



Quebec's Social and Health Survey Information: Baseline Data Report 2008 (Section 3.1)

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3.1 Families and Health

Table 3.1.1 – Family and non-family households (children of all ages) according to type, Quebec, 1987, 1992-1993 and 1998

	1987	1992-1993	1998	Pop ¹ '000
	%			
Non-family households				
Single persons	19.7	24.9	27.1	804
Other households	4.3	3.7	3.3	97
Total	24.0	28.6	30.4	901
Family households				
Couples without children	24.0	26.2	26.1	772
Two-parent families (intact)	39.5	32.5	29.0	859
Re-constituted families	2.6	3.4	4.0	118
Single-parent families	9.5	8.9	10.4	308
Other families	0.3	0.3**	0.2**	5
Total	76.0	71.4	69.6	2,062

Source: Institut de la statistique du Québec, *Enquête social et de santé* 1998.

1- Corresponds to an estimation of the number of households

** Imprecise estimate, indication only

- The percentage of single person households have increased when 1987, 1992-1993 and 1998 are compared.
- The percentage of two-parent families outweighs other types but has declined from 1987 to 1998.
- The percentage of couples without children and single-parent families has grown.



Table 3.1.2 – Socio-demographic characteristics of parents¹ living with at least one minor according to type of family, male and female heads of households with minors, Quebec, 1998

	Female parent				Male parent			
	Two-parent family	Re-constituted family	Single-parent family	Total	Two-parent family	Re-constituted family	Single-parent family	Total
	%							
Age group								
Less than 18 years	0.1**	0.3**	-	0.1**	0.0**	-	-	0.0**
25-34	3.9	3.9**	9.3**	4.8	1.7*	2.6**	-	1.8*
35-44	33.8	32.3	32.3	33.4	25.2	25.1	20.9*	25.0
45 years and older	14.5	8.2*	14.4	13.8	23.7	22.6	28.1*	23.8
Civil status								
Single	0.1**	-	48.9	8.4	0.1**	-	26.8*	1.2*
Married	77.7	23.1	-	58.5	77.6	22.6	0.7**	67.5
Common law	22.1	76.9	-	24.2	22.4	77.4	0.8**	28.3
Widowed, separated or divorced	0.2**	-	51.1	8.9	0.0**	-	71.8	3.0
Relative scolarity								
Very low	18.7	30.6	26.5	21.3	20.7	24.5	31.0*	21.6
Low	23.9	25.7	20.7	23.5	19.5	21.5	9.5**	19.3
Average	19.8	15.0*	18.9	19.1	15.9	14.4*	17.4**	15.7
High	18.6	15.9*	15.7	17.8	23.3	28.4	26.1	24.1
Very High	19.1	12.8*	18.3	18.2	20.6	11.3*	16.1**	19.2
Employment status								
Employed	61.7	66.6	57.8	61.6	92.4	83.6	80.6	90.8
Student	2.9	5.2**	8.8*	4.2	1.2*	2.4**	6.2**	1.5*
Homemaker	30.9	23.7	27.2	29.5	1.8*	3.9**	5.1**	2.2*
Retired	0.3**	-	0.3**	0.3**	0.5**	2.7**	1.7**	0.8*
Unemployed	4.2	4.5**	5.9*	4.5	4.1	7.4*	6.6**	4.6
Perception								
Comfortable	17.7	6.9**	5.1*	14.3	16.9	14.9*	12.1**	16.5
Sufficient income	65.2	60.2	49.3	61.9	64.0	57.9	51.9	62.8
Poor or very poor	17.1	32.9	45.6	23.8	19.1	27.1	36.1*	20.8

Source: Institut de la statistique du Québec, *Enquête sociale et de santé* 1998.

1- Includes persons who are not parents themselves but who are partners of a parent (reconstituted family only).

* Interpret with caution

** Imprecise estimate, indication only

- In single parent families with a minor, males who are head of the household tend to be older than females who are head of the household. Females who head single parent households are much more likely to report being single compared to males, while males are more likely to be widowed, divorced, or separated.
- Female headed single parent families with a minor are more likely to perceive themselves as poor or very poor when compared to male headed single parent families.

- Females who head a single parent family with a minor are much less likely than males of the same family type to be employed. 57.8% of females claimed to be employed compared to 80.6% of the males.
- A greater proportion of female headed households, including two-parent, re-constituted or single parent family type, report low and very low levels of scolarity compared to male headed households.

Table 3.1.3 – Quality of relations with minors and between partners, male and female parents according to type of family, male and female heads of households with minors, Quebec, 1998

	Female parent				Male parent			
	Two-parent family	Re-constituted family	Single-parent family	Total	Two-parent family	Re-constituted family	Single-parent family	Total
Relations with their own children								
No problem	48.9	35.2*	36.0	45.1	52.8	34.6	41.3*	50.4
Almost no problems or occasional problems	49.6	59.4	59.1	52.4	46.1	60.0	55.4	48.0
Frequent or constant problems	1.5**	5.4**	4.8**	2.5*	1.1**	5.4**	3.3*	0.1**
Relations with step-children								
No problem	-	31.8*	-	-	-	40.9	-	-
Almost no problems or occasional problems	-	39.4	-	-	-	54.7	-	-
Frequent or constant problems	-	28.8*	-	-	-	4.4*	-	-
Indicator of difficulty in relations between partners								
No difficulties	69.3	66.6	-	69.0	72.1	70.3	-	71.8
Minor difficulties	14.1	17.2*	-	14.5	12.6	15.0*	-	12.9
Average difficulties	9.6	8.4**	-	9.4	9.0	9.1**	-	9.0
Severe difficulties	7.0	7.8**	-	7.1	6.3	5.6**	-	6.2

Source: Institut de la statistique du Québec, *Enquête sociale et de santé* 1998.

- * Interpret with caution
 ** Imprecise estimate, indication only

- Both male and female parents of reconstituted families displayed a lower likelihood of reporting no problem with minors and between partners when compared with other family types.
- Reconstituted families were more likely than other family types to report occasional or frequent problems.

Table 3.1.4 – Health indicators of parents of minors according to type of family, both sexes, families with minors, Quebec, 1998

	Two-parent family	Re-constituted family	Single-parent family	Total
	%			
Number of times alcohol consumed¹				
14 or more	6.0	11.8	6.0*	6.6
7-13	12.8	12.6	10.0*	12.5
1-6	36.5	30.8	35.9	35.8
None	31.0	30.8	30.3	30.9
Former drinker or abstinent	13.7	14.1	17.9	14.2
Use of tobacco				
Regular smoker	28.3	53.7	49.0	33.6
Occasional smoker	3.0	1.4**	2.1**	2.7
Former smoker	36.9	24.8	26.9	34.4
Never smoked	31.9	20.0	21.9	29.3
Food insecurity				
Yes	5.7	8.4	21.3	7.8
No	94.3	91.6	78.7	92.2
Indicator of psychological distress				
Low or average	82.5	70.8	67.8	79.5
High	17.5	29.2	32.2	20.5
Perception of state of health				
Excellent, very good or good	94.1	92.3	90.0	93.5
Average or poor	5.9	7.7*	10.0*	6.5
Number of health problems				
No problem	38.5	34.7	26.0	36.6
1 problem	27.8	27.0	22.6	27.1
More than 1 problem	33.8	38.3	51.4	36.3
Consumption of medication²				
None	53.5	50.0	41.5	51.7
1 or 2	37.2	38.4	43.4	38.1
3 or more	9.3	11.7	15.1	10.2

Source: Institut de la statistique du Québec, *Enquête sociale et de santé* 1998.

1- In the course of a seven-day period.

2- In the course of a two-day period.

* Interpret with caution

** Imprecise estimate, indication only

- The parents of minors of re-constituted families were the most likely to report consuming alcohol 14 times or more in a 7 day period when compared with parents of other family types.
- The parents of minors of re-constituted and single-parent families were much more likely to be regular smokers compared to the parents of two-parent families.
- The parents of minors living in single-parent families are much more likely to report food insecurity than the parents of two-parent or re-constituted family types.
- The parents of minors living in re-constituted and single-parent families are much more likely to report high levels of psychological distress than those living in a two-parent family.

- The parents of minors living in single-parent families were more likely to report having more than 1 health problem than parents of other family types. They were also the group reporting the highest consumption rates of medication in a two day period.

Table 3.1.5 – Health indicators of parents of minors according to the sex of the parent and the type of family, male and female parents with minors, Quebec, 1998

	Female parent				Male parent			
	Two-parent family	Re-constituted family	Single-parent family	Total	Two-parent family	Re-constituted family	Single-parent family	Total
	%							
Number of times alcohol consumed¹								
14 or more	2.0	7.5	4.2**	2.9	9.9	15.6*	15.9**	10.8
7-13	8.3	10.1*	10.0*	8.8	17.3	14.7*	10.0**	16.7
1-6	36.5	35.7	33.8	35.9	36.4	25.9	46.7	35.5
None	36.7	31.7	33.3	35.6	25.5	30.2	14.1**	25.7
Former drinker or abstinent								
16.5	16.5	14.9*	18.7	16.7	10.9	13.5*	13.4**	11.3
Use of tobacco								
Regular smoker	26.9	58.3	49.1	34.3	29.5	49.5	47.8	32.8
Occasional smoker	3.0*	0.9**	2.3**	2.7	2.9*	2.0**	1.0**	2.7
Former smoker	35.8	24.3	26.0	32.8	38.0	25.0	32.9*	36.1
Never smoked	34.2	16.5*	22.5	30.3	29.6	23.5	18.4**	28.4
Food insecurity								
Yes	5.7	8.5*	24.0	9.2	5.7	8.5*	8.3**	6.2
No	94.3	91.5	76.0	90.8	94.3	91.5	91.7	93.8
Indicator of psychological distress								
Low or average	79.4	66.6	67.4	75.9	85.4	75.1	70.2	83.5
High	20.6	33.4	32.6	24.1	14.6	24.9	29.8*	16.5
Perception of state of health								
Excellent, very good or good	94.5	92.3	90.1	93.5	93.8	92.5	90.2	93.5
Average or poor	5.5	7.7*	10.0*	6.5	6.2	7.5*	9.8**	6.5
Number of health problems								
No problem	32.7	29.0	24.6	30.9	44.2	40.4	32.9	43.3
1 problem	26.5	23.8	20.9	25.2	29.1	30.3	31.1	29.3
More than 1 problem	40.8	47.3	54.5	43.9	26.7	29.4	36.1	27.4
Consumption of medication²								
None	43.2	39.4	37.4	41.8	63.9	60.7	61.7	63.4
1 or 2	45.3	43.8	45.8	45.2	29.2	32.6	32.2*	29.7
3 or more	11.5	16.8	16.9	13.0	7.0	6.7*	6.1**	6.9

Source: Institut de la statistique du Québec, *Enquête sociale et de santé* 1998.

1- In the course of a seven-day period.

2- In the course of a two-day period.

* Interpret with caution

** Imprecise estimate, indication only

- Female parents of minors are more likely than males to report either none or low levels of alcohol consumption in a seven day period. A greater proportion of males report consuming alcohol seven times or more in a seven day period compared to females.
- Female parents of minors living in a reconstituted family arrangement were more likely to be regular smokers than female parents in other family arrangements. They were also more likely to be regular smokers than male parents when all three family types are considered.
- Female parents of minors living in a single parent family type were much more likely (16-18% more in relative terms) than female parents of two-parent and reconstituted families to report food insecurity. They were also much more likely than male parents of all three family types to report food insecurity.
- Male parents of minors of all three family types reported lower levels of psychological stress than female parents living in the same family arrangements. Reconstituted and single-parent family types are linked with higher levels of psychological stress for both male and female parents of minors when compared with two-parent families.
- While variances in perception of health according to the sex of parents and family type are not great, there is a somewhat greater tendency for the parents of single-parent families to report average or poor health.
- When all three family types are considered, female parents of minors are much more likely (14 to 19% more in relative terms) than male parents to report having more than one health problem. Female parents living in a single-parent family arrangement are more likely than female parents of two-parent families and reconstituted families to report having more than one health problem.
- Female parents of minors tend to consume more medication than male parents.

Table 3.1.6 – Quality of relations with their ex-partners, separated parents according to sex, Quebec, 1998

	Mothers	Fathers	Total
	%		
Climate at separation			
Good or fairly good	58.4	64.9	61.2
Poor or very poor	41.7	35.1	38.8
Contacts with the other parent			
Yes	74.2	82.9	78.0
No	25.8	17.1	22.0
Current climate with the other parent			
Good or fairly good	83.5	83.5	83.5
Poor or very poor	16.5	16.5	16.5
Satisfaction with the financial involvement of the other parent			
Satisfied	48.4	70.7	58.1
Not satisfied	51.6	29.3	41.9

Source: Institut de la statistique du Québec, *Enquête social et de santé* 1998

- Mothers who are separated are more likely than separated Fathers to report a poor climate at separation, no contact with the other parent and significantly greater likelihood of dissatisfaction with financial involvement of the other parent.

Table 3.1.7 – Family and non-family households by mother tongue, Quebec, 1998

	N=	18211	1029	1045	445
		French	English	Other	n/a
Person alone		11.93%	15.26%	11.00%	18.65%
Couple without children		26.90%	25.56%	23.44%	28.09%
Other household		2.56%	3.11%	2.58%	4.04%
Two-parent with children		42.85%	40.52%	49.19%	33.03%
Reconstituted with children		1.34%	1.26%	1.15%	0.00%
Reconstituted without children		4.77%	3.98%	2.58%	5.39%
Single mother		7.18%	7.48%	8.52%	9.66%
Single father		2.02%	2.24%	1.24%	0.00%
Other family		0.44%	0.58%	0.00%	0.00%
		100.00%	100.00%	100.00%	100.00%

Source: Institut de la statistique du Québec, *Enquête social et de santé* 1998.

- Anglophone respondents were (28% in relative terms) more likely to report being a person living alone than Francophones. They were more likely to report being a single mother or single father than Francophone respondents.

Table 3.1.8 – Type of family with minor children by mother tongue, Quebec, 1998

	N=	7748	393	450	132
		French	English	Other	n/a
Two-parent		75.01%	74.55%	81.11%	70.45%
Reconstituted family without common children		8.65%	8.14%	4.44%	11.36%
Reconstituted family with common children		3.10%	3.31%	2.44%	0.00%
Single mother		10.62%	11.70%	11.78%	15.91%
Single father		2.62%	2.29%	0.00%	0.00%
		100.00%	100.00%	100.00%	100.00%

Source: Institut de la statistique du Québec, *Enquête social et de santé* 1998.

- Anglophone and Francophone survey respondents showed a similar pattern of distribution across family types.
- Anglophone respondents exhibited a slightly larger percentage of single mothers with minor children.

Table 3.1.9 – Number of children in families with minor children by mother tongue, Quebec, 1998

	N=	7748	393	450	132
		French	English	Other	n/a
1 child		45.24%	46.82%	45.78%	44.70%
2 children		40.32%	37.40%	32.89%	35.61%
3 children or more		14.44%	15.78%	21.33%	19.70%
		100.00%	100.00%	100.00%	100.00%

Source: Institut de la statistique du Québec, *Enquête social et de santé* 1998.

- Anglophones were more likely (9% in relative terms) than Francophones to report living in families with 3 children or more.

Table 3.1.10 – Age of the youngest child in families with minors by mother tongue, Quebec, 1998

	N=	7748	393	450	132
		French	English	Other	n/a
0-5 years		33.21%	37.66%	40.44%	38.64%
6-14 years		42.63%	42.75%	40.67%	38.64%
15-17 years		24.16%	19.59%	18.89%	22.73%
		100.00%	100.00%	100.00%	100.00%

Source: Institut de la statistique du Québec, *Enquête social et de santé* 1998.

- Anglophone respondents were more likely than Francophones to live in a family where the youngest child is 0-5 years. They are (about 20% in relative terms) less likely to report living in a family where the age of the youngest child is 15-17 years.

Table 3.1.11 – Type of relationship with minor children by mother tongue, Quebec, 1998

	N=	6302	341	226	99
		French	English	Other	n/a
No problem		46.14%	43.70%	58.41%	53.42%
Almost no problem		30.86%	35.78%	23.89%	26.03%
Occasional problem		20.04%	17.30%	15.93%	16.44%
Frequent problem		1.62%	2.05%	0.00%	0.00%
Constant problem		0.71%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%
Refusal		0.62%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%
		100.00%	100.00%	100.00%	100.00%

Source: Institut de la statistique du Québec, *Enquête social et de santé* 1998.

- Anglophones were more likely than Francophones to describe their relationship with minor children as frequently problematic or almost no problem. They were somewhat less likely to claim no problem.

Table 3.1.12 – Divorced or separated from the other parent by mother tongue, Quebec, 1998

	N=	18211	1054	685	99
		French	English	Other	n/a
Yes		7.84%	7.40%	3.36%	4.27%
No		26.41%	24.86%	29.05%	11.91%
Refusal		0.36%	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%
		100.00%	100.00%	100.00%	100.00%

Source: Institut de la statistique du Québec, *Enquête social et de santé* 1998.

- Anglophone respondents were less likely than Francophones to be divorced or separated from the other parent.

Table 3.1.13 – Satisfaction with the financial involvement of the other parent by mother tongue, Quebec, 1998

	N=	1407	74	52	19
		French	English	Other	n/a
Very satisfied		51.67%	41.89%	40.38%	26.32%
More or less satisfied		16.13%	20.27%	13.46%	31.58%
Unsatisfied		25.80%	28.38%	38.46%	26.32%
Unknown		6.40%	9.46%	0.00%	0.00%
		100.00%	100.00%	100.00%	100.00%

Source: Institut de la statistique du Québec, *Enquête social et de santé* 1998.

- Anglophone respondents were less likely (20% in relative terms) than Francophones to report being very satisfied with the financial involvement of the other parent. Proportionally speaking, they were 26% more likely to be satisfied than Francophones and 10% more likely to be unsatisfied.