

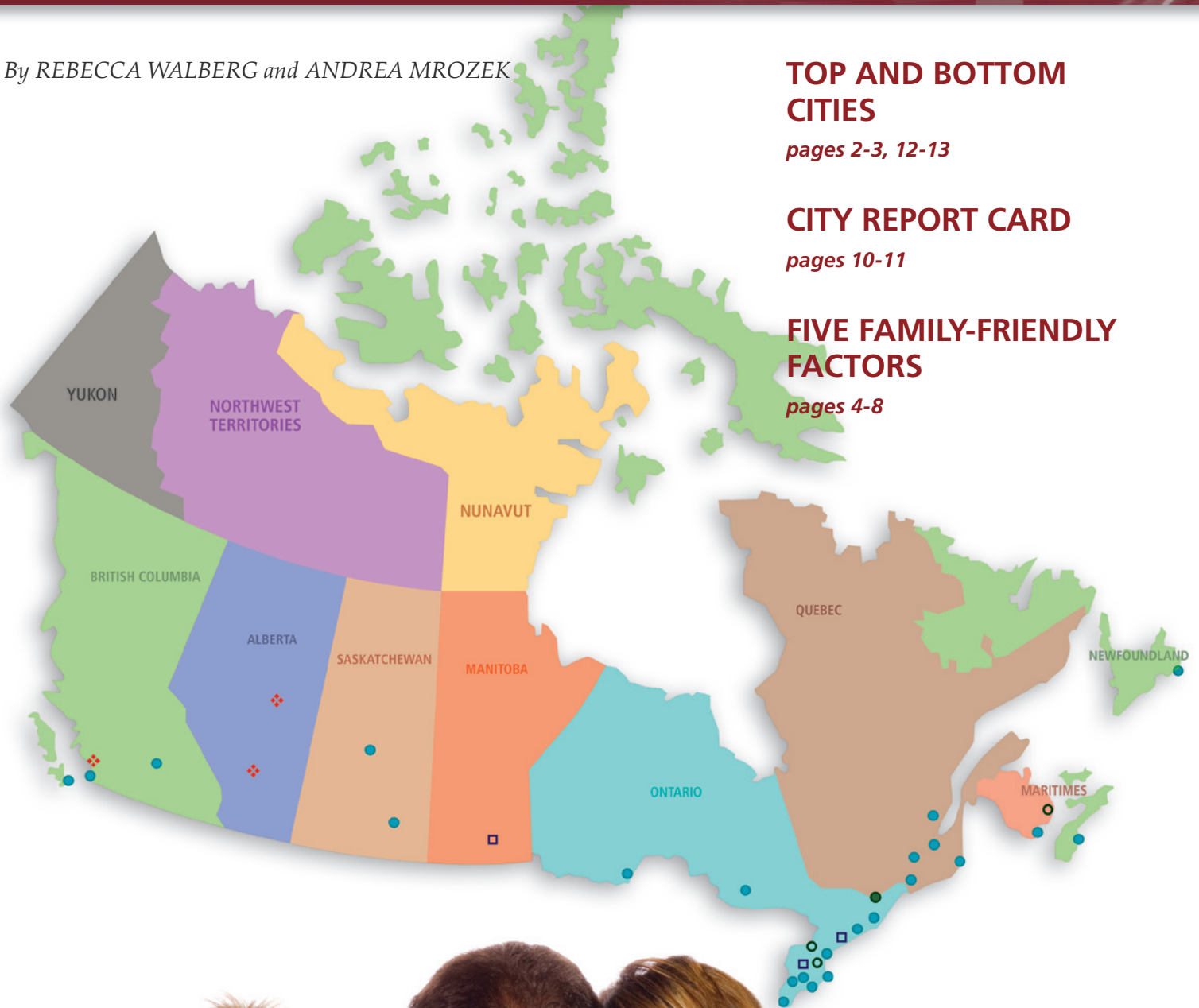
# CANADA'S TOP FAMILY-FRIENDLY CITIES

CANADA IS A GREAT PLACE TO LIVE. BUT WHAT ARE THE BEST CITIES FOR FAMILIES? A NEW REPORT CARD FINDS OUT

**IMFC** INSTITUTE OF MARRIAGE AND FAMILY CANADA

June 2010

By REBECCA WALBERG and ANDREA MROZEK



## TOP AND BOTTOM CITIES

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## ABOUT THE INSTITUTE

The Institute of Marriage and Family Canada (IMFC) was founded in 2005 and exists to conduct, compile and present the latest and most accurate research to ensure that marriage and family-friendly policy are foremost in the minds of Canada's decision makers.

## ABOUT THE AUTHORS

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**Walberg and Mrozek** previously partnered on the June 2009 release of *"Private choices, public costs: How failing families cost us all."*

## **WHY A FAMILY-FRIENDLY CITIES INDEX?**

Canadians are more mobile than ever. Those considering relocation can consult a growing list of indices evaluating the best cities in which to do business, to play sports, to get an education, to experience the arts...the list goes on and on.

This index is about putting all the important family-friendly factors together into one place. Choosing where to raise a family means taking many different factors into consideration.

A good business environment with a solid economy is important, but if the cost of living in a given city is exceptionally high, the advantages of a growing economy are diminished. A strong sense of community is likewise important, but if this is achieved through high tax rates, again, the drawbacks may outweigh the benefits. Day to day costs of housing, food and utilities, gas and transportation make a critical difference, as does the amount of income consumed by governments; there's little benefit for the average Canadian to a thriving community in which few can afford to live.

The freedom of families to make their own choices, close-knit and healthy communities with low crime rates, education options and economic strength — all these and more are part of what makes a place great for a family to live.

A family-friendly city will attract more families, who will contribute to the community themselves. Healthy, thriving families help create great cities as much as a city can ever offer a package of goods to attract families. The two reinforce each other.

We live in an era where a heightened sensitivity to individual rights may lead us to believe the family—stable marriages and healthy kids—matters less. The reality is that healthy marriages are as relevant today as ever, precisely because Canadian statistics show that fewer of us are getting married, and more of us are raising children in common-law unions or as single parents.<sup>1</sup> Families are the heart of our nation, our provinces and our cities and when families break down, our communities and our economy suffer.<sup>2</sup>

# CANADA'S TOP FAMILY-FRIENDLY CITIES

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## Top five family-friendly cities

Calgary, Alberta	A
Edmonton, Alberta	A
Guelph, Ontario	A
Kitchener, Ontario	A
Vancouver, British Columbia	A



## Top 3 small cities

Barrie, Ontario	B+
Guelph, Ontario	A
Moncton, New Brunswick	B+



## Top 3 medium cities

Kitchener, Ontario	A
Oshawa, Ontario	B+
Winnipeg, Manitoba	B+



## Top 3 large cities

Calgary, Alberta	A
Edmonton, Alberta	A
Vancouver, British Columbia	A

## Bottom five family-friendly cities

Saguenay, Quebec	C
Saint John, New Brunswick	C
St. John's, Newfoundland	C
Trois-Rivières, Quebec	C
Thunder Bay, Ontario	C



Map is not to scale

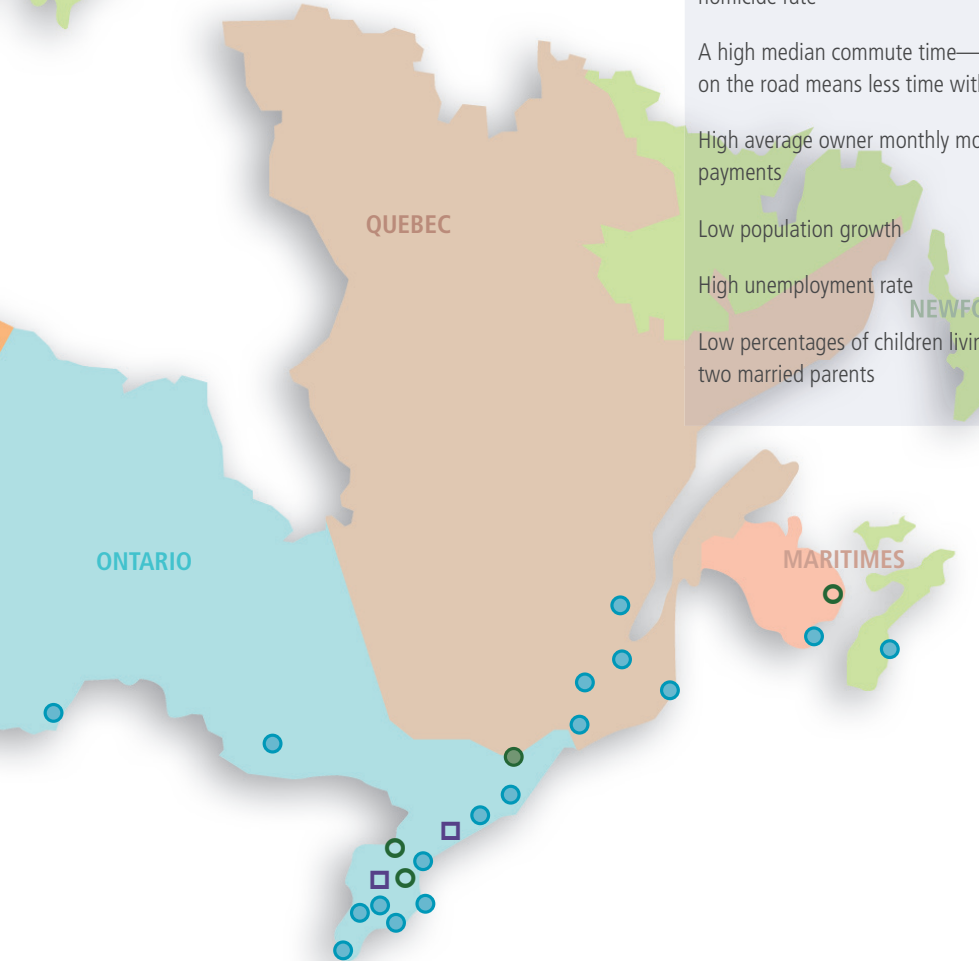


**Outstanding high marks for...**

High population growth	Calgary, Alberta and Barrie, Ontario	A+
Low food and household Consumer Price Index	Winnipeg, Manitoba	A+
Low government transfer payments as a percentage of household income	Calgary, Alberta	A+
A high percentage of seniors who are no longer able to care for themselves living with family	Vancouver, British Columbia and Toronto, Ontario	A+

**Low marks for...**

A low percentage of residents who have lived there five years or more and a high homicide rate	Abbotsford-Mission, British Columbia	F
A high median commute time—more time on the road means less time with family	Oshawa, Ontario	F
High average owner monthly mortgage payments	Toronto, Ontario	F
Low population growth	Saguenay, Quebec	F
High unemployment rate	St. John's, Newfoundland	F
Low percentages of children living with two married parents	Quebec City, Sherbrooke and Trois-Rivières, Quebec	F



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## USING THE INDEX

The family-friendly cities index assesses the strengths and weaknesses of 33 Canadian cities on the following five factors: community feel, education choice, cost of living, economic strength and family independence. Each factor is explained in some detail in the following pages of this report. Cities are given grades of A, B, or C for each indicator, and in exceptional cases, A+ or F. Then, each city gets an overall grade reflecting how well it meets the needs of families when all factors are taken into consideration.

This index might act as a guide for Canadian families facing a move. It might also act as a guide for policy makers. Canada is, from sea to sea, a great place to live and all Canadians can be very proud of how our communities compare with those around the world. That said, if there are areas where cities can make improvements for the benefit of the Canadian family, let this index be a guide.

## WHY 33 CITIES?

The 33 cities were chosen according to Statistics Canada's list of Census Metropolitan Areas. They define a CMA as "a very large urban area (known as the urban core) together with adjacent urban and rural areas that have a high degree of social and economic integration with the urban core. A Metropolitan Area has an urban core population of at least 100,000, based on the previous census."<sup>3</sup> This is one of the least arbitrary ways to choose cities and the most accurate way to collect data. The one drawback is that Prince Edward Island and the Territories are unrepresented in this index, since no cities in the regions meet the CMA criteria.

## THE FIVE FAMILY-FRIENDLY FACTORS

### *1. Community feel*

Gauging a community feel in an index is not easy. A strong sense of community is a public good for families, but so often it comes down to things that can't be measured—an impromptu summer street party, mowing a neighbour's lawn or watching children while someone steps out on an errand.

There are, however, some elements that act as a proxy gauge for community feel.

For one, we have measured the bike paths, parks and community centres available for family use. We've looked at neighbourhood stability, the per cent of residents who have lived in the community for five years or more. We've also looked at the per cent of people who give to charity as indicated in their tax returns, taking this as a proxy for people who care about making the world around them a better place. While we do not know where those charitable donations go, we do know that those who give money to charity are more likely to volunteer their time, vote and participate in public life.<sup>4</sup> Giving money to a charity here or abroad indicates a commitment to building social capital. Another factor in this bucket is the length of daily commutes, based on the understanding that the more time people spend on the road, the less they have for their families and communities.

Finally, included here is the homicide rate per 100,000 inhabitants. A low crime rate allows parents and families to feel safe. While the homicide rate may seem to be an indicator only of violent crime, it is a useful proxy for other crimes, such as gang activity, robbery and drug use. In short, the homicide rate correlates with other crimes that are of grave concern to families.

**Sources:** We called each municipality for parks, bike paths and the number of community centres and then made per capita calculations. The per cent of tax filers who give and the per cent of residents who have lived there for over five years are taken from Census 2006 data. The homicide rate and median commute are taken from figures maintained by Statistics Canada.

## **2. Education choice**

Schooling is of critical importance to families. Giving parents the power to choose which school their child will attend helps to ensure that all children get the education and environment that best suits them. We've quantified the number of schools in each city and then determined how many are public, private or charter schools. Education is a provincial jurisdiction, so variations in funding are consistent within each province. British Columbia, Alberta, Saskatchewan, Manitoba and Quebec all fund school choice while the rest of Canada does not, resulting in a higher rating for the former provinces. Ontario provides limited school choice because they fund Catholic schools but no one else. Therefore, Ontario gets a middling score for this indicator. They provide more choice than provinces that support only public schools but there is still room for improvement.

Every city had some presence of higher learning institutions, be it community colleges or universities.

**Sources:** We contacted the Ministry of Education in each province for the total number of independent, public and other types of schools; also to determine whether school choice is funded.

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### 3. Cost of living

Day to day living expenses consume a significant portion of any family budget. Here we include the Consumer Price Index, which reflects the cost of daily necessities like food and household supplies, utilities and other basics in each city. Also included is the cost of gas, the average rent for a two-bedroom apartment, the rate of home ownership and the average size of monthly mortgage payments.

*Sources:* This data is taken from information collected in the 2006 Census and from Statistics Canada figures on the cost of living and of fuel.

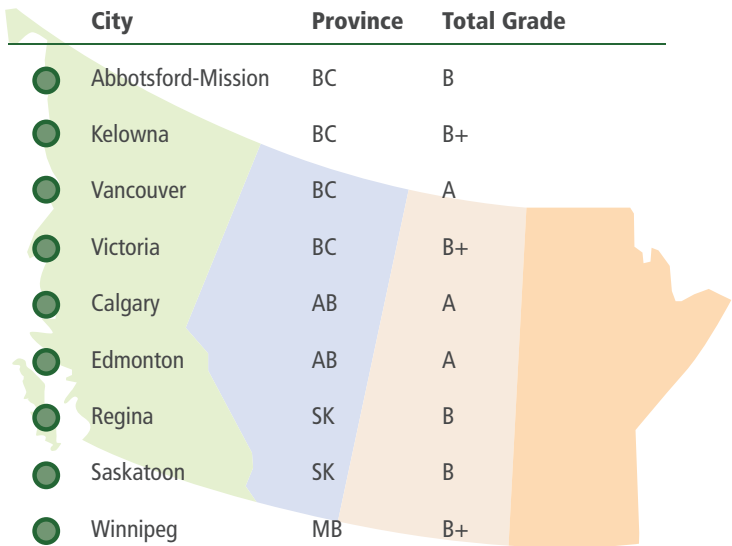
### 4. Economic strength

Economic strength evaluates the ability of a family to make a living in each city. The unemployment rate is included here as it may indicate whether or not finding a job in a particular city will be easier or harder. We include the average tax take for two-parent and single-parent families, understanding that if the government takes more money through taxes, you have less money in your pocket to spend.

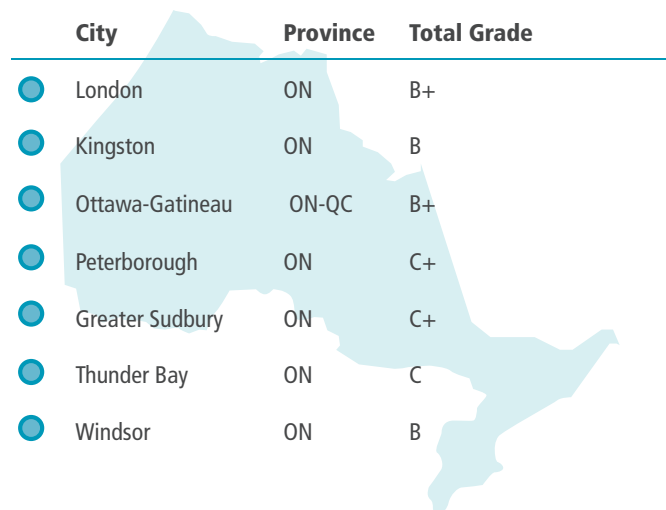
Included in this category are also the government transfer payments to a region, which is indicative of a higher reliance on government in order to get by. This may suggest a less friendly environment toward business, the absence of major employers, limited opportunities in the private sector, or reliance on an industry in decline.

### HOW DID YOUR CITY FARE?

#### THE WEST



#### ONTARIO





Finally, we also look at the population growth rate here, between 2001 and 2006, the most recent data available. Growth is a factor for a positive economy because an expanding population means more services, more stores and more opportunities in general.

*Sources:* The sources for household income through earnings and government transfers are based on 2006 Census data. Information on tax burdens on single and two-parent families is based upon 2008 tax rates in each jurisdiction and we use the unemployment rates maintained by Statistics Canada.

### 5. Family independence

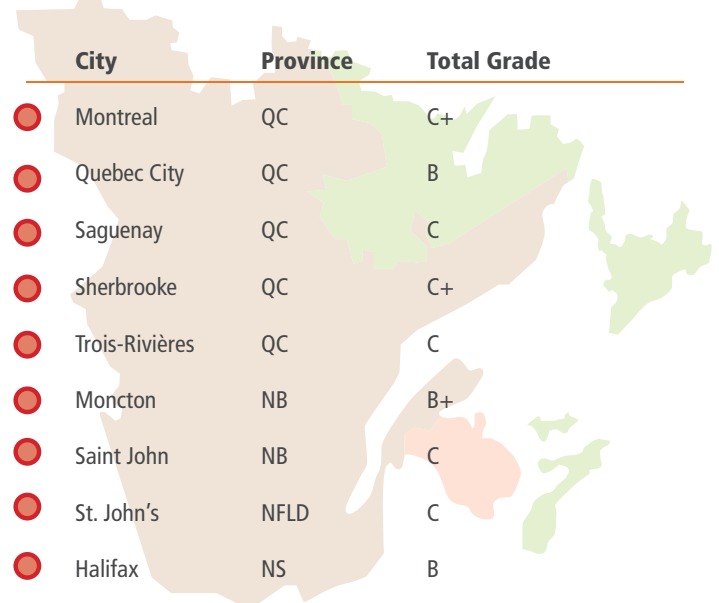
Family independence is a category that includes:

- the proportion of households headed by two married parents
- the proportion of households headed by a single parent
- the per cent of seniors living with family, as opposed to alone or in an institution
- the amount of unpaid time spent caring for children and seniors and carrying out other household tasks.

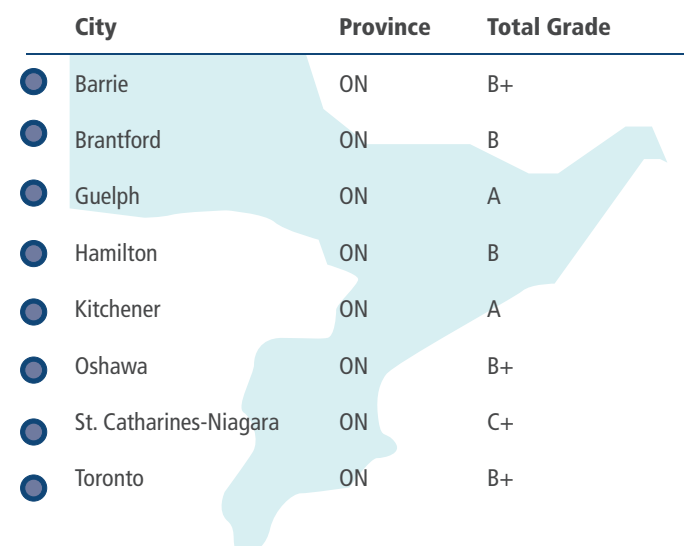
Altogether, this provides a measure of how well families rely on one another and themselves instead of government.

## HOW DID YOUR CITY FARE?

### QUEBEC, THE MARITIMES AND NEWFOUNDLAND



### ONTARIO continued



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By including the proportion of married parents and single-parent families, we are acknowledging an international consensus in the social science literature that family structure matters for children, and that children fare best on a number of indicators, even controlling for socio-economic status, when they have two married parents.<sup>6</sup>

Single-parent families also rely more on state intervention and government subsidies.<sup>7</sup> This form of state intervention increases reliance on something other than the people closest to you, such as parents, grandparents, cousins, aunt and uncles. When the government intervenes too heavily, it may replace and eventually displace the family as the bedrock of our communities. More importantly, the state can never target interventions as effectively as a family might, so for this reason, higher levels of government interference count as decreasing family strength.

Single parents can do an admirable job in raising children, and they deserve community help and support from families. This is not to say that lone-parent homes and alternate family forms are not positive contributors to community. This simply reflects the reality that outcomes for kids are best in two-parent married households. Since those outcomes can have an effect on the community at large, in economic and other factors, it's reasonable to include them in an assessment of how family-friendly each city is.

Living alone or having a poor social network is a health risk, one so severe some social scientists have compared it to the health risks of smoking or obesity.<sup>8</sup> Therefore, if a senior who is no longer to care for him/herself is embedded in family, living with children or grandchildren, we count this toward a family strength.

Quantifying unpaid labour on such tasks as caring for children or seniors also acknowledges those engaged in this important work. Raising children, helping seniors and making connections between the two is the important work of families and part of the web of our communities. Therefore, we count higher hours spent doing this type of work as a positive, a benefit both to the families themselves and to the broader community.

*Sources:* This data is taken from the 2006 Census and from Statistics Canada publications.

## DATA SOURCES AND ANALYSIS

Much of the data for family income, tax levels, and household budgets comes from the 2006 Census. Most other indicators are based on more recent information from Statistics Canada publications, such as cost of gas and consumer price indices, family structure, and commuting distances. The number and type of schools in each community, as well as green space and community centres, are based on information provided by each city or province.

For most indicators, the cut off points between A, B and C grades reflect discontinuities in the data, so that the scores reflect real differences and not arbitrary boundaries. Real outliers have arisen when a city is dramatically above or below the rest of the spectrum and we've used A+ or F to signify that there is something important and different going on in this city for the given indicator.

For example, Abbotsford, British Columbia and Winnipeg, Manitoba both have extremely high homicide rates, for instance, and so earn F for this indicator, while Calgary has an average household income that is significantly higher than anywhere else in the country, and so earns an A+.

Most cities were given an A, B or C for each indicator. To calculate a final percentage, we gave one point per C, two points per B and three points per A. For extremely weak or strong showings, cities were given F, corresponding to zero points, or A+, worth four points. Some cities were unable to provide information on parks, bike paths and green spaces. These cities are indicated in the matrix by an asterisk, and their final scores were pro-rated so their grades were neither helped nor harmed by this omission.

## **A FINAL CONSIDERATION ON FAMILY-FRIENDLY FACTORS**

A final note on the nature of every index you'll ever read: choosing factors for consideration is subjective. Our five factors, carefully considered and backed up by research, are no different. There are also many more factors that might be included. For example, what about the number of church or religious communities? Though this is an important consideration for many families, it's hard to quantify, because merely counting up church or other religious buildings is not an indication of a lively and contributing religious community. Many churches in downtown cores are dwindling in numbers; ten nearly deserted churches provide less social capital and public good than one growing and active congregation. We therefore took charitable contributions as a proxy for people who care for the community around them instead. Naturally, there are thousands of factors that contribute to family friendliness; however, there are limitations on the size and scope of any project.

We are aware of the sometimes subjective nature of this enterprise and look forward to discussing areas of discord. Others may value precisely the opposite of what we consider to be good indicators here, preferring high dependence on government transfers as a sign of redistribution, and lack of school choice as a sign of an assertive government. Readers who share this temperament should simply invert scores accordingly.

## THE FAMILY-FRIENDLY CITIES REPORT CARD

Cities by grade City	Province	Community feel						Education choice		Cost of living		
		Population (rounded to the nearest thousand, 2006 Census)	% tax filers who give	% residents who lived there five years or more	Green space, bike paths, community centres	Homicide rate per 100,000 population	Median commute distance (km)	Range of school choice (public versus independent schools)	Provincial government funds school choice	Cost of gas/L Average 2009	Food and household CPI	Average rent 2-bedroom unit (2008)
Calgary	AB	1,180,000	B	B	A	C	C	A	A	A	B	C
Edmonton	AB	1,124,000	B	B	A	C	B	B	A	A	B	C
Guelph	ON	134,000	A	B	C	A	A	B	B	B	B	B
Kitchener	ON	482,000	A	C	C	A	A	B	B	B	B	B
Vancouver	BC	2,271,000	B	A	B	B	B	A	A	C	B	C
Barrie	ON	188,000	B	C	C	A	C	B	B	B	B	C
Moncton	NB	132,000	B	B	B	A	A	B	C	A	C	A
Oshawa	ON	357,000	B	B	C	B	F	B	B	B	B	B
Ottawa-Gatineau	ON-QC	1,199,000	A	B	A	B	C	B	B	A	B	C
Winnipeg	MB	733,000	A	B	A	F	B	B	A	B	A+	B
Kelowna	BC	180,000	B	A	B	C	A	A	A	C	B	C
Victoria	BC	348,000	A	A	A	B	A	A	A	C	B	C
London	ON	485,000	A	B	B	A	A	B	B	B	B	B
Toronto	ON	5,531,000	B	B	A	B	C	A	B	B	C	C
Regina	SK	207,000	A	B	C	C	A	B	A	B	B	B
Windsor	ON	334,000	B	B	B	B	B	B	B	B	B	B
Abbotsford-Mission	BC	171,000	B	F	C	F	B	B	A	C	B	B
Halifax	NS	375,000	B	A	A	B	B	B	C	B	C	B
Hamilton	ON	732,000	B	B	B	A	C	C	B	B	B	B
Saskatoon	SK	250,000	B	C	C	B	A	B	A	B	B	B
Brantford	ON	137,000	B	C	C	B	A	B	B	B	B	B
Kingston	ON	159,000	B	C	C	A	A	B	B	B	B	B
Quebec City	QC	739,000	B	B	C	B	B	B	A	B	A	A
Peterborough	ON	121,000	B	A	C	A	A	B	B	B	B	B
Montreal	QC	3,751,000	C	B	A	B	C	A	A	B	A	A
Greater Sudbury	ON	165,000	B	B	C	B	B	C	B	B	B	B
Sherbrooke	QC	191,000	B	B	C	A	A	B	A	B	A	A
St. Catharines-Niagara	ON	404,000	B	B	*	B	A	B	B	B	B	B
Saguenay	QC	153,000	B	A	C	A	A	C	A	B	A	A
St. John's	NFLD	177,000	C	B	*	A	A	B	C	B	C	A
Thunder Bay	ON	125,000	B	B	C	A	A	C	B	B	B	B
Saint John	NB	126,000	B	B	B	A	B	C	C	A	C	A
Trois-Rivieres	QC	145,000	C	B	*	A	A	B	A	B	A	A

\* Data unavailable

			Economic strength						Family independence				Total score
% owned housing	Average owner monthly mortgage payment	Average family income	Average income tax take, two-parent families	Average income tax take, single-parent families	Population growth rate (2001 to 2006)	Unemployment rate, for households with children at home	Government transfer payments as a % of household income	% children living with two married parents	% children living with single parent	% seniors living with family	Amount of unpaid time caring for children and seniors and other household tasks		
B	C	A	B	B	A+	A	A+	A	A	B	B	A	
B	B	A	B	B	A	A	A	A	B	B	B	A	
B	C	A	B	B	A	B	A	A	A	B	A	A	
B	C	A	B	B	A	B	A	A	A	B	B	A	
B	C	B	A	A	B	B	A	A	A	A+	C	A	
A	C	B	B	B	A+	B	A	A	A	A	A	B+	
B	A	C	B	A	B	B	B	B	B	B	A	B+	
A	C	A	B	B	A	B	A	A	A	A	A	B+	
B	C	A	B	B	B	B	A	B	B	B	A	B+	
B	A	B	B	A	B	B	B	B	C	C	B	B+	
A	B	B	A	A	A	B	C	B	B	C	B	B+	
B	C	B	A	A	B	A	B	B	C	C	C	B+	
B	B	B	B	B	B	B	B	B	B	C	B	B+	
B	F	A	B	B	A	C	A	A	A	A+	C	B+	
B	B	B	B	A	C	A	A	B	C	C	B	B	
B	B	B	B	B	B	C	B	A	B	B	A	B	
B	B	B	B	B	B	B	B	A	B	B	A	B	
B	B	B	B	B	B	B	B	B	B	B	B	B	
B	C	A	B	B	B	B	B	A	B	B	B	B	
B	B	B	B	A	B	B	A	B	C	C	B	B	
B	B	B	B	B	B	B	C	B	B	B	A	B	
B	B	B	B	B	B	B	B	B	B	C	B	B	
C	A	B	C	C	B	A	B	F	B	C	A	B	
B	B	B	B	B	B	C	C	B	B	C	C	C+	
C	B	B	C	C	B	C	C	C	B	B	B	C+	
B	B	B	B	B	C	B	B	B	B	C	A	C+	
C	A	C	C	C	B	C	C	F	C	C	A	C+	
B	B	B	B	B	B	B	C	B	B	C	C	C+	
B	A	C	C	C	F	C	C	C	B	C	B	C	
B	B	B	C	B	B	F	C	B	B	A	A	C	
B	A	B	B	B	C	C	C	B	C	C	B	C	
B	A	C	B	A	F	C	C	B	C	B	C	C	
C	A	C	C	C	B	B	C	F	C	C	C	C	

# CANADA'S TOP FAMILY-FRIENDLY CITIES

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A NEW REPORT CARD FINDS OUT

## TOP FIVE FAMILY-FRIENDLY CITIES

**Top of the class:** *These five cities received a total score of "A"*

### Where these cities stand out:

Calgary, Alberta	A
Edmonton, Alberta	A
Guelph, Ontario	A
Kitchener, Ontario	A
Vancouver, British Columbia	A

**Calgary** likewise has very high population growth as well as low reliance on government transfers, a high percent of children living with two married parents, a high family income and education choice.

**Edmonton** has a lot of green space and bike paths, as well as doing well in the economic strength and family independence categories.

**Guelph** has a high family income, a high percentage of charitable givers, low commutes and low government transfer rates as well as a growing population.

**Kitchener** received "A"s for charitable giving, a low homicide rate, low commute times, high family income and population growth; also low government transfers and a high level of family independence.

Finally, **Vancouver** has a high per cent of the elderly living with families, also a number of economic strengths and "A"s for education choice.

### Not far behind were:

**Moncton** received "A"s for a low crime rate and short commutes; also for low average rent/home payments and gas prices among others.

**Oshawa** excelled on population growth and family independence — a high percentage of its families are headed by two married parents.

**Ottawa-Gatineau** has a lot of green space, and a high mark for unpaid time devoted to children, seniors and household tasks, which reflects families caring for each other; also low gas prices and high levels of charitable giving.

**Winnipeg** has by far the lowest cost of living in the index; there's also a lot of green space and a high level of charitable giving.

**Barrie** stood out for having a very high rate of population growth.

Cities that had an A+ are clearly ahead of the pack for one indicator. For example, Winnipeg, Manitoba jumped ahead for a very low food and household Consumer Price Index.

(Weather was not a factor under consideration in this report.)

Calgary is the only city with two "A+" grades for population growth and low rates of government transfers.

*Continued on next page*

**BOTTOM FIVE FAMILY-FRIENDLY CITIES**

***Report for extra help:** Canada is across the board a great place to live. But the following cities earned a C grade and should report for some extra help to get back into the B range*

Saguenay, Quebec	C
Saint John, New Brunswick	C
St. John's, Newfoundland	C
Trois-Rivières, Quebec	C
Thunder Bay, Ontario	C

**Why these cities are weaker**

**Thunder Bay** did poorly for low population growth, also a poor economic situation—they have very high levels of dependence upon government.

**Saguenay's** population is contracting and they fare poorly in the economic department as well.

**Trois-Rivières** has very low levels of children living with their married parents.

**Saint John**, like Saguenay, has very low population growth and fares poorly economically.

**St. John's**, likewise, relies heavily on government transfers and has a high unemployment rate.

There is also a collection of Canadian cities in the middle. Neither exceptional, nor terrible, this category is signified by the grade of "C+" or "B". These cities are middle of the road and a closer look at the complete grid on pages 10 and 11 will reveal details of how and why they didn't excel.

**Abbotsford-Mission** is the only city with two failing grades. One is for population stability, reflecting a relatively low number of residents who've lived there for five years or more. The other F is for a high homicide rate, the highest in Canada. A number of "A"s pulled it up in other areas, like low income taxes and high rates of family independence.

Finally, **the five Quebec cities** present a portrait of a province in which family health and behaviours are qualitatively different from the rest of Canada. It's not just the language that changes once you cross the border, it's the approach to life in general. There are precipitously low rates of married parents. Given what social science tells us about the benefits of married parents for kids, this doesn't bode well for the future. Taxes are higher, and a lower percentage of people own their own homes. There are higher government transfer payments to families and low levels of growth, as seen in **Saguenay's** population, which is actually contracting.

On the positive front, **Montreal** receives an "A" for green space, bike paths and community centres, and the homicide rate is low in **Saguenay, Sherbrooke** and **Trois-Rivières**. The daily cost of living, including rent, is universally low, and education choice is present in the province of Quebec. Still, Quebec's cities fell to the bottom in our index.<sup>5</sup>

## Endnotes

- 1 Statistics Canada. (2007, September 12). 2006 Census: Families, marital status, households and dwelling characteristics. Retrieved May 27, 2010 from <http://www.statcan.gc.ca/daily-quotidien/070912/dq070912a-eng.htm>
- 2 This was the thesis, building on a body of international research, as presented in the June 2009 release of *Private choices, public costs*. For more details, see Walberg, R., Mrozek, A. (2009, June). *Private choices, public costs: How failing families cost us all*. Ottawa: Institute of Marriage and Family Canada. Retrieved May 27, 2010 from [http://www.imfcanada.org/article\\_files/Cost%20of%20Family%20Breakdown%20final.pdf](http://www.imfcanada.org/article_files/Cost%20of%20Family%20Breakdown%20final.pdf) For more information on the idea of families helping to create a solid economy, see Crowley, B. (2009). *Fearful Symmetry: The Fall and Rise of Canada's Founding Values*. Toronto: Key Porter Books.
- 3 For a list of the Census Metropolitan Areas see: <http://www40.statcan.ca/z01/cs0007-eng.htm>
- 4 Putnam, R. (2000) *Bowling Alone: The Collapse and Revival of American Community*. New York: Simon & Schuster.
- 5 These results were mirrored in May 2010 when *Maclean's* magazine published the Canadian Council on Learning's "smart city" index. There, they report that Quebec presents "one of the more troubling results" because Laval, Longueuil, Montreal, Sherbrooke, Trois-Rivières and Saguenay fell likewise to the six bottom spots.  
Macdonald, N. (2010, May 31). The smartest cities in Canada. *Maclean's*, pp. 40-44.
- 6 Research shows that homes where fathers are absent, teenagers are more likely to experience negative outcomes, which can have an effect on the broader community. "Teenagers without a dad around are almost twice as likely to be depressed as teenagers from an intact married family. They are more than four times as likely to be expelled from school and three times as likely to repeat a grade. Drug and alcohol abuse is much more common. On top of that, they are also more likely to have sex before they are married—setting the stage for yet another fatherless generation." Rebecca Hagelin quoting Pat Fagan. (2006, June 13). *Life with -- and without -- father*. Heritage Foundation. Retrieved from <http://www.heritage.org/Press/Commentary/ed061206c.cfm>
- 7 Walberg, Mrozek, (2009, June).
- 8 York Cornwell, E. and Waite, L.J. (March 2009). Social disconnectedness, perceived isolation, and health among older adults. *Journal of Health and Social Behaviour*. vol. 50, pp 31-48.

## CANADA'S TOP FAMILY-FRIENDLY CITIES

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