

Child Poverty and Income Inequality in British Columbia

A Status Report

February 2006



Funded by:



Social Development
Canada

Développement social
Canada

Canada

Written by: Steve Kerstetter
Design by: Josephine Watson
Published by: First Call BC Child and Youth Advocacy Coalition
ISBN: 0-9730347-4-2

Contact Information:

First Call BC Child and Youth Advocacy Coalition
L416-4480 Oak Street, Vancouver, BC, Canada V6H 3V4
Tel: 604.875.3629 Toll Free: 1.800.307.1212 Fax: 604.875.3569
Email: info@firstcallbc.org
Web: www.firstcallbc.org

Who is First Call?

FIRST CALL: BC CHLD AND YOUTH ADVOCACY COALITION represents over 65 partner organizations, 25 local child, youth and family networks, and many individuals working together to create greater public awareness of the rights and needs of children and youth in BC. The Coalition advocates for good public policy, legislation and practice to ensure that all children and youth have the opportunities and resources required to achieve their full potential and to participate in the challenge of creating a better society.

Drawing on research evidence and analysis, FIRST CALL has built a broad provincial consensus around the four Keys to Success that children, youth and families need:

- A strong commitment to early childhood development
- Support in transitions from childhood to youth and adulthood
- Increased economic equality
- Safe and caring communities

FIRST CALL is committed to the implementation of the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child. One of the values flowing from the convention is the principle of economic justice:

- Economic justice is based upon ensuring that all families have a standard of living that provides for adequate nutrition, housing, and childcare.
- Economic justice supports healthy physical, emotional, social, and intellectual development, and assures access to health, educational, cultural, leisure, and recreational opportunities.
- Economic justice rests on the creation of an equitable economic base.

FIRST CALL provides local communities and organizations with information, tools and other supports to assist them in their advocacy on behalf of children and youth. Tools include things like election surveys, publications, poverty report cards, videos, e-mail networks, posters, and policy analysis. We are supported in our work by donations and contributions from various levels of government, private foundations, our partner organizations and individuals.

Contact FIRST CALL at:

L416-4480 Oak Street
Vancouver V6H 3V4
Phone: (604) 875-3629
Toll Free in BC: 1-800-307-1212
Fax: (604) 875-3569
E-mail: info@firstcallbc.org
Web site: <http://www.firstcallbc.org>

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This report is the most detailed report on child and family poverty in British Columbia ever published by First Call: the BC Child and Youth Advocacy Coalition. It includes not only province-wide data on poverty, but also data for 25 of the larger population centres in all regions of the province.

Most of the data is from the 2001 census, although there are some comparisons with earlier years as well. Data from the 2006 census will not be available for many months. Our best estimate is that the poverty statistics for BC compiled from the 2006 census will be much the same as the 2001 census figures, perhaps a bit better or a bit worse. This is the result of two competing forces at work: On the one hand, the provincial economy has improved markedly since 2001; On the other hand, provincial government income support programs and most social supports are much weaker than they were in 2001.

Other recent reports have shown no signs of any major breakthroughs in British Columbia - or anywhere else in Canada - in the fight against poverty.

This report uses Statistics Canada's low income cut-offs before income taxes as its measure of poverty. The cut-offs are compared with total family income to determine whether a family is poor or not. Total family income means the cash income of the family unit from all sources, including wages and salaries, other market income and a variety of government transfer payments such as welfare, unemployment insurance, the Canada Child Tax Benefit and BC Family Bonus, and the federal GST credit.

The principal author of the report was Steve Kerstetter. Additional analysis and editorial work was done by Rebecca Siggner and Michael Goldberg of SPARC BC, the Social Planning and Research Council of British Columbia. Design and illustration of the report was done by Josephine Watson of Hakara House Design.

First Call wishes to thank the Canadian Council on Social Development for providing us with special Statistics Canada 2001 census tabulations from its Urban Poverty Project.

This report was funded by the Government of Canada's Social Development Partnerships Program. The opinions and interpretations in the report are those of First Call and do not necessarily reflect the views of the Government of Canada.

Child poverty is a regrettable and painful reality in British Columbia and every other province in Canada. The poverty rates in BC have moved up and down over the years, but we have been unable as a society to break the bonds of poverty for significant numbers of children and their parents.

Children remain poor because their parents remain poor. That may sound like stating the obvious, but it underlines a fundamental paradox in the fight against child poverty. We all say we value children and want to give children the best possible start in life, yet we ignore the needs of parents who are struggling to do their best amid the many demands of parenting in today's busy world.

- We have utterly failed to provide adequate incomes for the poorest of the poor in British Columbia: the children, women and men on welfare.
- We refuse to require that employers pay parents and other adults in the paid labour force a “living wage” that would allow a decent standard of living.
- We have let lone parenthood become a social and humanitarian nightmare, a situation that may eventually come to be seen as the shame of our generation. About nine of every ten lone-parent families living in poverty in BC are headed by women.
- We shy away from public investment in accessible and affordable child care and accessible and affordable housing, perhaps because we believe the politicians who claim that the highest goal of public policy is to avoid spending whenever possible.
- We pride ourselves on our cross-cultural understanding, but we turn our backs when Aboriginal people, people of colour and immigrants to Canada suffer from racism.
- We punish parents of children with disabilities by requiring them to make superhuman efforts to care for their children while maintaining paid employment.

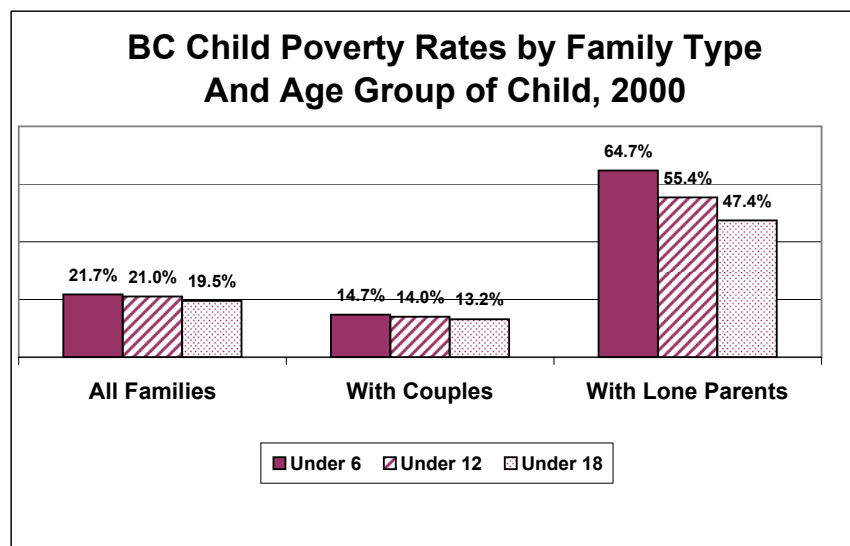
In 1989, the House of Commons voted unanimously to work to end child poverty by the year 2000. Sadly, as 2000 came and went, there was little evidence that the fight against child poverty had been joined in earnest.

This section of the report looks at child and family poverty in British Columbia as a whole and the many “risk factors” for poverty that we have yet to deal with in any reasonable manner. The analysis in this section is done using “economic families.” Economic families is the term Statistics Canada uses to describe people who live in the same household and who are related by blood, marriage or adoption.

We will be featuring the two main types of economic families with children: couples with children and lone parents with children. Couples include traditional husband-wife couples, same-sex couples and persons living in common-law relationships. Lone parents may be either women or men, although the vast majority of poor lone parents are women.

We start with a look at the 156,775 poor BC children under age 18 who were counted in the 2001 census. We also look at the poverty rates for children under 12 and children under 6. Graph A gives the details.

Graph A



Source: Statistics Canada 2001 census data for CCSD Urban Poverty Project

The three bars on the left-hand side of the graph show the poverty rates for children in all families in 2000, the last full calendar year before the 2001 census. The child poverty rate for children under six was 21.7 percent, the rate for children under 12 was 21 percent, and the rate for children under 18 was 19.5 percent.

The pattern is the same in the bars showing children living with couples and children living with lone parents. However, the difference in rates is much more pronounced for children in lone-parent families. The poverty rate for children under six in lone-parent families was 64.7 percent, compared to 55.4 percent for children under 12 and 47.4 percent for children under 18.

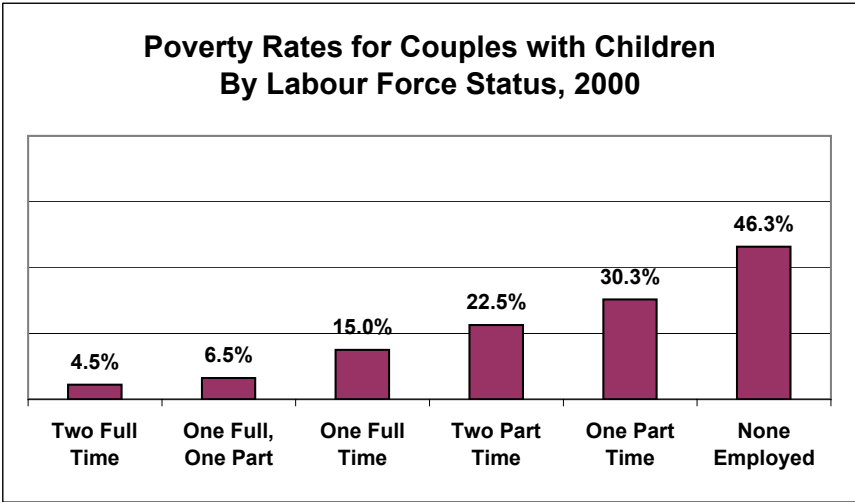
In 2000, there were 85,945 poor children under 18 living with couples and 70,830 living with lone parents. In percentage terms, that was 55 percent of all poor children living with couples and the other 45 percent living with lone parents.

Most parents are participants in the paid labour force, but the participation rates of mothers tend to rise once their youngest children reach school age. If mothers in two-parent households stay at home or work part-time when their children are very young, it means less family income and a greater risk of poverty. The situation is more extreme for lone parents outside the paid labour force, because they normally don't have another breadwinner in the family.

Graphs B and C look at family poverty among couples with children and lone parents according to their labour force status: full-time work of 30 or more hours a week, part-time work, or no work at all outside the home.

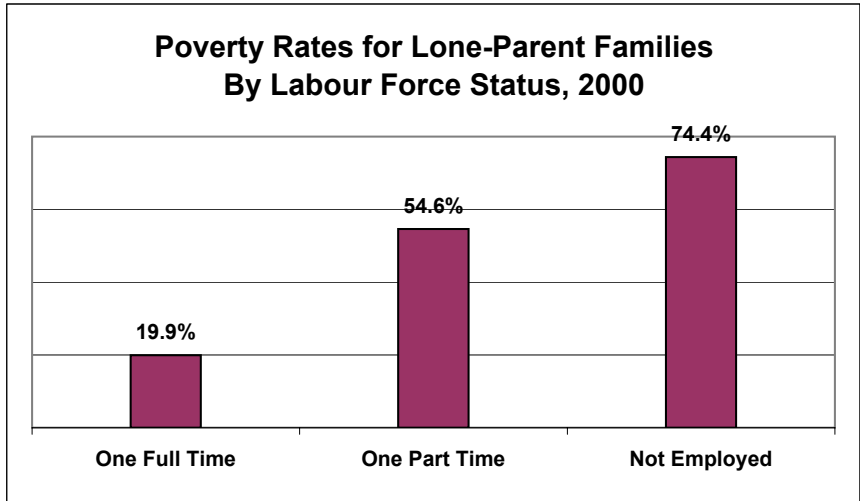
Graph B shows the poverty rates for couples with children and the different combinations of parental work patterns. The poverty rate where both spouses worked full time was only 4.5 percent in 2000, and the rate with one spouse working full time and one working part time was also very low at 6.5 percent. Clearly, the presence of two breadwinners helped keep the wolf away from the door in most two-parent families. The highest poverty rate for couples with children was 46.3 percent and applied to couples where neither spouse worked outside the home in 2000.

Graph B



Source: Statistics Canada 2001 census data for CCSD Urban Poverty Project

Graph C

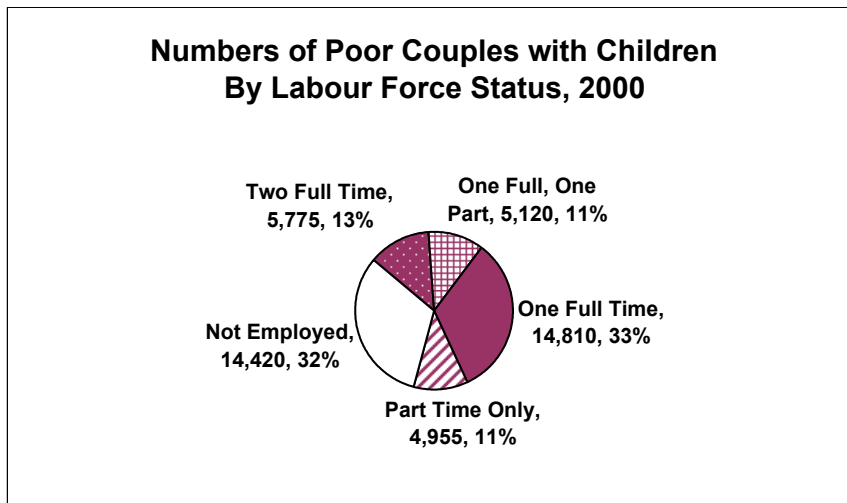


Source: Statistics Canada 2001 census data for CCSD Urban Poverty Project

With only one adult in a lone-parent family, there are only three possibilities when it comes to labour force status, as shown in Graph C. The poverty rate for families where the lone parents worked full time was 19.9 percent in 2000, the rate where lone parents worked part time was 54.6 percent, and the rate for lone parents who did not work outside the home was 74.4 percent.

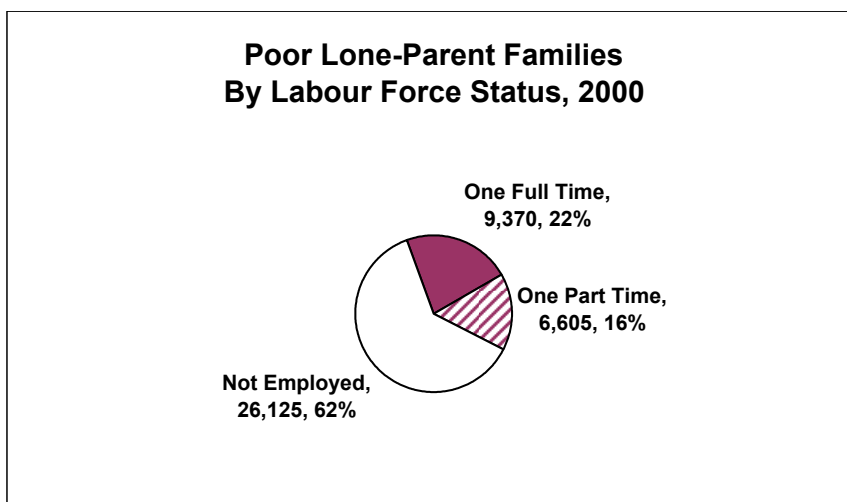
It is also revealing to take a look at the number of poor families with children by labour force status as well as their poverty rates. Graphs D and E give the details.

Graph D



Source: Statistics Canada 2001 census data for CCSD Urban Poverty Project

Graph E



Source: Statistics Canada 2001 census data for CCSD Urban Poverty Project

The pie for couples with children shows 14,420 poor families with no real attachment to the labour force, but most of the other slices show strong attachment. The other pie shows that most lone parents were outside the paid labour force or had only part-time work. Either of those situations in a lone-parent family carries a big risk of living in poverty.

Similar patterns can be seen looking at poor families with children by weeks of work during the year, as in Table 1. The poverty rates for couples with children are low when there are 49 weeks of work or more a year - the equivalent of one full-year job or more. The poverty rates climb sharply for couples when their total weeks of work fall to 25 weeks or less. The same general pattern holds true for lone-parent families.

TABLE 1
POVERTY RATES AND NUMBER OF POOR BC FAMILIES
BY WEEKS OF WORK DURING 2000

Weeks of Work	Couples with Children		Lone Parents	
	Number of Poor Families	Poverty Rate	Number of Poor Families	Poverty Rate
98 weeks plus	315	4.6%	65	8.1%
49-97 weeks	13,755	6.0%	6,620	16.9%
26-48 weeks	10,455	14.1%	6,135	33.9%
1-25 weeks	7,925	37.5%	8,360	67.9%
No work	13,575	59.2%	20,960	87.3%

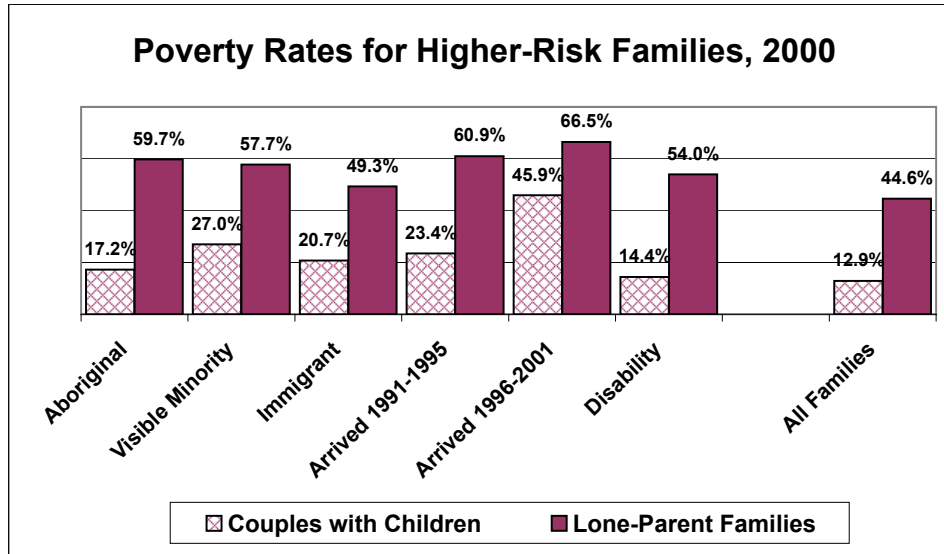
Source: Statistics Canada census data for CCSD Urban Poverty Project

It is worth noting that 6,620 of the lone parents shown in the table were working year round in 2000 - some at more than one regular job - yet they still were unable to avoid poverty.

There are many other risk factors for poverty aside from family type and attachment to the labour force. Among the families with children at greater risk of poverty are those where at least one member of the family – either an adult or a child - is Aboriginal, a member of a visible minority group, a recent immigrant to Canada or has a disability or activity limitation.

Graph F shows the poverty rates for couples with children and lone-parent families where one of these factors comes into play. The set of bars at the far right of the graph gives the overall family poverty rates just by way of comparison.

Graph F



Source: Statistics Canada 2001 census data for CCSD Urban Poverty Project

The poverty rates shown in the graph for families with Aboriginal members are artificially low, because they cover only those families living away from Indian Reserves. Statistics Canada does not include residents of Indian Reserves in any of its reports on poverty.

The statistics for visible minorities include both Canadian-born and immigrant families. Some of the immigrant families may also be members of visible minority groups.

The category for families with at least one immigrant is broken down further to show immigrants who arrived in Canada between 1991 and 1995 and those who arrived between 1996 and the time of the census in 2001. Other studies using Statistics Canada data have shown consistently that recent immigrants have higher poverty rates than immigrants who have been in Canada for relatively long periods of time. They also show an increase in poverty among newly arrived immigrants in recent years. A study published by Statistics Canada entitled *Low Income in Census Metropolitan Areas, 1980-2000* attributed virtually all the increase in poverty in Greater Vancouver between 1990 and 2000 to increasing numbers of new arrivals in the area plus rising poverty rates among those recent immigrants.

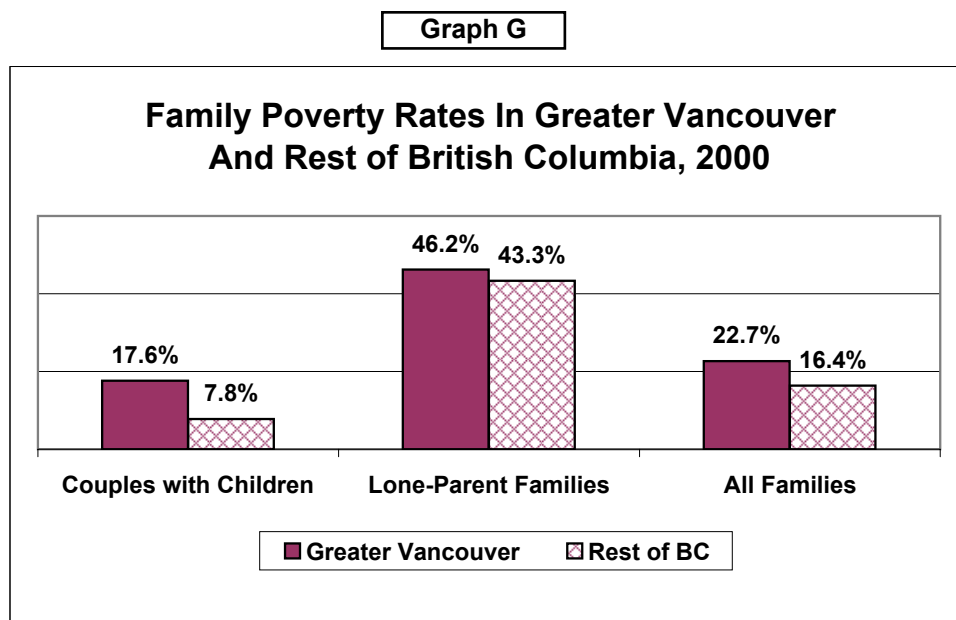
Graph F shows poverty rates ranging from 14.4 percent to 45.9 percent for couples with children where at least one family member falls into a higher-risk category. The poverty rate for all couples with children was 12.9 percent. Poverty rates for lone-parent families ranged from 49.3 percent to 66.5 percent in the higher-risk groups, compared to a poverty rate of 44.6 percent for all lone-parent families.

In an effort to gauge the impact of immigration on family poverty in BC, we compared the poverty rates in Greater Vancouver with the rates in the rest of the province. Statistics Canada calls Greater Vancouver the Vancouver census metropolitan area. It is the area known locally as the Greater Vancouver Regional District.

What we found was that the number of families with children in Greater Vancouver is almost the same as the number of families with children in the rest of the province. Greater Vancouver has fewer families with Aboriginal ties than the rest of the province, but it has many more visible minorities and many more immigrants, including recent immigrants. The number of families with at least one person with a disability or activity limitation is about the same in both areas.

There were important differences in poverty rates as well as numbers for some of the higher-risk families inside and outside Greater Vancouver. The most dramatic differences were in the rates for families with visible minorities and immigrants, which were much higher in Greater Vancouver than in the rest of BC. The rates for families with Aboriginal persons and families with persons with disabilities were much more alike.

Graph G gives an overview of family poverty in Greater Vancouver and the rest of British Columbia.



Source: Statistics Canada 2001 census data for CCSD Urban Poverty Project

The most dramatic difference is shown in the bars for couples with children. The poverty rate in Greater Vancouver was 17.6 percent - or more than twice the poverty rate of 7.8 percent outside Greater Vancouver. The rate for lone-parent families in Greater Vancouver was 46.2 percent, not that much higher than the rate of 43.3 percent elsewhere in the province.

Because there were many more couples with children than lone-parent families, the differential between Greater Vancouver and the rest of the province is also seen in the poverty rates for both types of families combined. The poverty rate for all families with children worked out to 22.7 percent in Greater Vancouver and 16.4 percent in the rest of BC.

Statistics Canada also publishes data on the depth of poverty, or the difference between the poverty line and the average incomes of poor families. Table 2 shows the average depth of poverty in 2000 expressed in negative figures as dollars below the poverty line. The average depth of poverty for all poor couples with children and all poor lone-parent families is shown on the first line of the table, followed by the average depth of poverty for higher-risk groups of both family types.

TABLE 2

**DEPTH OF POVERTY FOR POOR BC FAMILIES WITH CHILDREN,
MEASURED AS DOLLARS BELOW THE POVERTY LINE, 2000**

	Couples with Children	Lone-Parent Families
All Poor Families with Children	-\$15,330	-\$13,566
Aboriginal Identity	-\$19,563	-\$14,948
Visible Minority	-\$15,250	-\$14,329
Immigrant	-\$15,243	-\$13,711
* Arrived 1991-1995	-\$13,518	-\$13,549
* Arrived 1996-2001	-\$17,468	-\$15,217
Disability or Activity Limitation	-\$15,276	-\$13,614

Source: Statistics Canada census data for CCSD Urban Poverty Project

What is shocking about the table is the huge gap between the average incomes of poor families and the poverty line. The typical gap in 2000 was not a few dollars, or a few hundred dollars or even a few thousand dollars. It was many thousands of dollars.

Two groups had extraordinarily high depth of poverty: families with a person of Aboriginal identity and families with an immigrant who arrived after 1996.

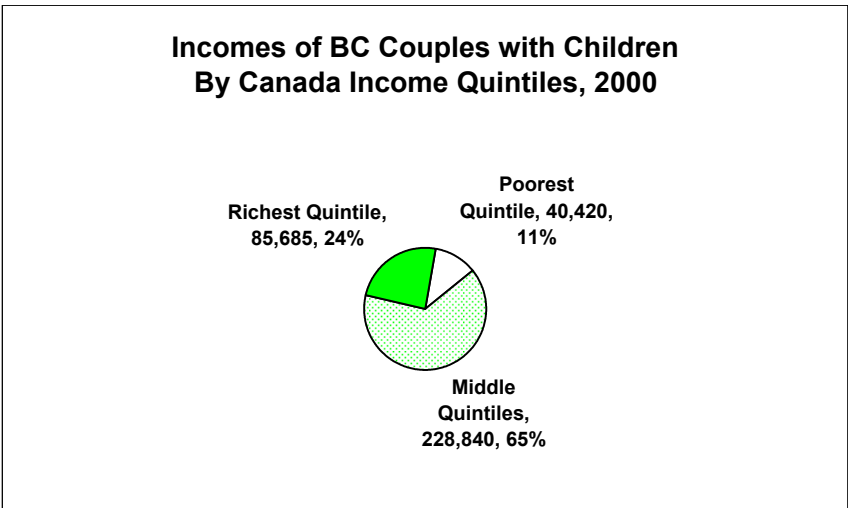
The depth of poverty statistics provide the best rejoinder to critics of the low income cut-offs. A few groups, including the Fraser Institute, argue that the LICOs used by the vast majority of social policy researchers in Canada as poverty lines are far too high. Critics of the LICOs promote much lower poverty lines that by definition produce much lower poverty rates.

What the depth of poverty figures in the table show is that even if the low income cut-offs were \$10,000 lower, many of the families with children in BC who are poor by current standards would still be considered poor.

Finally, Statistics Canada produces data about the distribution of income in the population at large, not just the population of poor people. These data tell us how we as a society slice up the personal income pie in British Columbia. That in turn allows a more informed public debate about what division of income is reasonable and what division is too extreme.

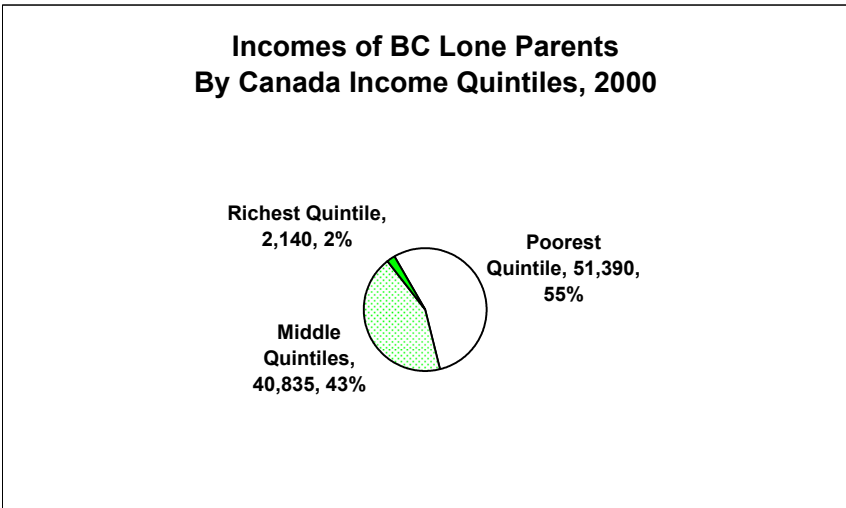
One of the tools used in these studies is the “quintile” or 20-percent slice of the population. In this particular case, we are using quintiles for economic families that were calculated by Statistics Canada for Canada as a whole. We can then compare the incomes of BC couples with children and BC lone-parent families with the incomes of families in general across the country. The results are in Graphs H and I. The three middle quintiles have been combined to make the poorest and richest quintiles easier to see.

Graph H



Source: Statistics Canada 2001 census data for CCSD Urban Poverty Project

Graph I



If the incomes of BC families with children were distributed the same as all families in Canada, the richest and poorest slices of each of the BC pies would also equal 20 percent. Instead, the BC pies show a disproportionately large number of well-to-do couples with children and a disproportionately large number of poor lone-parent families.

Nearly one-quarter of the couples with children were in the richest quintile and had incomes of \$94,581 or more in 2000. The relatively small number of families in the poorest quintile had incomes of \$29,794 or less. The poorest quintile was a rough approximation of couples with children who were living below the poverty line.

The pie for the lone-parent families was vastly different. More than half the families were stuck in the poorest quintile, and only a few made it into the richest quintile.

Poverty rates for families with children vary significantly from one area of British Columbia to another. The same is true for the median incomes of families and the overall distribution of income.

This section of the report begins with a look at families in British Columbia as a whole, followed by thumbnail sketches of each of the province's three census metropolitan areas and 22 census agglomerations. Census metropolitan areas are urban centres with populations of 100,000 or more. In BC, that means the areas in and around Vancouver, Victoria and Abbotsford. Census agglomerations are areas with populations of 10,000 or more.

The unit of analysis in this chapter is the "census family," a unit that is typically made up of parents and children, but not other relatives in the household.

Median income is a good indicator of the financial well-being of the population overall. It marks the divide between the richest and poorest halves of the population. It is a better measure than average income, because figures on average income are often distorted by the very high incomes of the wealthiest people.

Table 3 shows median incomes for all census families in 1990 and 2000 for Canada, British Columbia and each of the 25 BC census areas of 10,000 or more. All the figures are in constant 2000 dollars to remove the effects of inflation. The right-hand column shows the increase or decrease in median income in percentage terms and measures the change in real purchasing power over the decade.

Median family income changed very little in Canada as a whole between 1990 and 2000, but it actually fell in British Columbia from \$56,146 in 1990 to \$54,840 in 2000, a drop of 2.3 percent.

Fourteen of the 25 census areas had median incomes below the provincial total of \$56,146 in 2000, and the other 11 had higher median incomes. Median incomes ranged from a low of \$45,582 in Penticton to \$63,275 in Squamish and \$74,244 in Kitimat.

Between 1990 and 2000, 13 of the census areas suffered a drop in median incomes and 12 of the areas enjoyed an increase. The most significant declines were in Powell River, Prince Rupert, Port Alberni and Campbell River. The largest increases were in Kelowna and Squamish.

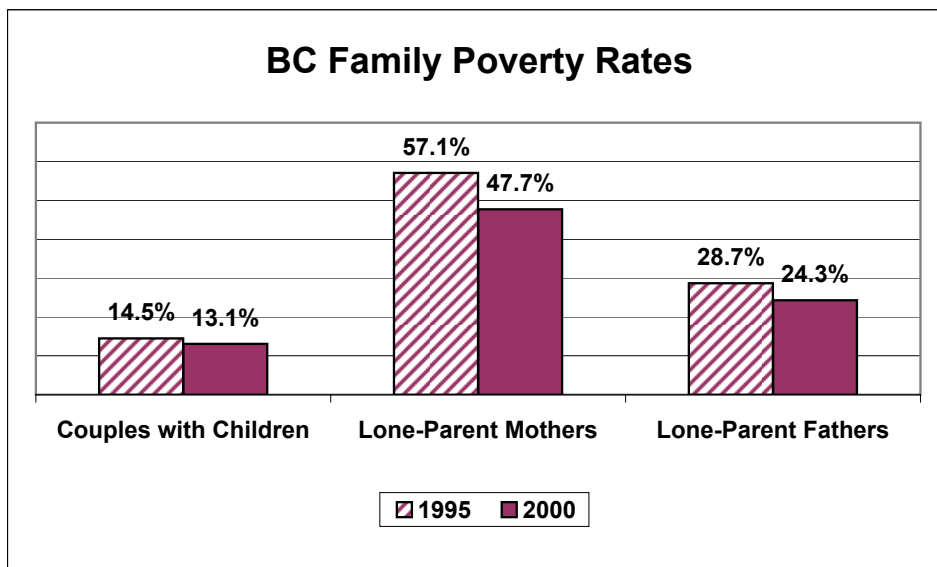
TABLE 3**Median Family Income for all Census families in constant 2000 dollars, 1990 and 2000**

	1990	2000	% Change
Canada	\$54,560	\$55,016	0.8%
British Columbia	\$56,146	\$54,840	-2.3%
Abbotsford	\$52,075	\$51,788	-0.6%
Campbell River	\$60,901	\$55,193	-9.4%
Chilliwack	\$50,090	\$49,529	-1.1%
Courtenay	\$49,835	\$50,067	0.5%
Cranbrook	\$54,630	\$53,622	-1.8%
Dawson Creek	\$52,202	\$54,198	3.8%
Duncan	\$51,882	\$49,881	-3.9%
Fort St. John	\$58,817	\$61,980	5.4%
Kamloops	\$55,982	\$55,608	-0.7%
Kelowna	\$47,678	\$51,136	7.3%
Kitimat	\$73,478	\$74,244	1.0%
Nanaimo	\$51,796	\$50,732	-2.1%
Parksville	\$46,029	\$48,668	5.7%
Penticton	\$44,356	\$45,582	2.8%
Port Alberni	\$57,178	\$51,211	-10.4%
Powell River	\$60,442	\$51,061	-15.5%
Prince George	\$59,768	\$60,927	1.9%
Prince Rupert	\$66,088	\$59,123	-10.5%
Quesnel	\$52,951	\$51,826	-2.1%
Squamish	\$59,479	\$63,275	6.4%
Terrace	\$59,357	\$57,122	-3.8%
Vancouver	\$60,254	\$57,926	-3.9%
Vernon	\$47,431	\$48,308	1.8%
Victoria	\$56,244	\$59,015	4.9%
Williams Lake	\$55,122	\$56,321	2.2%

Source: Statistics Canada Census Highlight Table 1

Poverty rates for families with children generally fell between 1995 and 2000 as the economy rebounded from the recession at the beginning of the 1990s and continued growing. However, there were significant differences by family type. The poverty rates for couples with children were generally low, the poverty rates for families headed by lone-parent fathers were relatively high, and the rates for families headed by lone-parent mothers remained very high in 2000, although not nearly as high as they were in 1995. Graph J gives the details.

Graph J



Among couples with children, the family poverty rate declined slightly from 14.5 percent in 1995 to 13.1 percent in 2000. As we noted in Section I using economic families, there was a striking difference in poverty rates in 2000 between Vancouver and the rest of the province. The same pattern is true using census families. Vancouver had the highest poverty rate by far for couples with children, and all the other 24 large areas of population had significantly lower poverty rates. The poverty rate for couples with children went as low as 3.7 percent in Fort St. John and 5 percent in Squamish.

Among lone-parent mothers and their children, the poverty rate for the province as a whole went from 57.1 percent in 1995 to 47.7 percent in 2000. The significant drop was encouraging, but the rate of 47.7 percent was still intolerably high. In 2000, the poverty rates for families led by lone-parent mothers ranged from 40.2 percent in Kelowna and 41.3 percent in Victoria to 61.1 percent in Campbell River.

Among lone-parent fathers and their children, the poverty rate was down from 28.7 percent in 1995 to 24.3 percent in 2000. The number of poor families led by lone-parent fathers is relatively small, too small to allow reliable calculations in most of the 25 census areas. In the areas where rates were published, the range was from 18.5 percent in Abbotsford to 35 percent in Kamloops.

The overall distribution of income in British Columbia and the rest of Canada remained highly skewed in 2000, with the richest 10 percent of families having the lion's share of income and the poorest 10 percent of families very little.

British Columbia had the worst distribution of family income of any province except Ontario, according to a Statistics Canada census study entitled *Income of Canadian Families*. The average income of the richest 10 percent of BC families in 2000 was \$176,762 and the average income of the poorest 10 percent was \$9,727 - a ratio of 18.2 to one.

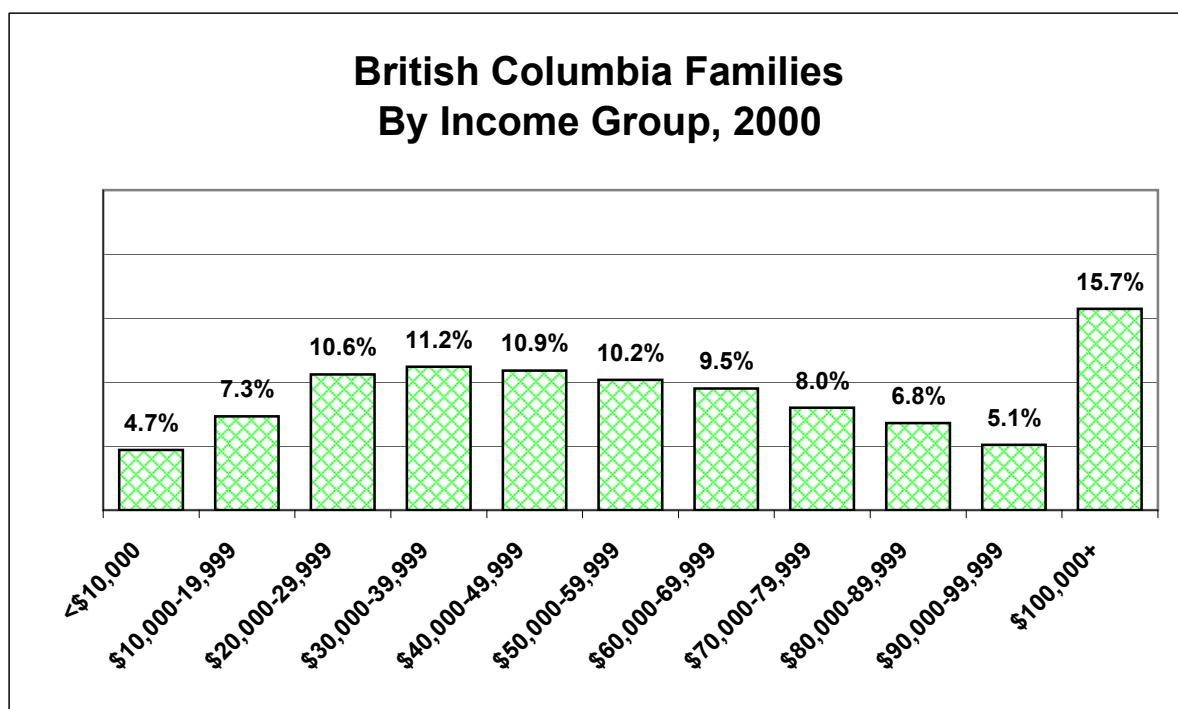
Among major cities in Canada, Vancouver had one of the worst distributions of family income in Canada, second only to Toronto. The average income of the richest 10 percent of Vancouver families was \$205,199 and the average for the poorest 10 percent was \$8,723 - a ratio of 23.5 to one.

Victoria and Abbotsford had a more equitable distribution of family income. In Victoria, the averages were \$164,035 and \$12,676 - a ratio of 12.9 to one. In Abbotsford, the averages were \$145,287 and \$11,052 - a ratio of 13.1 to one.

Statistics Canada does not publish similar data from the census for areas of less than 10,000, but it does publish information on the distribution of income overall for all census metropolitan areas and census agglomerations.

Data are available by income classes starting with the poorest group - income under \$5,000 a year - through the highest group - \$150,000 or more a year. We regrouped the data into slices of \$10,000 each up to a final slice of \$100,000 or more. The results for BC are shown in Graph K. The families in the graph are all families, both with and without children.

Graph K



The dominant pattern in the graph was that of a bell-shaped curve. The percentage of families with incomes under \$10,000 was very small. The percentage rose to 11.2 percent of families with incomes of \$30,000 to \$40,000 and then began tapering off as incomes kept rising. The big break in the overall pattern came at family incomes of \$100,000 or more and appeared in the graph as a bar taller than any other. In the province as a whole, 15.7 percent of families were in this income class in 2000.

The same general pattern was found in Vancouver, Victoria, Kamloops, Prince George, Terrace, Cranbrook and Campbell River. The most notable difference among these areas was the size of the group \$100,000 and up. In Vancouver, the group covered 19.1 percent of all families. In Campbell River, it covered only 13 percent.

A second common pattern was found in nine other areas: Abbotsford, Chilliwack, Courtenay, Duncan, Kelowna, Nanaimo, Parksville, Powell River and Vernon. Families in these areas were much more likely to have incomes in the ranges between \$20,000 and \$60,000. The proportion of families \$100,000 and up was much smaller than in the first group.

That leaves nine other census agglomerations with significant variations in income that didn't clearly fit either of the two other patterns. In Penticton, for example, the largest single group – 17.6 percent of all families - was the income group \$20,000 to \$30,000. In Kitimat, an astounding 26.4 percent of all families were in the income group \$100,000 and up.

The pages that follow give an overview of median incomes, poverty rates and income distributions listed alphabetically for each of the 25 census areas in BC with populations of 10,000 or more, followed by information on British Columbia as a whole. There is one page for each area to make it easier to read and easier to share with others. The data came from the Statistics Canada census tables listed at the end of this report.

Abbotsford

The Abbotsford census metropolitan area is made up of the City of Abbotsford, the District Municipality of Mission, the Matsqui Main and Upper Sumas Indian Reserves and Fraser Valley regional district electoral area H. The population in 2001 was 147,370.

Poverty Rates: The poverty rates for couples with children and lone-parent fathers were well below the BC average in 2000. The rate for lone-parent mothers was the same as the average.

Income Distribution: The distribution of family incomes was higher in the income ranges \$20,000 to \$60,000 than in the province as a whole. It was lower in the income range of \$100,000 and up.

Median Family Incomes, 2000: Median incomes for all families and two-earner couples were lower than the provincial averages.

All Census Families \$51,788

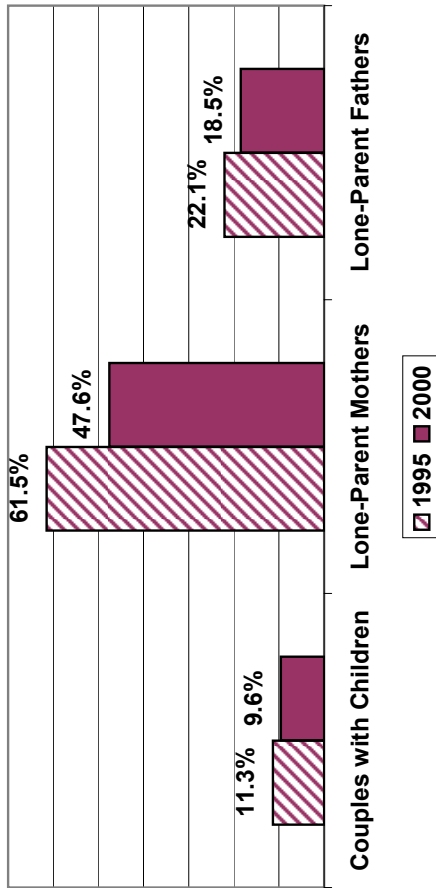
Couples with Children under 18:

Two Earners \$67,912
 One Earner \$49,966
 No Earner \$15,242

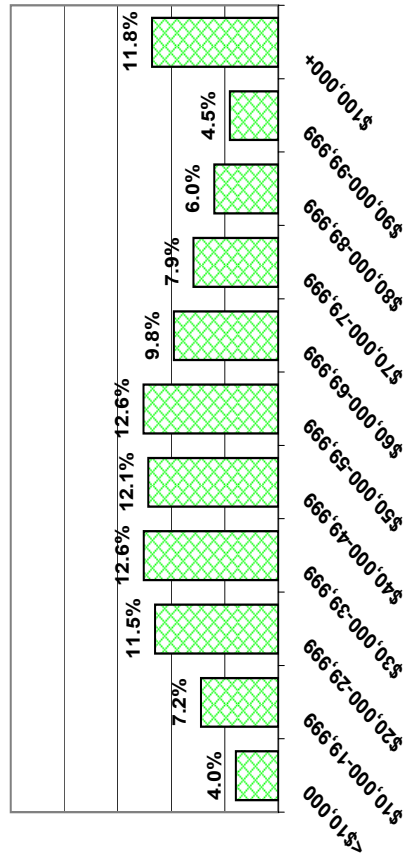
Lone-Parent Families:

One Earner \$33,216
 No Earner \$14,042

Abbotsford Family Poverty Rates



Abbotsford Families By Income Group, 2000



Campbell River

The Campbell River census agglomeration is made up of the District Municipality of Campbell River, the Campbell River and Quinsam Indian Reserves and Comox-Strathcona regional district electoral area D. The population in 2001 was 33,872.

Poverty Rates: The poverty rate for couples with children was lower than the BC average in 2000, but the rates for lone-parent mothers and lone-parent fathers were higher than the averages.

Income Distribution: The distribution of family incomes was similar to the distribution for the province as a whole.

Median Family Incomes, 2000: Median incomes were not far from the provincial averages.

All Census Families \$55,193

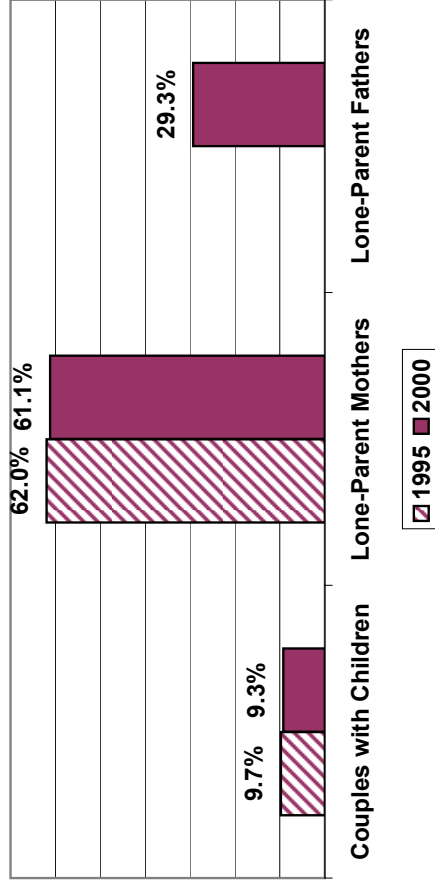
Couples with Children under 18:

Two Earners \$72,308
 One Earner \$53,264
 No Earner \$17,674

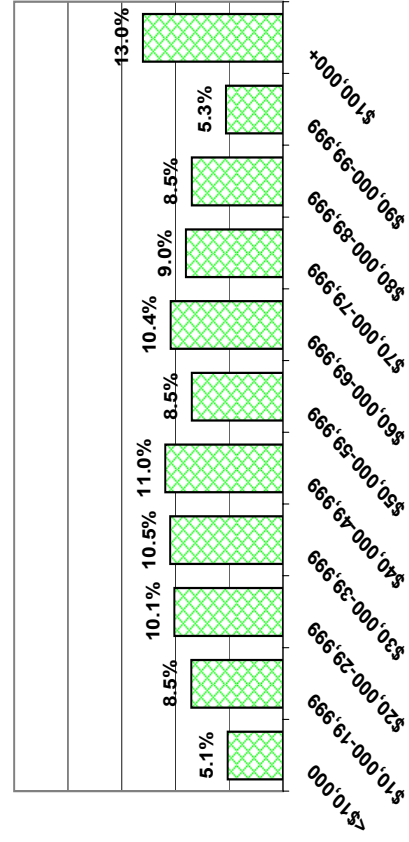
Lone-Parent Families:

One Earner \$29,134
 No Earner \$10,498

Campbell River Family Poverty Rates



Campbell River Families By Income Group, 2000



Chilliwack

The Chilliwack census agglomeration is made up of the City of Chilliwack, 16 Indian Reserves and Fraser Valley regional district electoral areas D and E. The population in 2001 was 69,776.

Poverty Rates: The poverty rate for couples with children was well below the BC average in 2000, but the rates for lone-parent mothers and lone-parent fathers were higher than the BC averages.

Income Distribution: The distribution of family incomes was higher in the income ranges \$20,000 to \$60,000 than in the province as a whole. It was lower in the income range \$100,000 and up.

Median Family Incomes, 2000: Median incomes for all families and families with earners were not far from the provincial averages.

All Census Families \$49,529

Couples with Children under 18:

Two Earners \$69,819

One Earner \$46,077

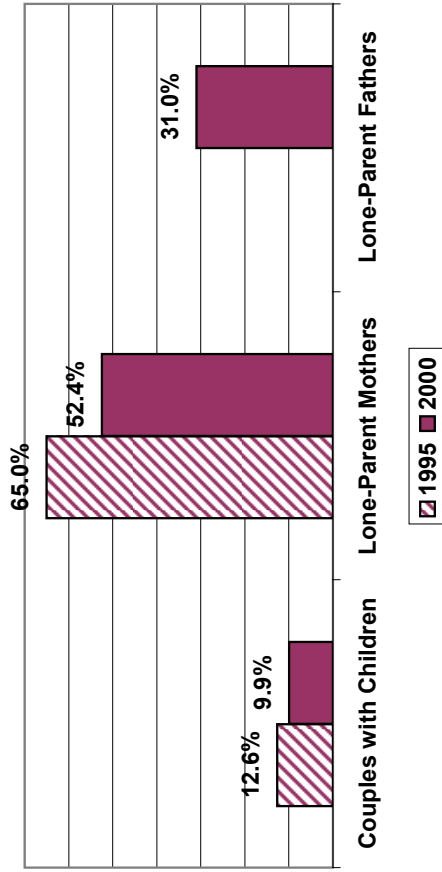
No Earner \$17,868

Lone-Parent Families:

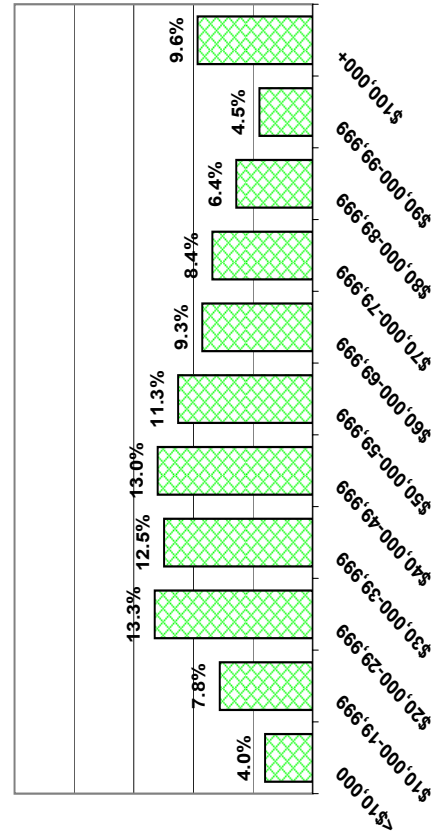
One Earner \$30,404

No Earner \$13,802

Chilliwack Family Poverty Rates



Chilliwack Families By Income Group, 2000



Courtenay

The Courtenay census agglomeration is made up of the City of Courtenay, the Town of Comox, the Village of Cumberland, the Comox and Pentledge Indian Reserves and Comox-Strathcona regional district electoral areas A, B and K. The population in 2001 was 47,051.

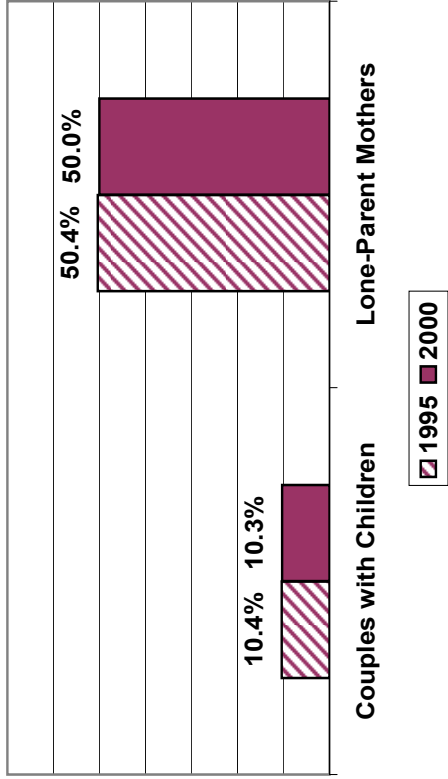
Poverty Rates: The poverty rate for couples with children was lower than the BC average in 2000, and the rate for lone-parent mothers was a bit higher than the average. The sample size of lone-parent fathers was too small to produce a reliable poverty rate.

Income Distribution: The distribution of family incomes was higher in the income ranges \$20,000 to \$60,000 than in the province as a whole. It was lower for the group \$100,000 and up.

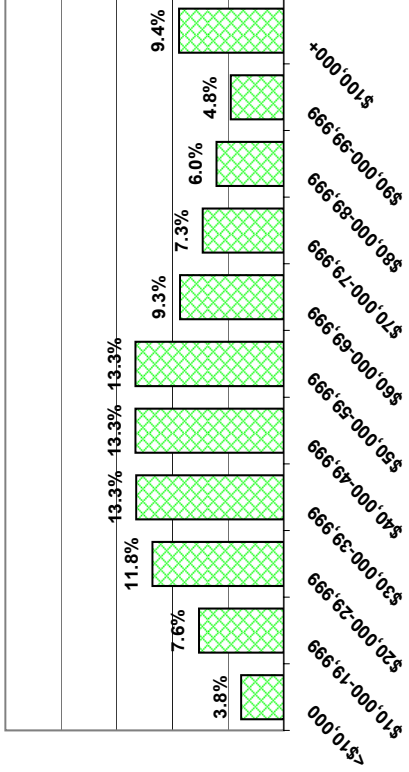
Median Family Incomes, 2000: Median incomes were lower than the provincial averages for two-earner couples with children and one-earner lone parents.

All Census Families	\$50,067
Couples with Children under 18:	
Two Earners	\$65,498
One Earner	\$49,198
No Earner	\$17,674
Lone-Parent Families:	
One Earner	\$26,673
No Earner	\$13,323

Courtenay Family Poverty Rates



Courtenay Families By Income Group, 2000



Cranbrook

The Cranbrook census agglomeration is made up of the City of Cranbrook, the Cassimayooks and Isidore's Ranch Indian Reserves and East Kootenay regional district electoral area C. The population in 2001 was 24,275

Poverty Rates: The poverty rate for couples with children was about two-thirds the BC average in 2000, but the rate for lone-parent mothers was a bit higher than the average. The sample size of lone-parent fathers was too small to produce a reliable poverty rate.

Income Distribution: The distribution of family incomes was similar to the distribution for the province as a whole.

Median Family Incomes, 2000: Median incomes were not far from the provincial averages.

All Census Families \$53,622

Couples with Children under 18:

Two Earners \$70,333

One Earner \$46,331

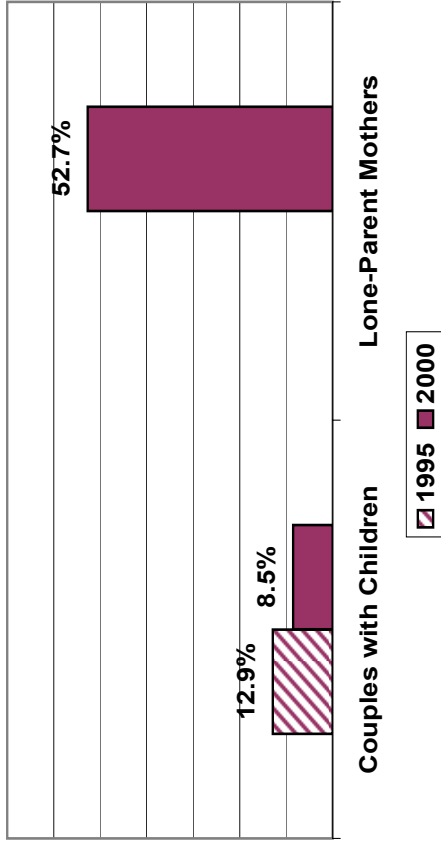
No Earner \$21,889

Lone-Parent Families:

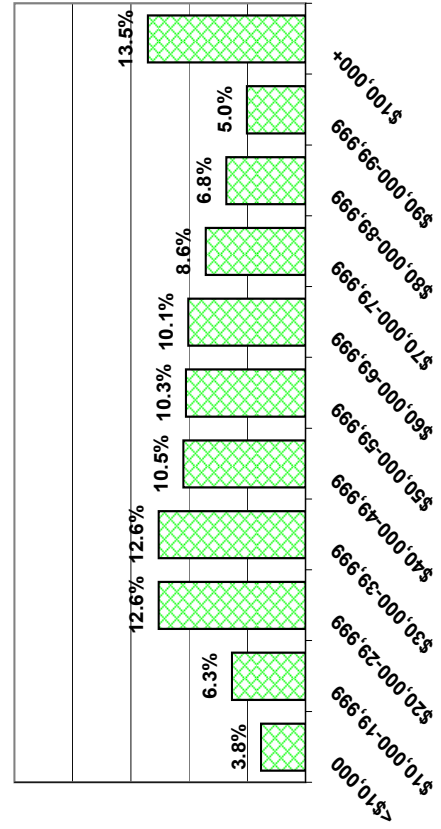
One Earner \$28,458

No Earner \$16,378

Cranbrook Family Poverty Rates



Cranbrook Families By Income Group, 2000



Dawson Creek

The Dawson Creek census agglomeration is made up of the City of Dawson Creek, the Village of Pouce Coupe and the Peace River regional district electoral area D. The population in 2001 was 17,444.

Poverty Rates: The poverty rate for couples with children was less than two-thirds of the BC average in 2000. The sample size of lone-parent mothers and fathers was too small to produce reliable poverty rates.

Income Distribution: The distribution of family incomes was more erratic than the distribution for the province as a whole.

Median Family Incomes, 2000: Median incomes were not far from the provincial averages.

All Census Families \$54,198

Couples with Children under 18:

Two Earners \$72,772

One Earner \$53,096

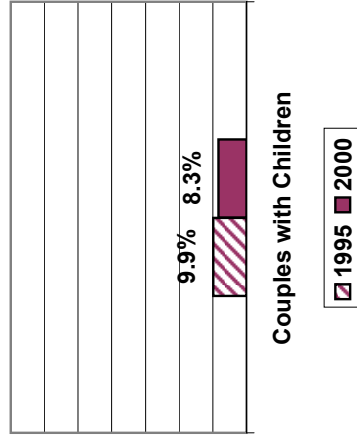
No Earner \$19,927

Lone-Parent Families:

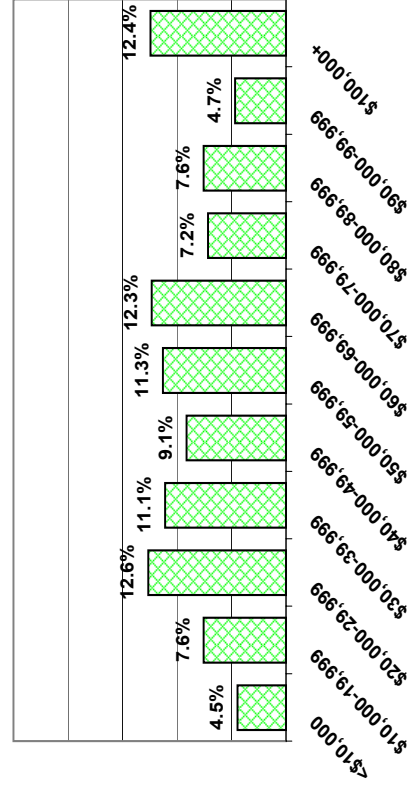
One Earner \$29,962

No Earner \$16,378

Dawson Creek Family Poverty Rates



Dawson Creek Families By Income Group, 2000



Duncan

The Duncan census agglomeration is made up of the City of Duncan, the District Municipality of North Cowichan, seven Indian Reserves and Cowichan Valley regional district electoral areas D and E. The population in 2001 was 38,813.

Poverty Rates: The poverty rate for couples with children was a bit lower than the BC average in 2000, and the rate for lone-parent mothers was a bit higher. The sample size of lone-parent fathers was too small to produce a reliable poverty rate.

Income Distribution: The income group of \$100,000 and up was smaller than in the province as a whole.

Median Family Incomes, 2000: Median incomes for all families and families with earnings were lower than the provincial averages.

All Census Families \$49,881

Couples with Children under 18:

Two Earners \$67,728

One Earner \$46,998

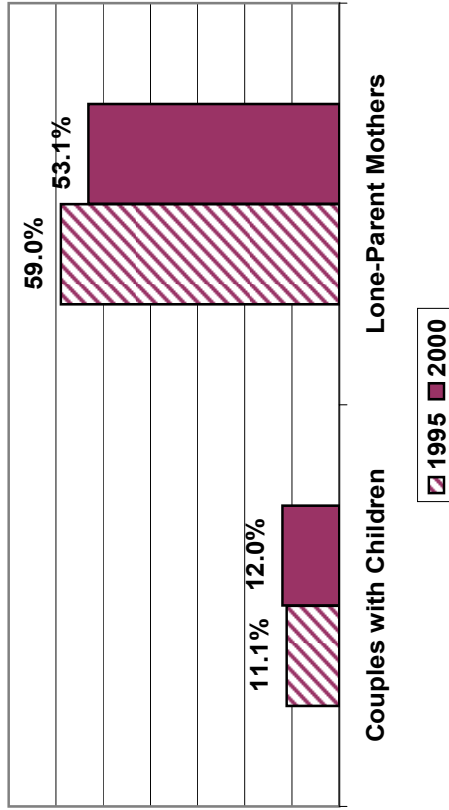
No Earner \$16,597

Lone-Parent Families:

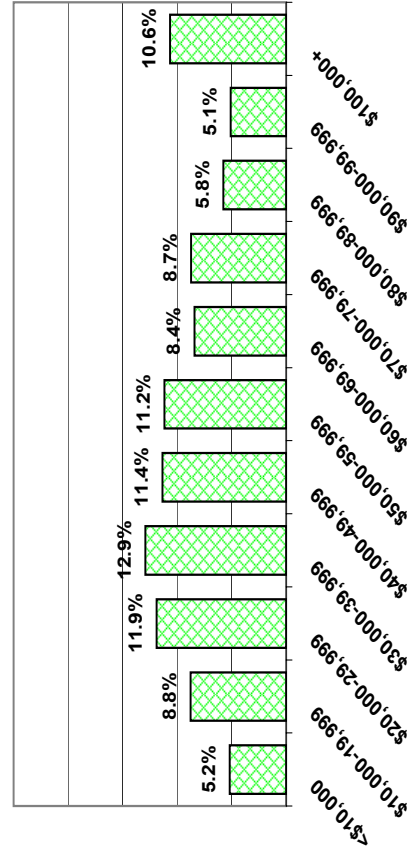
One Earner \$27,157

No Earner \$13,008

Duncan Family Poverty Rates



Duncan Families By Income Group, 2000



Fort St. John

The Fort St. John census agglomeration is made up of the City of Fort St. John. The population in 2001 was 16,034.

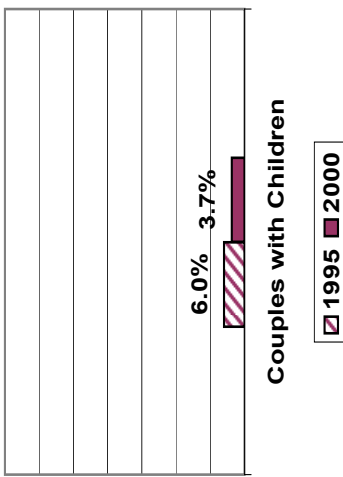
Poverty Rates: The poverty rate for couples with children was less than one-third of the BC average in 2000. The sample size of lone-parent mothers and fathers was too small to produce reliable poverty rates.

Income Distribution: The distribution of family incomes was higher than in the province as a whole in the income groups of \$80,000 and up.

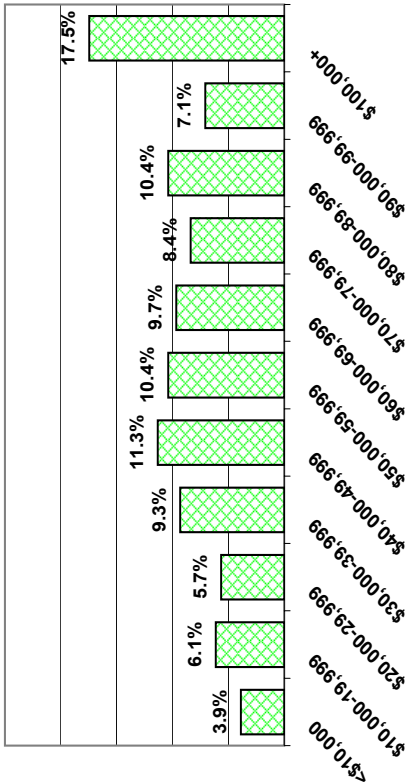
Median Family Incomes, 2000: Median incomes for all families and one-earner couples with children were much higher than the provincial averages. Sample sizes for families with no earners were too small to be reliable.

Census Families	\$61,980
Couples with Children under 18:	
Two Earners	\$72,590
One Earner	\$60,035
No Earner	-----
Lone-Parent Families:	
One Earner	\$32,587
No Earner	-----

Fort St. John Family Poverty Rates



Fort St. John Families By Income Group, 2000



Kamloops

The Kamloops census agglomeration is made up of the City of Kamloops, the District Municipality of Logan Lake, the Kamloops, Neskonlith, Sahhalkum and Whispering Pines Indian Reserves and Thompson-Nicola regional district electoral areas J and P. The population in 2001 was 86,491.

Poverty Rates: The poverty rate for couples with children was well below the BC average in 2000, the rate for lone-parent mothers was just above the average, and the rate for lone-parent fathers was well above the average.

Income Distribution: The distribution of family incomes was similar to the distribution for the province as a whole.

Median Family Incomes, 2000: Median incomes were not far from the provincial averages.

All Census Families \$55,609

Couples with Children under 18:

Two Earners \$72,298

One Earner \$47,308

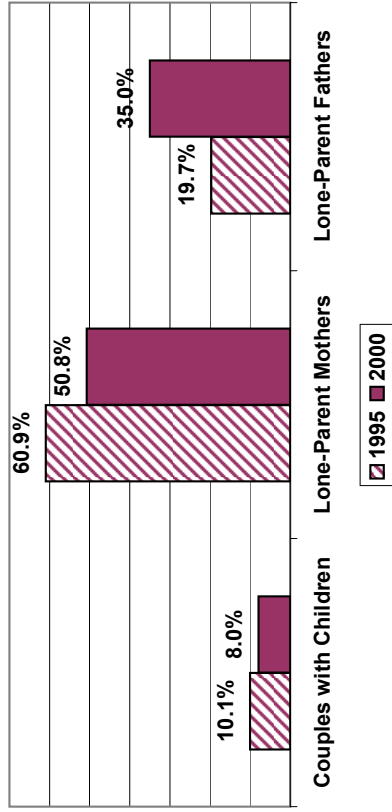
No Earner \$18,108

Lone-Parent Families:

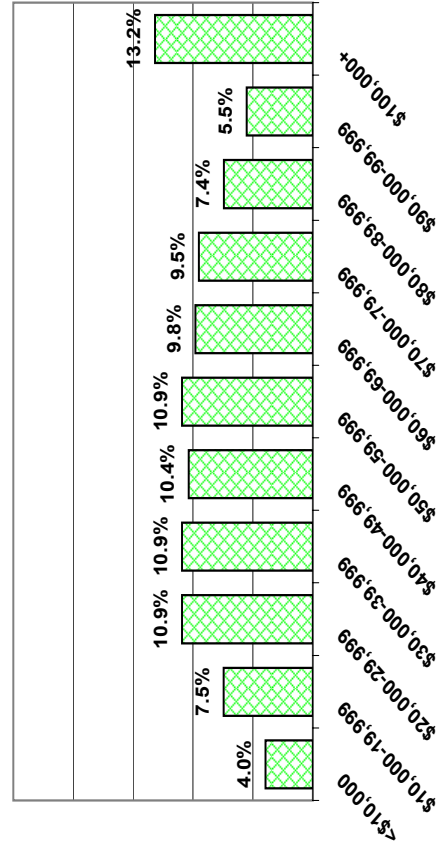
One Earner \$30,790

No Earner \$14,168

Kamloops Family Poverty Rates



Kamloops Families By Income Group, 2000



Kelowna

The Kelowna census agglomeration is made up of the City of Kelowna, the District Municipalities of Lake Country and Peachland, the Duck Lake and Tsinstikeptum Indian Reserves and Central Okanagan regional district electoral areas G, H and I. The population in 2001 was 147,739.

Poverty Rates: The poverty rates for all three family types with children were below the BC average in 2000, and the rate for couples with children was well below average.

Income Distribution: The distribution of family incomes was higher in the income ranges \$20,000 to \$60,000 than in the province as a whole. It was lower in the income range of \$100,000 and up.

Median Family Incomes, 2000: Median incomes were not far from the provincial averages.

All Census Families \$51,136

Couples with Children under 18:

Two Earners \$68,522

One Earner \$47,308

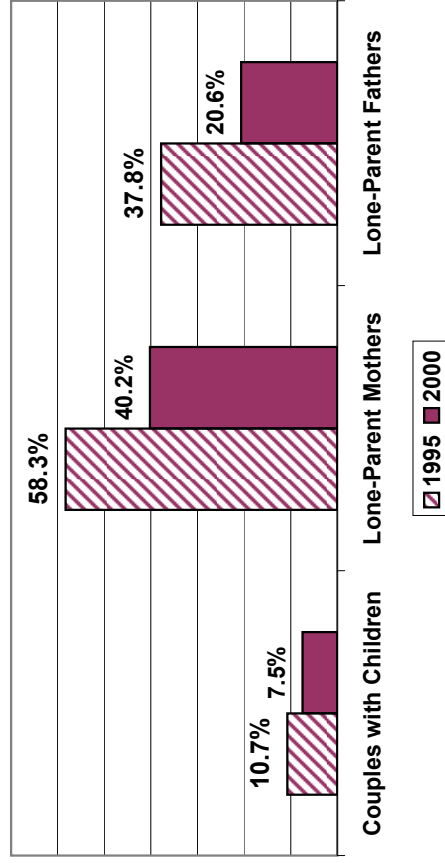
No Earner \$18,976

Lone-Parent Families:

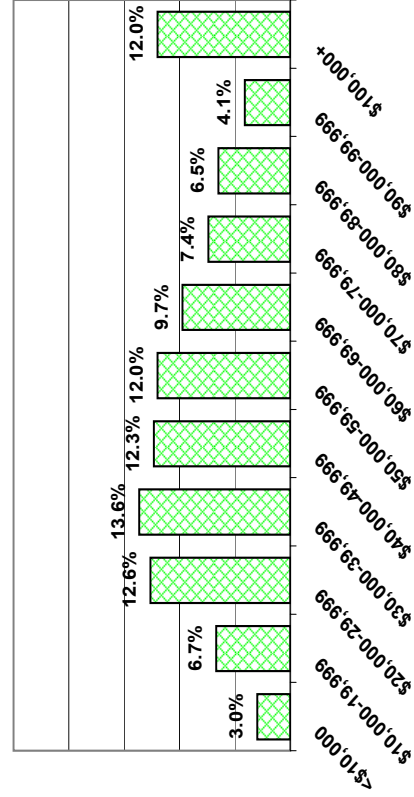
One Earner \$32,486

No Earner \$13,322

Kelowna Family Poverty Rates



Kelowna Families By Income Group, 2000



Kitimat

The Kitimat census agglomeration is made up of the District Municipality of Kitimat. The population in 2001 was 10,285.

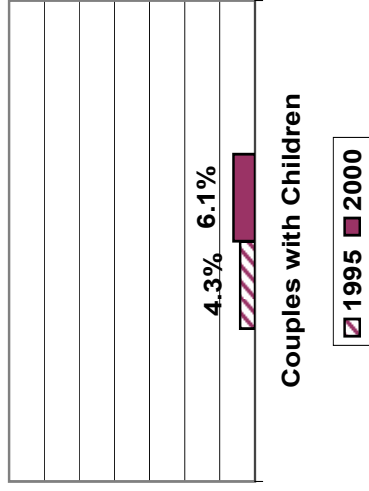
Poverty Rates: The poverty rate for couples with children was less than half the BC average in 2000. The sample size of lone-parent mothers and fathers was too small to produce reliable poverty rates.

Income Distribution: The distribution of family incomes was much higher in the upper income ranges than in the province as a whole.

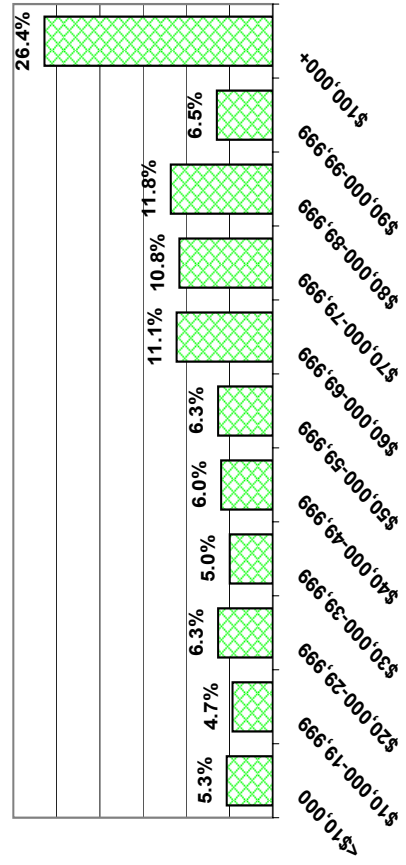
Median Family Incomes, 2000: Median incomes for all families, two-earner couples with children and one-earner couples with children were the highest of any census agglomeration or census metropolitan area in BC.

All Census Families	\$74,244
Couples with Children under 18:	
Two Earners	\$97,229
One Earner	\$65,813
No Earner	\$7,767
Lone-Parent Families:	
One Earner	\$32,417
No Earner	\$11,881

Kitimat Family Poverty Rates



Kitimat Families By Income Group, 2000



Nanaimo

The Nanaimo census agglomeration is made up of the City of Nanaimo, the Nanaimo River, Nanaimo Town and Nanoose Indian Reserves and Nanaimo regional district electoral areas A, C and D. The population in 2001 was 85,664.

Poverty Rates: The poverty rate for couples with children was lower than the BC average in 2000, and the rates for lone-parent mothers and fathers were a bit higher.

Income Distribution: The income group of \$100,000 and up was smaller than in the province as a whole.

Median Family Incomes, 2000: Median incomes were not far from the provincial averages.

All Census Families \$50,732

Couples with Children under 18:

Two Earners \$72,146

One Earner \$47,164

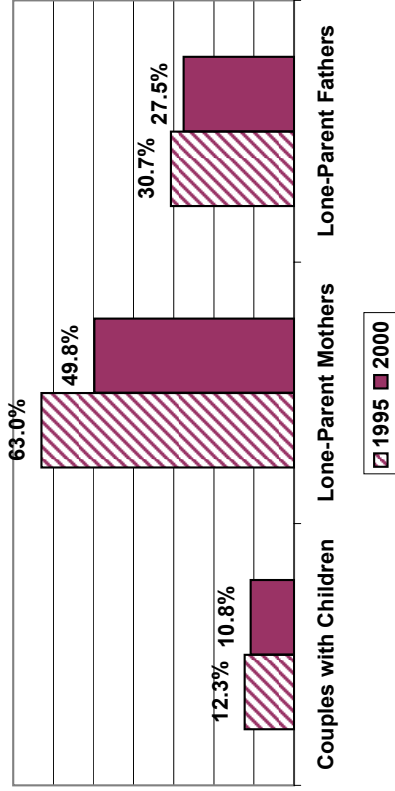
No Earner \$14,169

Lone-Parent Families:

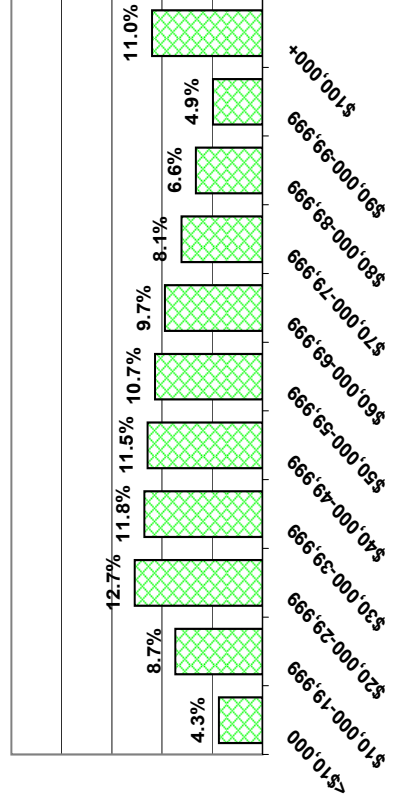
One Earner \$30,270

No Earner \$14,339

Nanaimo Family Poverty Rates



Nanaimo Families By Income Group, 2000



Parksville

The Parksville census agglomeration is made up of the City of Parksville, the Town of Qualicum Beach and Nanaimo regional district electoral area G. The population in 2001 was 24,285.

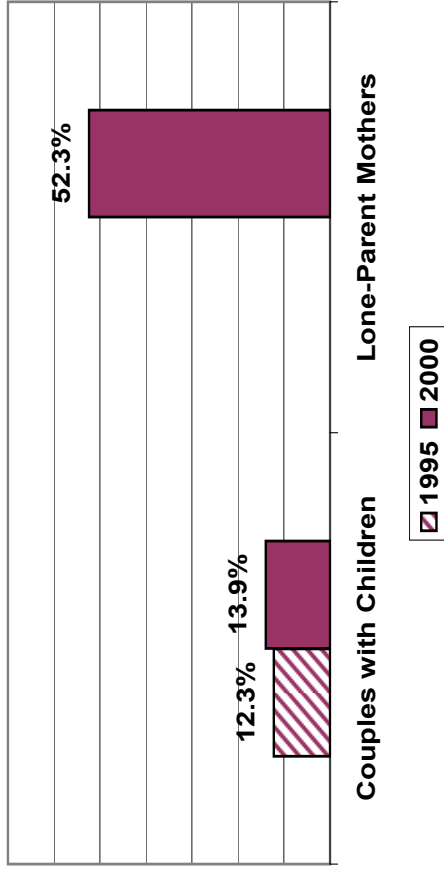
Poverty Rates: The poverty rates for couples with children and lone-parent mothers were a bit higher than the BC average in 2000. The sample size of lone-parent fathers was too small to produce a reliable poverty rate.

Income Distribution: The distribution of family incomes was much higher in the income ranges \$20,000 to \$60,000 than in the province as a whole. It was lower in the upper income ranges.

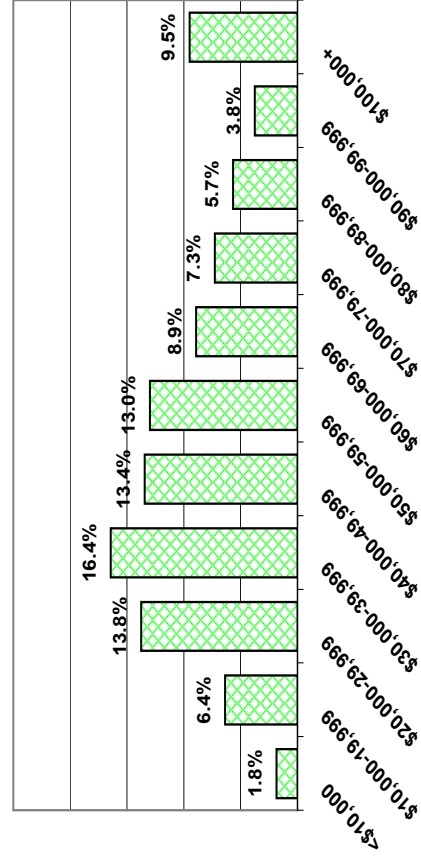
Median Family Incomes, 2000: Median incomes for the one-earner and two-earner couples with children were the lowest of any census agglomeration or census metropolitan area in BC. The sample size for the couples without earnings was too small to produce reliable results.

All Census Families	\$48,668
Couples with Children under 18:	
Two Earners	\$65,263
One Earner	\$38,781
No Earner	-----
Lone-Parent Families:	
One Earner	\$29,742
No Earner	\$12,992

Parksville Family Poverty Rates



Parksville Families By Income Group, 2000



Penticton

The Penticton census agglomeration is made up of the City of Penticton, the Penticton Indian Reserve and Okanagan-Similkameen regional district electoral areas D, E and F. The population in 2001 was 41,574.

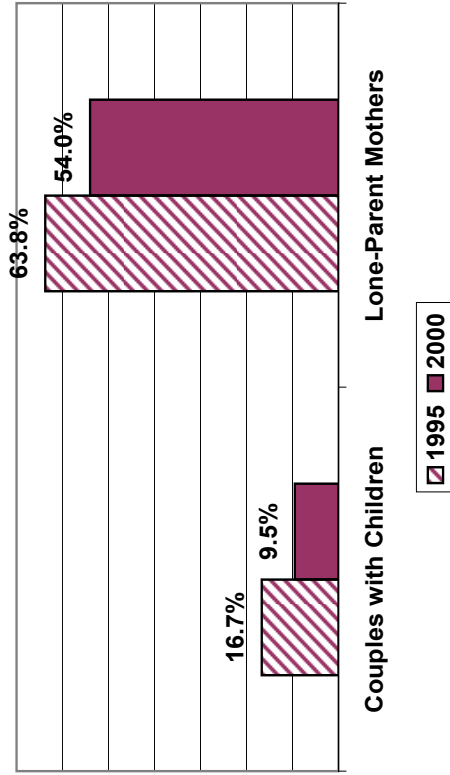
Poverty Rates: The poverty rate for couples with children was noticeably below the BC average in 2000, and the rate for lone-parent mothers was a bit higher than the average. The sample size of lone-parent fathers was too small to produce a reliable poverty rate.

Income Distribution: The largest single income group was \$20,000 to \$30,000. The income group \$100,000 and up was relatively smaller than in the province as a whole.

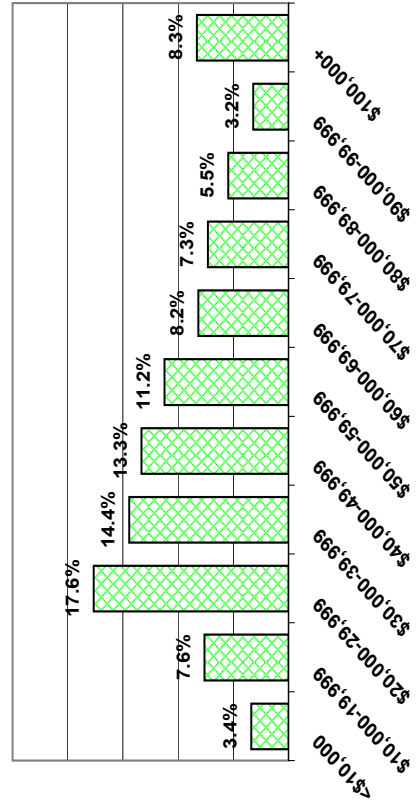
Median Family Incomes, 2000: Median incomes for families with earners were much lower than the provincial averages. Median income for all census families was the lowest of any census agglomeration or census metropolitan area in BC.

All Census Families	\$45,582
Couples with Children under 18:	
Two Earners	\$67,300
One Earner	\$41,551
No Earner	\$22,305
Lone-Parent Families:	
One Earner	\$26,668
No Earner	\$14,149

Penticton Family Poverty Rates



Penticton Families By Income Group, 2000



Port Alberni

The Port Alberni census agglomeration is made up of the City of Port Alberni, the Ahahswinis, Alberni, Klehkoot and Tsahaheh Indian Reserves and Alberni-Clayoquot regional district electoral areas B, D, E and F. The population in 2001 was 25,396.

Poverty Rates: The poverty rate for couples with children was almost the same as the BC average in 2000, and the rate for lone-parent mothers was a bit higher than the average. The sample size of lone-parent fathers was too small to produce a reliable poverty rate.

Income Distribution: The distribution of family incomes was much lower than in the province as a whole for the group \$100,000 and up.

Median Family Incomes, 2000: Median incomes were not far from the provincial averages.

All Census Families \$51,211

Couples with Children under 18:

Two Earners \$73,402

One Earner \$53,464

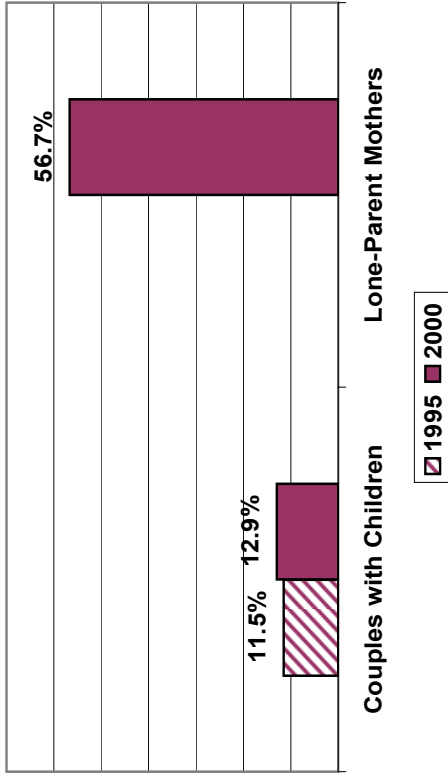
No Earner \$19,599

Lone-Parent Families:

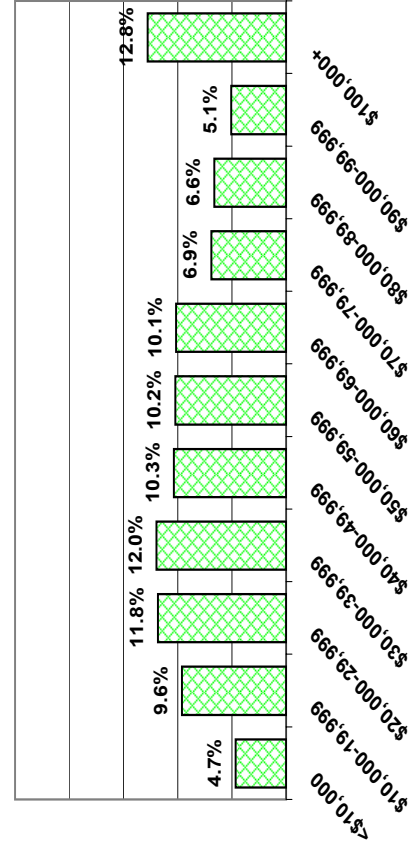
One Earner \$31,992

No Earner \$12,541

Port Alberni Family Poverty Rates



Port Alberni Families By Income Group, 2000



Powell River

The Powell River census agglomeration is made up of the District Municipality of Powell River, part of the Sechelt Indian Government District, the Harwood Island and Sliammon Indian Reserves and Powell River regional district electoral areas A, B and C. The population in 2001 was 18,269.

Poverty Rates: The poverty rate for couples with children was well below the BC average in 2000. The sample size of lone-parent mothers and fathers was too small to produce reliable poverty rates.

Income Distribution: The distribution of family incomes was higher in the income ranges \$20,000 to \$60,000 than in the province as a whole. It was lower in the income range of \$100,000 and up.

Median Family Incomes, 2000: Median incomes were not far from the provincial averages.

All Census Families \$51,061

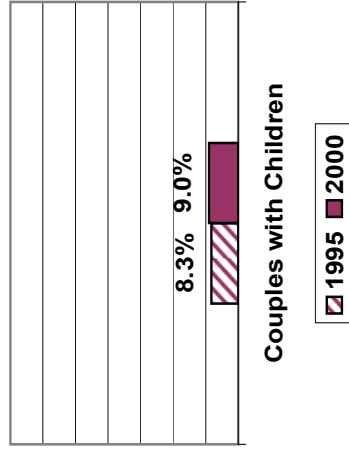
Couples with Children under 18:

Two Earners \$68,435
 One Earner \$50,880
 No Earner \$19,599

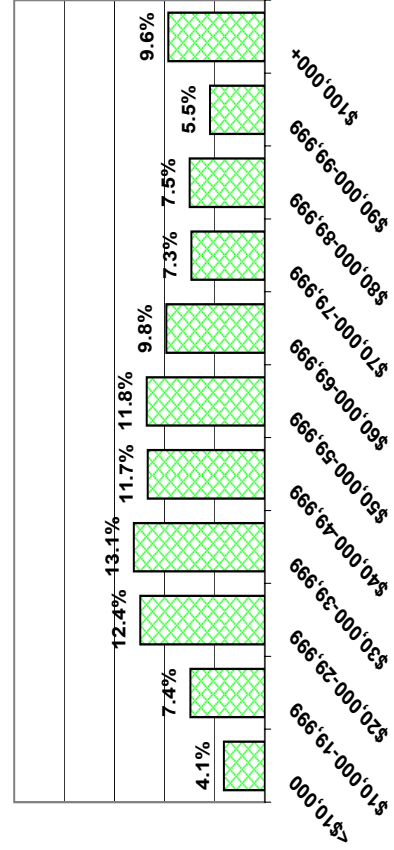
Lone-Parent Families:

One Earner \$31,992
 No Earner \$14,624

Powell River Family Poverty Rates



Powell River Families By Income Group, 2000



Prince George

The Prince George census agglomeration is made up of the City of Prince George, the Fort George Indian Reserve and Fraser-Fort George regional district electoral areas A, C, D and F. The population in 2001 was 85,035.

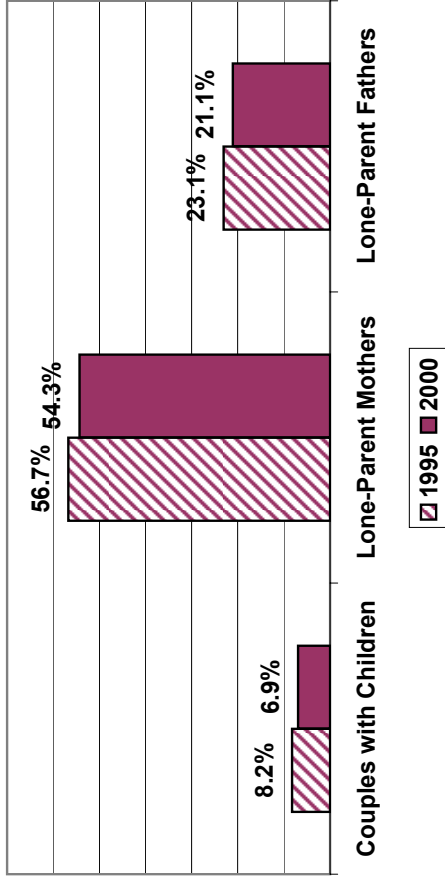
Poverty Rates: The poverty rate for couples with children was about half the BC average in 2000. The rate for lone-parent mothers was higher than the average, and the rate for lone-parent fathers was lower than the average.

Income Distribution: The distribution of family incomes was similar to the distribution for the province as a whole.

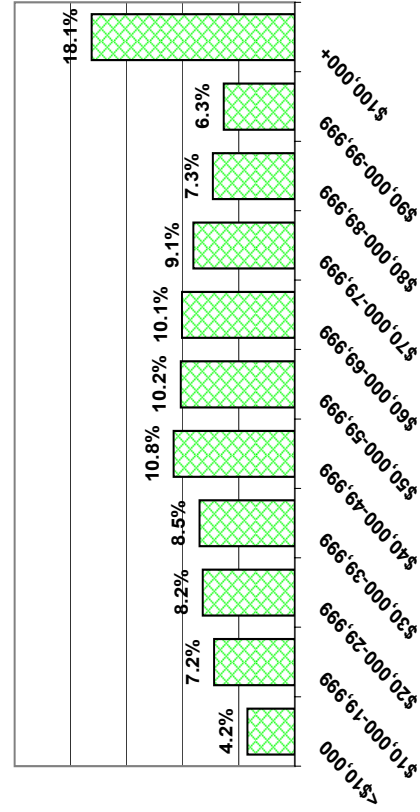
Median Family Incomes, 2000: Median incomes were noticeably higher than the provincial averages for one-earner and two-earner couples with children.

All Census Families	\$60,927
Couples with Children under 18:	
Two Earners	\$79,329
One Earner	\$52,576
No Earner	\$15,316
Lone-Parent Families:	
One Earner	\$35,180
No Earner	\$13,624

Prince George Family Poverty Rates



Prince George Families By Income Group, 2000



Prince Rupert

The Prince Rupert census agglomeration is made up of the City of Prince Rupert and the District Municipality of Port Edward. The population in 2001 was 15,302.

Poverty Rates: The poverty rate for couples with children was noticeably below the BC average in 2000. The sample size of lone-parent mothers and fathers was too small to produce reliable poverty rates.

Income Distribution: The distribution of family incomes was fairly flat except for a relatively large income group of \$100,000 and up.

Median Family Incomes, 2000: Median incomes of all families and families with earners were higher than the provincial averages.

All Census Families \$59,123

Couples with Children under 18:
Two Earners \$78,672

One Earner \$49,836

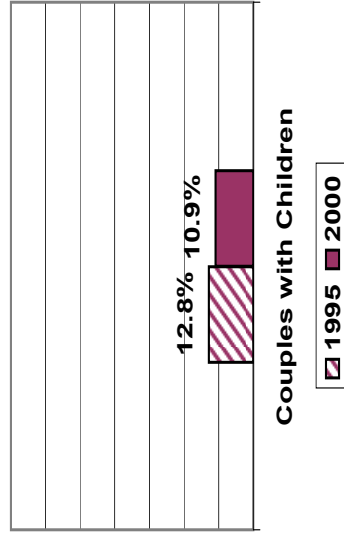
No Earner \$12,456

Lone-Parent Families:

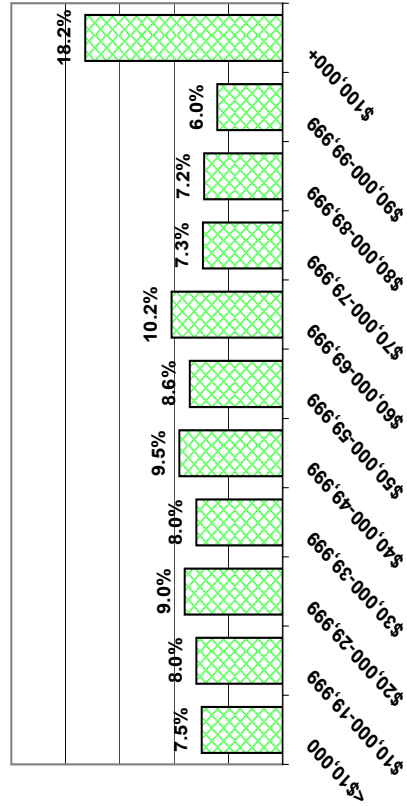
One Earner \$39,397

No Earner \$10,471

Prince Rupert Family Poverty Rates



Prince Rupert Families By Income Group, 2000



Quesnel

The Quesnel census agglomeration is made up of the City of Quesnel, the District Municipality of Wells, 15 Indian Reserves and Cariboo regional district electoral areas A, B, C and I. The population in 2001 was 24,426.

Poverty Rates: The poverty rate for couples with children was noticeably below the BC average in 2000. The sample size of lone-parent mothers and fathers was too small to produce reliable poverty rates.

Income Distribution: The distribution of family incomes was much more even than in the province as a whole.

Median Family Incomes, 2000: Median incomes were not far from the provincial averages.

All Census Families \$51,826

Couples with Children under 18:

Two Earners \$71,494

One Earner \$50,830

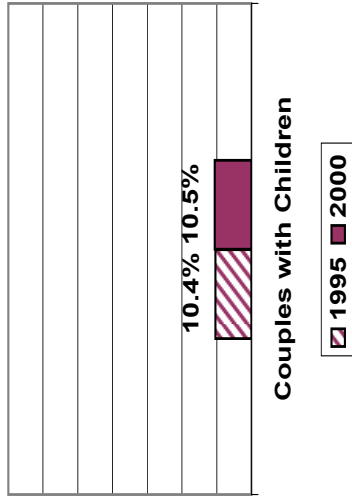
No Earner \$13,344

Lone-Parent Families:

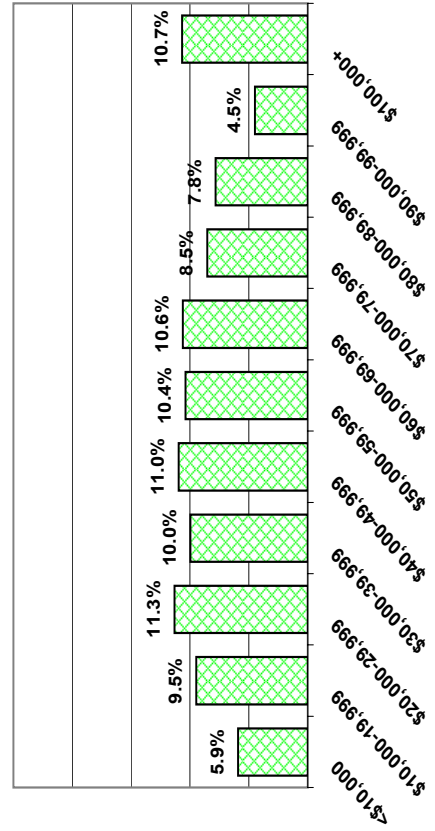
One Earner \$31,982

No Earner \$12,729

Quesnel Family Poverty Rates



Quesnel Families By Income Group, 2000



Squamish

The Squamish census agglomeration is made up of the District Municipality of Squamish and the Kowtain, Seatchem, Squamish, Stawamus, Walwakum and Yekwaupsum Indian Reserves. The population in 2001 was 14,435.

Poverty Rates: The poverty rate for couples with children was far below the BC average in 2000. The sample size of lone-parent mothers and fathers was too small to produce reliable poverty rates.

Income Distribution: The distribution of family income groups of \$50,000 and up was larger than in the province as a whole.

Median Family Incomes, 2000: Median incomes for all families and one-earner couples were much higher than the provincial averages. Sample sizes for families with no earners were too small to be reliable.

All Census Families \$63,275

Couples with Children under 18:

Two Earners \$73,855

One Earner \$56,113

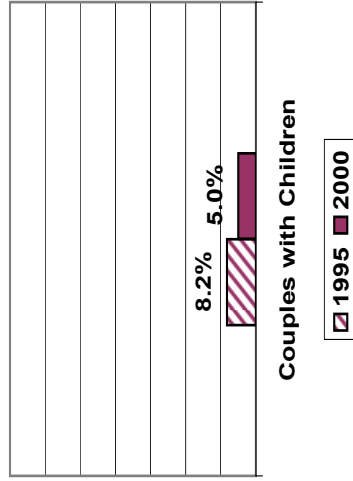
No Earner -----

Lone-Parent Families:

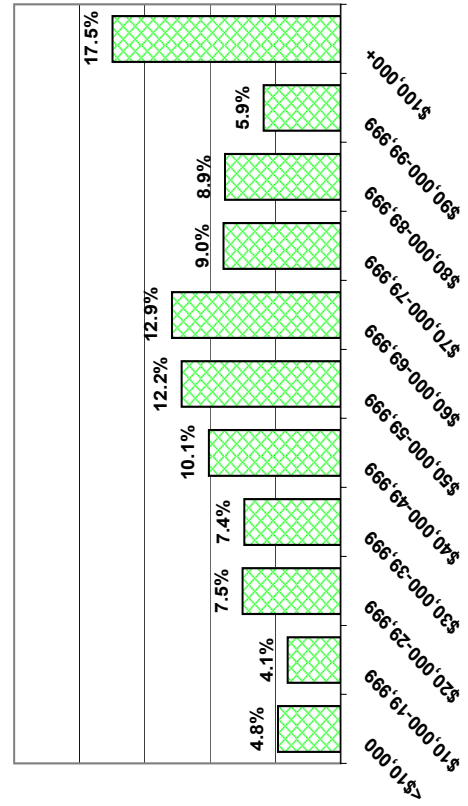
One Earner \$30,009

No Earner -----

Squamish Family Poverty Rates



Squamish Families By Income Group, 2000



Terrace

The Terrace census agglomeration is made up of the City of Terrace, the Kitsumkaylum, Kshish and Kulsipai Indian Reserves and Kitimat-Stikine regional district electoral areas C and E. The population in 2001 was 19,980.

Poverty Rates: The poverty rate for couples with children was about two-thirds of the BC average in 2000. The sample size of lone-parent mothers and fathers was too small to produce reliable poverty rates.

Income Distribution: The distribution of family incomes was similar to the distribution for the province as a whole.

Median Family Incomes, 2000: Median incomes were not far from the provincial averages.

All Census Families \$57,122

Couples with Children under 18:

Two Earners \$71,975

One Earner \$51,709

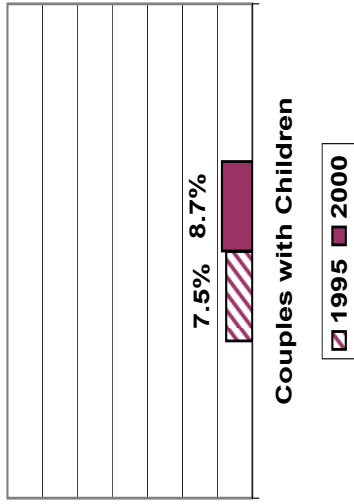
No Earner \$20,847

Lone-Parent Families:

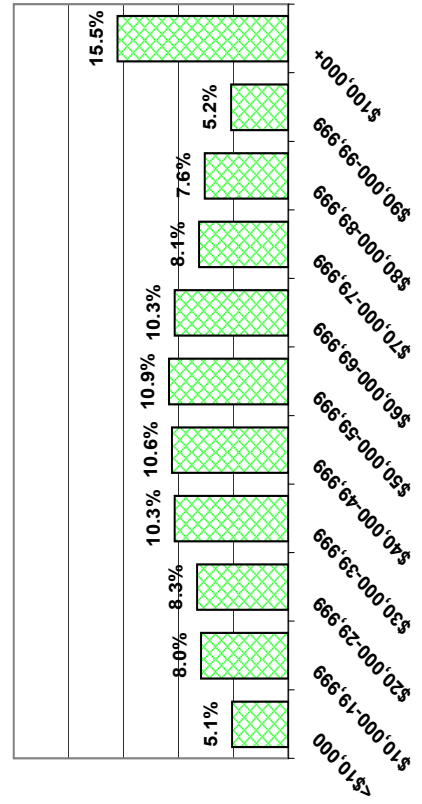
One Earner \$36,067

No Earner \$12,606

Terrace Family Poverty Rates



Terrace Families By Income Group, 2000



Vancouver

The Vancouver census metropolitan area is made up of the Cities of Vancouver, Burnaby, Coquitlam, Langley, New Westminster, North Vancouver, Port Coquitlam, Port Moody, Richmond, Surrey, West Vancouver and White Rock and nearby Villages, District Municipalities, Indian Reserves and regional district electoral areas. The population in 2001 was 1,986,965.

The Vancouver CMA is the same as the Greater Vancouver Regional District.

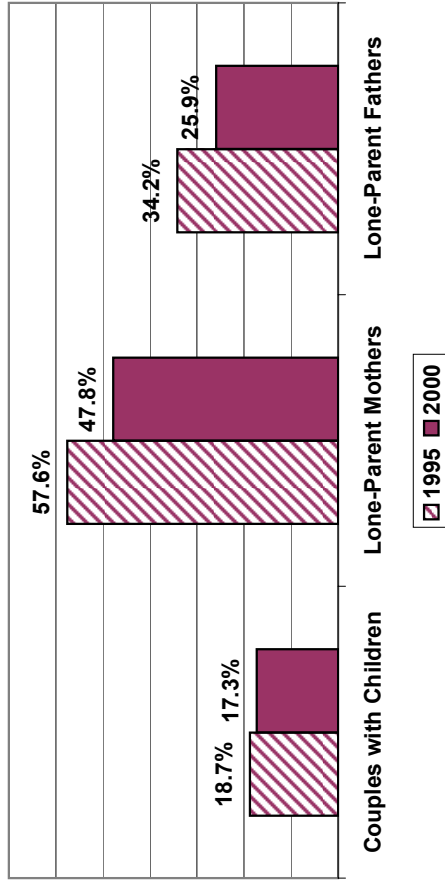
Poverty Rates: The poverty rate for couples with children was well above the BC average in 2000. The rate for lone-parent mothers was the same as the average, and the rate for lone-parent fathers was a bit above the average.

Income Distribution: The distribution of family incomes was similar to the distribution for the province as a whole, but the income group \$100,000 and up was larger.

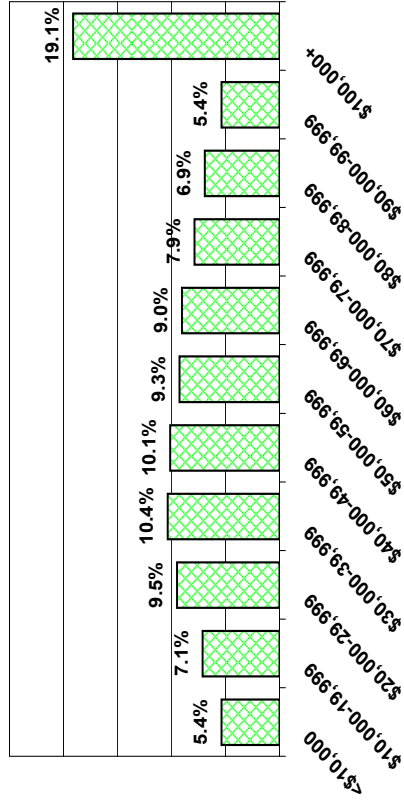
Median Family Incomes, 2000: Median incomes for all families, two-earner couples with children and one-earner lone parents were higher than the provincial averages.

All Census Families	\$57,926
Couples with Children under 18:	
Two Earners	\$77,025
One Earner	\$46,488
No Earner	\$10,964
Lone-Parent Families:	
One Earner	\$36,742
No Earner	\$13,267

Vancouver Family Poverty Rates



Vancouver Families By Income Group, 2000



Vernon

The Vernon census agglomeration is made up of the City of Vernon, the District Municipality of Coldstream, the Okanagan and Priest's Valley Indian Reserves and North Okanagan regional district electoral areas B and C. The population in 2001 was 51,530.

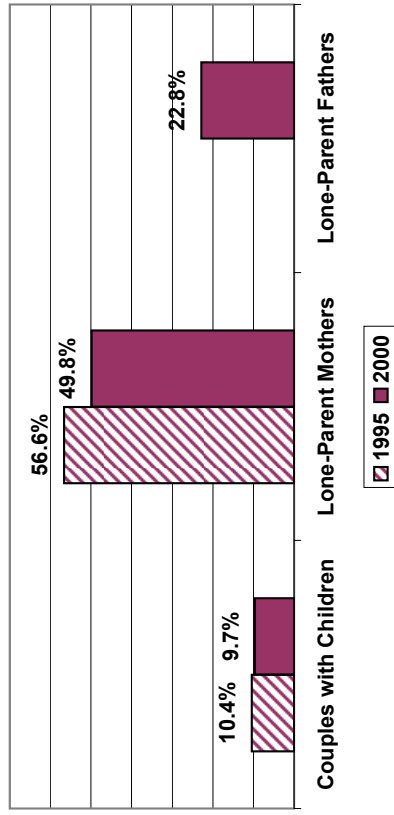
Poverty Rates: The poverty rate for couples with children was well below the BC average, the rate for lone-parent mothers was near the average, and the rate for lone-parent fathers was a bit below the average.

Income Distribution: The distribution of family incomes was higher in the income ranges \$20,000 to \$60,000 than in the province as a whole. It was lower in the income range of \$100,000 and up.

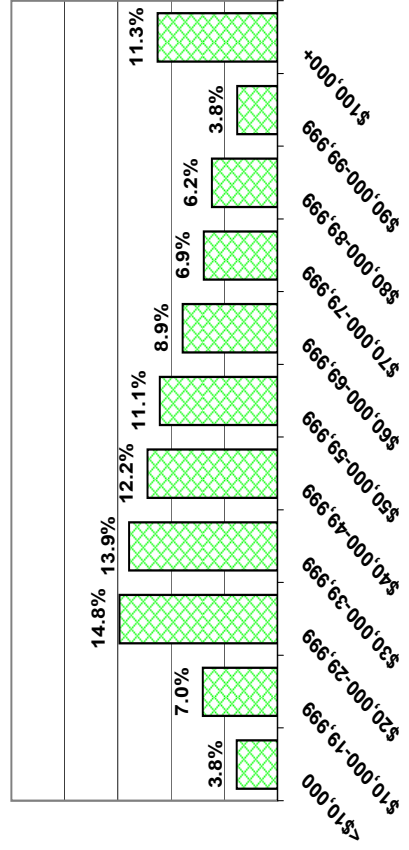
Median Family Incomes, 2000: Median incomes were noticeably lower than the provincial averages for all families and two-earner couples with children.

All Census Families	\$48,308
Couples with Children under 18:	
Two Earners	\$66,740
One Earner	\$46,323
No Earner	\$22,957
Lone-Parent Families:	
One Earner	\$31,801
No Earner	\$15,319

Vernon Family Poverty Rates



Vernon Families By Income Group, 2000



Victoria

The Victoria census metropolitan area is made up of the City of Victoria, the City of Colwood, the Town of Sidney, the Town of View Royal and a number of District Municipalities and Indian Reserves in the southern part of Vancouver Island. The population in 2001 was 311,902.

Poverty Rates: The poverty rates for all three types of families with children were below the BC average in 2000, and the rate for couples with children was well below the average.

Income Distribution: The distribution of family incomes was similar to the distribution for the province as a whole.

Median Family Incomes, 2000: Median incomes for all families and families with earners were higher than the provincial averages.

All Census Families \$59,015

Couples with Children under 18:

Two Earners \$75,602

One Earner \$51,503

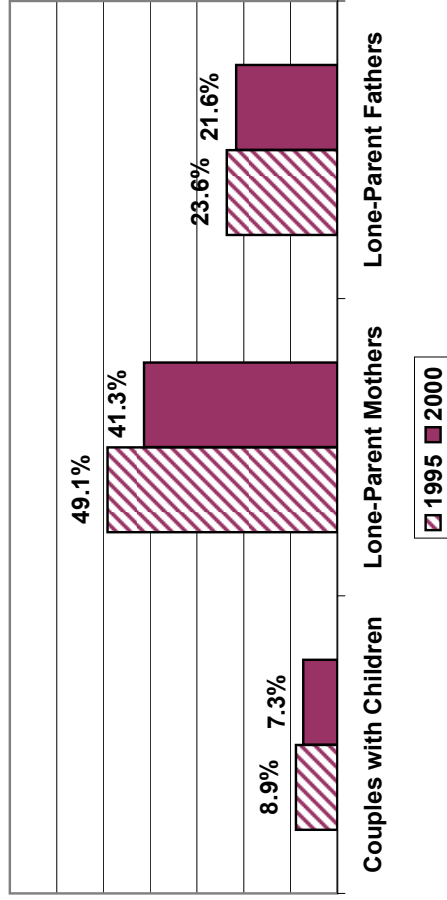
No Earner \$18,018

Lone-Parent Families:

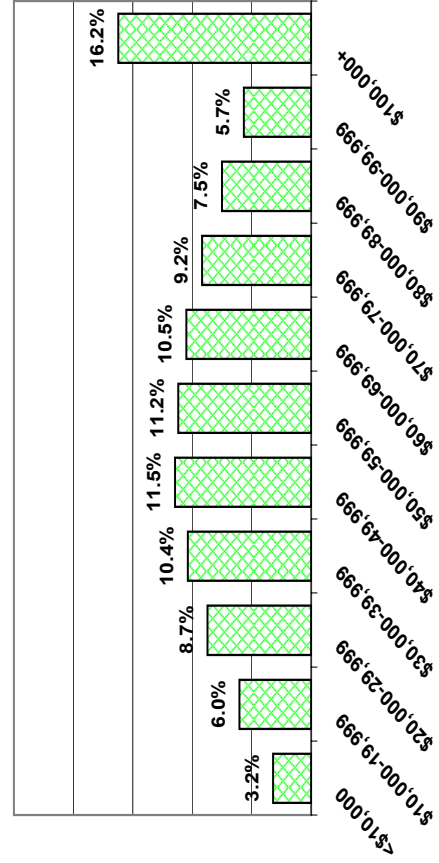
One Earner \$35,225

No Earner \$13,657

Victoria Family Poverty Rates



Victoria Families By Income Group, 2000



Williams Lake

The Williams Lake census agglomeration is made up of the City of Williams Lake, 12 Indian Reserves and Cariboo regional district electoral areas D, E and F. The population in 2001 was 25,122.

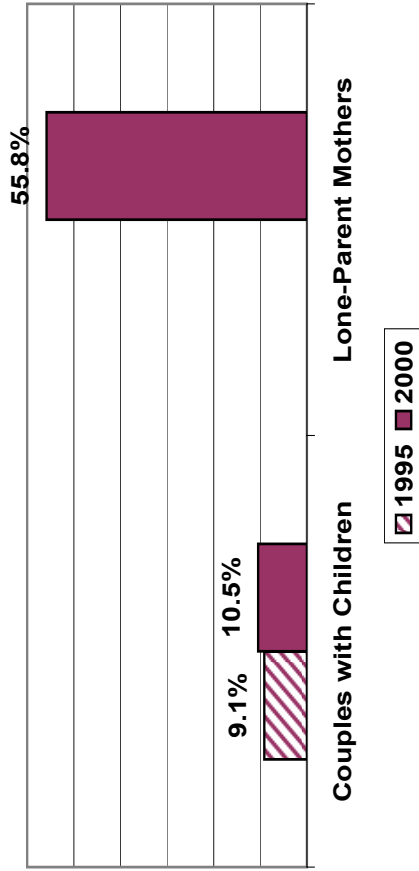
Poverty Rates: The poverty rate for couples with children was lower than the BC average in 2000, and the rate for single-parent mothers was higher. The sample size of lone-parent fathers was too small to produce a reliable poverty rate.

Income Distribution: The distribution of family incomes was more even than in the province as a whole.

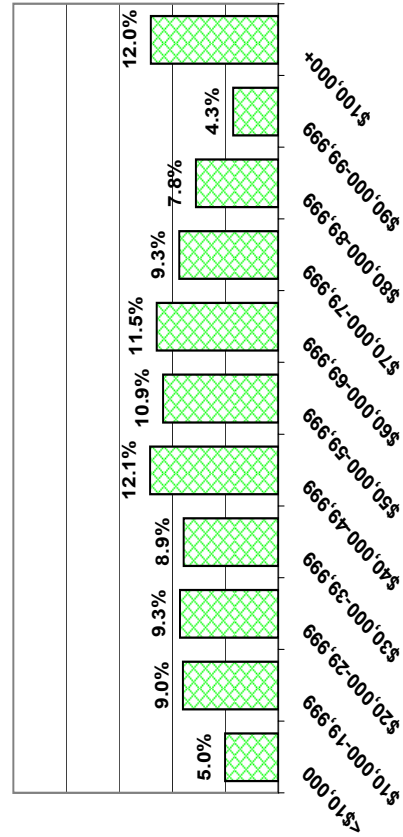
Median Family Incomes, 2000: Median incomes for two-earner and one-earner couples with children were lower than the provincial averages.

All Census Families	\$56,321
Couples with Children under 18:	
Two Earners	\$66,591
One Earner	\$41,190
No Earner	\$11,792
Lone-Parent Families:	
One Earner	\$33,294
No Earner	\$11,953

Williams Lake Family Poverty Rates



Williams Lake Families By Income Group, 2000



British Columbia

Median Incomes, 2000

All Census Families \$54,840

Couples with Children under 18:

Two Earners \$73,301
 One Earner \$47,951
 No Earner \$13,234

Lone-Parent Families:

One Earner \$33,860
 No Earner \$13,538

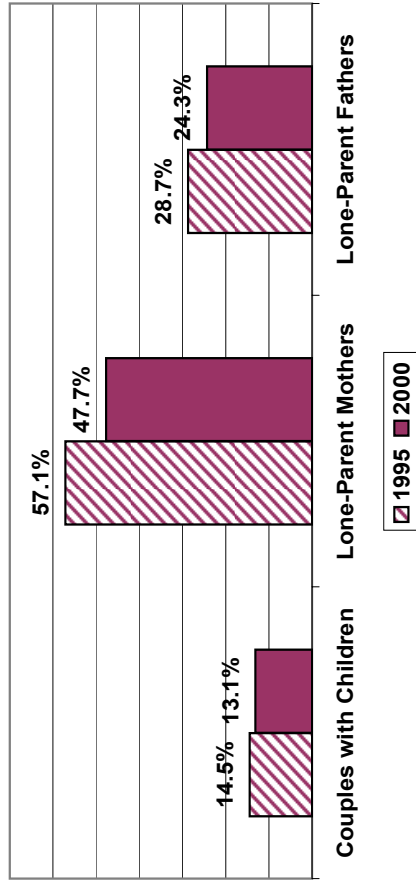
There were a total of 324,625 couples with children in BC at the time of the 2001 census. Of this total, 240,570 families or 74 percent were two-earner families, 69,800 families or 22 percent were one-earner families, and the remaining 14,255 families or four percent had no earners.

There were a total of 81,375 lone-parent families at last count. Of these, 57,895 or 71 percent were one-earner families, and the other 23,480 or 29 percent had no earners.

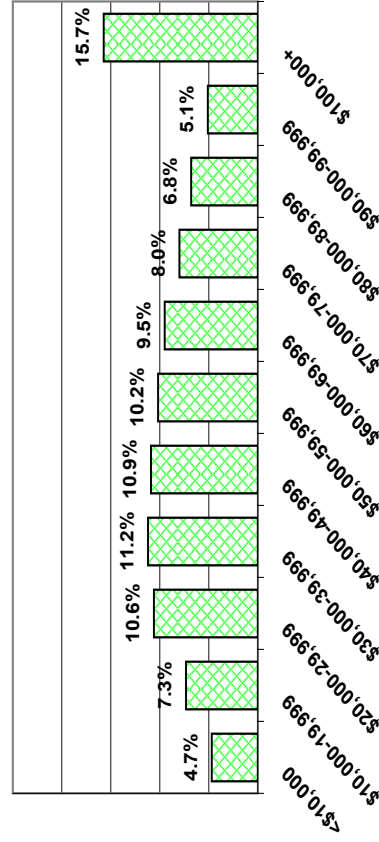
Among couples with children, there was a huge difference in median incomes between couples with one earner and two earners. This underlines the financial important of a second breadwinner in the family.

One-earner couples with children had noticeably higher median incomes than one-earner lone-parent families. Most lone-parent families are headed by women, and the wage gap between women and men explains part of the difference. Another reason is that some lone parents work less than full time or full year because of parental responsibilities.

BC Family Poverty Rates



British Columbia Families By Income Group, 2000



About the Methodology

All the census data in this report come from Statistics Canada. The data are from a 20-percent sample of the census rather than the entire census. The 20-percent sample is vastly larger than the samples used in the annual surveys of income done by the federal agency, and it produces much more accurate and much more detailed information than the annual surveys. However, in a few cases involving small groups of people in small areas of population, the sample sizes are too small to produce reliable results. No poverty statistics are published under those conditions.

Two units of analysis were used in this report. Section I uses “economic families” or people living in the same household who are related to each other by blood, marriage or adoption. Section II uses a more restrictive definition known as “census families.” Census families are basically couples and lone parents and their children. They exclude other family members such as widowed grandparents living in the same household. Both economic and census families include married, common-law and same-sex couples.

The poverty rates produced using economic and census families are generally very similar, but they should not be compared directly with one another. They are not as different as apples and oranges, but they may be as different as Granny Smith and Golden Delicious apples.

This report uses Statistics Canada’s low income cut-offs (LICOs) before federal and provincial income taxes as its measure of poverty. The LICOs vary with the size of the family unit and the area of population. Before-tax measures are used because the census does not capture data on taxes. The vast majority of social policy groups in Canada use the LICOs as poverty lines, even though Statistics Canada does not regard them as poverty lines.

Similarly, the incomes in the report are total family incomes, or incomes from wages and salaries and a variety of other market incomes plus government transfer payments from a variety of sources. Welfare, unemployment insurance benefits and the Canada Child Tax Benefit are examples of transfer payments often received by families with children.

The census always collects income data for the previous calendar year, so income data from the 2001 census is for the year 2000. The LICOs for 2000 are shown in the table below. Statistics Canada makes some small adjustments in the lines from time to time. The figures in the table reflect the latest adjustments.

Statistics Canada's Pre-Tax Low Income Cut-Offs For 2000

Cities of Areas	500,000+	100,000 to 499,999	30,000 to 99,999	Less than 30,000	Rural
One person	\$18,525	\$15,955	\$15,856	\$14,509	\$12,753
Two persons	\$23,063	\$19,861	\$19,739	\$18,061	\$15,876
Three persons	\$28,353	\$24,417	\$24,266	\$22,204	\$19,517
Four persons	\$34,425	\$29,646	\$29,463	\$26,960	\$23,698
Five persons	\$39,044	\$33,623	\$33,417	\$30,577	\$26,877
Six persons	\$44,035	\$37,923	\$37,689	\$34,486	\$30,314
Seven + persons	\$49,026	\$42,221	\$41,961	\$38,395	\$33,749

Source: Statistics Canada (2005)

Much of the report uses median incomes rather than average incomes. Median incomes are the middle values in any income group - that is, exactly half the group has incomes below the median and half the group has incomes above the median. Medians are generally lower and more representative in population studies in Canada. Averages get distorted by the very high incomes of the very richest Canadians.

For More Information

The 2001 census website of Statistics Canada contains a gold mine of information about communities of all sizes in British Columbia. Much of the information is available free of charge.

Start by clicking on the census icon on the website at www.statcan.ca. Click on “Show me data on the community I live in” and follow the alphabetic menu to get to your community. There is information about individual cities and towns, including towns of less than 10,000, and information about individual Indian Reserves. The information available covers population, age and marital status, earnings and income, education, work, housing, immigration, visible minorities and population by Aboriginal identity.

The census also features hundreds of tables on other topics that you can tailor to your own needs using the drop-down menus on the site. Start with the census icon and then click on “Search by topic.” You’ll see 21 topic areas, such as paid work, unpaid work, commuting to work, language, religion and many more. Each of the areas has a dozen or more tables to choose from. This report used tables from the topic area “Income of individuals, families and households.”

Another gold mine of information is available from the Human Early Learning Partnership, a multi-university undertaking based at the University of British Columbia. Their website is at www.earlylearning.ubc.ca.

The most comprehensive resource is the *BC Atlas of Child Development 2006*, which contains the very latest information on child development and socioeconomic characteristics for all areas of British Columbia. Click on the button on the right-hand side of the home page if you want the entire atlas. Order the CD-ROM or the hard-cover edition if you don’t want to spend a lot of time downloading reams of material.

The same page that lets you download the entire atlas has other options on the left-hand side. If you want smaller files that are much faster to download, try the area EDI and SES maps listed on the left-hand side of the page. They are available by community or by school district. EDI refers to the host of early development measures grouped into five categories: physical health and well-being, social competence, emotional maturity, language and cognitive development, and communication skills and general knowledge. SES stands for socioeconomic characteristics. There are 22 variables, including residential mobility, education levels, unemployment, lone-parent families, unpaid child care and a “housing stress” index.

Sources Cited in This Report

Census information available on Statistics Canada's 2001 census website (www.statcan.ca) under "Income of individuals, families and households" for provinces, census metropolitan areas and census agglomerations:

- Median incomes from Highlight Table 1 - Median Family Income in Constant (2000) Dollars for All Census Families, 1990 and 2000, Catalogue #97F0024XIE2001014
- Income distributions from Table 21 - Family Income Groups in Constant (2000) Dollars and Census Family Structure, 1995 and 2000, Catalogue #97F002XCB2001003
- Poverty rates from Table 62 - Income Status and Census Family Structure, 1995 and 2000, Catalogue #97F0020XCB20001006.

Special Statistics Canada tabulations from the 2001 census prepared for the Canadian Council on Social Development's Urban Poverty Project

Statistics Canada, Income of Canadian Families (2003) Catalogue #96F0030XIE2001014

Statistics Canada, Low Income Cut-offs for 2004 and Low Income Measures for 2002 (2005) Catalogue #75F0002MIE2005003

Andrew Heisz and Logan McLeod, Low Income in Census Metropolitan Areas, 1980-2000 (Ottawa: Statistics Canada, 2004), Catalogue #89-613-MIE, Number 001

