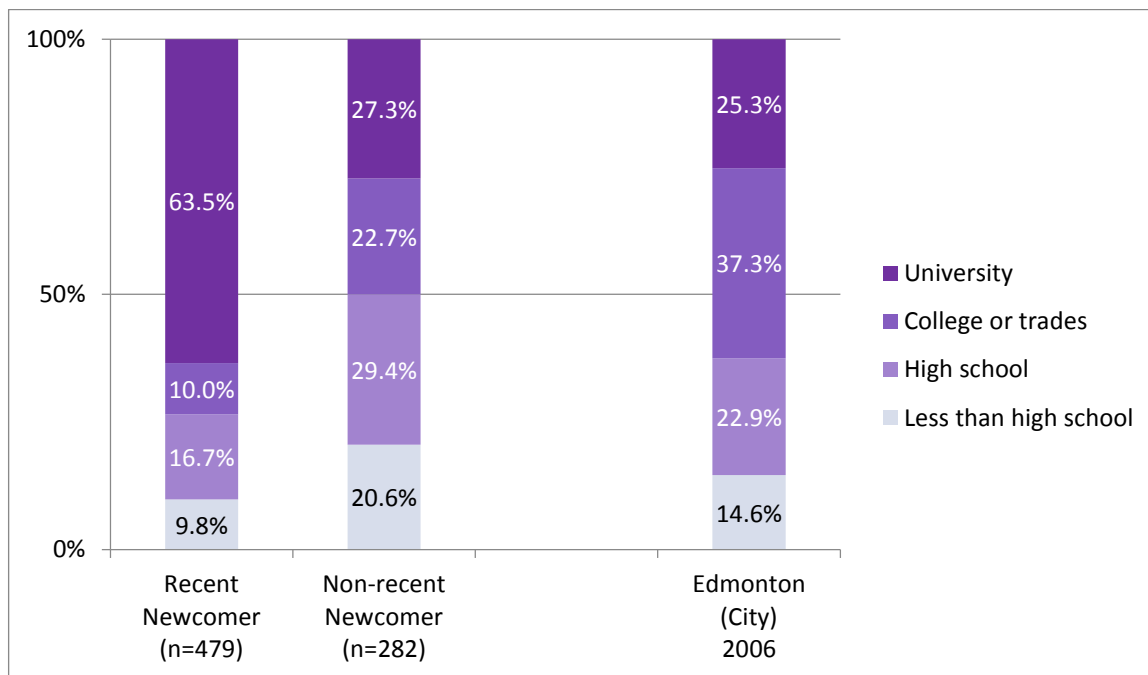
⁶ Caregivers were asked to report the highest level of education achieved. Analysis does not take into consideration multiple degree holders. College diplomas or trade certificates of university-degree holders are not accounted for.

Figure 12. Education levels of all caregivers by identity/status group and income level



When considering each identity and status group separately, three main observations are apparent (Figure 12 provides subgroup comparisons). First, regardless of identity/ status group, the educational attainment of the struggling-to-make-ends-meet caregivers is higher than that of other income groups (greater percentage with university credentials and a smaller percentage with less than a high school education). Second, regardless of income level, immigrant caregivers consistently report higher levels of educational attainment than all other caregiver groups as well as the general Edmonton population. Approximately half of the poor and poorest poor immigrant caregivers and 68% of the struggling-to-make-ends-meet group held at least one university degree. Third, Aboriginal caregivers reported the lowest educational attainment (higher percentage of caregivers with less than a high school education and smaller percentage with a university degree).

Figure 13. Educational attainment of foreign-born caregivers by time since arrival

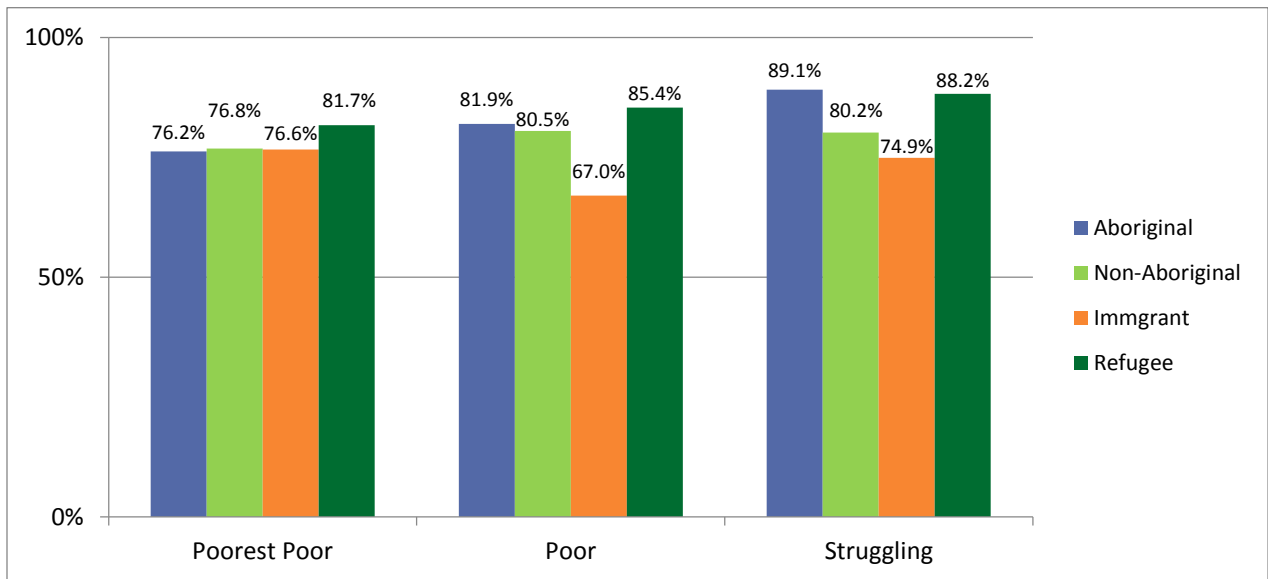


Further examination of the educational attainment of foreign-born caregivers reveals that recent newcomers have higher levels of education than those that have been living in Canada for five years or more or the general Edmonton population (Figure 13). While recent newcomers are less likely to hold college or trades credentials, they are much more likely to have at least one university degree. It is notable that in the case of recent newcomers, almost all of those with university credentials earned them outside of Canada (i.e., foreign credentials).

In general, approximately three-quarters of caregivers completed training in addition to their formal education (Figure 14). Refugee and Aboriginal caregivers have the highest incidence of additional training, followed by non-Aboriginal (Canadian-born) caregivers. Immigrant caregivers were least likely to report additional training.

Question:
Have you taken any training courses and programs in addition to your formal education?

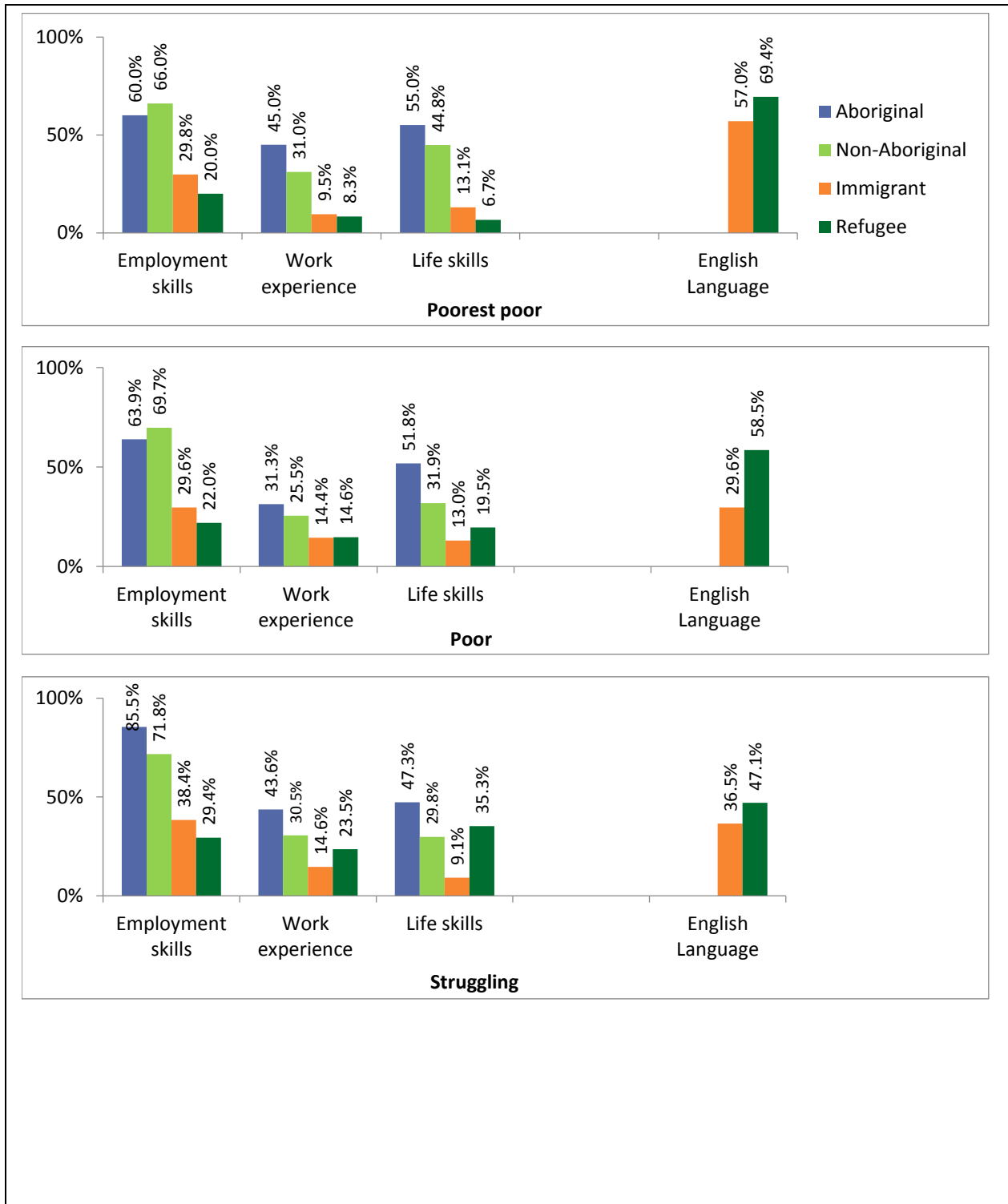
Figure 14. Percentage of caregivers that have taken additional training



However, when we look at the type of training (Figure 15), we can see that the foreign-born focused their efforts on language skills (42% of refugees and 31% of immigrants had taken English as a Second Language courses including the Language Instruction for Newcomers to Canada course, LINC).

Canadian-born caregivers were more likely than foreign-born caregivers to participate in all other training programs. Almost 70% of Canadian-born caregivers reported taking employment skills training, compared to about 30% of foreign-born caregivers. Similarly, a higher percentage of the Canadian-born took life skills programs (39%) (e.g. communication, budgeting, and problem solving) and work experience-related training (32%) (e.g. internship, job shadowing) than foreign-born caregivers (12% and 13%, respectively).

Figure 15. Percentage of caregivers that have taken additional training by identity/status group and type of program



VI. Employment status

Primary caregivers were asked whether they and their co-caregivers have ever worked for pay in Canada. About 93% of parent 1's and 85% of parent 2's reported having worked for pay in Canada. The percentage of caregivers who have worked in Canada are broken down in Table 10 by the four identity and status groups. Compared to Canadian-born caregivers, a smaller percentage of foreign-born caregivers report Canadian work histories.

Question:

Have you ever worked for pay in Canada?

Examining the length of time in Canada, Table 10 shows that recent newcomers (lived in Canada for fewer than five years) were least likely to have ever worked for pay in Canada, while those who have lived in Canada five years or more show similar labour market participation patterns to Canadian-born caregivers.

Table 10. Percentage of caregivers who have ever worked for pay in Canada[†]

	Have worked in Canada (%)	Number of Responses	Canadian-born		Foreign-born	
			Aboriginal,	Non-Aboriginal	Immigrant	Refugee
Parent 1	92.8%	1278	93.7%	99.0%	86.4%	78.8%
Parent 2	85.1%	489	94.6%	99.3%	78.9%	63.2%
					Non-recent Newcomer	Recent Newcomer
Parent 1					95.7%	76.6%
Parent 2					90.3%	70.3%

[†]n=1,767 due to missing data

Primary caregivers were also asked about their current employment status. While the overwhelming majority of caregivers had worked for pay in Canada at some point, a smaller percentage was working at the time of the interview (Figure 16).

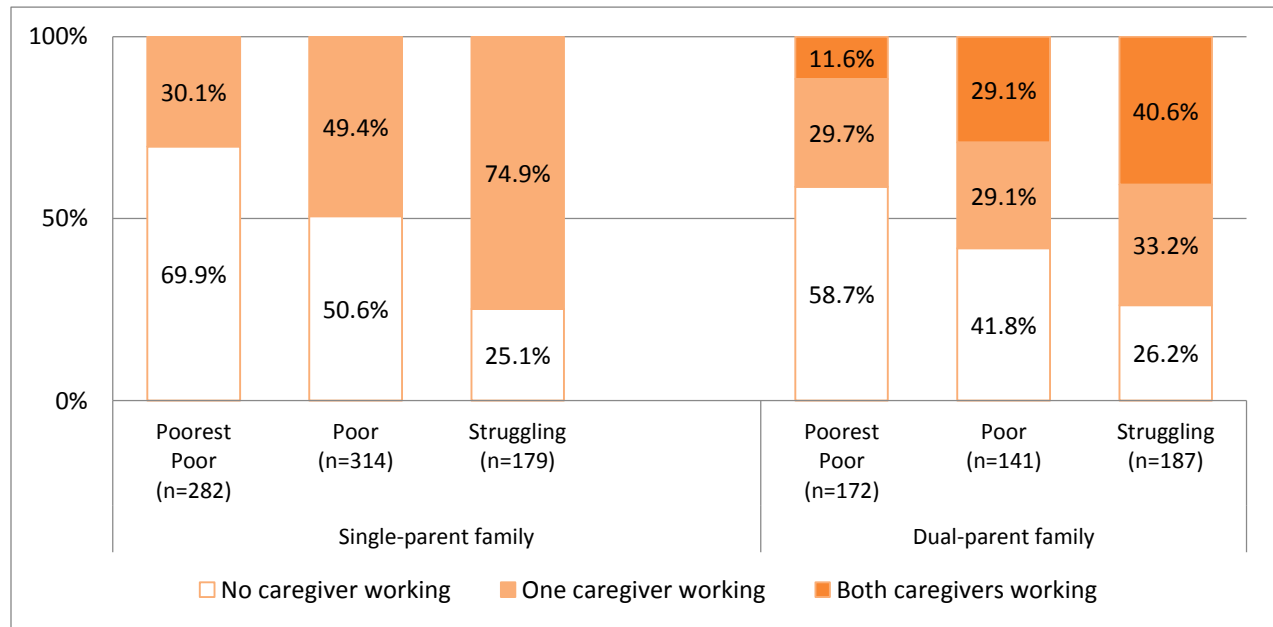
Question:

Are you currently working?

Approximately 47% of primary caregivers and 58% of co-caregivers reported working *at the time* of the interview.

Figure 16 shows the percentage of caregivers that were employed at the time of the first interview in lone and dual-parent families by income level. For both lone and dual-parent families, income level appears dependent upon the current employment status of caregivers. Specifically, a smaller percentage of caregivers were employed at the time of the interview in the poorest poor income group compared to the poor or struggling-to-make-ends-meet groups.

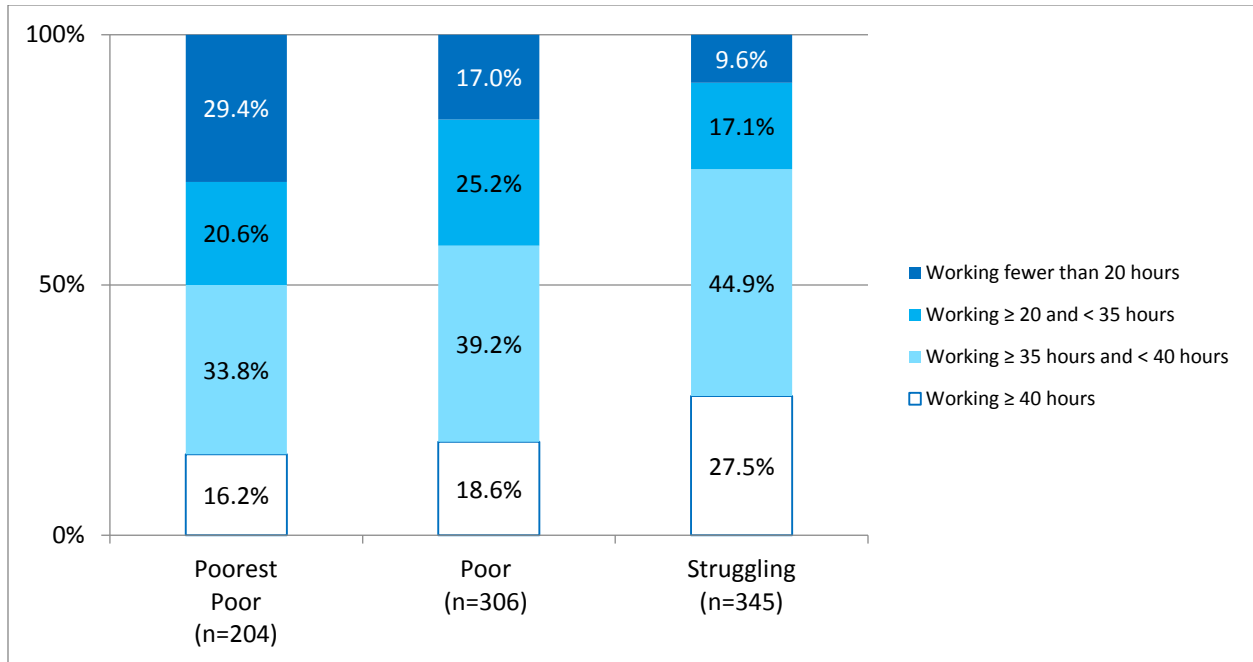
Figure 16. Percentage of caregivers working at the time of the first interview[†]



[†] n=1,275 due to missing data

Some caregivers who were working at the time of the first interview were employed full-time while others worked part-time. As shown in Figure 17, caregivers (Parent 1 and Parent 2) in higher income groups worked more hours per week than caregivers in lower income groups. It is important to note that even when caregivers worked 40 or more hours per week, households were still under the Low-Income Cut-Off threshold (16% of poorest poor and 19% of poor households).

Figure 17. Hours worked per week by income level



Caregivers who were *not* working at the time of the first interview reported on the activities they had been engaged in during the past 12 months. Responses included any combination of the following: working for pay, caring for family full-time, going to school or taking additional training, recovering from

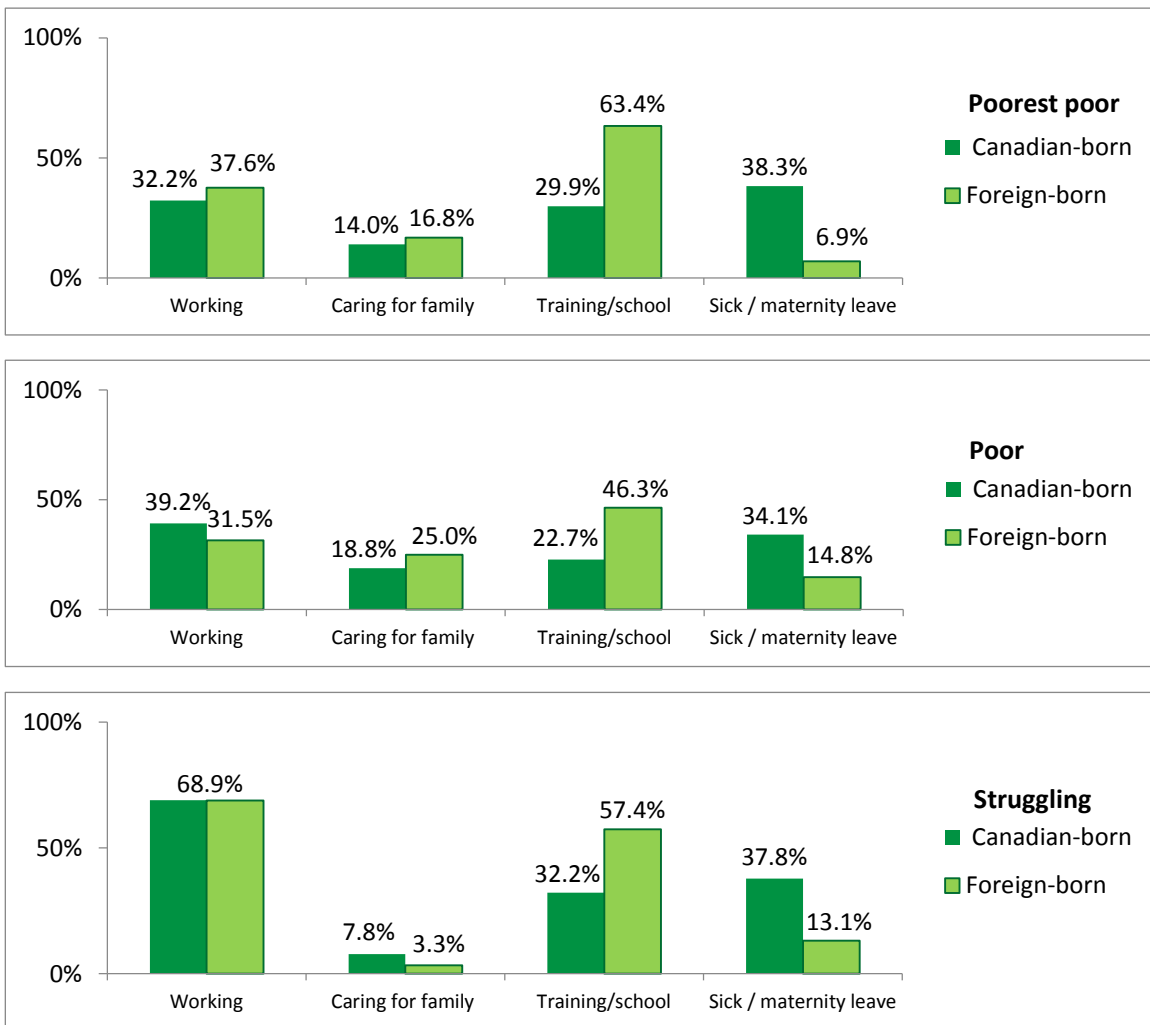
Question:

Have you done any of the following in the past twelve months?

- Working for pay
- Caring for family full-time
- Going to school or taking additional training
- Recovering from illness or taking maternity leave

illness or taking maternity leave. Figure 18 shows comparisons between the foreign-born and Canadian-born caregivers for these activities. Percentage-wise, foreign-born caregivers were more likely, regardless of income group, to attend school or obtain additional training when compared to Canadian-born caregivers. On the other hand, more Canadian-born caregivers reported taking maternity leave or took time off to recover from an illness. It is also noteworthy that, for the struggling-to-make-ends-meet group, two-thirds of the caregivers had worked for some length of time in the past 12 months, while only a third of caregivers in the other two income groups reported the same.

Figure 18. Activities in the past year for those who were not working at the time of the first interview



VII. Usual occupations

A. Occupations in Canada

This section contains information on the usual occupation worked by caregivers who had, at some point, worked for pay in Canada. It is important to note that this analysis includes responses from caregivers who were working at the time of the interview as well as caregivers who were not working. Caregivers could report up to four job titles. This report includes all responses to allow for a more comprehensive coverage of the types of jobs worked by low-income caregivers. In sum, 2,870 responses were collected which represent the job profiles of 1,600 caregivers (Parent 1 (n=1,182), Parent 2 (n=418)).

Question:

What kind of work do you usually do in Canada?

The reported job titles were organized using the 2006 version of the National Occupation Classification (NOC) System.ⁱⁱⁱ The NOC System organizes 520 occupations into 26 major groups. The occupations that are clustered together in a major group are similar in terms of the type of work or field of training (Skill Type) and amount of education typically required (Skill Level). Table 11 illustrates the breakdown of the jobs worked by caregivers according to the NOC system of organization.

Over half of the occupations reported by the caregivers belong to three major groups 6C, 6D and 1C (21%, 21%, and 11%, respectively). Furthermore, two-thirds of reported occupations are low(er)-skill jobs (skill-levels C (42%) and D (23%)).

Table 11. Breakdown of all occupations worked by caregivers by NOC major group

Skill Type										
Skill Level	1 Business, Finance and Administration Occupations	2 Natural and Applied Sciences and Related Occupations	3 Health Occupations	4 Occupations in Social Science, Education, Government Service and Religion	5 Occupations in Art, Culture, Recreation and Sport	6 Sales and Service Occupations	7 Trades, Transport and Equipment Operators and Related Occupations	8 Occupations Unique to Primary Industry	9 Occupations Unique to Processing, Manufacturing and Utilities	Total
Management	0.1%	-	0.2%		-	2.1%	0.0%	-	0.2%	2.5%
A	1.1%	1.2%	0.4%	2.5%	1.0%					6.2%
B	2.9%	2.8%	1.5%	5.9%	1.3%	5.5%	5.7%	0.2%	0.1%	25.9%
C	11.2%		2.4%			20.7%	6.4%	0.3%	1.1%	42.1%
D						20.9%	2.1%	0.1%	0.1%	23.2%
Total	15.3%	4.0%	4.4%	8.4%	2.3%	49.2%	14.2%	0.6%	1.5%	100%*

Skill level A: Occupations usually require university education

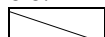
Skill level B: Occupations usually require college education or apprenticeship training

Skill level C: Occupations usually require secondary school and/or occupation-specific training

Skill level D: On-the-job training is usually provided for occupations

'-': None of the caregivers report working a job in this NOC major group

0.0%: A negligible number of caregivers worked a job in this NOC major group (0.0% with rounding)

 Not applicable

*Due to rounding error, total does not equal 100%

As mentioned above, even though there are 24 non-managerial major groups, three groups (1C, 6C and 6D) represent over half of the occupations worked by caregivers, with a concentration of these jobs in low skill sales and service. Caregivers are also clustered in clerical occupations. Table 12 gives examples of job titles that are found in the three most frequently reported NOC major groups.

Table 12. Examples of occupations in NOC major groups 1C, 6C and 6D

Skill Level	Skill Type								
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
A: university education									
B: college education or apprenticeship									
C: secondary school and/or occupation-specific training	1C					6C			
D: on-the job training						6D			

Clerical occupations

- Office Equipment Operators
- Finance and Insurance Clerks
- Administrative Support Clerks
- Mail and Message Distribution Occupations
- Recording, Scheduling and Distributing Occupations

Intermediate sales and service occupations

- Sales Representatives, Wholesale Trade
- Retail Salespersons and Sales Clerks
- Occupations in Travel and Accommodation
- Tour and Recreational Guides and Casino Occupations
- Occupations in Food and Beverage Service
- Other Occupations in Protective Service
- Childcare and Home Support Workers

Elemental sales and service occupations

- Cashiers
- Food Counter Attendants, Kitchen Helpers and Related Occupations
- Security Guards and Related Occupations
- Cleaners
- Other Occupations in Travel, Accommodations, Amusement and Recreation

As previously mentioned, many caregivers worked more than one occupation. Tables 13 to 16 list the most frequently reported job titles for the four different identity/status groups.

Table 13. Top five usual occupations of Aboriginal caregivers

Occupation	NOC	Major Group	Percentage
Food and Beverage Server	6453	6C	8.4%
Cashier	6611	6D	6.9%
Administrative Assistant	1411	1C	4.5%
Cook	6242	6B	4.5%
Construction Craft Labourer	7611	7D	4.5%

Table 14. Top five usual occupations of non-Aboriginal (Canadian-born) caregivers

Occupation	NOC	Major Group	Percentage
Administrative Assistant	1411	1C	7.4%
Floral Designer/Interior Decorator/Retail Salesperson	6421	6C	7.2%
Cashier	6611	6D	6.9%
Food and Beverage Server	6453	6C	6.2%
Early Childhood Educator	4214	4B	3.3%

Table 15. Top five usual occupations of immigrant caregivers in Canada

Occupation	NOC	Major Group	Percentage
Cashier	6611	6D	6.4%
Food Service Helper/Kitchen Helper and Food Assembler	6641	6D	4.9%
Food and Beverage Server	6453	6C	4.8%
Building Operator/Building superintendent/Custodian	6663	6D	4.6%
Floral Designer/Interior Decorator/Retail Salesperson	6421	6C	4.5%

Table 16. Top five usual occupations of refugee caregivers in Canada

Occupation	NOC	Major Group	Percentage
Building Operator/Building superintendent/Custodian	6663	6D	10.2%
Furniture Mover	7452	7C	8.6%
Health Care Aide	3413	3D	6.1%
Food Service Helper/Kitchen Helper and Food Assembler	6641	6D	6.1%
Taxi Driver/ Chauffeur	7413	7C	6.1%

Interestingly, refugees reported occupation titles quite different from the other three groups (e.g., furniture mover, health care aide, taxi driver). We suspect that the higher percentage of men self-identifying as parent 1 in the refugee group may account for some of this difference.

B. Pre-migration occupations

While the majority of this report captures information for 808 foreign-born caregivers, only 609 (Parent 1 (n=375), Parent 2 (n=234)) provided pre-migration work details.

Together, a total of 792 responses were collected as some caregivers reported more than one usual pre-migration occupation. For caregivers who had worked before coming to Canada, up to 4 job titles were collected. Similar to the method used for the occupations worked in Canada, job titles were coded with the National Occupation Classification (NOC) System.

Question:

What kind of work did you usually do before coming to Canada?

The breakdown of pre-migration occupations in Table 17 reveals that the majority of jobs held prior to migration were high-skill jobs. Unlike the occupations worked in Canada, a variety of pre-migration occupations were reported, a contrast to the clustering noted for jobs worked in Canada. Close to half of the pre-migration occupations reported by foreign-born caregivers belong to skill level A (university-level education required). The most frequently reported jobs belong to major groups 4A and 2A (16% and 15%, respectively) followed by major groups 6C and 1C (both 9%). Only 5% of the pre-migration jobs were low-skill jobs requiring minimal training (skill level D).

Table 17. Breakdown of all pre-migration occupations worked by NOC major group

Skill Type										
Skill Level	1 Business, Finance and Administration Occupations	2 Natural and Applied Sciences and Related Occupations	3 Health Occupations	4 Occupations in Social Science, Education, Government Service and Religion	5 Occupations in Art, Culture, Recreation and Sport	6 Sales and Service Occupations	7 Trades, Transport and Equipment Operators and Related Occupations	8 Occupations Unique to Primary Industry	9 Occupations Unique to Processing, Manufacturing and Utilities	Total
Management	0.8%	-	0.4%		-	4.2%	0.3%	-	0.9%	6.6%
A	6.9%	15.3%	4.7%	16.0%	2.5%					45.4%
B	4.0%	4.8%	1.9%	1.1%	1.0%	2.8%	4.8%	0.3%	0.1%	20.8%
C	8.6%		2.4%			9.1%	2.3%	0.4%	1.5%	24.3%
D						3.9%	1.1%	0.0%	0.0%	5.0%
Total	20.3%	20.1%	9.1%	17.4%	3.5%	20.0%	8.5%	0.7%	2.5%	100%*

Note. Skill level A: Occupations usually require university education

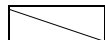
Skill level B: Occupations usually require college education or apprenticeship training

Skill level C: Occupations usually require secondary school and/or occupation-specific training

Skill level D: On-the-job training is usually provided for occupations

'-': None of the caregivers report working a job in this NOC major group

0.0%: A negligible number of caregivers worked a job in this NOC major group (0.0% with rounding)

 Not applicable

*Due to rounding error, total does not equal 100%

Even though there are 26 major groups in the NOC, four groups (i.e., 4A, 2A, 6C and 1C) represent about half (49%) of the occupations worked by foreign-born caregivers prior to migrating to Canada. Almost 40% of foreign-born caregivers worked high-skill occupations in the natural and applied sciences (20%) as well as social sciences and public service sector (17%). The third and fourth most commonly reported major groups are skill-level C sales and service occupations and skill-level C business, finance and administration occupations. Table 18 gives examples of occupations that are found within the two most commonly reported pre-migration groups: Skill Level A natural and applied sciences and Skill Level A social science, education, government services and religion occupations.

Table 18. Examples of occupations in NOC major groups 1C, 2A, 4A and 6C

Skill Level	Skill Type								
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
A: university education		2A		4A					
B: college education or apprenticeship									
C: secondary school and or specific training	1C					6C			
D: on-the job training									

Professional occupations in natural and applied sciences

- Physical Science Professionals
- Life Science Professionals
- Civil, Mechanical, Electrical and Chemical Engineers
- Computer and Information Systems Professionals

Professional occupations in social science, education, government services and religion

- University Professors and Assistants
- College and Other Vocational Instructors
- Secondary and Elementary School Teachers and Educational Counsellors
- Psychologists, Social Workers, Counsellors, Clergy and Probation Officers
- Policy and Program Officers, Researchers and Consultant

Tables 19 and 20 list the most frequently reported pre-migration jobs for immigrant and refugee caregivers. When compared to Tables 15 and 16 we can see that the skill level and skill type between pre and post-migration jobs are quite different. Three of the top five jobs for immigrant caregivers prior to migrating were skill level A (university credential usually required) while none of the top five jobs usually worked in Canada required upper-level education (Table 15). As for skill type, the top five jobs usually worked by immigrants in Canada were sales and service jobs. Prior to migration the skill type for the top five jobs usually worked was more varied and included jobs in the areas of business, finance and administration; social science, education, government service and religion; and, sales and service. The pre-migration jobs usually worked by refugees overlaps the immigrant list considerably with administrative assistant, elementary teacher and secondary school teacher listed for both immigrants and refugees. Immigrants were more likely than refugees to work as an accountant and retail salesperson prior to migration.

Table 19. Top five usual pre-migration occupations of immigrant caregivers

Occupation	NOC	Major Group	Counts
Administrative Assistant	1411	1C	6.8%
Accountant	1111	1A	5.3%
Secondary School Teacher	4141	4A	4.6%
Elementary School Teacher	4142	4A	4.6%
Retail Salesperson	6421	6C	3.6%

Table 20. Top five usual pre-migration occupations of refugee caregivers

Occupation	NOC	Major Group	Counts
Administrative Assistant	1411	1C	5.0%
Secondary School Teacher	4141	4A	5.0%
Elementary School Teacher	4142	4A	5.0%
Retail Store Manager	0621	Managerial	4.0%
Food and Beverage Server	6453	6C	4.0%
Cashier	6611	6D	4.0%
House Cleaner	6661	6D	4.0%
Furniture Mover	7452	7C	4.0%

IX. Income source ratio

Household income was calculated using the income of both caregivers (parent 1 and parent 2), and consisted of three main sources: 1.) government transfer payments, 2.) labour market participation and, 3.) other sources. Table 21 details the different sources contributing to household income.

Table 21. Sources of household income

Government Transfers		Labour Market
Children: Child Tax Benefit <i>Alberta Family Employment Tax Credit (AFETC)</i> Childcare Benefit Foster child care		Wages Self-employment
Disabilities: Worker's Compensation <i>Assured Income for the Severely Handicapped (AISH)</i> Disability <i>Child disability</i>		
EI: Employment Insurance <i>Maternity leave</i>	Misc: <i>Prosperity cheque</i> <i>Resource rebate</i> <i>Immigration assistance</i> <i>Widow/orphan benefits</i>	
Income Support: Income support Goods & sales tax <i>Alberta works</i>		
Seniors: Guaranteed Income Supplement (GIS) <i>Old Age Security (OAS)</i> <i>Canadian Pension Plan (CPP)</i> <i>Alberta old age benefits</i>		Other Child support Alimony Third party income <i>Rental income</i> <i>Investments</i> <i>Oil Royalties</i> <i>Band</i>
		Note. The source types in italics were not printed on the questionnaire but were identified and reported by participants themselves.

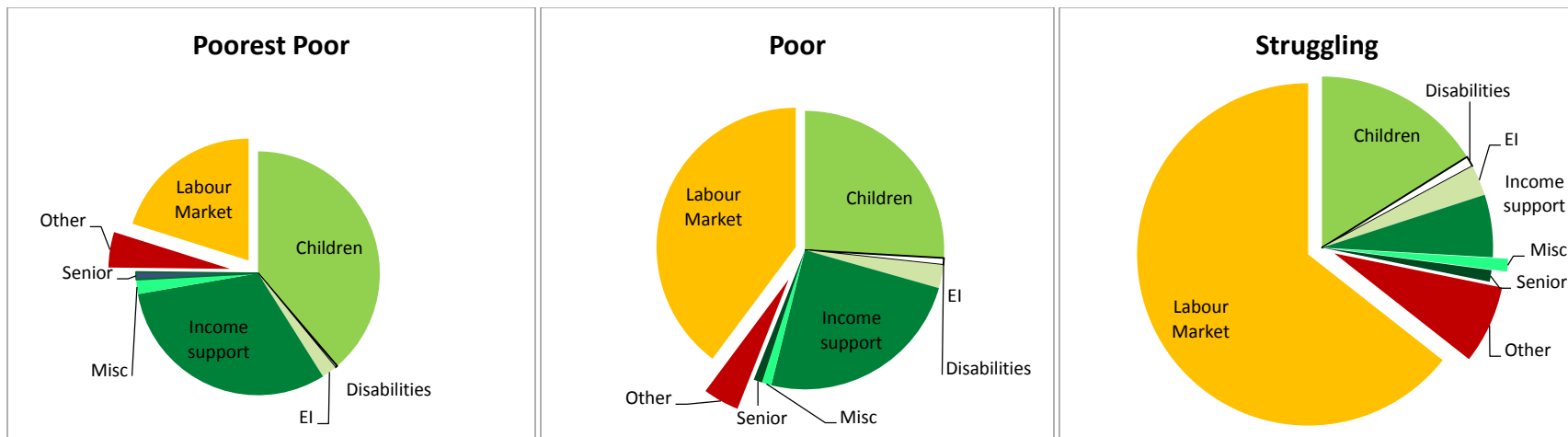
On average, 55% of household income for these families came from government transfers. Another 40% came from the labour market, and 5% from other sources. Further breakdown of income source ratio by income level is found in Table 22. While the proportion of "other" sources of income does not differ

Table 22. Income source ratios by income level

	Government Transfer	Labour Market	Other
Poorest poor	0.75	0.20	0.05
Poor	0.56	0.40	0.04
Struggling-to-make-ends-meet	0.28	0.64	0.08
Total Average	0.55	0.40	0.05

substantially between the different income levels, labour market and government transfers do. When compared to families with lower incomes, families with higher incomes have a larger proportion of their income stemming from the labour market. Conversely, when compared to families with higher incomes, families with lower incomes have a larger percentage of their income coming from government transfers. Figure 19 shows that the majority of government transfers, regardless of income level, relate to income support and children (Child Tax Benefit, Alberta Family Employment Tax Credit (AFETC), Childcare Benefit and monies for foster children).

Figure 19. Income source ratio by income level



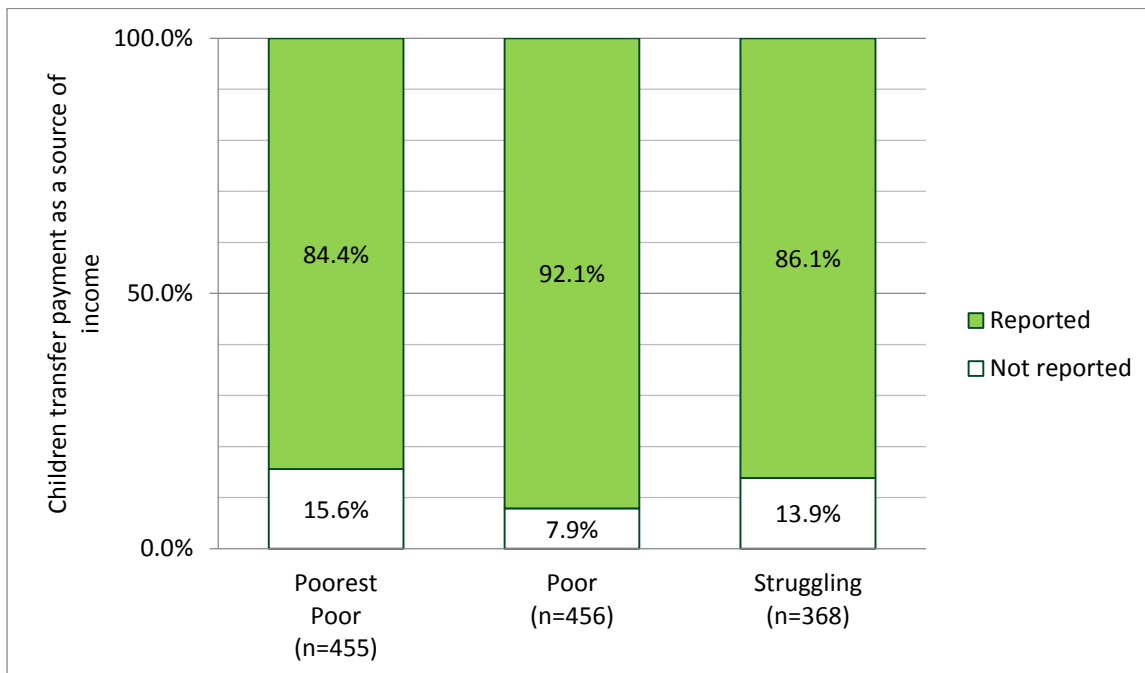
Interestingly, while the percentage of transfers for children is largest for the poorest poor when compared to the poor or struggling, the dollar amount received by the poorest poor is lower than what the higher income groups receive (Table 23). On average, the poorest poor received \$4,600 for children compared to \$6,200 by the poor and \$5,500 by the struggling-to-make ends-meet group.

Table 23. Median amount of the largest income sources (after-tax) by income level

	Poorest	Poor	Struggling-to-make-ends-meet
Labour Market	\$2.6k	\$9.7k	\$24.1k
Transfer for Income Support	\$4.0k	\$5.2k	\$1.8k
Transfer for Children	\$4.6k	\$6.2k	\$5.5k
Median household income	\$13.2k	\$23.6k	\$38.3k

One speculation as to why the poorest poor families receive fewer dollars (on average) is that there are more families in the poorest poor group that do not file their tax return and as a result do not receive the government transfer payment for their children. Figure 20 presents the percentage of families reporting or not reporting children transfer payment as a source of income.

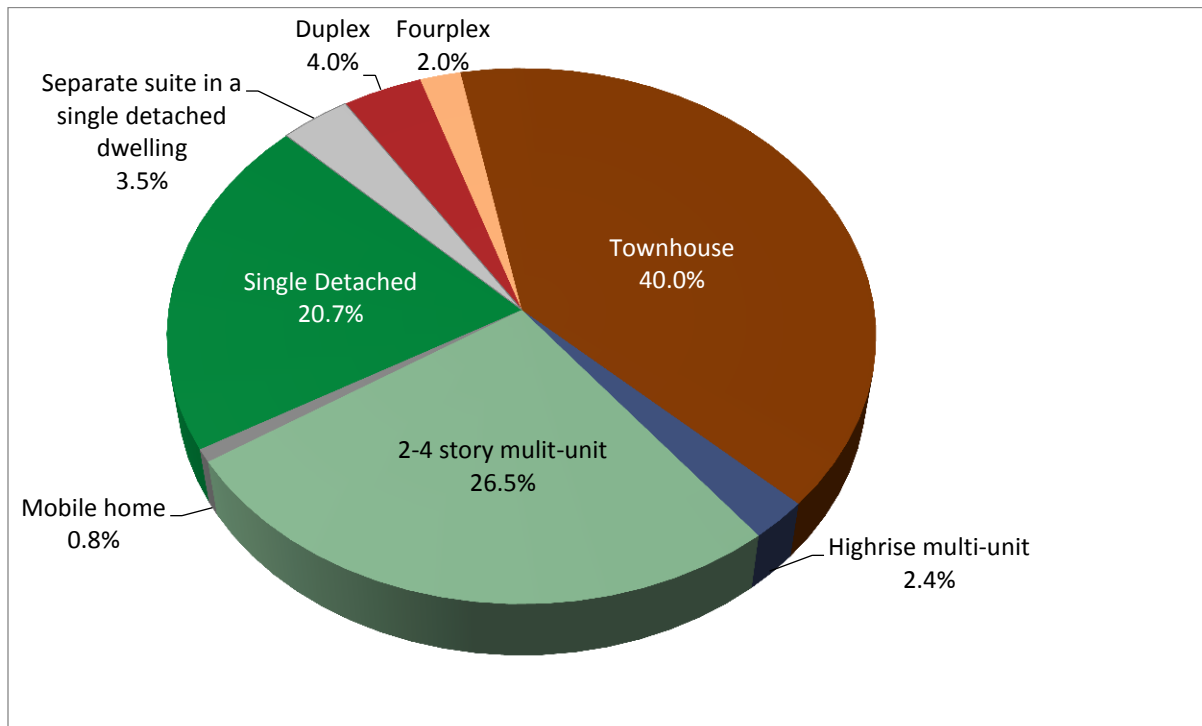
Figure 20. Percentage of families reporting child transfer payments



X. Types of dwellings

Types of dwellings were recorded by research staff for most of the families (n=1,277). Nearly 90% of the families in this report lived in three types of dwellings: townhouses (40%), 2-4 story multi-unit buildings, and single detached dwellings. The other six dwelling types housed about 10% of families.

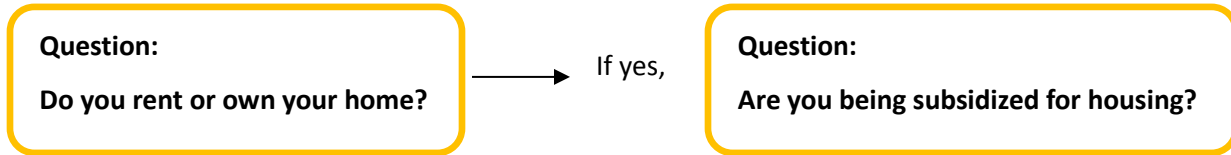
Figure 21. Percentage of all dwelling types reported by primary caregivers



The pattern in Figure 21 stays relatively the same across different income level and identity/status groups. However, there are two exceptions. First, a higher percentage of families in the struggling-to-make-ends-meet group lived in single detached dwellings (27%) compared to the poor group (18%) and the poorest poor group (19%). This finding makes sense as single detached housing tends to be more costly and the struggling-to-make-ends-meet group is better able to afford more expensive housing. Second, recent immigrant primary caregivers are more likely to live in 2-4 storey multi-unit apartments (45%) than non-recent immigrant primary caregivers (23%) and non-Aboriginal (Canadian-born) primary caregivers (20%).

XI. Homeownership

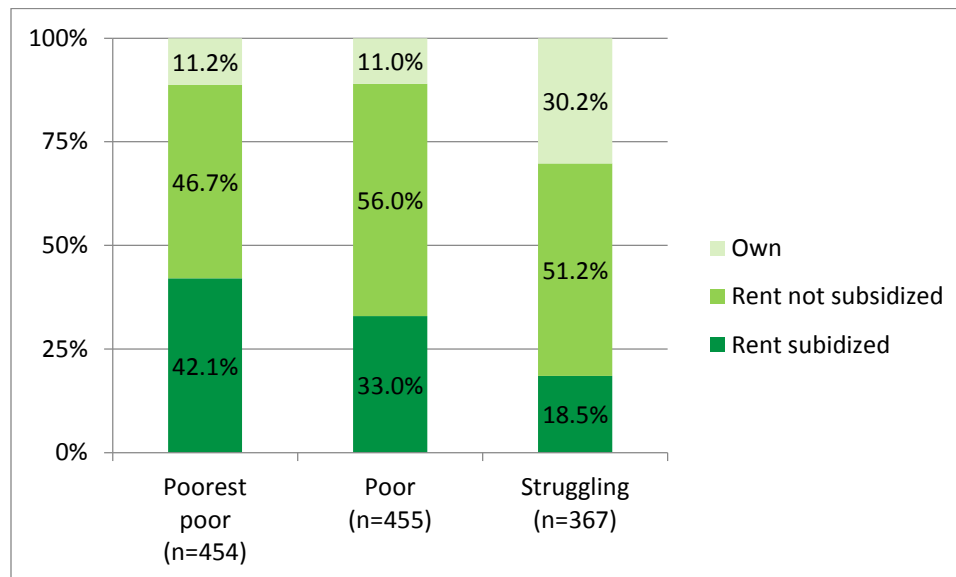
All primary caregivers were asked whether they rent or own their homes. If they rented, they were then asked whether they were being subsidized for their housing.



Overall, only 17% of the FFE families owned their homes, 51% of the families rented their homes with subsidies, and 32% rented without subsidies. Since different population groups have different patterns of home ownership, it is important to examine home ownership by income level (Figure 22) and identity/status group (Figure 23).

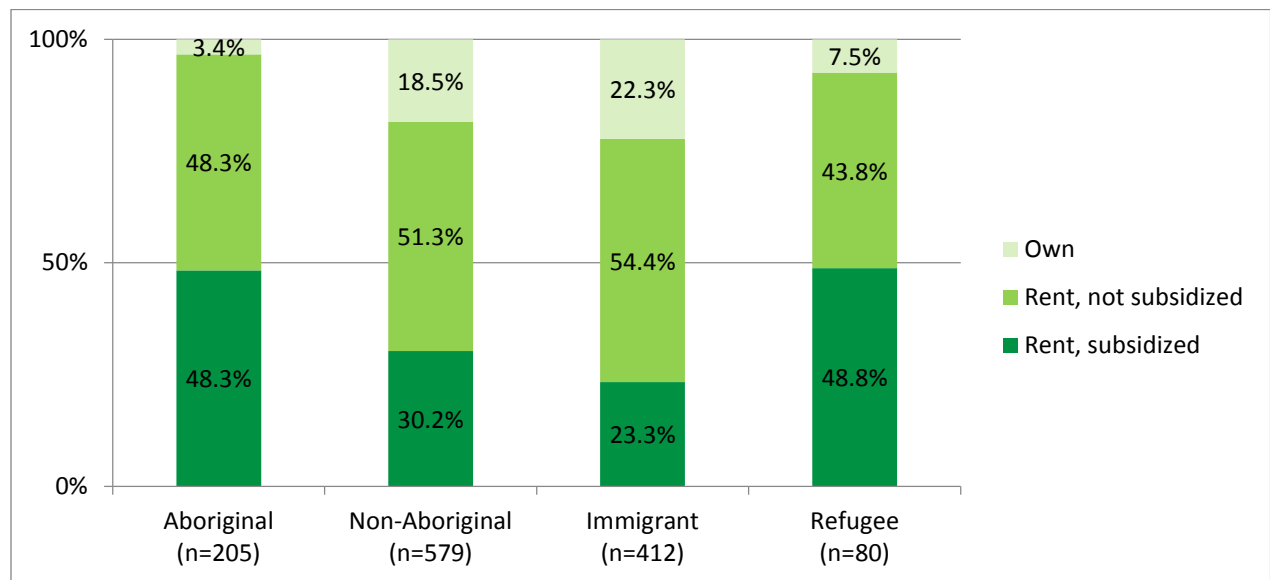
Figure 22 shows that a greater percentage of struggling-to-make-ends-meet families own their home (30%) compared to the other two groups (11%). This finding does support the claim that families with higher incomes are better able to own their own homes. A greater percentage of the poorest poor received rent subsidies (47%) when compared to the poor and struggling-to-make-ends-meet families (33% and 19% respectively).

Figure 22. Percentage of homeowners by income level



Most striking in Figure 23 is the low percentage of homeowners among Aboriginals (3%) and refugees (8%). Aboriginal and refugee households on the other hand were much more likely to receive rent subsidies when compared to non-Aboriginal (Canadian-born) and immigrant households. In contrast, 19% of non-Aboriginal and 22% of immigrant households owned their own homes. A closer examination of immigrant homeownership reveals that a lower percentage of recent immigrants own their own homes (15%) when compared to immigrants who have lived in Canada for five or more years (26%).

Figure 23. Percentage of homeowners by identity/status group



XII. Number of years living in Edmonton

All primary caregivers were asked how long they have lived in Edmonton.

Question:

How long have you lived in Edmonton?

Overall, 43% of the FFE primary caregivers had lived in Edmonton for less than 5 years. However, there were a number of primary caregivers who were long-time Edmonton residents. In fact, 27% of the primary caregivers had lived in Edmonton for over 20 years at the time the baseline interviews were conducted. It is important to note that the poorest poor group tends to have slightly more newcomers to Edmonton (47%) than the poor and struggling-to-make-ends-meet groups (both about 40%). Furthermore, immigrant and refugee primary caregivers have higher percentages of newcomers to Edmonton (69% and 78%, respectively) than Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal (Canadian-born) primary caregivers (34% and 24%, respectively).

XIII. Household mobility

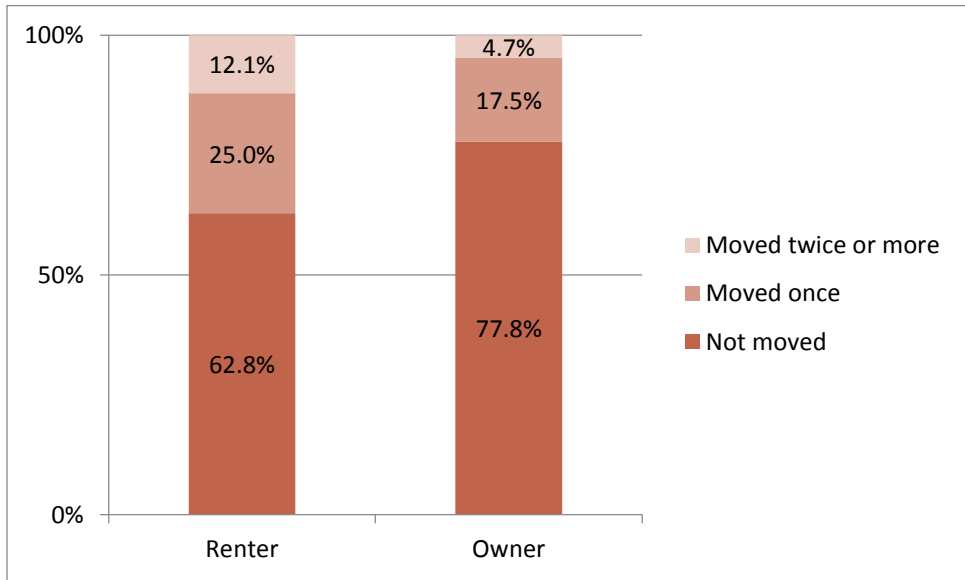
A. Number of moves in the past 12 months

Question:
Have you moved in the past 12 months?

In general, the majority of the families had not moved in the 12 months prior to the first interview (65%). However, 24% of families had moved once in the past 12 months and 11% had moved two or more times.

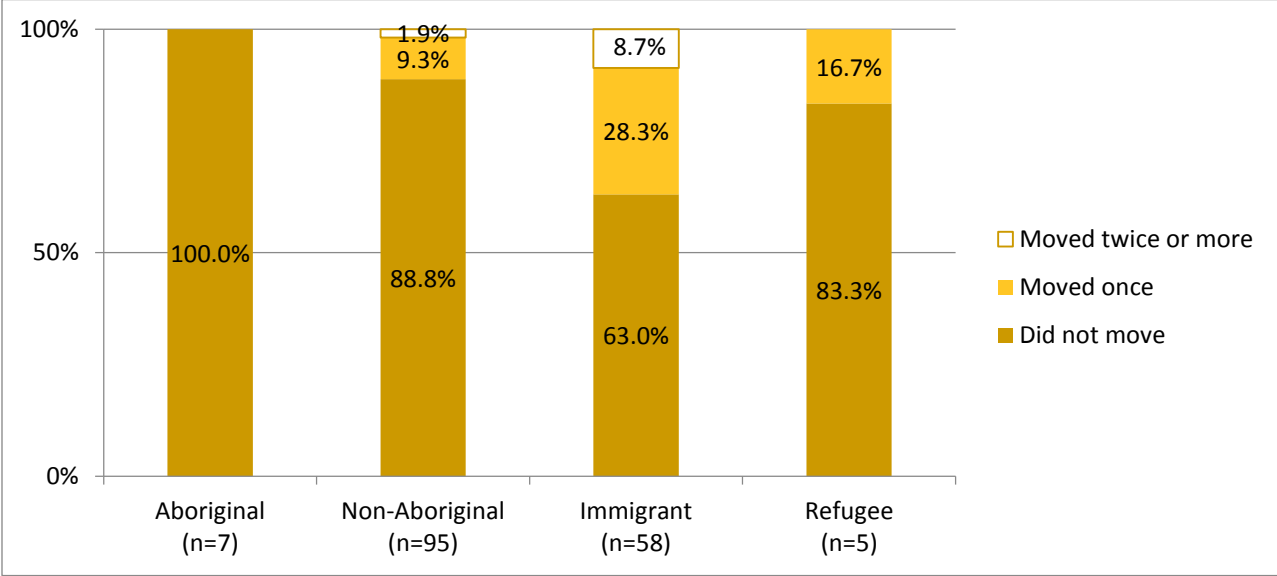
One factor that may influence the number of moves is home ownership. Figure 24 compares the percentage of homeowners and renters who had moved in the 12 months prior to the first interview. Overall, the renters were more mobile than the homeowners, with a greater percentage reporting moving once (25% compared to 18%) or two or more times (12% compared to 5%) in the previous year. Within the group of renters who moved two or more times in the past 12 months (12%), there were instances of families who had moved four to seven times.

Figure 24. Percentage of homeowners vs. renters who moved in the past 12 months



Household mobility for homeowners across the different identity/status groups is detailed in Figure 25. Considering the small number of Aboriginal and refugee homeowners, we focus our discussion on comparisons between non-Aboriginal (Canadian-born) and immigrant families.

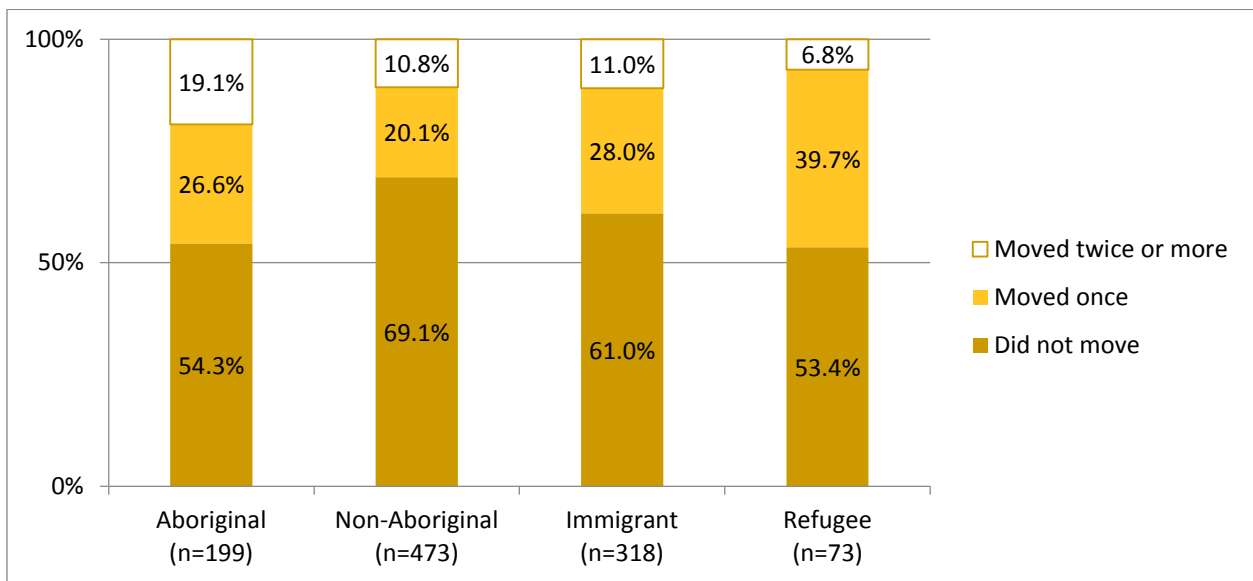
Figure 25. Number of moves in the past 12 months for homeowners



When compared to non-Aboriginal (Canadian-born)homeowners, immigrant homeowners showed greater mobility. While 11% of non-Aboriginal families who owned their home at the time of the baseline interview reported moving at least once in the previous year, 37% of immigrant homeowners reported the same. This suggests that when compared to non-Aboriginal (Canadian-born)homeowners, a greater percentage of immigrant families are recent homebuyers.

Household mobility for renters across the different identity/status groups is detailed in Figure 26. Of the four identity/status groups, non-Aboriginal (Canadian-born) and immigrant families are the most similar, demonstrating the same percentage of families moving two or more times in the past year (11%). Aboriginal and refugee families who rent showed the greatest mobility with just over half of families moving at least once in the past 12 months. Aboriginal families were the most likely, when compared to the other groups, to move two or more times (19%).

Figure 26. Number of moves in the past 12 months for renters



B. School change(s) due to move(s)

At times, a family move requires the child(ren) to change schools. Our sample indicates that 50% of household moves involved children changing schools.

Question:

Did your children change schools due to your move?

XIV. Health

Living with low income negatively affects both physical and mental health.^{iv} For immigrants, health status has been found to be sensitive to the length of residence in the host country.^v In general, immigrants tend to be healthier than the average Canadian when they first arrive, however this advantage diminishes with time. Given the impact of time since arrival on health, we compare recent newcomers and non-recent newcomers in addition to the four other identity/status groups.

A. General health

The EQ-5D-3L visual analogue scale (EQ VAS)^{vi} was used to measure overall general health. The lowest point is 0 representing the ‘worst imaginable health state’ and the highest point is 100 representing the ‘best imaginable health state’. The score is expressed as a percentage between 0% and 100%.

Question:

Please indicate your own health state today

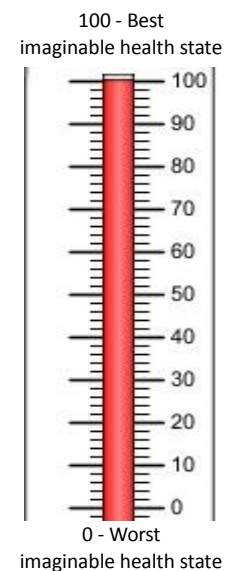
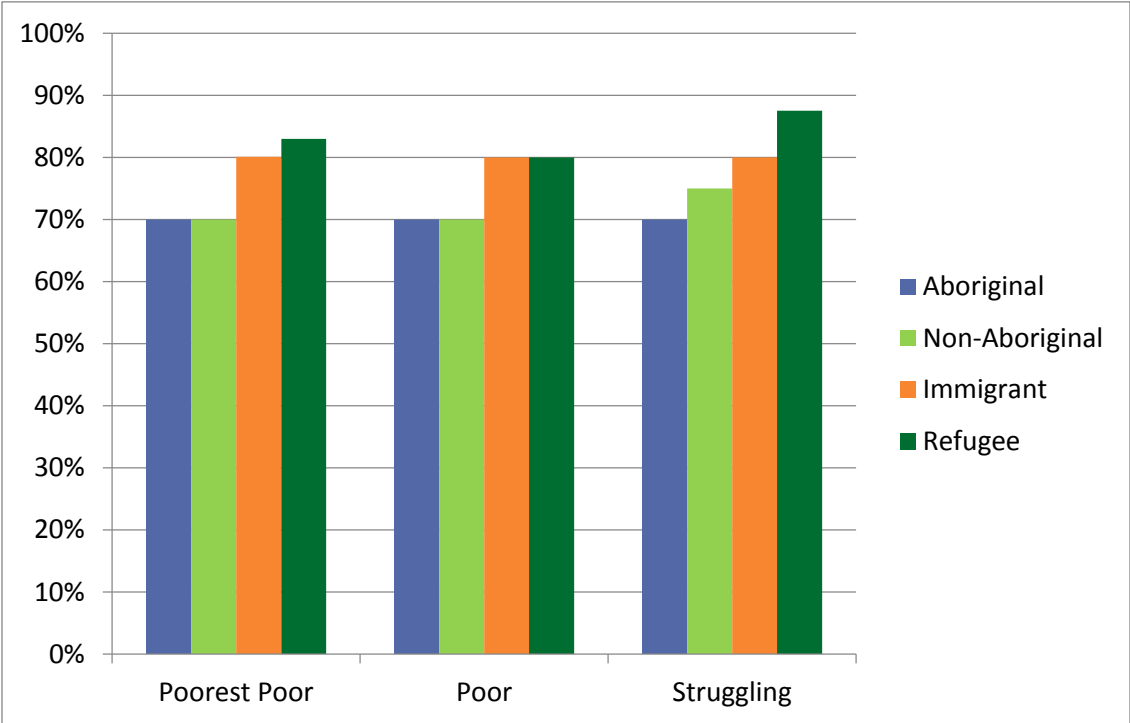


Figure 27 shows the median scores of the primary caregivers from each identity and status group for the three income levels. With the exception of Aboriginal and immigrant caregivers, who showed no variation in their health ratings across the three income levels, primary caregivers in the higher income group (i.e. struggling-to-make-ends-meet) rated themselves healthier than their counterparts in the lower income groups (i.e. poorest poor and poor). Income level aside, foreign-born caregivers viewed their general health more favourably than Canadian-born caregivers. Although not presented in Figure 27, it is notable that the health of foreign-born primary caregivers is higher than that for non-recent newcomers. While investigation of a healthy immigrant effect requires analysis using longitudinal data, this result suggests that length in time in Canada does have a deleterious effect on the health of the foreign-born.

Figure 27. Median thermometer (general health) score by identity/status group and income level



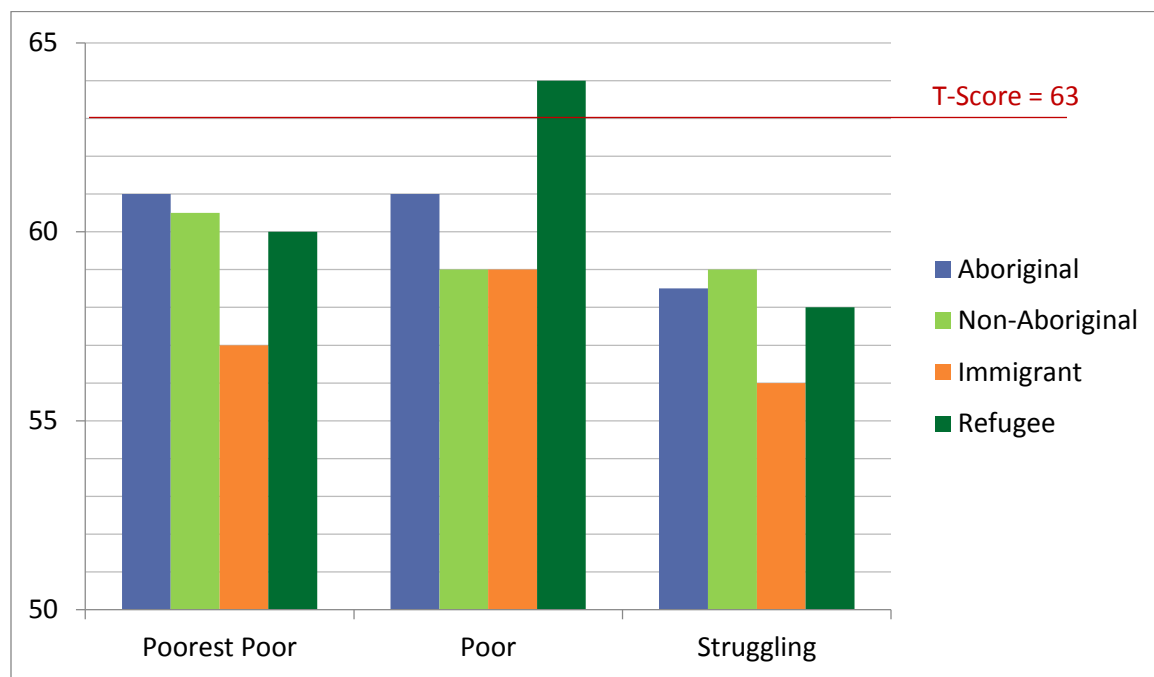
B. Mental health

The FFE study used the Symptom Checklist-90-Revised (SCL-90-R)^{vii} to assess mental health symptomology for the primary caregiver. The SCL-90-R consists of 90 items that tap into nine dimensions

of mental health (i.e., depression, hostility, psychoticism, somatization, obsessive-compulsive, interpersonal sensitivity, anxiety, phobic anxiety, and paranoid ideation) and summarizes them with three global indices of distress. This report examines the level of distress represented by the global severity index (GSI) for the three income levels.

A global severity index (GSI) T-score was calculated for each primary caregiver using gender specific, adult, non-patient norms. A higher T-score indicates greater psychological distress with a T-score of 50 representing the average level for the referenced population. According to the creators of the SCL-90-R, a person who has a GSI T-Score greater than or equal to 63 is of clinical concern.

Figure 28. Median global severity index (mental health) scores of parent 1



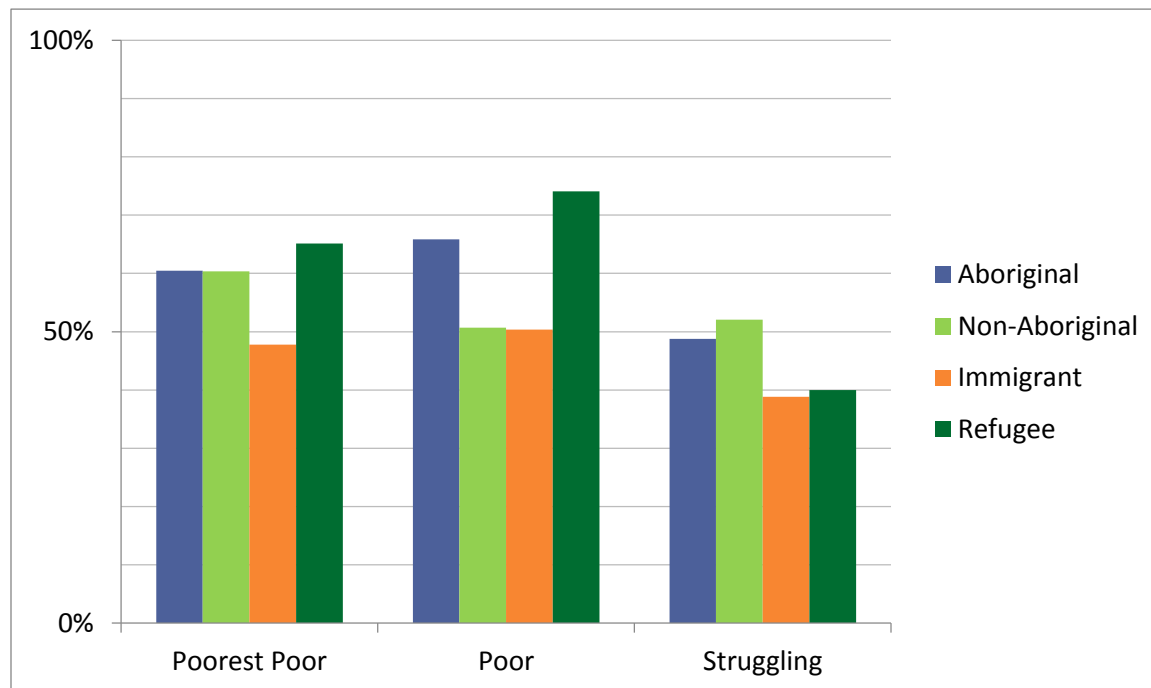
As mentioned above, a GSI T-score of 50 represents the average level for the referenced population.

Figure 28 shows that regardless of identity/status or income level the GSI scores of the primary caregivers are elevated (above average). Another observation is that regardless of identity/status group, the T-score for the highest income group (struggling-to-make-ends-meet) is lower (healthier) than those for the poor and the poorest poor. Compared to the other identity/status groups, the immigrant primary caregivers had the lowest T-scores (healthier), regardless of income level. Refugees in the poor income

group, on the other hand, had the highest T-scores (64). While recent newcomers showed a clear advantage over non-recent newcomers in terms of general health, only those in the highest income level demonstrate this same advantage in terms of mental health (T-Score of 53 as opposed to 59).

Next, we consider the percentage of primary caregivers within each identity/status group and income level that have T-Scores ≥ 63 (indication that they are at risk for a psychiatric disorder). According to the SCL-90-R, "at-risk" is defined as either a score of 63 or more on the GSI, or having scores on any two dimensions greater than or equal to 63 (e.g., anxiety and depression are both ≥ 63).

Figure 29. Percentage of primary caregivers demonstrating "at-risk" symptomology (mental health)



Similar to the findings for Figure 29, the incidence of elevated T-Scores is less pronounced for the highest income group (struggling-to-make-ends-meet) when compared to the poor and poorest groups, regardless of identity/status. Again, immigrants demonstrate the most favourable scores; in this case they have the smallest percentage with "at-risk" levels. Refugees however have the highest percentage with "at-risk" scores in the poor (74%) and poorest poor (65%) income groups. The greatest within identity/status difference is between poor and struggling-to-make-ends-meet refugees with 74% of the former classified as "at-risk" compared to 40% for the latter.

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v Newbold K, Danforth J. Health status and Canada's immigrant population. *Social science & medicine* 2003;57(10):1981-95.

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XVI. Appendices

Appendix A - Eligibility criteria

The Families First Edmonton study focused on low-income families residing in the City of Edmonton from 2006-2011. Families who met the following three main criteria were eligible to participate:

1. Resided in City of Edmonton area;
2. At least one child younger than 12 years of age at recruitment
3. Family received **any one** of the following:
 - (i) Income Support
 - (ii) Alberta Child Health Benefit
 - (iii) City of Edmonton's Leisure Access program
 - (iv) Alberta Adult Health Benefit, and
 - (v) Capital Regional Housing

All of these programs provide either financial assistance or access to affordable housing and recreation for low-income individuals or families in the city area.

At recruitment, the study had three main exclusion criteria: (1) the family was unwilling to commit to five years follow-up, (2) the family was unwilling to provide researchers access to the child who was randomly selected to answer research questions, or (3) researchers were unable to arrange an interpreter for a non-English speaking family. After families were recruited, they were free to withdraw from the study at any time without penalty. Interventions were terminated for families that did withdraw. Families were also terminated from the study if they moved outside of the City of Edmonton. While the study targeted low-income families, families who experienced substantial increases in household income were allowed to continue to participate in the study as these fluctuations were expected from one year to the next.

Appendix B - Glossary

Term	Definition
Aboriginal	A person who was born in Canada and who answered “yes” to the question “Do you identify yourself as an Aboriginal person?”
Co-caregiver	An adult in the family identified by the primary caregiver as sharing care giving responsibilities.
Dual-parent family	A family comprised of a primary caregiver and a co-caregiver who share care giving responsibilities.
Identity/Status group	Identity: A caregiver that identifies as Canadian-born (either Aboriginal or non-Aboriginal). Status: A caregiver that identifies as foreign-born (either immigrant or refugee).
Immigrant	A person who was born outside of Canada and whose immigration status upon arrival to Canada was reported as immigrant or a category other than refugee (includes economic immigrant, family class immigrant, foreign student, visitor, temporary worker, and other non-specified).
Lone parent	Used interchangeably with the term <i>single parent</i> .
Multiple-identity	A dual-parent family in which the primary caregiver has a different identity or status from the co-caregiver. ⁷
Non-Aboriginal (Canadian-born)	A person who was born in Canada and who answers “no” to the question “Do you identify yourself as an Aboriginal person?”
Non-recent newcomer	An immigrant or refugee who has lived in Canada for 5 or more years.
Parent 1	Used interchangeably with the term <i>primary caregiver</i> .
Parent 2	Used interchangeably with the term <i>co-caregiver</i> .
Poor	Income group in which families fell within the upper half of the continuum below the LICO threshold at the time of the first interview.
Poorest poor	Income group in which families fell within the lower half of the continuum below the LICO threshold at the time of the first interview.
Primary caregiver	The adult in the family who self-identified as the most knowledgeable about the child(ren) and who was the primary respondent in the interview, answering questions regarding herself/himself and on behalf of the family.
Recent newcomer	An immigrant or refugee who has lived in Canada for less than 5 years.
Refugee	A person who was born outside of Canada and whose immigration status upon arrival to Canada was reported as refugee or refugee claimants (includes government-assisted refugees, privately sponsored refugees, refugees landed in Canada and refugee dependants).
Single-parent	A family in which no co-caregiver was reported.
Struggling-to-make-ends-meet	Income group in which families had incomes at or above LICO at the time of the first interview; <i>struggling</i> used when space is limited.

⁷ The primary caregiver’s identity/status is used to represent the family’s identity/status.

Appendix C - Depth of poverty

Depth of poverty is a measure of how far off the family's income is as compared with the poverty line. Throughout this document, depth of poverty (DOP) is defined and expressed as the percentage of the family income in relation to its respective Low Income Cut-off (LICO):

$$DOP = \frac{\text{Family household income}}{LICO} \times 100\%$$

For example, the low income after-tax cut-off for a family of five living in Edmonton in 2005 was \$37,071. If that family had a household income of \$30,000 in 2005,

$$DOP = \frac{\$30,000}{\$37,071} \times 100\%$$

its depth of poverty would be:

$$DOP = 0.809 \times 100\% = 80.9\%$$

Suppose another family of five living in Edmonton in 2005 had a household income of \$70,000 (the LICO would be the same as the first family),

$$DOP = \frac{\$70,000}{\$37,071} \times 100\%$$

its depth of poverty would be:

$$DOP = 1.888 \times 100\% = 188.8\%$$

Therefore when a family's household income is below its respective LICO, its DOP would be under 100%. When a family's household income is above its respective LICO, its DOP would be over 100%. If a family's household income is right at its LICO, its DOP would be at 100%.

Appendix D - All identities and status including families with 'multiple-identities'

All families N=1279	Dual-parent families					Subtotal
	Caregivers with same identity/status				Multiple identities/ status	
	Aboriginal	Non-Aboriginal	Immigrant	Refugee		
Poorest poor	1.3%	2.8%	6.6%	1.2%	1.6%	13.4%
Poor	0.2%	2.8%	5.2%	0.9%	2.1%	11.1%
Struggling	0.7%	4.5%	6.4%	0.3%	2.9%	14.8%
subtotal	2.1%	10.1%	18.2%	2.3%	6.6%	39.3%
	Lone-parent families					
Poorest poor	5.2%	9.6%	5.4%	1.9%	-	22.1%
Poor	5.9%	13.0%	4.8%	0.9%	-	24.6%
Struggling	2.0%	9.5%	2.3%	0.3%	-	14.0%
subtotal	13.1%	32.1%	12.5%	3.0%	-	60.7%
Total	N=1279					100%

Appendix E - Country of birth of all foreign-born caregivers

Country of Birth	%	Country of Birth	
Total Response, n=800+			
(More than 1%)		(Less than 1%, Alphabetical order)	
China	22.9%	Albania	Germany
Pakistan	7.3%	Algeria	Greece
Philippines	6.0%	Angola ^a	Grenada
India	5.9%	Antigua and Barbuda	Guatemala ^a
Sudan ^a	4.6%	Argentina	Guyana
Afghanistan ^a	3.5%	Austria	Haiti
subtotal	50.1%	Bahamas	Honduras
Colombia ^a	2.9%	Bangladesh	Hong Kong
Somalia ^a	2.6%	Barbados	Indonesia
Lebanon ^a	2.1%	Belarus	Iran
Vietnam ^a	2.1%	Bermuda	Ireland NIE
Ethiopia ^a	2.0%	Bosnia and Herzegovina ^a	Israel
Iraq ^a	2.0%	Brazil	Japan
United Kingdom	2.0%	Brunei Darussalam	Jordan
United States	2.0%	Burkina Faso	Kenya
Jamaica	1.5%	Burma	Korea NOS
Liberia ^a	1.5%	Burundi	Kurdistan ^a
Egypt	1.3%	Cameroon	Libya
El Salvador ^a	1.1%	Caribbean and Bermuda NOS	Lithuania
Democratic Republic of Congo (Zaire) ^a	1.0%	Central Africa	Malaysia
Sierra Leone ^a	1.0%	Chile	Mauritania
		Cote d'Ivoire	Mexico ^a
		Denmark	Mongolia
		Dominican Republic	Myanmar
		Ecuador	Netherlands
		Eritrea	New Zealand
		Fiji ^a	Nigeria ^a
			Palestine
			Peru
			Poland
			Portugal
			Republic of Ireland (EIRE)
			Republic of South Africa
			Republic of the Congo
			Romania
			Russia Federation
			Rwanda
			Serbia
			South Korea
			Southern Africa
			Sri Lanka ^a
			Switzerland
			Taiwan
			Tajikistan ^a
			Thailand
			Trinidad and Tobago
			Turkey ^a
			Uganda ^a
			Ukraine
			US Pacific Trust Territories
			Yemen
			Yugoslavia
			Zimbabwe

^a Countries reported as birthplace by both immigrant and refugee caregivers.

Appendix F - Mother tongue of all caregivers

Mother Tongue	%	Mother Tongue		
Total Response=973				
(More than 1%)		(Less than 1%, Alphabetical order)		
English	53.8%	Albanian	Ilocano (Filipino)	Poolar
Mandarin	9.0%	Amehavile (Ethiopia)	Ilonggo	Portuguese
Arabic	3.5%	Amharic	Indonesian	Pushto (Pakistan)
Spanish	3.2%	Annuak	Italian	Romanian
Persian (Farsi)	2.0%	Balti	Japanese	Russian
Urdu	1.7%	Bangoli	Kakwa	Saraiki
Cantonese	1.7%	Bari (Sudanese)	Kirundi	Saulteux (Ojibway)
Tagalog (Filipino)	1.6%	Belanda	Kissi	Serbo-Croatian
Cree	1.5%	Bengali	Korean	Shona
Punjabi	1.5%	Bisaya	Krio (Sierra Leone)	Sidamo
French	1.4%	Bosnian	Kuku	Sign Language
Somali	1.2%	Cebuano (Filipino)	Kurdish	Sindhi
		Chinese, NOS (i.e. other dialects)	Kutchi (India)	Swahili
		Creole	Lebanese	Tamil
		Danish	Lengala	Tegrina (Eritrea)
		Dene	Lithuanian	Tegulu
		Dinka (Africa)	Lvgisu	Thai
		Dutch	Malayalam (India)	Tigrigna
		Filipino	Malinke	Turkish
		German	Maranao	Ukrainian
		Ghadi	Menda (Sierra Leone)	Uzbeki
		Greek	Mongolian	Vietnamese
		Gujarati	Ngomba	Vizaya
		Hakka	Nuer (Sudanese)	Welsh
		Harari (Ethiopia)	Oriya	Yoruba
		Hindi	Patwa	
		Hungarian	Polish	