

**SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY
FOR NANAIMO
PHASE 1: SOCIAL STATUS REPORT**

**Prepared for:
The Social Development Strategy
Steering Committee**

**Prepared by:
John Talbot & Associates Inc.**

May 2003

Letter from the SDS Steering Committee

We are pleased to introduce Nanaimo's Social Status Report. It is a statistical report that attempts to answer the question: "Where are we now from a social perspective?" This report is the first step towards preparing a comprehensive Social Development Strategy. The strategy, when complete, will answer two related questions: "Where do we want to go?" and "How do we get there?"

To expedite the preparation of the Social Status Report, the City's Social Planning Advisory Committee established a steering committee that included broad-based community representation from a wide variety of agencies. John Talbot & Associates Inc. prepared the report, in close consultation with the steering committee, and with the assistance of community agencies which provided statistical information.

The Social Status Report highlights 50 measurable indicators, which are organized according to the following ten sections:

- Population
- Economic
- Children and Youth
- Education
- Health
- Housing
- Leisure and Recreation
- Participation
- Public Safety
- Transportation

Each indicator is designed to be used separately or in combination. For example, the reader may be interested in a specific topic such as unemployment or he or she may want to learn more about the economy in general. In the former case, the reader would refer to the specific indicator; while in the latter case, he or she would read the applicable section.

The indicators are based on secondary information which is regularly collected by government agencies and non-profit organizations for administrative and planning purposes. The information is the most up-to-date available at the time of data collection. Primary research, in the form of interviews and surveys, was not conducted for this project. Additionally, budget and time constraints limited the range of topics which are profiled. The City of Nanaimo will endeavor to undertake future updates, as information becomes available.

Social issues are not unique to Nanaimo, as they are present in all major cities. However, what distinguishes cities is how they deal with these social issues. Some cities take a proactive approach and develop strategies to enhance or protect their quality of life; while others choose to ignore these issues, mistakenly believing that they will resolve themselves. Nanaimo, with its long history of being proactive, as evidenced by Imagine Nanaimo and, more recently, by the Economic Development and Human Resources Strategies, has decided to boldly acknowledge and address its social issues.

The completion of the Social Status Report thus launches the next phase, the preparation of the Social Development Strategy. Regarding the Strategy, generous funding support from the City of Nanaimo and The Vancouver Foundation enables us to immediately commence the public consultation process and to begin the journey toward achieving the city's full social and economic potential.

The steering committee is comprised of the following members:

- Lee Mason, Chair, The United Way of Nanaimo and District
- Cori-Lynn Carlson, Chamber of Commerce
- Bill French, Ministry of Human Resources
- Eileen Hooyberg, Social Planning Advisory Committee
- Micheline Cawley, School District #68
- Beryl Mason, Ministry of Children and Family Development
- Carol Matthews, Nanaimo Port Authority
- Alison Millward, City of Nanaimo
- Bill Preston, School District #68
- Dennis Silvestrone, Malaspina University-College
- Laurelle Street, Human Resources Development Canada
- Carolyn Tatton, Economic Development Group
- Anne Williams, Vancouver Island Health Authority

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Introduction

The City of Nanaimo commissioned this Social Status Report to provide information about social conditions and changes occurring in the City of Nanaimo. Its primary purpose is to identify social issues and to provide background and statistical information in support of a Social Development Strategy for Nanaimo. Its other purpose is to raise public awareness about social issues and to prompt dialogue about future directions. As such, it should be seen as the first phase in a much larger process to effect and enhance social conditions in Nanaimo.

The report took ten months to complete and was prepared by John Talbot & Associates Inc., in close consultation with the Social Development Strategy Steering Committee. This steering committee provided assistance in selecting the indicators, identifying the potential data sources, collecting the information and revising the report. The report also relied on information from a large number of data sources, including but not limited to: the City of Nanaimo and its various Departments, the Economic Development Group, Malaspina University College, the Ministry of Children and Family Development, the Ministry of Human Resources, the Regional District of Nanaimo, School District #68 and the Vancouver Island Health Authority.

The report contains ten sections and fifty indicators. Each section starts with its own executive summary which outlines the key findings contained within it and concludes with information regarding community contacts, reference materials and other possible indicators. Each indicator profiles a specific topic area (e.g., unemployment) and contains information as to its importance and the situation in Nanaimo, as well as comparison and historic information. The Cities of Kamloops and Prince George and the Province are used for comparison purposes. The report also contains information on issues, opportunities and assets/resources. Of note, the report does not identify priority issues or make recommendations.

The report depends almost exclusively on secondary information, meaning that government agencies, non-profit organizations and others collected the information. As such, only those indicators for which information is collected and publicly available are profiled. The information is the most up-to-date at the time of data collection. With regard to those indicators which rely on the Census, several of the release dates occurred after data collection. As such, some indicators are based on 1996 Census, which raises concerns about their currency. Given this limitation, the City of Nanaimo will endeavour to undertake future updates as this information becomes available. Additionally, budget and time constraints limited the range of topics which are profiled.

For detailed information regarding the methodology, including limitations which need to be considered when interpreting the findings, please refer to Appendix 1.



Population Indicators Section

Executive Summary:

Nanaimo's rate of population growth has slowed over the past 15 years. Between 1986 and 1991, the population grew by 22.6% from 49,029 to 60,129; while between 1991 and 1996, the population grew by 16.6% from 60,129 to 70,130. During the most recent five year period (i.e., between 1996 and 2001), the population grew by only 4.1% from 70,130 to 73,000.

With regard to population trends, BC Stats PEOPLE Projection Run 26 data (2001) provides projection information up to 2026 for the Nanaimo Local Health Area (see Appendix 2). While this data provides useful information on the future size and composition of the population, it has several limitations. First, base or benchmark figures were calculated prior to the release of the 2001 Census, thus there may be discrepancies between BC Stats and Census figures. Second, projection information is based on a number of assumptions, which may or may not prove correct. Regardless, it provides the most reliable and regularly reported information available on population trends.

Between 2001 and 2026, the Nanaimo Local Health Area's population is projected to grow by 56.6% or by an average of 2.3% per year. Between 2001 and 2026, the percentage of children (0-14) and youth and young adults (15-24) is projected to decrease, while the percentage of seniors (65+) is projected to significantly increase. Regarding the latter, the number of seniors is projected to increase by 113.8% from 14,650 to 31,328.

Nanaimo's family composition and ethnic make-up is also changing. Between 1996 and 2001, the number of lone parent families increased by 13.6% from 3,455 to 3,925; while the number of two parent families increased by 2.8% from 16,205 to 16,660. As for its ethnic make-up, recent immigrants (i.e., those arriving between 1991 and 1996) accounted for 11.2% of the net population growth that occurred between 1991 and 1996 and most recent immigrants (51%) were from Asia, with four of the five largest source countries being Asian. Regarding the aboriginal population in Nanaimo, between 1996 and 2001, it increased by 29.3% from 2,615 to 3,380.

In School District #68 (Nanaimo-Ladysmith), there were 24 students classified as being physically dependent and 226 students classified as having a moderate mental or physical disability in 2000/01. For the Ministry of Children and Family Development, 296 Nanaimo adults with disabilities were in receipt of assistance in April 2002. Additionally, the Ministry of Human Resources estimates that about 1,000 Nanaimo adults will fall under its new Persons with Disabilities Act.

Highlighted Population Indicators:

Population Growth, Children (0-14), Youth and Young Adults (15-24), Seniors (65+), Aboriginal Peoples, Lone Parent Families, People with Disabilities, Recent Immigrants



Population Growth

Why is it important?

Population growth can have both positive and negative impacts.

Positive impacts can include a choice of housing types for different income levels and lifestyles; increased property tax revenues; new or upgraded municipal facilities and roads; and revitalization of existing neighbourhoods.

Negative impacts can include congested municipal facilities because of the lag between planning and construction; increasing financial liabilities resulting from the capital needs associated with population growth; loss of agricultural, heritage and/or natural resources; and social issues such as alienation.

What is the situation in Nanaimo?

Nanaimo's rate of population growth has slowed considerably over the past 15 years.

Between 1986 and 1991, the population grew by 22.6% from 49,029 to 60,129; while between 1991 and 1996, the population grew by 16.6% from 60,129 to 70,130. During the most recent five year period (i.e., between 1996 and 2001), the population grew by only 4.1% from 70,130 to 73,000. Put another way, over the past five years, Nanaimo's population grew by an average of 0.8% per year.

The three primary pieces of legislation guiding population growth in Nanaimo are the Regional District's Growth Management Plan (1997) and the City's Plan Nanaimo (July 1996) and Downtown Plan (May 2002).

The Growth Management Plan covers a timeframe of 25 years, includes population and employment projections, and is designed to guide the preparation and review of Official Community Plans and other local plans. It also articulates a vision of a desirable future region and a strategy for attaining that vision. As part of this vision, it calls for: strong urban containment; a nodal community structure; the creation of a vibrant and sustainable economy; efficient services and resource use; improved mobility; and the protection of environmentally significant features and rural integrity.

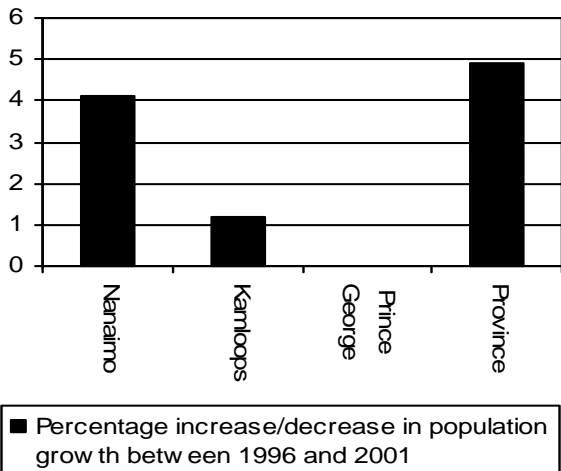
Plan Nanaimo is a land use plan that is designed to guide future development and servicing decisions within Nanaimo. Its five primary goals are to build complete communities; manage urban growth; improve mobility and service efficiency; protect the environment; and provide for community involvement. It also establishes growth centres around existing commercial and service areas, including the Downtown and Hospital Area. These growth centres will be the recipient of future densification.

The City of Nanaimo has recently initiated work to update Plan Nanaimo. This work includes a study conducted by Urban Futures Incorporated and entitled Population and Housing Projections for the Regional District and the City of Nanaimo, 2001 to 2031 (August 2002).

The Downtown Plan, which forms part of Plan Nanaimo, covers a timeframe of 10 years and is designed to guide development and revitalization in the area. As part of its vision, the plan articulates three primary strategies. These strategies are to increase the number of people living in the Downtown by encouraging residential development; creating a unique niche for the Downtown by positioning the area as a centre for arts and cultural activities; and increasing the number of people working in the Downtown by building a strong business base.

How do we compare?

Between 1996 and 2001, Nanaimo's rate of population growth (4.1%) was far higher than for the Cities of Kamloops (1.2%) and Prince George (-3.7%) but lower than for the Province (4.9%).



What are the trends?

Between 2001 and 2026, BC Stats PEOPLE Run 26 data projects that the population will grow by 56.6% for the Nanaimo Local Health Area (see Appendix 2). Put another way, the area's population is projected to grow by an average of 2.3% per year.

What are some of the issues?

The extensive projected cuts to the Provincial civil service and the softwood lumber tariffs imposed by the United States, which could result in about 20,000 job losses across the Province, could negatively impact the rate of population growth for Nanaimo, at least in the short-term.

What are some assets/resources?

Copies of the City's Plan Nanaimo and Downtown Plan can be found at public libraries in Nanaimo. They are also available on the City's website at: (www.city.nanaimo.bc.ca). Copies of the Regional District's Growth Management Plan, as well as its annual progress reports toward achievement of the vision and goals, are available on the Regional District's website at (www.rdn.bc.ca).

What questions does this raise?

- What factors are responsible for the slowing rate of population growth in Nanaimo?
- What will be the impacts of a slowing rate of population growth on the property tax base and municipal service provision?

Where to go for information?

- BC Stats. PEOPLE Projection Run 26. Victoria: Ministry of Management Services, 2001.
- City of Nanaimo. Downtown Plan. Bylaw 2002, No. 6000.038.
- City of Nanaimo. Plan Nanaimo. Bylaw 1996, No. 6000.
- Regional District of Nanaimo. Growth Management Plan. Nanaimo: Regional District of Nanaimo, 1997.

What are related indicators?

- Population: Aboriginal Peoples
- Population: Children (0-14)
- Population: Youth and Young Adults (15-24)
- Population: Recent Immigrants
- Population: Seniors (65+)
- Housing: Mobility



Children (0-14)

Why is it important?

The number of children has planning implications for community facilities, health services, organized sports, parks, schools, etc. An increasing number of children, especially young children, may suggest the need for increased child care, larger numbers of library books to meet the needs of young minds, more active and neighbourhood park space, traffic calming measures, etc. For schools, administrators will need to look at the capacity of existing school buildings, staffing levels and/or transportation requirements. If the number of new students exceed capacity, then capital expenditures for new school buildings may be necessary, and this can take several years for approval and construction to occur.

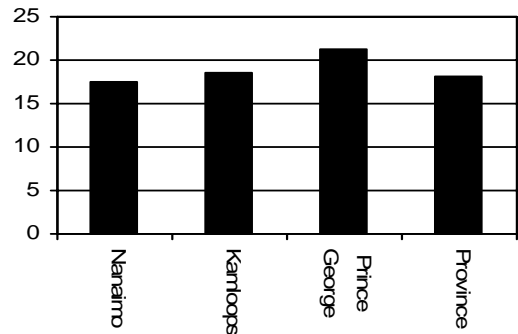
What is the situation in Nanaimo?

In Nanaimo, there were 3,605 children aged 0 to 4 years in 2001, which accounted for 4.9% of the population. As for children aged 5 to 14 years, there were 9,235 such children in 2001, which accounted for 12.7% of the population. Combined, there were 12,840 children aged 0 to 14 years in 2001, which accounted for 17.6% of the population.

Within Nanaimo, the neighbourhoods with the highest percentages of children aged 0 to 14 years in 2001 were: North Slope (19.0%), Northfield (19.3%), Harewood (20.7%) and Five Acres (22.3%).

How do we compare?

In 2001, Nanaimo had a lower percentage of children aged 0 to 14 years (17.6%) than for the Cities of Kamloops (18.6%) and Prince George (21.3%) and for the Province (18.1%).



■ Percentage of the population aged 0 to 14 years in 2001

What are the trends?

In 2001, BC Stats estimated that children aged 0 to 4 years accounted for 4.6% of the population and children aged 5 to 14 years accounted for 12.8% of the population in the Nanaimo Local Health Area (see Appendix 2). Combined, BC Stats estimated that children aged 0 to 14 years accounted for 17.4% of the population in the Nanaimo Local Health Area.

BC Stats PEOPLE Run 26 data projects that by 2026, the percentage of children aged 0 to 4 years will account for 4.4% of the population and the percentage of children aged 5 to 14 years will account for 10.1% of the population in the Nanaimo Local Health Area. Combined, children aged 0 to 14 years are projected to account for 14.5% of the population in the Nanaimo Local Health Area.

As such, it is projected that children aged 0 to 14 years will decrease by 2.9 percentage points (i.e., 17.4% to 14.5%) during the 25 year period between 2001 and 2026, while the total number of children aged 0 to 14 years is projected to increase by 29.8% from 16,636 to 21,594 for the period in question or by an average of 1.2% per year.

What has been written?

In 1999, the Canada/British Columbia Strategic Initiative Program, Human Resources Development Canada and the Ministry for Children and Families jointly funded the Early Years: Investing In Our Future. This project conducted research into early brain development and based on its findings, it emphasized the importance of nurturing care and positive stimulation.

The project referred to the period from pre-conception to age five as the investment phase of child development. It reported that during this phase, children develop language skills, the ability to learn, to cope with stress and to develop healthy relationships with others. As for the period between ages six and eighteen, these years were referred to as the enhancement or remediation phase. The project reported that during this phase, improving child development means strengthening family, community and school capacities to assist children to overcome developmental deficits or gaps.

The project stressed that the amount of money invested in education, health and social programs was inversely related to the potential benefits for children. It noted that there is less public spending in the early years, when the brain is flexible, and more as children age. As such, it reported that investments in early childhood would increase the efficiency of education, reduce the costs of health care and significantly contribute to future productivity.

What are some of the issues?

The projected slow growth in the number of children aged 0 to 14 years during the 25 year period between 2001 and 2026 could result in school closures in some neighbourhoods in Nanaimo, as well as stagnant or slow enrollment in child care, clubs, organized sports and other programs and services catering to this age group. It could also result in decreased demand for detached single family housing, as there will be fewer families with young children and more families comprised of empty nesters.

What are some assets/resources?

The Central Vancouver Island Crisis Society, as part of its Nanaimo Resource Directory, lists a number of services for children. For a copy of this directory, contact (250) 753-2495.

There is a 0-6 group in Nanaimo. This group currently meets twice a year and it provides an opportunity for agencies to network. On January 29, 2003, the Vancouver Island Health Authority held a meeting involving 0-6 members entitled "Connecting the Threads in the Early Years." As a result of this meeting, there was agreement to work more closely together for purposes of referral and submitting proposals.

The Vancouver Island Health Authority has a Nanaimo Child, Youth and Family Team that meets every month. This group is not just 0-6 but tends to primarily focus on this age group. Additionally, there is a Joint Advisory Group to the School District that includes the School District, the Ministry of Children and Family Development and the Vancouver Island Health Authority.

What questions does this raise?

- As the population ages in Nanaimo, how do we ensure that children's needs are adequately addressed in all neighbourhoods?
- What more can be done to help ensure positive early childhood development in Nanaimo?

Where to go for information?

- BC Stats. PEOPLE Projection Run 26. Victoria: Ministry of Management Services, 2001.
- Statistics Canada. 2001 Community Profiles, 2002.

What are related indicators?

- Children & Youth: Child Care
- Children & Youth: Child Poverty
- Children & Youth: Children and Youth in Care



Youth and Young Adults (15-24)

Why is it important?

The number of youth and young adults aged 15 to 24 years has planning implications for community facilities, educational institutions, health services, organized sports, parks, etc. It also has implications for employment and housing. For older youth and young adults, many will take their first steps toward independence by seeking a driver's license, employment and housing of their own. Some youth and young adults will also leave Nanaimo to pursue an education, employment and housing elsewhere.

What is the situation in Nanaimo?

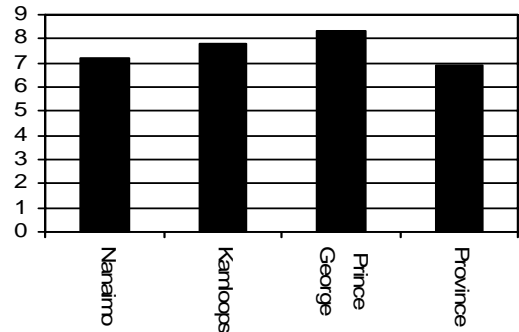
In Nanaimo, there were 5,260 youth aged 15 to 19 years in 2001, which accounted for 7.2% of the population. As for young adults aged 20 to 24 years, there were 4,405 young adults in 2001, which accounted for 6.0% of the population. Combined, there were 9,665 youth and young adults aged 15 to 24 years in 2001, which accounted for 13.2% of the population.

Within Nanaimo, the neighbourhoods with the highest percentages of youth and young adults aged 15 to 24 years in 2001 were: Five Acres (13.9%), Dover (14.4%), Northfield (16.4%) and Harewood (16.5%).

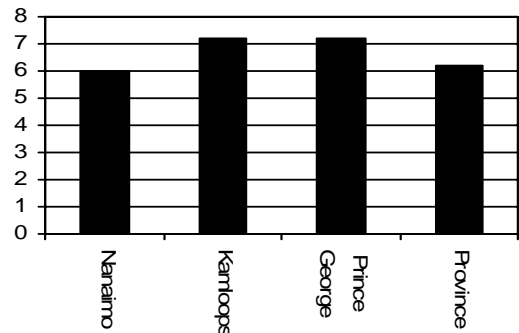
How do we compare?

In 2001, Nanaimo had a lower percentage of youth aged 15 to 19 years (7.2%) than for the Cities of Kamloops (7.8%) and Prince George (8.3%) but a higher percentage of youth than for the Province (6.9%).

As for young adults aged 20 to 24 years, Nanaimo had a lower percentage (6.0%) than for the Cities of Kamloops and Prince George (both at 7.2%) and for the Province (6.2%).



■ Percentage of the population aged 15 to 19 years in 2001



■ Percentage of the population aged 20 to 24 years in 2001

What are the trends?

In 2001, BC Stats estimated that youth aged 15 to 19 years accounted for 7.1% of the population and young adults aged 20 to 24 years accounted for 6.5% of the population in the Nanaimo Local Health Area (see Appendix 2). Combined, BC Stats estimated that youth and young adults aged 15 to 24 years accounted for 13.6% of the population in the Nanaimo Local Health Area.

BC Stats PEOPLE Projection Run 26 data projects that by 2026, the percentage of youth aged 15 to 19 years will account for 5.3% of the population and the percentage of young adults aged 20 to 24 years will account for 5.2% of the population in the Nanaimo Local Health Area. Combined, youth and young adults aged 15 to 24 years are projected to account for 10.5% of the population in the Nanaimo Local Health Area.

As a percentage of the population, it is projected that youth and young adults aged 15 to 24 years will decrease by 3.1 percentage points (i.e., from 13.6% to 10.5%) during the 25 year period between 2001 and 2026. With regard to the total number of youth and young adults aged 15 to 24 years, their number is projected to increase by 21.0% from 13,007 to 15,738 for the period in question or by an average of 0.8% per year.

What are some of the issues?

The projected slow growth in the number of youth and young adults aged 15 to 24 years during the 25 year period between 2001 and 2026 could result in school closures in some neighbourhoods and stagnant or slow enrollment in organized sports, post-secondary education and youth programs. It could also result in a declining crime rate, as youth and young adults have a greater propensity to commit crime, especially property crime, than for other age groups (Ministry of the Attorney General, June 1998).

What are some assets/resources?

The Central Vancouver Island Crisis Society, as part of its [Nanaimo Resource Directory](#), lists a number of services for youth. For a copy of this directory, contact (250) 753-2495.

The City of Nanaimo's Community Planning Division publishes [Surviving in Nanaimo](#), which lists a number of services for youth. For a copy of this directory, contact (250) 755-4483.

The Neutral Zone is a late night, substance free youth program. The majority of participants are between 10 and 18 years and activities include arts and crafts, games, movies and sports. Operated by Tillicum Haus, it can be reached by contacting (250) 753-6578.

One Stop Youth Centre offers a drop-in program where youth aged 13 to 18 years can have a meal and socialize. It also offers access to community resources and recreational activities, as well as planned outings on a regular basis. Operated by the Nanaimo Youth Services Association, it can be reached by contacting (250) 754-1989.

Youth Quest provides weekly drop-in for gay, lesbian, bi-sexual and transgender youth aged 14 to 21 years. Operated by the Nanaimo Women's Centre, it can be reached by contacting (250) 754-0665.

What questions does this raise?

- What can be done to increase affordable housing options for youth and young adults?
- What can be done to retain Grade 12 graduates within Nanaimo?

Where to go for information?

- BC Stats. [PEOPLE Projection Run 26](#). Victoria: Ministry of Management Services, 2001.
- Ministry of the Attorney General – Public Safety and Regulatory Branch, Police Services Division. "Crime Rates." [BC Crime Trends](#). June 1998.

What are related indicators?

- Economic: Unemployment
- Children & Youth: Children and Youth in Care
- Education: High School Completion
- Education: Post-Secondary Transition
- Health: Teen Pregnancy
- Public Safety: Youth Crime



Seniors (65+)

Why is it important?

Nanaimo's population is aging, as evidenced by the 2001 Census. In 1996, Nanaimo's median age was 36.5 years, whereas in 2001, the median age had increased to 40.4 years. Of note, the median age is the point where exactly one-half of the population is older than the median age and one-half of the population is younger than the median age.

The aging of the population will have significant impacts on facilities, programs and services for seniors, such as accessible, adaptable and affordable housing; health and long term care facilities; and transportation. It will also have significant impacts on the labour force, as the retirement of the Baby Boom generation will lead to possible skill shortages in a number of areas.

From a community perspective, today's seniors contribute more to charity, participate more often in community affairs and politics, and volunteer more often than younger members of society. In fact, retirement once meant withdrawal from civic activity but because of marked improvements in the finances and health of seniors, they are now making an active contribution to community life (Putnam, 2000).

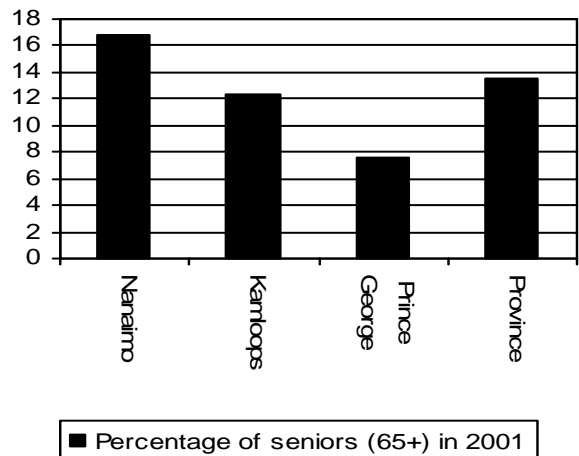
What is the situation in Nanaimo?

In Nanaimo, 12,300 or 16.8% of the population was 65+ in 2001. Of this total, 5,370 or 43.7% were male and 6,930 or 56.3% were female. In this same year, 2,490 or 3.4% of the population was 80+. Of this total, 905 or 36.3% were male and 1,585 or 63.7% were female.

Within Nanaimo, the neighbourhoods with the highest percentages of seniors in 2001 were as follows: Townsite (21.7%), City Centre (22.7%), Pleasant Valley/Turner (24.4%), and Newcastle (25.9%). Of note, three of these four neighbourhoods are located in Central Nanaimo.

How do we compare?

In 2001, Nanaimo had a higher percentage of seniors (16.8%) than for both the Cities of Kamloops (12.3%) and Prince George (7.6%) and for the Province (13.6%).



What are the trends?

In 2001, those persons 65+ represented 15.4% of the population in the Nanaimo Local Health Area (see Appendix 2). BC Stats PEOPLE Run 26 data projects that by 2026, the percentage of persons 65+ in the Nanaimo Local Health Area will increase by 5.6 percentage points to 21.0%, while the total number of persons 65+ will more than double from 14,650 to 31,328.

As for those persons 80+, in 2001, they represented 3.8% of the population in the Nanaimo Local Health Area. BC Stats PEOPLE Run 26 data projects that by 2026, the percentage of persons 80+ in the Nanaimo Local Health Area will increase by 1.1 percentage points to 4.9%, while the total number of persons 80+ will more than double from 3,638 to 7,383.

What are some of the issues?

The projected more than doubling of the population 65+ and 80+ in the 25 year period between 2001 and 2026 will place enormous strains on those facilities, programs and services catering to these two population groups in the Nanaimo Local Health Area.

Because of improvements in the finances and health of seniors, more are likely to live independently for longer periods of time. As such, housing which enables the elderly to age in place and home support and other services to assist them to live independently will become increasingly important. However, when seniors can no longer live independently, a range of facility options, including congregate, long term and special care, will need to be available.

The increasing number of seniors will also place demands on the parks and recreation system, as seniors call for more passive park space and programs geared to their abilities, interests and needs.

What are some assets/resources?

The Central Vancouver Island Crisis Society, as part of its Nanaimo Resource Directory, lists a number of services for seniors. For a copy of this directory, contact (250) 753-2495.

The Bowen Park Seniors Program has over 1,700 members and provides a number of recreational and social activities such as ballroom and line dancing, escorted trips, fitness classes, games and special events. In addition, volunteers provide financial advice and legal help. For more information, contact (250) 755-7501.

Nanaimo and District Home Support provides a range of in-home support and professional services for seniors and caregivers to maximize their health, independence and well being. For more information, contact (250) 754-3351.

Paradise Isle Senior Society offers a drop-in centre for games, hobbies and socializing. It also has a nurse on staff who offers counselling and educational classes on nutrition and other relevant topics. For more information, contact (250) 754-9566.

The Seniors Outreach Team provides mental health outreach to seniors. It targets those seniors with behavioural, emotional and/or mental health issues. For more information, contact (250) 755-3301.

What questions does this raise?

- How will neighbourhoods develop and evolve as a result of the aging population in Nanaimo – e.g., increasing demand for public transit, more passive park space, presence of gated developments, etc.?
- What can be done to harness the considerable energy, knowledge and skills of seniors to the betterment of Nanaimo?

Where to go for information?

- BC Stats. PEOPLE Projection Run 26. Victoria: Ministry of Management Services, 2001.
- Putnam, Robert D. Bowling Alone: The Collapse and Revival of American Community. New York: Simon and Schuster, 2000.
- Urban Aspects Consulting Group Ltd. Building Capacity: A Housing Needs Assessment. Nanaimo: City of Nanaimo, 1999.

What are related indicators?

- Housing: Mobility
- Housing: Non-Market Housing
- Participation: Charitable Giving
- Participation: Volunteerism



Aboriginal Peoples

Why is it important?

Aboriginal peoples have and continue to experience significant inequalities. They are among those that face the highest levels of poverty, incarceration, suicide and unemployment. With regard to poverty, aboriginal peoples in cities are more than twice as likely to be living in poverty than non-aboriginal peoples (Lee, 2000).

According to the Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples (1998): "Aboriginal peoples face discrimination in hiring and employment; they earn about one-third less in wages; they are less likely to hold down full-time, full-year jobs; and they are much more likely to be employed in manual trades such as construction than in white collar jobs."

Additionally, aboriginal life expectancy is seven years less than that of the overall population in Canada, and there are almost twice as many infant deaths among aboriginal peoples (Townson, 1999).

How is it defined?

The Census groups the population as either aboriginal or non-aboriginal. Aboriginal peoples are further grouped as "Inuit," "Metis" or "North American Indian." Aboriginal peoples also include "Registered and Treaty Indians," as defined by the Indian Act of Canada, and members of First Nations and Indian Bands.

What is the situation in Nanaimo?

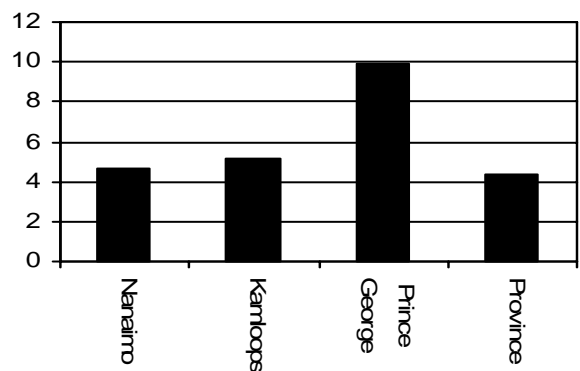
In Nanaimo, 3,380 people or 4.7% of the population identified themselves as being aboriginal in 2001.

As for the Snuneymuxw First Nation, it is situated on the southern outskirts of the City of Nanaimo and it currently occupies four reserves. In total, it had a population of about 450 people in 2001.

Unlike the City of Nanaimo, the on-reserve population is younger, with 42.5% of its population 24 years or younger in 2001. By comparison, for the City of Nanaimo, 30.8% of its population was 24 years or younger in 2001.

How do we compare?

In 2001, Nanaimo had a lower percentage of its population who identified themselves as being aboriginal (4.7%) than for both the Cities of Kamloops (5.2%) and Prince George (9.9%); however, it had a higher percentage than for the Province (4.4%).



■ Percentage of the population who identified themselves as being aboriginal in 2001

What are the trends?

Between 1996 and 2001, the number of people who identified themselves as being aboriginal increased by 29.3% from 2,615 to 3,380 in Nanaimo.

In 1996, 3.8% of the population identified themselves as being aboriginal; while in 2001, 4.7% of the population identified themselves as being aboriginal in Nanaimo.

With regard to the Snuneymuxw First Nation, between 1996 and 2001, the number of band members increased by 4.9% from 428 to 449.

What are some assets/resources?

The M'Akola Housing Society provides affordable rental housing for families and single parents of aboriginal ancestry who are in core need of housing. For more information, contact (250) 756-4217.

The Snuneymuxw First Nation offers a number of programs and services to its band members. These programs and services target the education, employment, health, housing and spiritual needs of its members. Its employment services include career counselling, employment assistance and vocational training. Its health services include AIDS education, alcohol and drug assessment, anger management, family counselling and parenting skills. Its housing programs include CMHC housing mortgages and insurance, as well as assistance with construction, maintenance and renovation needs. For more information about these and other programs and services, contact (250) 740-2300.

The Tillicum Haus Native Friendship Centre offers counselling and health services, education and training programs, and social supports. It also offers activities and special events targeting children, youth, adults and families. For more information, contact (250) 753-6578.

The Tsow-Tun Le Lum Society offers a 29-bed substance abuse treatment program for aboriginal peoples. This program is based on the philosophy that for many aboriginal peoples, abuse of alcohol and drugs is a problem arising from complex sources, including loss of identity and spirituality. For more information, contact (250) 390-3123.

The Nanaimo First Nations Liaison Committee was established to foster and develop improved communication between local government jurisdictions and the Snuneymuxw First Nation, as well as to establish an advisory and consultative mechanism to address local issues of mutual concern as they may arise between both parties. For more information, contact (250) 755-4423.

Where to go for information?

- Lee, Kevin K. Urban Poverty in Canada. Ottawa: Canadian Council on Social Development, April 2000.
- Statistics Canada. 2001 Community Profiles, 2002.
- Statistics Canada. Selected Characteristics for Census Divisions and Sub-Divisions, 1996 Census - 100% and 20% Sample Data. Cat. No. 95-191-XPB.
- Townson, Monica. Health and Wealth: How Social and Economic Factors Affect Our Well Being? Toronto: J. Lorimer, 1999.

What questions does this raise?

- What is being done in the schools to develop an appreciation of aboriginal culture and history among students?
- What is being done to change misconceptions and stereotypes about aboriginal peoples?
- What role can aboriginal arts and culture play in efforts to facilitate economic growth in Nanaimo?

What are related indicators?

- Population: Population Growth
- Children & Youth: Children and Youth In Care
- Economic: Poverty
- Economic: Unemployment
- Housing: Housing Cost
- Housing: Non-Market Housing
- Leisure & Recreation: Heritage



Lone Parent Families

Why is it important?

There has been an increase in the number of lone parent families in BC. Between 1996 and 2001, the number of lone parent families increased by 21.2%; while the number of two parent families increased by 5.5%.

In 2001, the vast majority (81%) of lone parent families were headed by females in BC. These female lone parent families had far lower average family incomes than for two parent families and male lone parent families. As such, lone parent families, especially those headed by females, are far more likely to live in poverty, and children in such families face far greater risk of experiencing negative outcomes and poor living conditions (National Council of Welfare, February 2002).

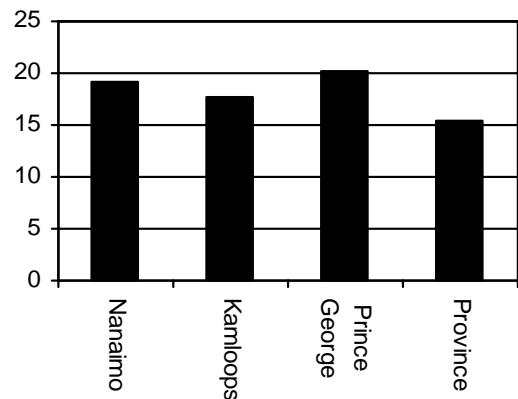
What is the situation in Nanaimo?

In Nanaimo, 3,925 or 19.1% of all families were comprised of lone parent families in 2001. Of these families, 83.3% were headed by females and 16.7% were headed by males.

With regard to average family income for lone parent families in Nanaimo, this information will not be available until May 13, 2003. However, this information is available for 1995. In this year, female lone parent families earned 43% of that earned by two parent families and 65% of that earned by male lone parent families in Nanaimo.

How do we compare?

Nanaimo had a slightly lower percentage of all families comprised of lone parent families than for the City of Prince George (20.2%) but a higher percentage than for both the City of Kamloops (17.7%) and the Province (15.5%) in 2001.



■ Percentage of all families comprised of lone parent families in 2001

What are the trends?

Between 1996 and 2001, the number of lone parent families increased by 13.6% from 3,455 to 3,925; while the number of two parent families increased by 2.8% from 16,205 to 16,660 in Nanaimo.

In 1996, 17.6% of all families were comprised of lone parent families; while in 2001, 19.1% of all families were comprised of lone parent families in Nanaimo.

What has been written?

Lone parents, with children to care for and without a partner to help, are often socially isolated. As a result, they seldom participate in most forms of civic engagement (e.g., club attendance, volunteer activities, voting, etc.) (Putnam, 2000). Work outside the home can improve the situation; however, only 51% of female lone parents with children under 16 worked in 1996, compared to 67% of comparable females in two parent families in BC (BC Council for Families, June 1997). Information was not readily available for male lone parents.

What are some of the issues?

Recent changes to BC Benefits (now BC Employment and Assistance) will have major impacts on employable lone parent recipients with non-disabled children over three. Whereas in the past, these parents were expected to find work when their youngest child turned seven; they are now expected to find work when their youngest child turns three. They then have two years (out of five years) to become independent, after which time their benefits may be reduced (PovNet, April 2002).

What are some assets/resources?

The Central Vancouver Island Crisis Society, as part of its [Nanaimo Resource Directory](#), lists a number of services for families, including child care resources and parenting programs. For a copy of this directory, contact (250) 753-2495.

Family Place, a program of the Nanaimo Family Life Association, offers a family resource centre and toy library. It also offers information, referral, resources and support, as well as an opportunity to meet other parents and children. Additionally, it offers workshops on topics regarding parenting. For more information, contact (250) 754-3720.

The Ministry of Human Resources offers a child care subsidy to low income families to assist in the cost of child care. For information about this subsidy, as well as eligibility requirements, contact the Nanaimo MHR Information and Assistance Line at 1 (866) 866-0800.

Regional Childcare Resource and Referral assists parents in locating childcare for children 0 to 12 years. It also assists caregivers by providing education, professional consultation and support with regard to childcare related issues. For more information, contact (250) 716-2022.

What questions does this raise?

- Given that over 80% of lone parent families are headed by females, what services and supports are necessary to address their child care, employment, housing and recreational needs?
- What services and supports are necessary to enable lone parents to overcome their isolation? How can we assist them and their children to be more involved in the social fabric of society – e.g., club membership, volunteer activities, voting, etc.?

Where to go for information?

- BC Council for Families (BCCF). [Diversity and Change: A Profile of British Columbia Families](#). Vancouver: BCCF, June 1997.
- National Council of Welfare. [The Cost of Poverty](#). Ottawa: National Council of Welfare, February 2002.

What are related indicators?

- Economic: Food Support
- Economic: Income Support
- Economic: Poverty
- Children & Youth: Child Care
- Housing: Housing Cost
- Health: Teen Pregnancy



People with Disabilities

Why is it important?

People with disabilities want to participate in the community as much as other citizens but may be limited by attitudinal or environmental barriers that make participation difficult or impossible. Attitudinal barriers label people with disabilities, disregard their contributions and gifts, and limit their opportunities to participate. Environmental factors, although easier to correct, can also limit their opportunities to participate and live independently. These barriers can include restrictive access to community facilities and parks, inadequate and inflexible housing, lack of designated parking, limited public transit options, and poor building and neighbourhood design.

How is it defined?

For the purpose of this indicator, it is acknowledged that disabilities are identified by the individual and may include but are not limited to mobility, agility, hearing, sight, speech, cognitive or mental disability.

What is the situation in Nanaimo?

Given that no one agency tracks the number of people with disabilities and the nature of their disability, this indicator must rely on information from many sources.

For School District #68 (Nanaimo-Ladysmith), 24 students were classified as physically dependent, 99 students were classified as having a moderate mental disability and 127 students were classified as having a physical disability in 2000/01. Additionally, 40 students were classified as autistic, 31 students were classified as deaf/hard of hearing and 12 students were classified as visually impaired in 2000/01 (Ministry of Education, 2000/01).

According to the Ministry of Children and Family Development, the following statistics pertain to people with disabilities in Nanaimo for September 2002 (Christie, September 2002).

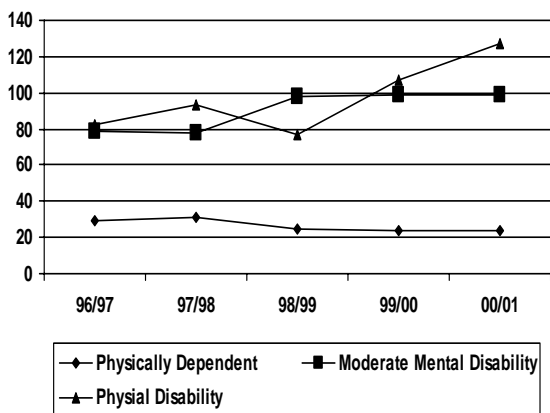
Programs	#
Number of children with autism receiving behavioural support	80
Number of children with special needs receiving supported child care	280
Number of children and youth with severe disabilities receiving benefits under the At-Home Program	50
Number of adults with developmental disabilities living in community residences	143
Number of adults with developmental disabilities residing in semi-independent living arrangements	49
Number of adults with developmental disabilities in intensive adult care	0
Number of adults with developmental disabilities in supported work programs	30

According to the Ministry of Human Resources, it is anticipated that about 1,000 people will fall under its new Persons with Disabilities Act in Nanaimo. In July 2001, approximately 1,200 people fell under the old legislation identified as DB2 (French, September 2002).

It should be stressed that the above categories are not mutually exclusive, meaning that a person with a disability may be counted more than once. As such, caution should be exercised in interpreting the findings.

What are the trends?

Between 1996/97 and 2000/01, the number of physically dependent students decreased by 17.2% for School District #68 (Nanaimo-Ladysmith). As for students classified as having moderate mental and physical disabilities, their numbers increased by 25.3% and 54.9% respectively (Ministry of Education, 2000/01).



Between April 1999 and April 2002, the number of adults with mental disabilities served by the Ministry of Children and Family Development in Nanaimo increased by 13% from 262 to 296. Although information was not readily available for children and youth served by the Ministry, it was stated that the number is increasing by between five and ten children per year (Christie, September 2002).

What are some assets/resources?

The Nanaimo Association for Community Living is a non-profit society which provides services and support to people with developmental disabilities. Through its day programs and six residences, it is working to ensure that people with developmental disabilities have access to needed services and the opportunity to achieve both a high quality of life and integration within the community. For more information, contact (250) 741-0224.

The Nanaimo Association for Mentally Handicapped People offers day programs and training for between 50 and 75 people with developmental disabilities. It also teaches basic skills to people with developmental disabilities as part of its Skills Development Program. For more information, contact (250) 753-5322.

The Nanaimo Independent Living Program assists people with disabilities to achieve greater independence. It believes that people with disabilities should be able to select their own mode of living, including making decisions affecting their education, employment, finances, medical care, etc. To this end, it provides information and referral, one-on-one peer support and peer support groups. For more information, contact (250) 758-5547.

What questions does this raise?

- What can be done to eliminate or reduce attitudinal and environmental barriers which limit participation by people with disabilities in their neighbourhoods?
- What can be done to publicly recognize the contributions and gifts of people with disabilities in Nanaimo?

Where to go for information?

- Christie, Mark. Community Living Program, Ministry of Children and Family Development.
- French, Bill. Ministry of Human Resources.
- Ministry of Education. Annual Student Achievement Profile for the Nanaimo-Ladysmith School District in School Year 2000/01.

What are related indicators?

- Children & Youth: Children and Youth in Care
- Housing: Non-Market Housing
- Transportation: HandyDART Usage
- Transportation: Public Transit Usage



Recent Immigrants

Why is it important?

Recent immigration (those immigrants arriving between 1991 and 1996) accounted for 11.2% of the net population growth that occurred in Nanaimo between 1991 and 1996. Most recent immigration to Nanaimo was from Asia (51%), with four of the five largest source countries being Asian.

While recent immigration has helped fuel economic growth during the period in question, it has also placed strains on immigrant support services, including language training. Recent immigrants must cope with a multitude of challenges, including accessing child care, education and health care services; figuring out the currency; finding employment and housing; learning the language; and becoming familiar with the customs, laws and traditions of BC.

What is the situation in Nanaimo?

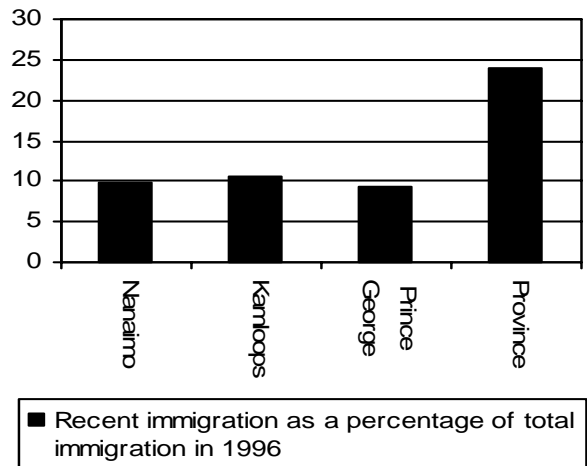
Between 1991 and 1996, 1,120 immigrants settled in Nanaimo, which represented 9.9% of the total immigrant population living in the municipality. During this period, the largest immigrant group was from Vietnam (210 or 18.8% of the total). The second largest immigrant group was from the United Kingdom (140 or 12.5%), the third was from India (115 or 10.3%), the fourth was from the Philippines (90 or 8.1%) and the fifth was from Taiwan (75 or 6.7%).

Within Nanaimo, the neighbourhoods receiving the highest numbers of recent immigrants were: Departure Bay, North Slope and South Harewood (each with 75 or 6.7% of the total), Rutherford (80 or 7.1%), Hospital (125 or 11.2%), North Harewood (165 or 14.7%), and Woodgrove (260 or 23.2%).

2001 Census information pertaining to immigration and citizenship will not be available until January 21, 2003.

How do we compare?

In 1996, recent immigration as a percentage of total immigration was slightly higher for Nanaimo (9.9%) than for the City of Prince George (9.4%) but was lower than for the City of Kamloops (10.6%) and for the Province (24.0%).



What are the trends?

During the five year period between 1991 and 1996, 1,120 immigrants settled in Nanaimo. Put another way, an average of 224 immigrants per year settled in Nanaimo. By comparison, during the ten year period between 1981 and 1990, an average of 131 immigrants per year settled in Nanaimo.

What has been written?

Martin Spigelman, who has written extensively on the poverty faced by recent immigrants to Canada, notes that the average total income for recent immigrants is less than half that for non-immigrants. Additionally, he notes that recent immigrants face many barriers, including inadequate English language skills, isolation, systematic discrimination and underemployment in relation to their education levels.

What are some of the issues?

About 62% of immigrants to Nanaimo were 20 years or older at the time of immigration. As such, they did not or are not benefiting from language training in the schools. With regard to non-English speaking immigrants, some may enroll in English language services for adults or take private tutoring, while others may try to learn English on their own or with the assistance of family and friends. For the latter, accessing community services, achieving employment, enhancing education or skills, expanding social support networks, and integrating into the community will be a more difficult task.

What are some assets/resources?

The Central Vancouver Island Multicultural Society is concerned with advancing immigrant settlement and fostering awareness of and pride in cultural diversity. To this end, it offers cross-cultural counselling, a drop-in employment centre, ESL for adults, interpretation and translation services, referral to community resources and a women's group. For more information, contact (250) 753-6911.

The Nanaimo Immigrant Settlement Society provides settlement assistance to recent immigrants and sponsors refugees. Its services include advocacy, assistance with clothing and furnishings, citizen information, cross-cultural counselling, interpretation and translation services, orientation to community, reception of new arrivals and tutoring. For more information, contact (250) 758-6518.

The Ministry Responsible for Multiculturalism & Immigration published a Newcomers' Guide to Resources and Services in June 1999. This guide provides information on citizenship and government; the education, health care and legal systems; finding a job; money and banking; etc. For a copy of this guide, call (604) 660-2203.

What questions does this raise?

- Given the changing face of immigration (i.e., more immigrants from Asia and fewer from Europe), how are immigrant support services coping with these seemingly more complex needs?
- How can residents and service providers welcome, orient and ease the period of adjustment and integration for recent immigrants? What are we currently doing and what more could we be doing?

Where to go for information?

- Spigelman, Martin. Unfulfilled Expectations, Missed Opportunities: Poverty Among Immigrants and Refugees in British Columbia. Vancouver: Working Group on Poverty, 1998.
- Statistics Canada. Selected Characteristics for Census Divisions and Sub-Divisions, 1996, Census - 100% and 20% Data. Statistics Canada - Cat. No. 95-191-XPB.

What are related indicators?

- Population: Population Growth
- Economic: Income Support
- Economic: Poverty
- Economic: Unemployment
- Education: English-as-a-Second Language
- Housing: Homelessness

Who are potential population contacts?

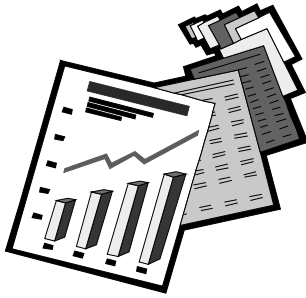
- Jo-Anne Blackman, Executive Director, Central Vancouver Island Multicultural Society, #114-285 Prideaux Street, Nanaimo, BC, V9R 2N2, (250) 753-6911.
- Alison Millward, Social Planner, Community Planning Division, Development Services Department, City of Nanaimo, 455 Wallace Street, Nanaimo, BC, V9R 5J6, (250) 755-4483.
- Ruth McDougall, Manager, Population Statistics, BC Stats, Ministry of Management Services, PO Box 9410, Stn. Prov. Govt., Victoria, BC, V8W 9V1, (250) 387-0337.

What other references were used in this section?

- City of Nanaimo. Nanaimo Downtown Plan. Bylaw 2002, No. 6000.038.
- City of Nanaimo. Plan Nanaimo. Bylaw 1996, No. 6000.
- Economic Development Office. Community Profile. Nanaimo: City of Nanaimo, 2001.
- Office of the Medical Health Officer. Population Health Report 1999. Nanaimo: Central Vancouver Island Health Region, 2000.
- Regional District of Nanaimo. Growth Management Plan. Lantzville: Regional District of Nanaimo, January 30, 1997.
- Urban Futures Incorporated. Population and Housing Projections for the Regional District and City of Nanaimo, 2001 to 2031. Nanaimo: City of Nanaimo, August 2002.

What are other possible population indicators?

- Number of Family and Non-Family Households
- Number of Persons Living Alone
- Population by Age Groups and Gender
- Population by Ethnicity
- Population by Mother Tongue



Economic Indicators Section

Executive Summary:

Nanaimo and region have been shifting from a resource-based economy that traditionally relied on an abundance of natural resources in the forests and oceans, towards an information, knowledge and service based economy that relies on the innovation, knowledge and skills of its local workforce. While these changes have created new opportunities for residents of Nanaimo, not everyone has benefited equally. During the transition, which will take time for businesses, educational institutions, government and others to adjust, Nanaimo has experienced lower levels of personal income due to the shift from higher paying resource sector jobs to lower paying service sector jobs, as well as higher levels of food support usage, income support, poverty and unemployment.

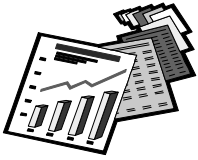
These economic and social conditions provided the impetus for the formation of the Economic Development Group (EDG), which comprises a coalition of businesses, institutions and organizations committed to working together to create a community of economic and social opportunity. The EDG developed the first edition of its Community Economic Development Strategy, entitled "Working Together to Build a Prosperous Future," in 1999 and published its second edition in May 2002.

In addition to the efforts of the EDG, the City of Nanaimo has instituted a number of economic development initiatives, including BusinessCARE, Film Nanaimo and Tourism Nanaimo. Its Economic Development Office has also prepared a Community Profile (May 2002), which includes statistical information about the economic situation and trends occurring in Nanaimo. Nanaimo is also a member of a number of economic development organizations, including the LinxBC Call Centre Team; the Mid-Island Science, Technology and Innovation Council; the Pacific Offshore Energy Group; and the Vancouver Island Economic Developers Association.

For more information about the cited economic development initiatives and organizations, refer to Appendix 3.

Highlighted Economic Indicators:

Personal Income, Female Participation Rate, Food Support, Income Support, Poverty, Unemployment



Personal Income

Why is it important?

There is strong evidence that higher incomes and social status are linked to better health and social well being. In fact, studies in provinces and cities in all parts of Canada consistently show that people at each step on the income scale are healthier than those on the step below.

One large study of pension data from people across Canada found that men in the top 20% income bracket live on average six years longer than those in the bottom 20% and can expect 14 more years of life free of activity restrictions. Additionally, women in the top 20% income bracket live on average three years longer than those in the bottom 20% and can expect eight more years of life free of activity restrictions (Office of the Provincial Health Officer, November 1995).

What is the situation in Nanaimo?

In Nanaimo, the average personal income based on taxation returns was \$36,234 in 1999.

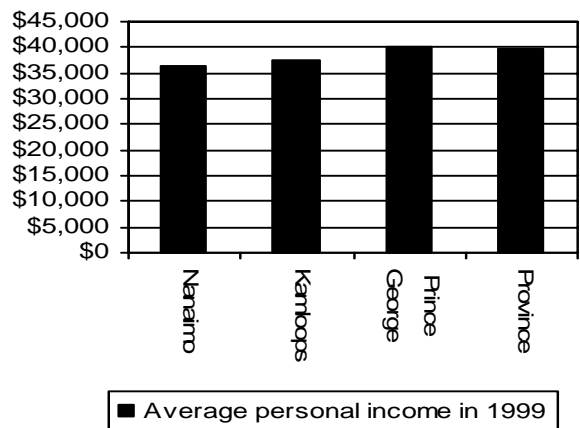
With regard to the distribution of income in Nanaimo, 20,580 persons or 37.3% of all persons who filed an income tax return reported income between \$0 and \$15,000. Another 10,360 persons or 18.8% of all persons reported income between \$15,001 and \$25,000 and 7,980 persons or 14.5% of all persons reported income between \$25,001 and \$35,000. As such, at least 70.6% of all persons who filed an income tax return reported income below the average personal income. For Nanaimo, this means that the income distribution curve is not symmetrical and that the median personal income, which is the level at which 50% of the population earn more and 50% of the population earn less, is far lower than the average personal income (BC Stats, 2002).

With regard to the source of total income for Nanaimo in 1999, most (60.9%) came from employment (i.e., salaries and wages). As for the remainder, 16.6% came from government transfer payments and 22.6% came from other income (e.g., investment, self-employment, tax exempt, etc.) (BC Stats, 2002).

Government transfer payments include the Canada Pension Plan, Old Age Security and Guaranteed Income Supplement, Employment Insurance benefits, Federal Child Tax benefits and other income from government sources.

How do we compare?

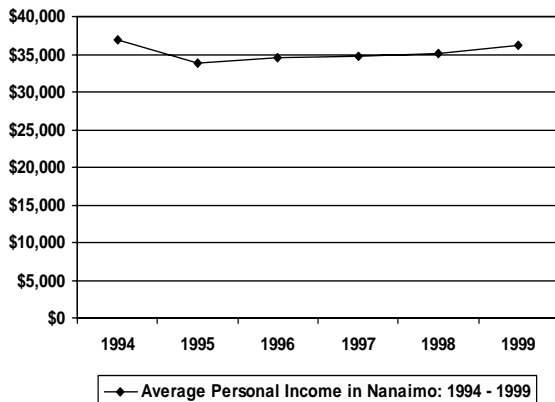
Nanaimo had a lower average personal income (\$36,234) than for both the Cities of Kamloops (\$37,685) and Prince George (\$40,253) and for the Province (\$39,758) in 1999.



Data from the 2001 Census revealed that the median personal income for persons (15+) in Nanaimo (\$20,253) was lower than for the Cities of Kamloops (\$21,543) and Prince George (\$24,624) and for the Province (\$22,095). As for median family income, Nanaimo (\$50,482) was again lower than for the Cities of Kamloops (\$56,188) and Prince George (\$60,578) and for the Province (\$54,840).

What are the trends?

Between 1994 and 1999, the average personal income in Nanaimo decreased by 2.0% from \$36,972 to \$36,234. During the same period, the average personal income for the Province increased by 2.3% from \$38,883 to \$39,758.



What are some of the issues?

As part of a strategic planning retreat for Health Canada (December 10-11, 2001), it was reported that incomes will likely fall or stall in the coming years for British Columbians. Reasons cited for the likely fall or stall included:

- the extensive, projected cuts to the Provincial civil service and Provincially funded programs;
- the decrease in the minimum wage;
- the tightening of eligibility for welfare and other government assistance programs;
- the softwood lumber tariffs imposed by the United States, which are expected to result in 20,000 job losses Province-wide until Canada and the United States can reach an agreement;
- the current risk of similar tariffs being imposed on the film industry, which is worth about \$1 billion annually to British Columbia's economy.

The above reasons are likely to result in falling or stalling personal incomes, especially for those people belonging to the civil service, those who are new to the job market, those who are on welfare and those who work in the resource sector, especially forestry.

What questions does this raise?

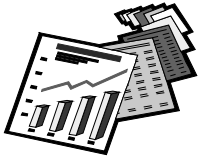
- How will an aging population affect or impact the average personal income in Nanaimo?
- How will the shift from resource to service sector occupations affect or impact the average personal income in Nanaimo?

Where to go for information?

- BC Stats. [Community Facts](#), 2002.
- Health Canada. [Strategic Planning Retreat for the BC/Yukon Region](#). Vancouver: Regional Executive Committee, December 10-11, 2001.
- Office of the Provincial Health Officer. [Health Goals for British Columbians](#). Victoria: Province of British Columbia, November 1995.

What are related indicators?

- Economic: Female Participation Rate
- Economic: Income Support
- Economic: Poverty
- Economic: Unemployment
- Housing: Housing Cost
- Participation: Charitable Giving



Female Participation Rate

Why is it important?

Over the past two decades, there have been particularly sharp increases in the proportion of females with children in the labour force in BC. Between 1976 and 1996, participation by females in the labour force in two parent families with children under age 16 living at home rose from 40% to 62%. During the same period, participation by females in two parent families whose youngest child was less than three rose from 23% to 60% (BC Council for Families, June 1997).

As a consequence, more than 70% of pre-school children (up to age six) find themselves in non-parental care arrangements on a regular basis while parents work or attend school (BC Council for Families, June 1997). As such, the quality of non-parental care has a great influence on healthy child development.

In addition to concerns about the quality of non-parental care, females in the labour force face their own set of challenges. In BC, female family members devote considerably more time than their male counterparts to unpaid work activities, including housework, primary child care, shopping and volunteer activities. This occurs even when females are in the labour force. For example, females in the labour force spent 4.3 hours per day on unpaid work activities, over 1.5 hours more per day than the figure for their male counterparts (BC Council for Families, June 1997).

As a consequence, females in the labour force are more likely to experience anxiety or stress as they try to juggle the demands of family and work, including unpaid work.

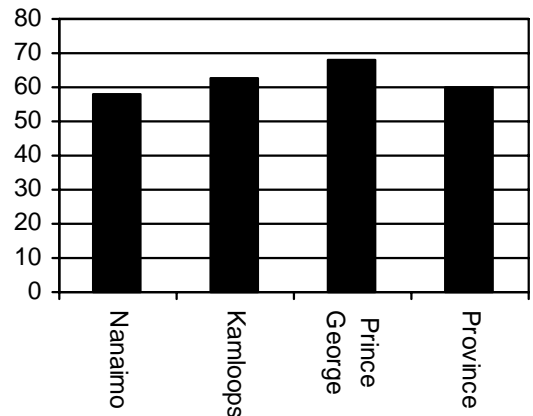
What is the situation in Nanaimo?

In Nanaimo, 16,530 or 58.0% of all females (15+) participated in the labour force in 1996.

2001 Census information pertaining to the labour force (including paid and unpaid work) will not be available until February 11, 2003.

How do we compare?

In 1996, Nanaimo had a lower percentage (58.0%) of all females (15+) in the labour force than for the Cities of Kamloops (62.9%) and Prince George (68.2%) and for the Province (60.0%).



■ Percentage of all females (15+) who participated in the labour force in 1996

What are the trends?

Between 1991 and 1996, the percentage of all females (15+) who participated in Nanaimo's labour force increased by 2.6 percentage points from 55.4% to 58.0%.

What has been written?

According to Statistics Canada, in its report entitled Women in Canada 2000, women in general have far lower incomes than men – i.e., 62% of the average annual pre-tax income of men. This disparity has implications for female-headed households, particularly female-headed lone parent family households.

What are some of the issues?

Given the increasing female participation rate in the labour force, more families are becoming dependent on non-parent care arrangements. This dependency is raising concerns over the availability, cost and quality of that care.

Additionally, for many females, participation in the labour force is not an option. In fact, about 60% of two parent families with younger children less than three years count on two wages to make ends meet in BC (Vanier Institute for the Family, 1998).

What are some assets/resources?

In Nanaimo, there were 189 licensed child care facilities with 2,630 spaces in September 2002. For more information about licensed child care facilities and spaces, including contact information and locations, contact Community Care Facilitating Licensing, Central Island Health Service Delivery Area, at (250) 714-0424.

For low income families, a child care subsidy is available to assist in the cost of child care. For information about this subsidy, which is offered through the Ministry of Human Resources, contact the Nanaimo MHR Information and Assistance Line at 1 (866) 866-0800.

Regional Childcare Resource and Referral assists parents in locating childcare for children 0 to 12 years. It also assists caregivers by providing education, professional consultation and support with regard to childcare related issues. For more information, contact (250) 716-2022.

The Supported Child Care Program provides services to families of children with special needs. More specifically, it facilitates optimum participation of children requiring extra supports in community childcare settings by providing consultation, support and training to early childhood educators, family childcare providers, parents and other caregivers. For more information, contact (250) 245-3466.

What questions does this raise?

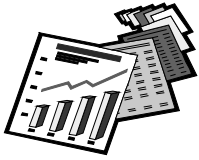
- How are the new maternity benefits impacting the female participation rate in the labour force? Are fewer females deciding to return to work after their benefits expire?
- What will be the impacts of recent changes to eligibility requirements for a child care subsidy?
- Why is Nanaimo's female participation rate in the labour force lower than for the two comparison municipalities and for the Province? Is it due to the lower cost of living in Nanaimo?

Where to go for information?

- BC Council for Families: Diversity & Change: A Profile of British Columbia Families. Vancouver: BC Council for Families, June 1997.
- Vanier Institute for the Family. From the Kitchen Table to the Board Table, 1998.

What are related indicators?

- Population: Lone Parent Families
- Economic: Unemployment
- Children & Youth: Child Care
- Participation: Volunteerism



Food Support

Why is it important?

Children are particularly at-risk from an inadequate diet. Undernourished children have difficulty concentrating and are more likely to suffer from illnesses that cause them to be absent from school. They perform more poorly on standardized tests and poor performance early in school is a major risk factor for dropping out of school in later years. Additionally, evidence has shown that even mildly undernourished children may potentially suffer abnormal brain, cognitive and psychological impairments that, if not corrected, can be irreversible (National Centre for Children in Poverty, 1997).

What is food support?

Food banks and other food support programs provide emergency and ongoing food assistance to people in need. They are not intended to ensure that people are adequately fed or have sufficient resources to be free from hunger. On average, households receive a food hamper once or twice per month, with enough groceries to last for about five days.

What is the situation in Nanaimo?

There are a number of food support programs in Nanaimo, many of which are operated by faith based organizations. While most of these programs maintain statistics as to use, the statistics are not always comparable – i.e., some track the number of clients, while others track the number of bags, hampers or meals distributed. Of note, recipients may be clients of more than one program, thus caution should be exercised in interpreting the findings.

The following statistics were collected for food support programs in Nanaimo for 2001 and 2002. There may be other programs which operate on an intermittent or seasonal basis.

The 7-10 Club provided between 200 and 350 breakfasts and 200 bag lunches per day (Monday through Friday) in 2001.

The Loaves and Fishes Community Food Bank distributed food on 104 days in 2001. For the year in question, it distributed 28,642 survival bags or about 775 bags per week. As for clients, it currently has 2,255 adults and 1,359 children.

The Nanaimo Christian Food Bank currently distributes about 90 bags of food per week on the first three Mondays of each month. As for clients, it currently has 3,684 people listed on its database, not including family members.

The Nanaimo Community Kitchens Society, offers a self-help group in which members learn about budgeting, food preparation and storage. In 2001, there were about 250 members.

The NRE Community Gardens had 93 full-time and 25 part-time gardeners in 2002. In addition to gardening space, gardeners receive instruction in food preservation and vegetable cooking.

The Salvation Army provided 44,775 breakfasts and lunches in 2001. It also provided 6,075 emergency food hampers in 2001.

School District #68, as part of its School Meals Program, provided an average of 1,139 catered meals per day and an average of 238 on-site meals per day, as well as providing substantial snacks to about 150 students per day in 2001/02 (see Appendix 4).

The Nanaimo Foodshare Network Society, as part of its Summer Lunch Munch, provided about 7,200 lunches to about 180 school aged children in 2002. These children usually rely on the School Meals Program.

The Nanaimo Community Food Bank ceased its operations in 2002.

What are the trends?

Between 1999 and 2002, use of food support programs in Nanaimo either remained constant or increased. Regarding the latter, the Loaves and Fishes Community Food Bank reported a sharp increase in September 2002 (up 35% from September 2001) and October 2002 (up 40% from October 2001). Other programs reported more modest increases in use between 1999 and 2002.

What has been written?

In 1997, about 2.5% of Canadians experienced difficulties meeting their food needs, which was double the figure eight years earlier (Health Canada, December 10-11, 2001). In 1999, in BC, almost 2% of the population used food banks. During the first six months of 2002, food banks in BC experienced a 13% to 18% increase in usage (Beatty, September 19, 2002).

What is happening in Nanaimo?

On October 4, 2002, representatives from 29 Nanaimo agencies working with recipients of food support took part in a one-day forum. The purpose of the forum was to develop a common vision and goals, as well as next steps, to improve Nanaimo's ability to provide food support.

At the forum, participants also discussed barriers, gaps and overlaps with regard to food support. These barriers, gaps and overlaps included but were not limited to: lack of collaboration, communication and/or information sharing; competition for funding and volunteers; inadequate referral systems; limited public education about the root causes of poverty; physical plant issues such as inadequate space and safe food storage; and public misconceptions regarding abuses.

As a result of this and a subsequent forum, agencies have committed to organizing a sector umbrella group. Through this collaborative effort, agencies plan to take on strategic initiatives to build capacity within the sector to overcome long standing barriers, gaps and overlaps to addressing hunger in Nanaimo.

What are some of the issues?

Recent changes to BC Benefits (now BC Employment and Assistance) will likely increase the use of food support programs in Nanaimo. These changes include a three week job search period during which time the applicant is not eligible to receive assistance, reductions to both the monthly shelter allowance and support rates for some clients, and time limits for those in receipt of assistance.

What are some assets/resources?

The Central Vancouver Island Crisis Society, as part of its [Nanaimo Resource Directory](#), lists a number of low and no cost food and clothing services. For a copy of this directory, contact (250) 753-2495.

The City of Nanaimo's Community Planning Division publishes and annually updates [Surviving in Nanaimo: Where to Get Free or Low Cost Goods and Services?](#) For more information or to receive a copy, contact (250) 755-4483.

Where to go for information?

- Beatty, Jim. "Job Market Helps BC Drop 19,000 from Welfare." [The Vancouver Sun](#). September 19, 2002, Sec. B, Page 7.
- Health Canada. [Strategic Planning Retreat for the BC/Yukon Region](#). Vancouver: Regional Executive Committee, December 10-11, 2001.

What are related indicators?

- Economic: Income Support
- Economic: Poverty



Income Support

Why is it important?

Income support programs play an important role in the incomes of poor individuals and families, as well as buffering non-poor individuals and families against poverty. For those individuals and families that are dependent on income support programs, they are particularly vulnerable to cuts and/or tightened eligibility criteria with regard to these programs. For those who fail to qualify or who are no longer eligible, the consequences can include food scarcity and homelessness.

How is it measured?

This indicator will highlight two income security programs: BC Employment and Assistance and Employment Insurance.

BC Employment and Assistance serves adults 19 to 64 years who are employable or temporarily excused from looking for employment. It also serves adults aged 65 years or older who do not receive a federal pension, children under 19 years who are living away from home, and children living in the home of a relative.

Employment Insurance provides temporary financial assistance to unemployed individuals while they look for work or upgrade their skills, while they are pregnant or caring for a newborn or adopted child, or while they are sick.

What is the situation in Nanaimo?

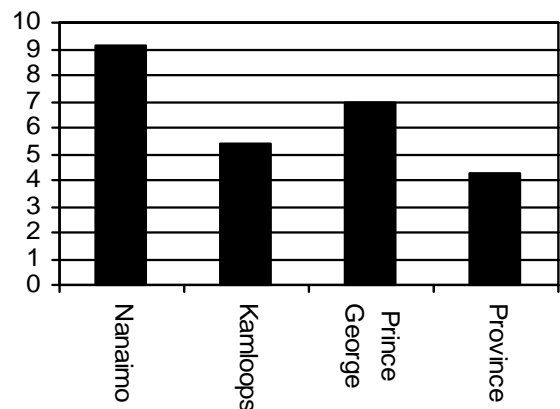
In Nanaimo, 9.1% of the adult population 19 to 64 years and 14.4% of children and youth under 19 years received basic BC Employment and Assistance in December 2001. Of note, these figures do not include aboriginal peoples living on reserve, children in the home of a relative, people with disabilities and seniors.

In Nanaimo, 4.3% of the adult population 19 to 64 years received Employment Insurance in December 2001. By age groups, 4.0% of 19 to 24 year olds, 4.8% of 25 to 54 year olds and 2.4% of 55 to 64 years olds received Employment Insurance in December 2001.

Of note, information pertaining to recipients of both programs is not readily available by neighbourhood in Nanaimo.

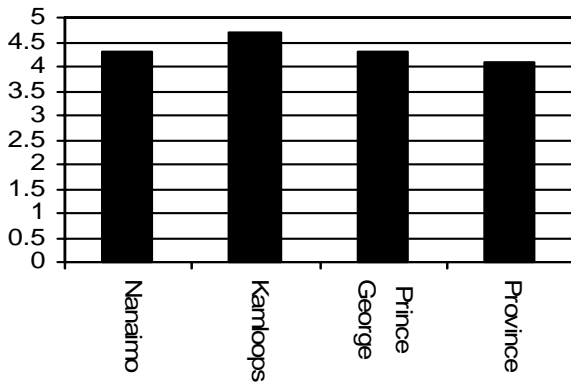
How do we compare?

In December 2001, Nanaimo had a higher percentage (9.1%) of its adult population 19 to 64 years who received basic BC Employment and Assistance than for both the Cities of Kamloops (5.4%) and Prince George (7.0%) and for the Province (4.3%).



■ Percentage of the population 19 to 64 years who received basic BC Employment and Assistance in December 2001

In December 2001, Nanaimo had the same percentage (4.3%) of its adult population 19 to 64 years who received Employment Insurance as the City of Prince George, a lower percentage than for the City of Kamloops (4.7%) and a higher percentage than for the Province (4.1%).



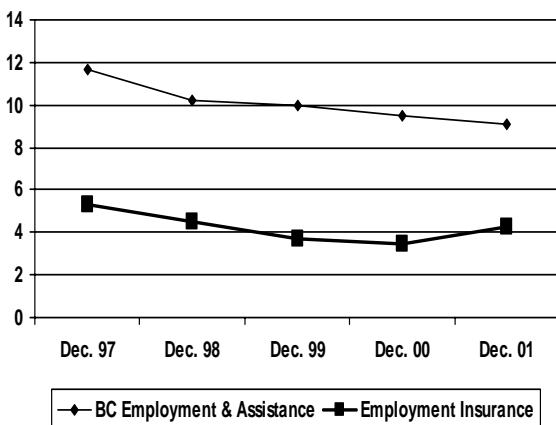
■ Percentage of the population 19 to 64 years who received Employment Insurance in December 2001

What are the trends?

During the five year period between December 1997 and December 2001, the percentage of Nanaimo's adult population 19 to 64 years who received basic BC Employment and Assistance decreased from 11.7% to 9.1%.

During the same period, the percentage of Nanaimo's adult population 19 to 64 years who received Employment Insurance decreased from 5.3% to 4.3%. Of note, for the five year period in question, the percentage of the adult population 19 to 64 years who received Employment Insurance reached a high of 5.3% in December 1997 and a low of 2.6% in September 2000.

Chart: Percentage of the Adult Population on Income Support for Nanaimo



What are some of the issues?

The Provincial government has made a number of changes to BC Benefits, many of which will limit eligibility and reduce benefits (see Appendix 5). These changes, which are detailed under its new BC Employment and Assistance Program, may be offset by an increase in support to assist people to employable status and then to achieve employment. This may result in a reduction in intergenerational dependence.

Federally, Employment Insurance regulations have been progressively tightened through the 1990s and the effect has been that fewer people qualify for benefits and of those that qualify, their benefits do not last as long.

What are some assets/resources?

For information about BC Employment and Assistance, consult the BC Ministry of Human Resources' website (www.mhr.gov.bc.ca) or contact the Nanaimo MHR Information and Assistance Line at 1 (866) 866-0800.

What questions does this raise?

- What will be the impacts of the new BC Employment and Assistance Program?
- What will be the impacts of time limits with regard to the receipt of BC Employment and Assistance?

Where to go for information?

- BC Stats. Basic BC Benefits and Employment Insurance Data for Nanaimo. Victoria: Ministry of Management Services, June 2002.
- Ministry of Human Resources. BC Employment and Assistance Initiatives, April 1, 2002.

What are related indicators?

- Economic: Poverty
- Economic: Unemployment



Poverty

Why is it important?

Many studies have shown a strong association between income or socio-economic status and health and well being. There does not appear to be a cut-off at a particular level of income; instead there appears to be a gradient.

The more income one has, the healthier he or she is likely to be. More income may allow one to eat better, afford better housing and live in a more desirable neighbourhood (e.g., low crime, nearby amenities, well serviced, etc.). Additionally, individuals with more income tend to experience a higher degree of control in their personal and work related lives, which is also associated with one's health and well being.

How is it measured?

The most widely used poverty measure is Statistics Canada's low-income cut-offs, which are controlled for community size and family size. These cut-offs are selected on the basis that unattached individuals and economic families with incomes below these limits (see Appendix 6) usually spend more than 54.7% of their income on clothing, food and shelter and are therefore considered to be living in "straitened circumstances."

What is an economic family?

The term "economic family" is referred to in this indicator. Statistics Canada defines an economic family as two or more persons who live in the same dwelling and are related to each other by blood, marriage, common-law or adoption.

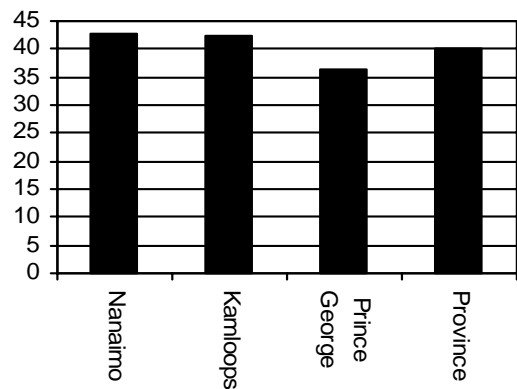
What is the situation in Nanaimo?

In Nanaimo, 4,635 unattached individuals (15+) or 42.6% of all unattached individuals (15+) and 3,325 economic families or 16.8% of all economic families were living below the low-income cut-offs in 1995.

2001 Census information pertaining to the low-income cut-offs will not be available until May 13, 2003.

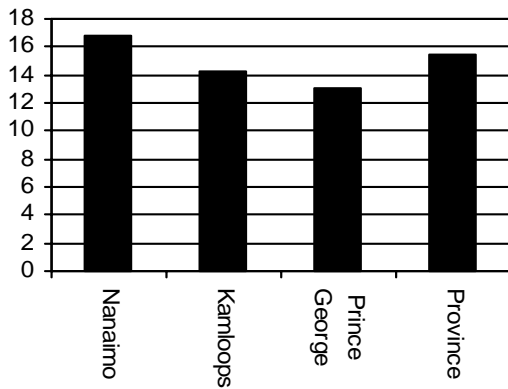
How do we compare?

Nanaimo had a higher percentage of unattached individuals (15+) living below the low-income cut-offs (42.6%) than for the Cities of Kamloops (42.2%) and Prince George (36.2%) and for the Province (40.2%) in 1995.



■ Percentage of unattached individuals (15+) living below the low-income cut-offs in 1995

As for economic families living below the low-income cut-offs, Nanaimo again had a higher percentage (16.8%) than for the Cities of Kamloops (14.2%) and Prince George (13.0%) and for the Province (15.4%) in 1995.



■ Percentage of economic families living below the low-income cut-offs in 1995

What are the trends?

In Nanaimo, the percentage of unattached individuals (15+) living below the low-income cut-offs increased from 41.5% in 1990 to 42.6% in 1995. As for the percentage of economic families living below the low-income cut-offs, it also increased from 15.3% in 1990 to 16.8% in 1995.

Who are most at-risk?

Those groups who are most at-risk of high rates of poverty, as well as deep and persistent poverty, include aboriginal peoples, lone parent families, people with disabilities, recent immigrants and refugees who are members of visible minorities and unattached individuals (National Council of Welfare, February 2002).

What are some of the issues?

For adults and children, poverty can mean loneliness and exclusion from cultural, recreational, social, sports and other activities around which individual confidence, friendships and other positive social relationships are built. For children, this can have far-reaching and long-lasting effects (National Council of Welfare, February 2002).

What are some assets/resources?

The Central Vancouver Island Crisis Society, as part of its [Nanaimo Resource Directory](#), lists a number of low or no cost food and clothing services. For a copy of this directory, contact (250) 753-2495.

The City of Nanaimo's Community Planning Division publishes and annually updates [Surviving in Nanaimo: Where to Get Free or Low Cost Goods and Services?](#) For more information or to receive a copy, contact (250) 755-4483.

The City of Nanaimo's Parks, Recreation and Culture Department recorded 3,050 registrants in its Leisure Economic Access Program in 2001, which represented an 18.6% increase from 2000. This program provides discounted course fees, free access to recreational programs for children and youth under 19, and subsidized access for adults (see Appendix 7). For more information, contact (250) 756-5200.

What questions does this raise?

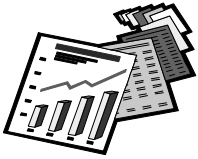
- What can be done to reduce poverty in Nanaimo? What would have the most significant impact – e.g., affordable housing, job training, subsidized child care, etc.?
- What percentage of those who are living below the low-income cut-offs are counted as part of the working poor?

Where to go for information?

- Lee, Kevin K. [Urban Poverty in Canada](#). Ottawa: Canadian Council on Social Development, April 2000.
- National Council of Welfare. [The Cost of Poverty](#). Ottawa: National Council of Welfare, February 2002.

What are related indicators?

- Economic: Food Support
- Economic: Income Support



Unemployment

Why is it important?

Unemployment, especially long-term unemployment, is associated with poorer health. One Canadian study found that the unemployed had significantly more activity limitations, anxiety, depressive symptoms, disability days, health problems, hospitalization, physician visits and psychological distress than the employed. In this study, most health problems seemed to be associated with the stress of unemployment, not with the lack of income per se (Office of the Provincial Health Officer, November 1995). For youth, especially those who have not completed high school or who have limited job skills, unemployment can lead to despair and disillusionment.

How is it measured?

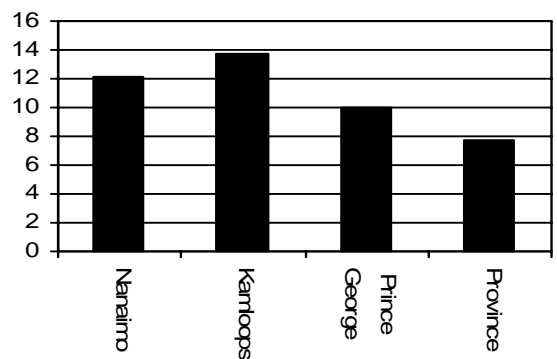
Unemployment statistics are based on a survey in which people who do not have jobs are asked whether they are actively looking for work. Those who are looking for work are counted as unemployed, and they are included in the labour force. If they are not looking for work, they are not included in unemployment statistics, and they are not counted as part of the labour force. As such, the unemployment rate is calculated as the ratio of the number of people who are unemployed (i.e., actively looking for work) to the total labour force.

What is the situation in Nanaimo?

In Nanaimo, the annual average unemployment rate for adults in the labour force (15+) was 12.1% in 2001. With regard to absolute numbers, there were approximately 4,700 unemployed adults (15+) in the labour force in 2001 (BC Stats, March 2002).

How do we compare?

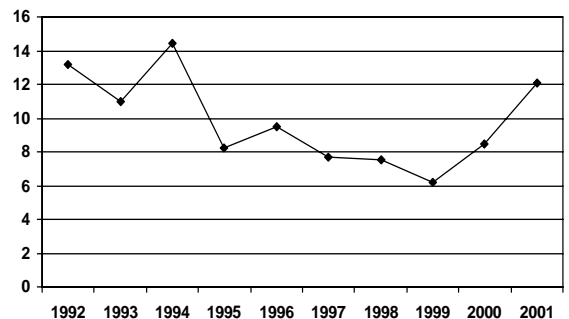
In 2001, Nanaimo had a higher annual average unemployment rate for adults (15+) in the labour force (12.1%) than for the City of Prince George (10.0%) and for the Province (7.7%) but a lower rate than for the City of Kamloops (13.7%) (BC Stats, March 2002).



■ Annual average unemployment rate for adults (15+) in the labour force in 2001

What are the trends?

Between 1992 and 2001, Nanaimo's annual average unemployment rate for adults (15+) in the labour force decreased from 13.2% to 12.1% (BC Stats, March 2002).



◆ Annual Average Unemployment Rate for Adults (15+) in the Labour Force in Nanaimo: 1992 - 2001

The rise in Nanaimo's annual average unemployment rate in 2001 may be due, in part, to extensive cuts to the Provincial civil service and the softwood lumber dispute with the United States. Regarding the latter, recent tariffs are expected to result in 20,000 job losses Province-wide until Canada and the United States can reach an agreement (Health Canada, December 10-11, 2001).

What are some of the issues?

In Canada, the duration of unemployment in the 1990s was longer than for unemployed workers in previous times. The percentage of unemployed workers who were without employment for more than half a year increased by nine percentage points from 14.1% in 1976 to 23.1% in 1998 (Lee, April 2000).

As for those workers who are unemployed in Canadian cities, they are far more likely to live in poverty than workers with full-time, full year jobs. In fact, 49.2% of workers with no annual employment lived in poverty, compared to only 13.2% of workers with full-time, full-year jobs in 1996 (Lee, April 2000).

What are some assets/resources?

The Assessment and Referral Centre (ARC) of Nanaimo offers a full range of employment related services to unemployed, employment-ready and employment-threatened residents in the Greater Nanaimo Region. Since May 1997, it has served over 21,000 registered clients. The ARC is operated by the Nanaimo Employment Opportunities Advocacy Society and is funded by Human Resources Development Canada, the Ministry of Advanced Education and fee-for-service activities. For more information about the ARC and other employment service providers, refer to the ARC's website at (www.the-arc.org) or phone (250) 716-9019.

The Interagency Group is comprised of management and staff from employment service agencies, training institutes and the Ministry of Human Resources. It meets regularly to share program and service information.

Human Resources Development Canada publishes a Directory of Options, which is a current summary of the employment services it funds. This directory is updated every two months and is intended as a tool for clients. To receive a copy of this directory, contact (250) 754-0222.

The Ministry of Human Resources provides employability skills training and job placement programs through a number of agencies, including Community Futures, Destinations, Job Wave BC, the Island Christian Care Society, Malaspina University College, the Nanaimo Youth Services Association, Sprott Shaw and the Vancouver Island Vocational Rehabilitation Service. For more information, contact the Nanaimo MHR Information and Assistance Line at 1 (866) 866-0800.

Where to go for information?

- BC Stats. Labour Force Activity by Selected BC Cities – Annual Averages. March 2002.
- Lee, Kevin K. Urban Poverty in Canada. Ottawa: Canadian Council on Social Development, April 2000.
- Office of the Provincial Health Officer. Health Goals for British Columbia: Identifying Priorities for a Healthy Population. Victoria: Province of British Columbia, November 1995.
- Townson, Monica. Health and Wealth: How Social and Economic Factors Affect Our Well Being? Toronto: J. Lorimer, 1999.

What are related indicators?

- Economic: Personal Income
- Economic: Food Support
- Economic: Income Support
- Economic: Poverty
- Education: Literacy
- Housing: Homelessness

Who are potential economic contacts?

- Karen Calderbank, Labour and Social Statistics, BC Stats, Ministry of Management Services, PO Box 9410, Stn. Prov. Govt., Victoria, BC, V8W 9V1, (250) 356-7870.
- Tanja McQueen, Economic Development Officer, City of Nanaimo, 300-238 Franklyn Street, Nanaimo, BC, V9R 5J6, (250) 755-4465.
- Carolyn Tatton, Executive Director, Assessment and Referral Centre of Nanaimo, 575 Fitzwilliam Street, Nanaimo, BC, V9R 3B2, (250) 716-9019.

What other references were used in this section?

- BC Stats. Statistical Profile for Regional District #21 – Nanaimo.
- City of Nanaimo. Future Plan. Bylaw 1996, No. 6000.
- City of Nanaimo. Nanaimo Downtown Plan. Bylaw 2002, No. 6000.038.
- Economic Development Group of Nanaimo. Working Together To Build A Prosperous Future. Nanaimo: Economic Development Group of Nanaimo, May 2002.
- Economic Development Office. Community Profile. Nanaimo: City of Nanaimo, 2001.
- Kathleen Savory and Associates. Central Island Human Resources Strategy. Nanaimo: Economic Development Group of Nanaimo, March 2002.

What are other possible economic indicators?

- Job Seekers per Job Posting
- Number of Consumer Bankruptcies
- Total Income by Quintals (Poorest, Second, Middle, Fourth, Richest)



Children & Youth Indicators Section

Executive Summary:

This section highlights three children and youth indicators that are related to healthy development and a positive transition to adulthood. It also makes reference to other children and youth indicators in other sections of the report, most notably in education and health.

In September 2002, there were 189 licensed child care facilities with 2,630 spaces in Nanaimo. With regard to barriers created by child care related issues, the most often cited barriers were cost of child care, child care being too far away, child care not being available when needed and not knowing where to find quality child care.

In 1995 (the latest year in which these statistics are available), 4,040 children aged 0 to 14 years or 28.4% of all children in this age category were living below Statistics Canada's low-income cut-offs in Nanaimo. These cut-offs are a widely used poverty measure and people living below them are considered to be living in "straitened circumstances." Comparison information was only available by Local Health Area. In 1995, the Nanaimo Local Health Area (see Appendix 2) had a higher percentage of children and youth aged 0 to 18 years living below the low-income cut-offs (25.4%) than for the Province, which had a rate of 22.5%.

In April 2002, there were 284 children (0-14) and 75 youth (15-18) in care from Nanaimo. Between April 1999 and April 2002, the number of children (0-14) in care decreased by 2.7% from 292 to 284; while the number of youth (15-18) in care decreased by 31.8% from 110 to 75. In the Province, of the about 10,000 children and youth in care in 2000, about two-thirds were children (0-14) and one-third were youth (15-18). Additionally, there was a disproportionate number of aboriginal children and children and youth with severe behavioural, intellectual or physical disabilities in care. Of note, about three-quarters of children and youth taken into care are returned home within one year.

Recent changes to BC Benefits (now BC Employment and Assistance) may increase child poverty levels, increase the number of children and youth entering care and reduce access to the child care subsidy. These changes include a reduction in support payments for some recipients and a redefining of the social reasons by which one may qualify for the child care subsidy.

Highlighted Children and Youth Indicators:

Child Care, Child Poverty, Children and Youth In Care



Child Care

Why is it important?

The structure of most families has changed dramatically over the past couple of decades. There are more lone parent families today (primarily headed by females) than ever before, while at least 84% of all Canadian families now have two working adults. Many parents, who in the past would have asked a family member or friend (typically a female) to care for their children informally, now can no longer do so because they are also working. The result is that even greater numbers of families depend on outside care arrangements for their children (Ministry of Social Development and Economic Security, Fall 1999).

The quality of care that children receive early in life is the strongest predictor of success when they enter the school system. In fact, high quality early childhood care and education can decrease the likelihood that children will be admitted into special education programs, lower the rate of school failure or drop-out, and reduce juvenile delinquency rates. Additionally, it can increase the detection and treatment of health problems (Ministry of Social Development and Economic Security, Fall 1999).

In the Provincial Health Officer's Annual Report (1997), it was stated that "the most important intervention to improve the well being of children, after the reduction of poverty, is the provision of stimulating and supportive child care."

What is "licensed child care"?

Child care services are regulated by the BC Ministry of Health's Community Care Facilities Act.

Under the Act, regulations for group centres and licensed family child care facilities are enforced by licensing officers on staff in health authorities. These officers issue licenses, conduct on-site visits to check compliance and investigate complaints from clients or other community members. For licensed-not-required family child care facilities, the only regulatory requirement is that they not exceed two children in care (British Columbia Association of Child Care Services, 2002). The latter providers can register with Regional Childcare Resource and Referral. If they do so, they must meet its requirements, which are similar to that of licensing.

What is the situation in Nanaimo?

In September 2002, there were 189 licensed child care facilities with 2,630 spaces in Nanaimo. Information as to the number of licensed child care facilities and spaces was not readily available by neighbourhood in Nanaimo.

Licensed Child Care Facilities and Spaces in Nanaimo – September 2002

Type	Facilities	Spaces
Group Day Care (under 36 months)	4	103
Group Day Care (30 months to school age)	22	510
Pre-School	16	326
Family Child Care	102	714
Out of School Care	40	907
Child Minding	5	70
Total	189	2,630

What has been written?

According to the Provincial Child Care Needs Assessment Survey, Central Vancouver Island Regional Report (September 1997), 48% of all children (0-12) had child care arrangements beyond the primary caregiver. These findings are higher than for the Province, which had a figure of 45%. Of these children, 31% were cared for by relatives in the home, 46% were cared for by non-relatives in the home, 37% were cared for by relatives outside the home and 38% were cared for by non-relatives outside the home. Additionally, 21% of children (0-5) used a child care centre. Of note, the percentages do not add up to 100%, as many families used more than one form of child care to care for their children.

The above report also looked at barriers created by child care related issues and noted that these barriers were more pronounced for those people with lower incomes. In fact, people with lower incomes generally expressed more concern about the cost of child care (76% compared to 50% for people with higher incomes), about child care being too far away (31% compared to 15%), about child care not being available when needed (28% compared to 31%) and about not knowing where to find good quality child care (17% compared to 15%).

What are some of the issues?

In the above report, the leading child care barrier to finding or retaining a job, or pursuing an education or training, was the expense of child care, which was mentioned by 66% of respondents in the Central Vancouver Island Region.

For those low income families who are reliant on a child care subsidy, recent changes to BC Benefits (now BC Employment and Assistance) will mean that fewer families will qualify for this program and of those families that do, their subsidy amount may be reduced (PovNet, April 2002).

What are some assets/resources?

For low income families, a child care subsidy is available to assist in the cost of child care. In July 2002, there were about 1,200 child care files in Nanaimo. For information about this subsidy, which is offered through the Ministry of Human Resources, contact the Nanaimo MHR Information and Assistance Line at 1 (866) 866-0800.

Regional Childcare Resource and Referral assists parents in finding child care for their children newly born to 12 years at no charge. It also provides various services to caregivers such as education, professional consultation and support regarding child care related issues. In September 2002, it recorded 173 registered licensed and license not-required facilities in Nanaimo-Ladysmith, with 2,004 spaces. For more information, contact (250) 716-2002.

What questions does this raise?

- What percentage of children are being cared for in unlicensed, unregulated child care arrangements?
- What percentage of school aged children are without access to supervised care and who are in what is typically known as latchkey or self-care arrangements?

Where to go for information?

- Campbell Goodell Traynor Consultants Limited. Provincial Child Care Needs Assessment Survey: Central Vancouver Island Regional Report Victoria: Ministry for Children and Families, 1997.
- Ministry of Social Development and Economic Security. Building a Better Future for British Columbia's Kids: Discussion Paper. Fall 1999.

What are related indicators?

- Population: Lone Parent Families
- Economic: Female Participation Rate



Child Poverty

Why is it important?

Child poverty is a source of risk to the health and well being of children and can limit their life chances. The health problems of poor children begin before birth and continue to place these children at greater risk of death, disability and other health problems throughout their lives.

Poor children are more likely to be in the care of child welfare services, engage in riskier behaviours (e.g., drinking, smoking, taking drugs, etc.), exhibit disorderly conduct, get in trouble with the law, suffer from emotional disorders, and be unemployed as adults (BC Child and Youth Coalition et al., 1999). Additionally, child poverty has a strong association with a lower level of pre-school ability, which is associated with lower test scores in childhood, as well as grade failure, school disengagement and drop-out (Novick, November 1999).

How do we measure it?

The most widely used poverty measure is Statistics Canada's low-income cut-offs, which are controlled for community size and family size. These cut-offs are selected on the basis that unattached individuals and economic families with incomes below these limits (see Appendix 6) usually spend more than 54.7% of their income on clothing, food and shelter and are therefore considered to be living in "straitened circumstances."

What is the situation in Nanaimo?

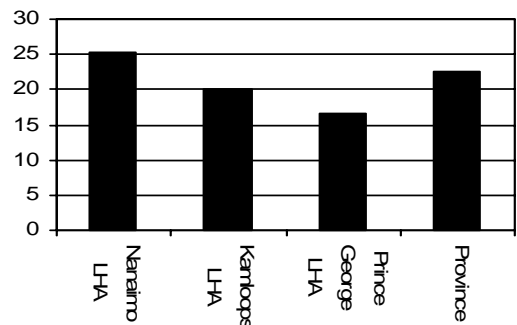
In Nanaimo, 4,040 children aged 0 to 14 years or 28.4% of all children in this age category were living below the low-income cut-offs in 1995. As for those children aged 0 to 9 years, 2,795 children or 30.5% of all children in this age category were living below the low-income cut-offs in 1995.

Within Nanaimo, the neighbourhoods with the highest percentages of children aged 0 to 14 years living below the low-income cut-offs in 1995 were: Brechin/Townsite (40.8%), South Harewood (41.9%), Downtown (47.9%), North Harewood (49.7%) and Southend (53.9%).

2001 Census information pertaining to the low-income cut-offs will not be available until May 13, 2003.

How do we compare?

Comparison information is only available by Local Health Area. In 1995, the Nanaimo Local Health Area had a higher percentage of children and youth aged 0 to 18 years living below the low-income cut-offs (25.4%) than for both the Kamloops (20.1%) and Prince George (16.7%) Local Health Areas and for the Province (22.5%).



■ Percentage of children and youth aged 0 to 18 years living below the low-income cut-offs in 1995

What are the trends?

Historic information as to the percentage of children living below the low-income cut-offs was not readily available for 1990, thus a trend could not be discerned. However, the percentage of economic families living below the cut-offs in Nanaimo increased by 1.5 percentage points from 15.3% in 1990 to 16.8% in 1995.

What are some of the issues?

According to a recently released report, it is becoming even more difficult for poor families, especially those receiving welfare, to make ends meet. Between 1997 and 2001, the overall cost of living in BC increased by 5%, while BC Benefits (now BC Employment and Assistance) increased by 2%. As such, those families in receipt of BC Benefits lost ground.

In 2001, BC Benefits met only 65% of the minimum monthly cost of living (as calculated by SPARC BC) for a lone parent of a young child. Additionally, it met only 61% of the minimum monthly cost of living for a couple with two young children (Goldberg and Long, December 2001).

Percentage of SPARC BC's Estimated Minimum Monthly Cost of Living Met by BC Benefits in 1997 and 2001

	Lone Parent of a Young Child	Couple with Two Young Children
1997	70%	62%
2001	65%	61%

This report raises the possibility that poverty, including child poverty, may have increased in Nanaimo since 1995. Given that shelter costs are generally lower in Nanaimo than for many other municipalities in BC, the increase, if one has occurred, may be more modest than in other municipalities.

Since the release of the above report, recent changes to BC Benefits (now BC Employment and Assistance) have seen reductions to the shelter allowance for families of three or more. In fact, for a family of three, the allowance has been reduced from \$610 to \$555; while for a family of four, the allowance has been reduced from \$650 to \$590 (PovNet, April 2002). Of note, these changes were made to provide for a standard rate schedule that is more equitable between families of differing sizes by increasing the rate by \$35 per additional person.

What are some assets/resources?

The Central Vancouver Island Crisis Society, as part of its [Nanaimo Resource Directory](#), lists a number of low or no cost food and clothing services. For a copy of this directory, contact (250) 753-2495.

The City of Nanaimo's Community Planning Division publishes and annually updates [Surviving in Nanaimo: Where to Get Free or Low Cost Goods and Services?](#) For more information or to receive a copy, contact (250) 755-4483.

What questions does this raise?

- What can be done to assist low-income children to participate in leisure, recreation, social and sports activities?
- What can be done to ensure that low-income children receive adequate food and nutrition to maintain optimal levels of physical and mental health?

Where to go for information?

- BC Child and Youth Advocacy Coalition, BC Teachers' Federation and SPARC BC. [Child Poverty in British Columbia: Report Card](#), 1999.
- Goldberg, Michael and Andrea Long. [Falling Behind: A Comparison of Living Costs and Income Assistance Rates \(BC Benefits\) in BC](#). Vancouver: SPARC BC, December 2001.
- Novick, Marvyn. [Fundamentals First: An Equal Opportunity from Birth for Every Child](#). Ottawa: Campaign 2000, November 1999.
- PovNet. "How the Changes to Welfare Affect Children and Youth?" [Welfare Fact Sheet #6](#), April 2002.

What are related indicators?

- Population: Children (0-14)
- Population: Lone Parent Families
- Economic: Food Support
- Economic: Poverty



Children and Youth In Care

Why is it important?

Research indicates that children's healthy development is rooted in early experiences and influences. Good physical health and the ability to cope with stress, learn and relate well to others, as well as to have positive self-esteem, are known to be rooted in the earliest experiences in life. Where, how and with whom children spend their time in their earlier years has a major impact on their healthy development.

In infancy and early childhood, children need to establish a secure attachment with nurturing adults. This influences how they relate to others and how they interpret the world around them. Children also need positive sensory stimulation, the absence of which can result in life long developmental problems (Premier's Council on Health, Well Being and Social Justice, May 1994).

What is meant by children in care?

If a family is unable to care for a child, child welfare authorities may temporarily or permanently assume responsibility for that child, by authority of the Child, Family and Community Service Act. Children who require this care, custody or guardianship come into the care of the Ministry of Children and Family Development and are referred to in the Act as "children in care."

Children come into care for a variety of reasons. Protection may be required due to abuse or neglect, parents may be absent or unable to care for their child, or the child may require medical or other special care of some type (Office of the Provincial Health Officer, May 2001).

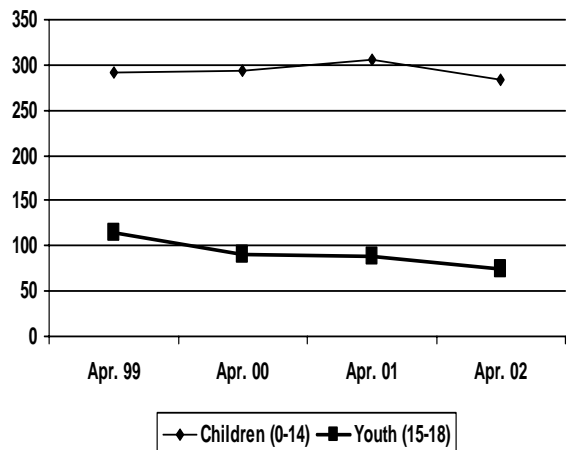
For the purposes of this indicator, the term "children and youth in care" is used to reflect the fact that many children in care are youth (15-18).

What is the situation in Nanaimo?

In April 2002, there were 284 children (0-14) and 75 youth (15-18) in care from Nanaimo. In total, there were 359 children and youth (0-18) in care from Nanaimo. As such, for the above month, about 2.2% of all children (0-14) and about 1.8% of all youth (15-18) in Nanaimo were in the care of the Ministry of Children and Family Development.

What are the trends?

Between April 1999 and April 2002, the number of children (0-14) in care from Nanaimo decreased by 2.7% from 292 to 284; while the number of youth (15-18) in care from Nanaimo decreased by 31.8% from 110 to 75.



What is the profile of those in care?

In 2000, there were about 10,000 children and youth in care at any point in time or about one percent of the Provincial population under 19. Of those in care, about two-thirds were children (0-14) and one-third were youth (15-18). There were more male than female children in care, except among youth.

There was a disproportionate number of aboriginal children and youth in care, especially among the younger age groups. In fact, about one-third of children and youth in care were aboriginal, whereas only about eight percent of children and youth in the Provincial population were aboriginal in 2000.

There was also a disproportionate number of children and youth with severe behavioural, intellectual or physical disabilities. In fact, about one-fifth of children and youth in care had a severe disability, whereas less than one percent of children and youth in the Provincial population had a severe disability in 2000.

Of note, about three-quarters of children and youth taken into care are returned home within one year (Office of the Provincial Health Officer, May 2001).

What are some of the issues?

Given that about 60% of children and youth in care come from families on BC Benefits (now BC Employment and Assistance) (Office of the Provincial Health Officer, May 2001), recent changes to this program are of concern. These changes include the reduction of support payments for recipients; the elimination of earnings and income exemptions (e.g., family maintenance, orphan's benefits, etc.); and the tightening of eligibility criteria for a child care subsidy (PovNet, April 2002).

The Provincial government is proposing cuts of up to 30% or \$460 million for the Ministry of Children and Family Development by 2004/05. These proposed cuts could result in the loss of more than 1,000 positions. It is also proposing to reduce the number of children and youth in care by allocating more resources toward family development and support programs (Beatty, Nov. 29, 2001).

What are some assets/resources?

The Ministry of Children and Family Development offers a number of programs and services both to assist families and support children and youth. These programs and services are listed on its website at: (www.gov.bc.ca/mcf).

Where to go for information?

- Beatty, Jim. "30% Cut Coming in Children's Ministry." The Vancouver Sun. November 29, 2001, Sec. B, Pages 1 and 8.
- Ministry of Children and Family Development. Children and Youth in Care Statistics for the City of Nanaimo, 2002.
- Office of the Provincial Health Officer. What Do Mortality Data Show?: Health Status of Children and Youth in Care in British Columbia. Victoria: Ministry of Health and Ministry Responsible for Seniors, May 2001.
- PovNet. "How the Changes to Welfare Affect Children and Youth?" Welfare Fact Sheet #6, April 2002.
- Premier's Council on Health, Well Being and Social Justice. Yours, Mine and Ours: Ontario's Children and Youth. Toronto: Premier's Council on Health, Well Being and Social Justice, May 1994.

What are related indicators?

- Population: Lone Parent Families
- Economic: Poverty
- Children & Youth: Child Care
- Children & Youth: Child Poverty
- Health: Teen Pregnancy

Who are potential children and youth contacts?

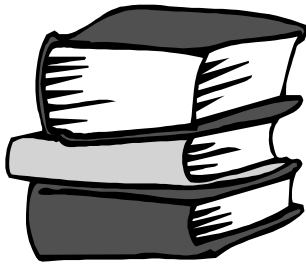
- Steve Hancock, District Supervisor, Ministry of Children and Family Development, #201-488 Albert Street, Nanaimo, BC, V9R 2V7, (250) 741-5454.
- Judy Stewart, Regional Childcare Resource and Referral, #9-327 Prideaux Street, Nanaimo, BC, V9R 2N4, (250) 716-2022.
- Kathy Torhjelm, Provincial Licensing Officer, Community Care Facilitating Licensing, Central Island Health Service Delivery Area, 3rd Floor, 528 Wentworth Street, Nanaimo, BC, V9R 3E4, (250) 714-0424.

What other references were used in this section?

- Canadian Council on Social Development. The Progress of Canada's Children. Ottawa: Canadian Council on Social Development, December 7, 1998.
- National Council of Welfare. The Cost of Poverty. Ottawa: National Council of Welfare, 2002.
- Office of the Medical Health Officer. Population Health Report 1999. Nanaimo: Central Vancouver Island Health Region, 2000.
- Ross, David P. and Paul Roberts. Income and Child Well Being: A New Perspective on the Poverty Debate. Ottawa: Canadian Council on Social Development, 1999.

What are other possible children and youth indicators?

- Number of Reported Child Abuse Cases
- Number of Youth on Probation
- Number of Reportable Serious Incidents in Licensed Child Care Facilities
- Participation by Children and Youth in Structured Extracurricular Activities



Education Indicators Section

Executive Summary:

In Nanaimo, 3,270 people or 5.9% of the population (15+) had less than a Grade 9 education in 1996. Grade 9 is a proxy measure for literacy according to Statistics Canada. This rate was lower than for the Province, which had a rate of 7.4% in 1996. As for high school completion, 6,935 people or 12.6% of Nanaimo's population (15+) had completed high school but had not pursued a post-secondary education in 1996. This rate was similar to that for the Province, which had a rate of 12.9% in 1996.

With regard to post-secondary education, 2,635 people or 4.8% of Nanaimo's population (15+) had a trade certificate or diploma in 1996. Another 15,965 people or 28.9% of the population (15+) had an "other non-university education only" and 6,925 people or 12.5% of the population (15+) had a "university education without a degree." Additionally, 5,210 people or 9.4% of the population (15+) had a bachelor degree or higher. Of note, Nanaimo had a lower percentage of its population (15+) who had a bachelor degree or higher than for the Province (13.6%) in 1996.

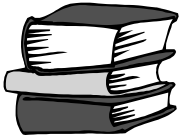
For School District #68 (Nanaimo-Ladysmith), the Dogwood Completion Rate was 72.3% in 2000/01, which was lower than for the Province, which had a rate of 75.2%. Of note, the Dogwood Completion Rate measures the percentage of Grade 8 students who graduate with a Dogwood Diploma within six years. As for post-secondary transition, for School District #68 (Nanaimo-Ladysmith), 19.2% of Grade 12 graduates enrolled in career technology, university degree and university transfer courses at Malaspina University College in 2001/02.

With regard to English-as-a-Second Language (ESL) in School District #68 (Nanaimo-Ladysmith), 589 students or 3.5% of all students were enrolled in this program in September 2001. Of note, the number of students enrolled in ESL increased by 0.3 percentage points from 3.2% in 1999/00 to 3.5% in 2001/02.

In Nanaimo, there are two public libraries: the Harbour Front Branch and the Wellington Branch. In 2002, both branches had a membership of 36,984 people, 6,391 of which were new, and a circulation of 788,513 items. Between 1996 and 2002, the total circulation of library items increased by 12.6% from 700,518 to 788,513.

Highlighted Education Indicators:

Literacy, High School Completion, Post-Secondary Transition, Post-Secondary Education, English-as-a-Second Language, Public Library Usage



Literacy

Why is it important?

An individual's education, income and occupation are all indicators of his or her living and working conditions. These indicators are closely related, because on average, individuals with lower levels of education and literacy are less likely to be employed, to have stable incomes and to have jobs which offer higher levels of control and social status (Townson, 1999).

Lower levels of education and literacy are also associated with poorer health. Low literacy can affect health directly – e.g., through misreading prescriptions. In fact, much of the available health education literature requires a level of reading that makes it inaccessible to a large proportion of the population in greatest need of health information (Canadian Public Health Association, 1996). In addition, psychosocial effects linked with low literacy include diminished self-confidence/self-esteem and elevated stress (Townson, 1999).

How is it measured?

Grade 9 is a proxy measure for literacy. The assumption is that individuals with this level of education are literate. Although this is not always true, it is a standard cut-off used by Statistics Canada. Another measure is functional literacy. This measure refers to an individual's ability to do tasks such as reading a telephone bill or using a phone book.

What is the situation in Nanaimo?

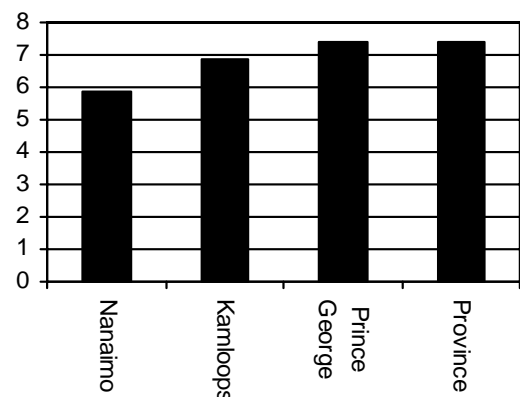
In Nanaimo, 3,270 people or 5.9% of the population (15+) had less than a Grade 9 education in 1996.

Within Nanaimo, the neighbourhoods with the highest percentages of their populations (15+) with less than a Grade 9 education in 1996 were as follows: North Harewood (7.7%), South Harewood (8.4%), Chase River (8.8%), Southend (8.8%), Brechin/Townsite (9.1%), and the Downtown (11.0%).

2001 Census information pertaining to education and levels of schooling will not be available until March 11, 2003.

How do we compare?

In 1996, Nanaimo had a lower percentage of its population (15+) with less than a Grade 9 education than for the Cities of Kamloops (6.9%) and Prince George (7.4%) and for the Province (7.4%).



■ Percentage of the population (15+) with less than a Grade 9 education in 1996

What are the trends?

Between 1991 and 1996, the percentage of the population (15+) with less than a Grade 9 education in Nanaimo decreased by 2.1 percentage points from 8.0% to 5.9%.

What has been written?

According to the report, Reading the Future: A Portrait of Literacy in Canada, about 22% of adult Canadians (16+) fall in the lowest level of literacy, meaning that they have serious difficulty reading printed material. Another 24% to 26% fall in the second lowest level, meaning that they can deal only with printed material that is simple and clearly laid out. According to the report, most adults without a high school education fall in the lowest level of literacy.

What are some of the issues?

According to the results of the 1998 Adult Education and Training Survey, 31.9% of British Columbians were enrolled in adult education and training activities in 1997. In fact, British Columbia had the highest rate of participation in Canada.

While the results are generally positive, the survey raised some real concerns with regard to those individuals most in need of adult education and training. For example, the lower an individual's educational level, the less likely he or she is to enroll in an adult education program. In fact, an individual who did not complete high school is five times less likely to obtain further education. Additionally, participation rates were far lower among unemployed than employed individuals. In fact, about 20% of unemployed individuals participated in job-related education and training activities, compared with 29% of employed individuals (Statistics Canada, 1998).

What are some assets/resources?

Literacy Nanaimo is a non-profit society that provides information, resources and support to adult learners seeking help with basic reading, writing and math. Its volunteer tutor program matches trained volunteer tutors with adult learners and provides one-on-one tutoring. In 2001, 51 tutors were trained and 105 learners were matched. For more information, contact (250) 754-8988.

The Ministry of Human Resources, through various contracts provides a range of labour market support services to enhance employability and improve work related skills. These skills can include adult basic education, basic literacy, job finding, life skills, resume preparation, etc. For more information, contact the Nanaimo MHR Information and Assistance Line at 1 (866) 866-0800.

What questions does this raise?

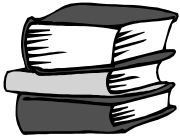
- Do recent immigrants have higher or lower levels of education than the general population?
- What is being done locally to ensure that all residents have a basic level of literacy? What is being tried elsewhere?

Where to go for information?

- Canadian Public Health Association. Report on the Health of Canadians. Ottawa: Canadian Public Health Association, 1996.
- Lee, Kevin K. Urban Poverty In Canada. Ottawa: Canadian Council on Social Development, April 2000.
- Statistics Canada. Reading the Future: A Portrait of Literacy in Canada. Ottawa: Statistics Canada, September 8, 1997.
- Statistics Canada. Report on Adult Education and Training in Canada; Learning a Living. Ottawa: Human Resource Development Canada and Statistics Canada, 1998.
- Townson, Monica. Health and Wealth: How Social and Economic Factors Affect Our Well being? Toronto: J. Lorimer, 1999.

What are related indicators?

- Economic: Personal Income
- Economic: Food Support
- Economic: Income Support
- Economic: Poverty
- Economic: Unemployment
- Education: High School Completion
- Education: Public Library Usage



High School Completion

Why is it important?

Economic restructuring and technical innovation have put a new emphasis on the skills needed to succeed in a workplace where information and knowledge have become critical resources. High school completion is now the minimum standard for entry in almost all areas of employment.

Employers expect graduates to be good learners, to communicate clearly, to be self-directed, to think critically and to work well with others. The new workplace also requires individuals to be knowledgeable about technology and to be able to search out and apply information from many sources (Ministry of Education, September 2000).

For those students who do not graduate, many will find themselves trapped in cycles of unstable work and dependency, a situation that often leads to low self-esteem and poverty (Ministry of Education, 1999).

How is it measured?

The Dogwood Completion Rate measures the percentage of Grade 8 students who graduate with a Dogwood Certificate within six years. It is not the inverse of the drop-out rate, as students may graduate after the six year period.

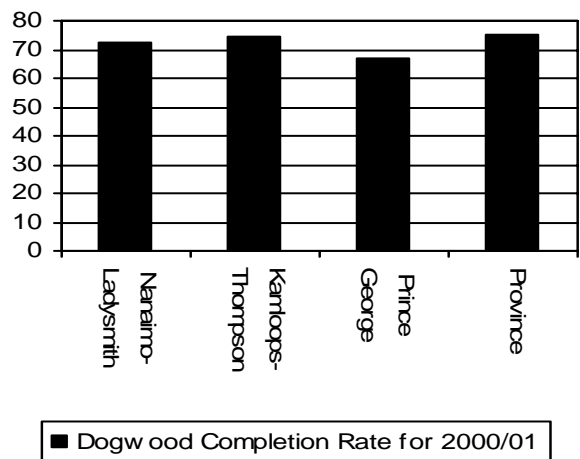
The rate is based on selecting a specific group of students who arrive in Grades 8 through 12 in a School District over a six year period and analyzing the success of those students in obtaining a Dogwood Certificate from the District by the end of the period. For more information about the rate and how it is calculated, refer to the [Annual Student Achievement Profile for the Nanaimo-Ladysmith School District in School Year 2000/01](#).

What is the situation in Nanaimo?

In 2000/01, the Dogwood Completion Rate was 72.3% for School District #68 (Nanaimo-Ladysmith). Of note, this rate excludes students enrolled in Distance Education or in the Franco-phone Education Authority, as well as students enrolled in private schools. It also excludes adult students (20 years of age or older).

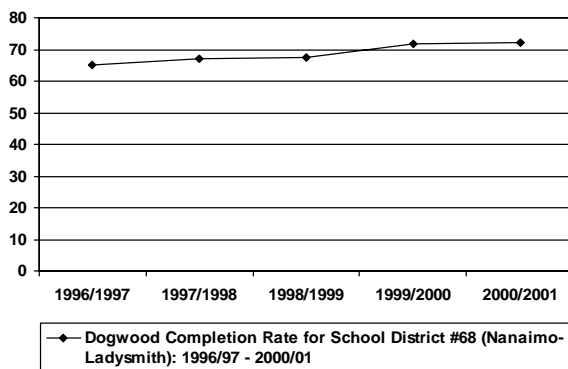
How do we compare?

In 2000/01, the Dogwood Completion Rate was 72.3% for School District #68 (Nanaimo-Ladysmith). This rate was higher than for School District #57 (Prince George) (66.8%) but lower than for School District #73 (Kamloops-Thompson) (74.7%) and for the Province (75.2%).



What are the trends?

Between 1996/97 and 2000/01, the Dogwood Completion Rate for School District #68 (Nanaimo-Ladysmith) increased by 7.1 percentage points from 65.2% to 72.3%. Of note, the rate increased each year for the five year period in question.



What are some of the issues?

Individuals with less than a high school education are over-represented among the urban poor in Canada. According to Kevin K. Lee in his report entitled Urban Poverty in Canada (2000), the average poverty rate among the urban population (15+) was 23.2% in 1996. Individuals with less than a high school education had a far higher-than-average poverty rate of 29.6%, while individuals with a post-secondary education had a far lower-than-average poverty rate of 15.9%.

In other words, individuals with less than a high school education were almost twice as likely to live in poverty as were individuals with a post-secondary education. Of note, the poverty rate for high school graduates was in line with the average for the urban population-as-a-whole.

What are some assets/resources?

Malaspina University College offers an Adult Basic Education Program. As part of this program, students can take the following courses:

- English (from literacy level to Grade 12 equivalency);
- Math (from literacy level to Grade 12 equivalency);
- Biology (Grade 11 and 12 equivalency);
- Chemistry (Grade 11 and 12 equivalency);
- Physics (Grade 11 and 12 equivalency).

The courses can be used as academic preparation for post-secondary programs, as course prerequisites or as upgrading for work.

Tuition and tutorial assistance are free and advising, counseling and student drop-in services are available. Students can also attend day or evening classes. For more information, contact (250) 740-6425.

There were 1,742 students enrolled in Adult Basic Education at Malaspina University College in 2001/02, a 28.2% increase since 1998/99.

What questions does this raise?

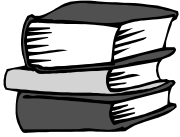
- What is being done locally to encourage or enable students to complete high school? What is being tried elsewhere?
- Within Nanaimo, are there noticeable differences between neighbourhoods and schools with regard to the Dogwood Completion Rate?

Where to go for information?

- Lee, Kevin K. Urban Poverty In Canada. Ottawa: Canadian Council on Social Development, April 2000.
- Ministry of Education. Kindergarten to Grade 12 Education Plan. Revised September 2000.
- Ministry of Education. Annual Student Achievement Profile for the Nanaimo-Ladysmith School District in School Year 2000/01.
- Ministry of Education. Performance Plan for 2000/01-2002/03, 1999.

What are related indicators?

- Economic: Personal Income
- Economic: Food Support
- Economic: Income Support
- Economic: Poverty
- Economic: Unemployment
- Education: Post-Secondary Education
- Education: Post-Secondary Transition



Post-Secondary Transition

Why is it important?

Economic restructuring is reducing the traditional importance of resource sector employment and raising the prominence of information-based, technological and value-added industries that require higher levels of education.

Given this new reality, post-secondary education and training has become increasingly important and it is now a significant factor in reducing the likelihood that an individual will be unemployed. In fact, the gap in employability has widened based on an individual's level of education. The difference in employment between those with post-secondary education and training and those without has increased from 2.9 percentage points in 1981 to 5.2 percentage points in 1994 (The Ministry of Advanced Education, Training and Technology, September 13, 1996). This gap may have since widened.

What is the situation in Nanaimo?

For School District #68 (Nanaimo-Ladysmith), 19.2% of its Grade 12 graduates enrolled in career technology, university degree and university transfer courses at Malaspina University College in 2001/02.

The difference between the percentage of students who graduate from School District #68 (Nanaimo-Ladysmith) and those who actually enroll at Malaspina University College can be accounted for in several ways. Many may enter directly into the job market, while others may temporarily postpone their post-secondary plans. Still others may attend a college or university outside of Nanaimo.

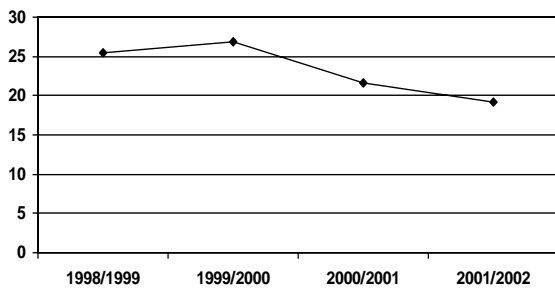
For those postponing entry, a Provincial study found that financial and information issues were the most often cited reasons by students. Regarding the former, many students were discouraged by the prospect of the large financial burden of loans and this was particularly true of students from a background of poverty, who were less optimistic about their ability to repay their student loans. As for the latter, some students were unaware of available information regarding post-secondary institutions – e.g., eligibility criteria, career or program options, financing, etc. (Post-Secondary Transition Review Team, February 1997).

How do we compare?

Comparison information was not readily available for this indicator. The Ministry of Education, as part of its Annual Student Achievement Profile, does report on the percentage of Grade 12 graduates registering in all BC universities; however, this information underreports actual enrollment in post-secondary education. For example, in September 2000 (the latest year in which this information is available), the percentage of 1999/00 graduates registering in all BC universities was 8.3% for School District #68 (Nanaimo-Ladysmith) and 15.5% for the Province.

What are the trends?

Between 1998/99 and 2001/02, the percentage of Grade 12 graduates from School District #68 (Nanaimo-Ladysmith) enrolled in career technology, university degree and university transfer courses at Malaspina University College decreased by 6.2 percentage points from 25.4% to 19.2%.



Percentage of Grade 12 Graduates from School District #68 (Nanaimo-Ladysmith) Enrolled in Career Technology, University Degree and University Transfer Courses at Malaspina University College: 1998/99 - 2001/02

What are some of the issues?

In February 2002, the Provincial government eliminated grants to all first year students and granted autonomy to public post-secondary institutions to determine their own tuition fee levels.

Prior to the first change, students with the highest levels of financial need received non-repayable grants in their first four years of study. This policy was developed in 1987 to encourage lower and middle income students to pursue a post-secondary education and to reduce student debt loads.

Prior to the second change, tuition fees had increased by 46% over the past decade in BC, less than half the national average. Additionally, participation rates for post-secondary education in BC had gone from the second lowest to the second highest among Provinces (McFadyen, February 11, 2002).

These changes will likely result in fewer lower and middle income students pursuing a post-secondary education and higher debt loads for those students that do so.

What are some assets/resources?

The British Columbia Student Assistance Program helps eligible students with the costs of post-secondary studies at colleges, training institutes and universities. It is a needs-based program, which exists to supplement funds available to students through work, assets/savings, and family income/resources. The application form is a one-stop process to apply for two kinds of funding: grants and loans. For information on this program and other forms of financial assistance, consult "Student Financial Aid" as part of the Ministry of Advanced Education's website at: (www.gov.bc.ca/aved).

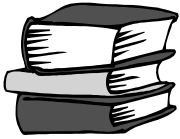
The Career Technical Centre, located at Nanaimo District Secondary Community School, enables students to take special courses and receive university credits. It offers five programs, including applied business technology, auto service technology, culinary arts, Internet essentials and welding (Level C). For more information, contact (250) 740-2000.

Where to go for information?

- BC Ministry of Education. Annual Student Achievement Profile for the Nanaimo-Ladysmith School District in School Year 2000/01.
- McFadyen, Summer. Campbell Preparing to Increase Tuition Fees. Vancouver: Canadian Federation of Students, February 11, 2002.
- Ministry of Advanced Education, Training and Technology. A Strategic Plan for the Future of BC's College, Institute and Agency System, September 13, 1996.
- Post-Secondary Transition Review Team. Secondary to Post-Secondary Transition. Victoria: Ministry of Education, Skills and Training, February 1997.

What are related indicators?

- Population: Youth and Young Adults (15-24)
- Education: High School Completion
- Education: Post-Secondary Education



Post-Secondary Education

Why is it important?

Constraints on natural resources, economic restructuring, increased international competition and rapid introduction of new technology are pushing the Province towards an information- and knowledge-based economy; and this, in turn, is increasing the demand for highly educated and skilled workers. As a result, the middle is disappearing from the labour market.

In the future, lower-skilled, lower-paid jobs will likely be available primarily in the service sector, while more attractive higher-skilled, higher-paid jobs will be available only to those with strong analytical and technical skills and/or those who have the ability to plan, problem-solve and use knowledge to further the goals of their employer. As such, post-secondary education and training will increase the likelihood of finding and retaining a higher-paid job.

What is the situation in Nanaimo?

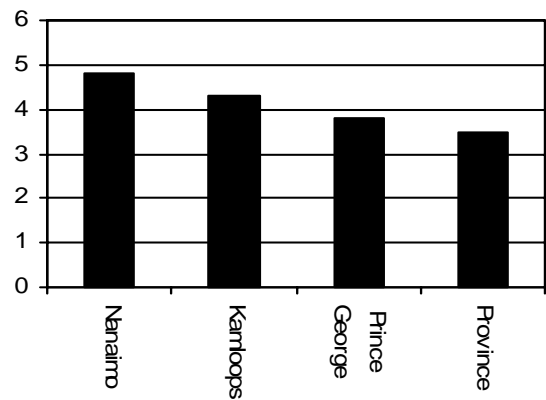
In Nanaimo, 2,635 people or 4.8% of the population (15+) had a trade certificate or diploma in 1996. Another 15,965 people or 28.9% of the population (15+) had an "other non-university education only" and 6,925 people or 12.5% of the population (15+) had a "university education without a degree." Additionally, 5,210 people or 9.4% of the population (15+) had a "university education with a bachelor degree or higher."

Within Nanaimo, the neighbourhoods with the highest percentages of their populations (15+) with a bachelor degree or higher in 1996 were: Woodgrove (11.7%), Departure Bay (12.4%), Westwood (12.6%), North Slope (13.5%), and Northeast Slope (20.1%).

2001 Census information pertaining to education and levels of schooling will not be available until March 11, 2003.

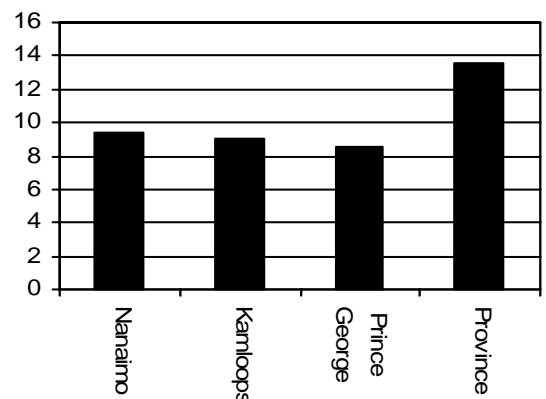
How do we compare?

In 1996, Nanaimo had a higher percentage of its population (15+) (4.8%) who had a trade certificate or diploma than for the Cities of Kamloops (4.3%) and Prince George (3.8%) and for the Province (3.5%).



■ Percentage of the population (15+) who had a trade certificate or diploma in 1996

In 1996, Nanaimo had a higher percentage of its population (15+) (9.4%) who had a bachelor degree or higher than for both the Cities of Kamloops (9.0%) and Prince George (8.5%) but a lower percentage than for the Province (13.6%).



■ Percentage of the population (15+) who had a bachelor degree or higher in 1996

What are the trends?

Between 1991 and 1996, the percentage of Nainimo's population (15+) who had a trade certificate or diploma increased by 0.3 percentage points from 4.5% to 4.8%.

During the same period, the percentage of Nainimo's population (15+) who had a bachelor degree or higher increased by 2.0 percentage points from 7.2% to 9.2%.

What has been written?

Mounting evidence suggests that education increases opportunities for income and job security, and provides individuals with a sense of control over life circumstances, which are key factors that influence health. For example, individuals with a university education in BC are almost two times as likely to report being content or having high self-esteem than those who have not completed high school (Health Canada, December 10-11, 2000).

Additionally, a post-secondary education is one of the most important predictors of many forms of civic participation. In the United States, where this association has been extensively studied, having four more years of education is associated with 30% more interest in politics, 40% more club attendance and 45% more volunteering (Putnam, 2000).

What are some assets/resources?

Malaspina University College offers four-year university degree completion, post-secondary diploma programs, a Masters of Business Administration and an International Masters of Business Administration. In addition, it offers customized training for business and industry, as well as a wide range of community education programs. Currently, the institution's three campuses serve approximately 10,000 full- and part-time students and approximately 15,500 community education students.

With regard to satisfaction levels related to the quality of education received at Malaspina University College, 80.5% of all respondents were generally satisfied in 2001. This was higher than for the average satisfaction levels (76.2%) for all other university colleges in the Province. Additionally, it was 4.5 percentage points higher than for the satisfaction levels (76.0%) recorded for Malaspina University College in 1996.

For more information about Malaspina University College, contact (250) 753-3245 or refer to its website at: (www.mala.bc.ca).

Malaspina University College and School District #68 are involved in the Central Island Human Resources Strategy, which is promoting the development of key occupations related to targeted growth areas.

What questions does this raise?

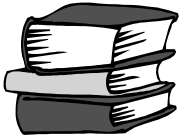
- How do we encourage or enable a greater percentage of high school graduates to attend a post-secondary educational facility?
- How do we retain or attract college or university graduates?

Where to go for information?

- Health Canada. Strategic Planning Retreat for the BC/Yukon Region. Vancouver: Regional Executive Committee, December 10-11, 2001.
- Putnam, Robert D. Bowling Alone: The Collapse and Revival of American Community. New York: Simon and Shuster, 2000.

What are related indicators?

- Economic: Personal Income
- Education: High School Completion
- Education: Post-Secondary Transition
- Participation: Charitable Giving
- Participation: Municipal Voting
- Participation: Volunteerism



English-as-a-Second Language

Why is it important?

Over the past three decades, the origin of immigrants to the Province has shifted significantly. In the early 1970s, most immigrants came from Europe, whereas the majority of today's immigrants come from Asia. As a result of the higher proportion of immigrants coming from countries where English is neither the native language or used widely, the overall English language ability of immigrants has dropped.

The increasing number of languages in use has implications for advertisers, businesses, community service providers, educators and others. With regard to educators, the increasing number of non-English speaking immigrants has necessitated the need for English-as-a-Second Language (ESL) training.

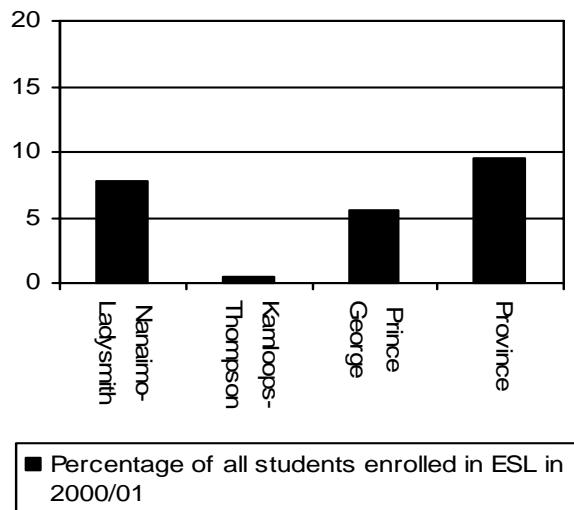
What is the situation in Nanaimo?

In September 2001, 589 students or 3.5% of all students were enrolled in ESL in School District #68 (Nanaimo-Ladysmith). The vast majority of these students were in elementary school (86.4%); while the remainder were in kindergarten (5.3%) and secondary school (8.3%). These figures do not include those students enrolled in Continuing or Distance Education (Ministry of Education, Report Number 1586A).

In September 2001, the most prevalent non-English languages spoken at home by students in School District #68 (Nanaimo-Ladysmith) were Vietnamese (1.3%), Punjabi (0.9%), Chinese (0.4%), Korean (0.3%) and French (0.3%) (Ministry of Education, Report Number, 1527).

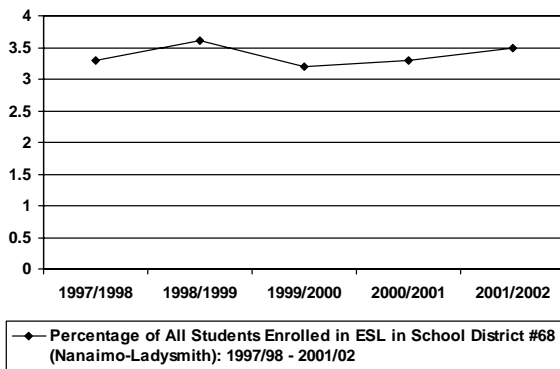
How do we compare?

In 2000/01 (the most recent academic year in which comparison data is available), 3.3% of all students were enrolled in ESL in School District #68 (Nanaimo-Ladysmith). This percentage was higher than for School District #73 (Kamloops-Thompson) (0.4%) but lower than for School District #57 (Prince George) (5.5%) and for the Province (9.6%).



What are the trends?

During the five-year period between 1997/98 and 2001/02, the number of all students enrolled in ESL in School District #68 (Nanaimo-Ladysmith) averaged 3.4%. In the past three academic years, the percentage of all students enrolled in ESL in School District #68 (Nanaimo-Ladysmith) increased from 3.2% in 1999/00, to 3.3% in 2000/01, to 3.5% in 2001/02.



What has been written?

A recent study by Statistics Canada, which compared children of non-English speaking immigrants with children of Canadian-born parents, found that children of non-English speaking immigrants performed at first at lower levels than others in reading and writing but at the same level or better in mathematics. It further found that the gap closed by age 13 years, given ESL instruction and other supports (Lazaruk, November 15, 2001).

What are some of the issues?

About 62% of immigrants to Nanaimo were 20 years or older at the time of immigration. As such, they did not or are not benefiting from language training in the schools. With regard to non-English speaking immigrants, some may enroll in English language services for adults or take private tutoring, while others may try to learn English on their own or with the assistance of family and friends. For the latter, accessing community services, achieving employment, enhancing education or skills, expanding social support networks, and integrating into the community will be a more difficult task.

What are some assets/resources?

The Central Vancouver Island Multicultural Society provides English language classes for adults and conversation and pronunciation evenings for immigrants. For more information, contact (250) 753-6911.

The Nanaimo Immigrant Settlement Society provides settlement assistance to recent immigrants and sponsors refugees. Its services include advocacy, assistance with clothing and furnishings, citizen information, cross-cultural counselling, interpretation and translation, orientation to community, reception of new arrivals, and tutoring. For more information, contact (250) 758-6518.

What questions does this raise?

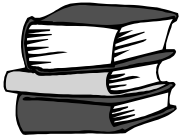
- Given that 62% of immigrants to Nanaimo were 20 years or older at the time of immigration, and, as such, did not or are not benefiting from language training in the schools, what can be done to better meet their needs?

Where to go for information?

- BC Stats. [English Language Ability of Recent Immigrants](#), 1997.
- Lazaruk, Susan. "ESL Students Narrow the Gap by Age 13." [The Province](#). November 15, 2001, Sec. A., Page 25C.
- Ministry of Education. [Annual Student Achievement Profile for the Nanaimo-Ladysmith School District in School Year 2000/01](#).

What are related indicators?

- Population: Children (0-14)
- Population: Youth and Young Adults (15-24)
- Population: Recent Immigrants
- Education: High School Completion
- Education: Post-Secondary Transition



Public Library Usage

Why is it important?

Public libraries foster personal and community development by making knowledge and learning accessible to all. In this emerging age of information and technology, libraries are becoming increasingly important. As evidence, they facilitate literacy and offer access to computers and the Internet.

With regard to community development, libraries have become important gathering places and learning centres. They offer story times for young children, places to learn and study for students, and act as information and resource centres for adults. In fact, they cater to all generations. Libraries are also being used to revitalize areas, such as downtown cores, and to assist in economic development efforts.

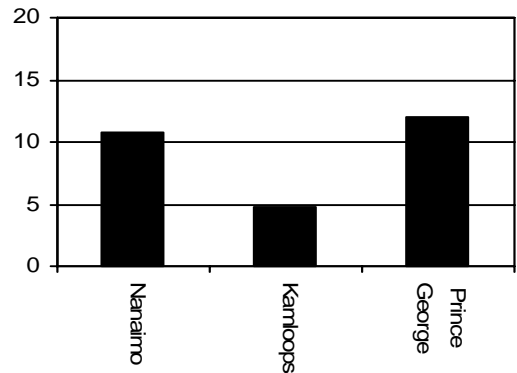
What is the situation in Nanaimo?

Nanaimo has two public libraries: the Harbour Front Branch and the Wellington Branch. In 2002, the Harbour Front Branch had a membership of 22,906 people, 4,274 of which were new, and a circulation of 376,579 items. In this same year, the Wellington Branch had a membership of 14,078 people, 2,117 of which were new, and a circulation of 411,934 items. In total, both branches had a membership of 36,984 people, 6,391 of which were new, and a circulation of 788,513 items.

As for library programs and services, in 2001, both branches recorded 1,634 young children attending story time sessions, 1,203 students visiting as part of school field trips, and 663 adults participating in both author readings or groups. In total, 3,500 people participated in library programs and services.

How do we compare?

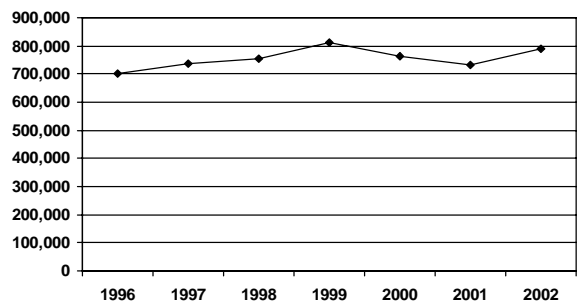
In 2002, there were 10.8 library items checked out for each person living in Nanaimo, which was a higher number than for the City of Kamloops (4.7) but a lower number than for the City of Prince George (12.0).



■ Number of library items checked out per person in 2002

What are the trends?

Between 1996 and 2002, the total circulation of library items increased by 12.6% from 700,518 to 788,513 at both branches in Nanaimo.



◆ Total Circulation of Library Items for Public Libraries in Nanaimo: 1996 - 2002

What has been written?

According to the report, Reading the Future: A Portrait of Literacy in Canada, there appears to be a large income penalty for those people with low literacy skills and, conversely, a large income bonus for those people with high literacy skills. In fact, unemployed people are three times as likely to have low literacy skills than are employed people. As such, adult basic education, literacy programs and public libraries have a major role to play in improving the lives and work prospects of people with low literacy skills.

What are some assets/resources?

The Vancouver Island Regional Library offers a range of programs and services through its Harbour Front and Wellington Branches in Nanaimo. These programs and services include access to computers and the Internet, assistance with homework, books on tape and videos, reference materials and story times. It also offers an Altrusa Club, which delivers books to shut-ins every third week. To contact the Harbour Front Branch, call (250) 753-1154 and to contact the Wellington Branch, call (250) 758-5544. To access its on-line catalogue and resources, use: (www.virl.bc.ca).

Literacy Nanaimo is a non-profit society that provides information, resources and support to adult learners seeking help with basic reading, writing and math. Its volunteer tutor program matches trained volunteer tutors with adult learners and provides one-on-one tutoring. In 2001, 51 tutors were trained and 105 learners were matched. For more information, contact (250) 754-8988.

School District #68, as part of its Early Literacy Program, is targeting aboriginal children and children in inner city schools. The program takes the lowest achieving students and works with them to increase their reading achievement. In 1997/98, the program involved 300 students in 10 schools. By 2000/01, the program had expanded to involve 21 schools.

School District #68 has developed a number of other early literacy initiatives, including implementing best practices in literacy teaching, establishing five Early Literacy Team Leaders (in five inner city schools) and providing funding for a Literacy Support Teacher.

What questions does this raise?

- How do we ensure that public libraries remain relevant in an age of computers and the Internet?
- What can be done to make public libraries less intimidating and more welcoming to people with low levels of literacy?

Where to go for information?

- Statistics Canada. Reading the Future: A Portrait of Literacy in Canada. Ottawa: Statistics Canada, September 8, 1997.
- Vancouver Island Regional Library. Nanaimo City Library Statistics: 1996-2002. January 13, 2003.

What are related indicators?

- Population: Children (0-14)
- Population: Youth and Young Adults (15-24)
- Economic: Income Support
- Economic: Unemployment
- Education: English-as-a-Second Language
- Education: High School Completion
- Education: Literacy
- Education: Post-Secondary Transition

Who are potential education contacts?

- Irene Conroy, Senior Data Administrator, Ministry of Education, PO Box 9150, Stn. Prov. Govt., Victoria, BC, V8W 9H1, (250) 387-6152.
- Michael de Leur, Customer Service Librarian, Nanaimo Harbour Front Branch, Vancouver Island Regional Library, 90 Commercial Street, Nanaimo, BC, V9R 5G4, (250) 753-1154.
- Moufida Holubeshen, Manager, Institutional Research and Planning, Malaspina University College, 900 Fifth Street, Nanaimo, BC, V9R 5S5, (250) 740-6296.
- Jennifer McNeil, Communications/Information, School District #68 (Nanaimo-Ladysmith), 395 Wake-siah Avenue, Nanaimo, BC, V9R 3K6, (250) 754-5521.
- Carolyn McWhinnie, Executive Director, Literacy Nanaimo, 19 Commercial Street, Nanaimo, BC, V9R 5G3, (250) 754-8988.

What other references were used in this section?

- Bouchard, Brigitte and John Zhao. "University Education: Recent Trends in Participation, Accessibility and Returns." Educational Quarterly Review. Ottawa: Statistics Canada, 1999, Vol. 6, No. 4.
- Lipps, Garth and Jackie Yiptong-Avila. From Home to School: How Canadian Children Cope? Ottawa: Statistics Canada, October 14, 1999.

What are other possible education indicators?

- Enrollment in Aboriginal Education Programs
- Enrollment in Adult Basic Education
- Enrollment in Career Preparation Programs
- Enrollment in Job Readiness and Retraining Programs
- Enrollment in Special Education Programs



Health Indicators Section

Executive Summary:

The Nanaimo Local Health Area (see Appendix 2) used to form part of the Central Vancouver Island Health Region. On December 12, 2001, the health region became part of the new Vancouver Island Health Authority, which had a population of 703,052 in 2000.

In 1999, there were 51.6 pregnancies per 1,000 females aged 15 to 19 years in the Nanaimo Local Health Area. This rate was higher than for the Province, which had a rate of 39.3. With regard to low birth weight, in 2000, 4.8% of all live births were classified as having low birth weight in the Nanaimo Local Health Area. This rate was lower than for the Province, which had a rate of 5.1%.

In 2001/02, 91.7% of kindergarten students were visually screened for tooth decay in School District #68 (Nanaimo-Ladysmith). Of these students, 62.6% had "no decay ever," 25.2% had "past decay treated," 10.8% had "decay untreated," and 1.5% had "decay, which required urgent attention." These rates were better than for School Districts #57 (Prince George) and #73 (Kamloops-Thompson).

In 2000, there were 5.07 alcohol-related deaths per 10,000 population in the Nanaimo Local Health Area. This rate was higher than for the Province, which has a rate of 3.68. In this same year, there were 4.36 illicit drug deaths per 100,000 population in the Central Vancouver Island Health Region. This rate was lower than for the Province, which has a rate of 9.1.

In 2000, there were 1.6 suicides per 10,000 population in the Nanaimo Local Health Area. This rate was higher than for the Province, which had a rate of 0.82.

In 2001, the City of Nanaimo funded the development of an information collection program on problem gambling. Based on the information received between April 1 and October 31, 2001, 118 problem gamblers were identified in Nanaimo.

It is estimated that those people with serious mental illness represent about 2% of the population. For Nanaimo, this would mean that there are about 1,460 people with serious mental illness.

Highlighted Health Indicators:

Teen Pregnancy, Low Birth Weight, Dental Care, Alcohol-Related Deaths, Illicit Drug Deaths, Mental Illness, Problem Gambling, Suicides



Teen Pregnancy

Why is it important?

Sexual activity among teens poses risks such as unplanned pregnancies and sexually transmitted diseases. Unplanned pregnancies can adversely affect the health and well being of female teens and their babies. Teen mothers are less likely to complete Grade 12, have greater difficulty obtaining and/or holding employment (due to limited education and child care requirements), and face greater stress than females their own age who have not given birth or who remain in school. As for their babies, they are at greater risk of premature birth, low birth weight, death in the first year of life, and developmental problems (The Office of the Medical Health Officer, 2000).

How is it measured?

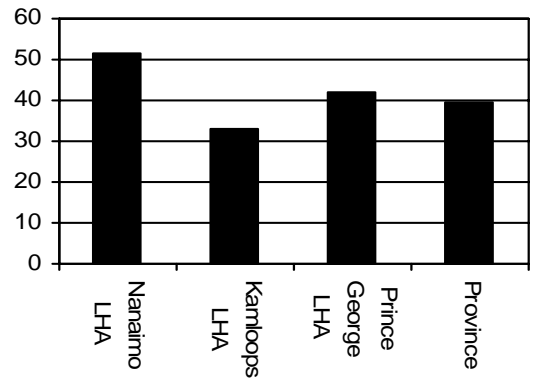
The number of teen pregnancies is estimated by adding the number of live births, still births, abortions and miscarriages that result in hospitalization for females aged 15 to 19 years.

What is the situation in Nanaimo?

In the Nanaimo Local Health Area, there were 165 pregnancies or 51.6 pregnancies per 1,000 females aged 15 to 19 years in 1999. Of these pregnancies, 63 or 38.2% resulted in a live birth, 1 or 0.6% resulted in a still birth and the remainder (101 or 61.2%) resulted in either an abortion or a miscarriage.

How do we compare?

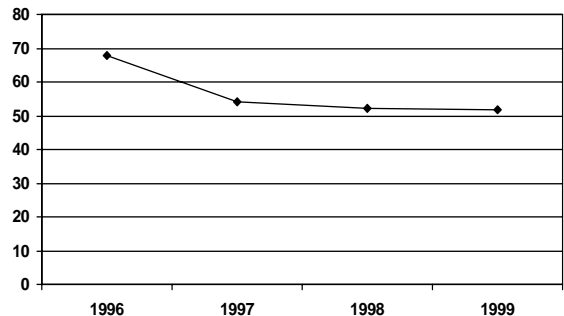
In 1999, there were 51.6 pregnancies per 1,000 females aged 15 to 19 years in the Nanaimo Local Health Area. This rate was higher than for the Kamloops (32.8) and Prince George (42.1) Local Health Areas and for the Province (39.3).



■ Number of pregnancies per 1,000 females aged 15 to 19 years in 1999

What are the trends?

Between 1996 and 1999, the number of pregnancies per 1,000 females aged 15 to 19 years decreased from 67.9 to 51.6 in the Nanaimo Local Health Area.



◆ Number of Pregnancies per 1,000 Females Aged 15 to 19 Years for the Nanaimo LHA: 1996 - 1999

What are some of the issues?

Regarding risk factors leading to teen pregnancy, The McCreary Centre Society in its Adolescent Health Survey (1998) of Grades 7 through 12 students in the Central Vancouver Island Region, found that about 27% of males and 24% of females aged 12 to 19 years reported that they had sexual intercourse at least once.

When asked which method(s) of birth control they used to prevent pregnancy the last time they had sex, 56% of sexually active students stated that they used a condom, 39% stated that they used birth control pills and 24% stated that they used no birth control method or used withdrawal (which is generally considered to be an unreliable form of birth control) to prevent pregnancy.

The survey involved 2,179 students in the Central Vancouver Island Region, including students from School District #68 (Nanaimo-Lady-smith).

What are some assets/resources?

The Facts of Life Line is a confidential phone line which provides information about sexuality, birth control, pregnancy options, relationships and sexually transmitted diseases. To receive help, call 1 (800) 739-7367.

The Nanaimo Crisis Pregnancy Centre offers a 24-hour crisis pregnancy line. It also offers confidential peer support to females and males in a crisis pregnancy situation, as well as free pregnancy tests. For more information or to receive help, contact (250) 714-2191.

The Nanaimo Family Life Association offers a Teen Learning Centre. This education based service supports teen parents to continue their education within School District #68. This service includes: pregnancy and early parenting support groups, home visits, individual counseling, individual and group parenting support, licensed infant and toddler day care for parents attending school, a life skills and support program, and referral. For more information, contact (250) 754-2672 or (250) 754-2673.

The Planned Parenthood Association offers five birth control clinics per week. It also offers birth control information and supplies, as well as free pregnancy tests and referrals. For more information, contact (250) 753-9511.

The Birthright Society offers assistance to all females experiencing an unplanned pregnancy. It provides anonymous pregnancy tests and information about adoption, legal options, medical care and resources, as well as education, guidance and support. For more information, contact (250) 753-6131.

What questions does this raise?

- According to the Adolescent Health Survey, 24% of sexually active students are not using birth control or are using withdrawal. As such, what can be done to reach these students in order to reduce the risk of unplanned pregnancies and sexually transmitted diseases?
- What accounts for the higher rate of teen pregnancy in the Nanaimo Local Health Area than for the two comparison health areas and for the Province?

Where to go for information?

- Information & Research Management Branch, Vital Statistics Agency. Demographic & Summary of Vital Statistics by Local Health Area. Victoria: Vital Statistics Agency, 2002.
- Office of the Medical Health Officer. Population Health Report 1999. Nanaimo: Central Vancouver Island Health Region, 2000.
- The McCreary Centre Society. Adolescent Health Survey: Central Vancouver Island Region. Vancouver: The McCreary Centre Society, 2000.

What are related indicators?

- Population: Lone Parent Families
- Population: Youth and Young Adults (15-24)
- Children & Youth: Child Care
- Education: High School Completion
- Education: Literacy
- Health: Low Birth Weight



Low Birth Weight

Why is it important?

The ability of a new baby to survive and to have a healthy infancy is related to its birth weight. Adequate prenatal growth is a building block for future growth and development. Therefore, adequate birth weight is an indicator of positive development. Babies with a low birth weight have a higher incidence of mental and physical disabilities, and, in extreme cases, death. Low birth weight is also a predictor of health in later life. Studies suggest that low birth weight can increase the risk of diabetes, heart disease and other chronic health conditions (The Ministry of Health, 1998).

How is it measured?

Low birth weight is any weight less than 2,500 grams or 5.5 pounds at birth. The following formula is used to calculate the low birth weight rate: number of live births where birth weight is less than 2,500 grams divided by the total number of live births multiplied by 100.

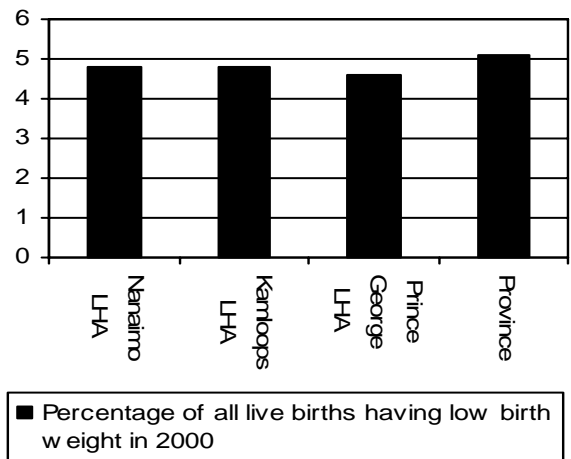
What is the situation in Nanaimo?

In the Nanaimo Local Health Area, 35 live births or 4.8% of all live births were classified as having low birth weight in 2000.

Within the Nanaimo Local Health Area, information as to low birth weight is not readily available at the municipal or neighbourhood level. However, it is known that the incidence of low birth weight is correlated to a number of factors such as limited education, poor health habits (e.g., alcohol, drug and/or tobacco use), teen pregnancy and the use of fertility drugs. As such, low birth weight will be more prevalent in low income areas (Townson, 1999). It will also be more prevalent among teens who have dropped out-of-school and among older women who have deferred child birth.

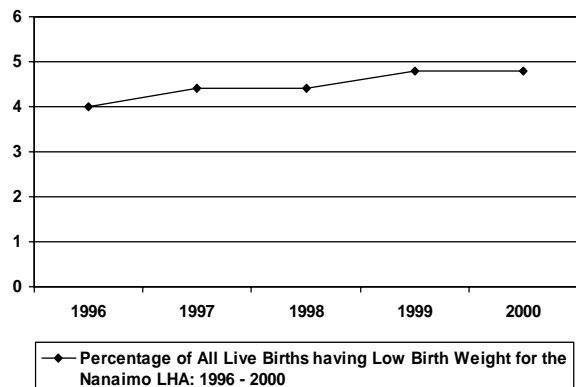
How do we compare?

In 2000, 4.8% of live births were classified as having low birth weight in the Nanaimo Local Health Area. This rate was the same as for the Kamloops Local Health Area and slightly higher than than for the Prince George Local Health Area (4.6%). However, the rate was lower than for the Province (5.1%).



What are the trends?

Between 1996 and 2000, the low birth weight rate averaged 4.5%, reaching a low of 4.0% in 1996 and a high of 4.8% in 1999 and 2000.



What are some of the issues?

Two activities that increase the chances of having a low birth weight baby are alcohol and tobacco use.

Babies of women who drink while pregnant may have mental or physical birth defects that vary in severity. In severe cases, these babies are said to have Fetal Alcohol Syndrome: they are smaller than normal and tend to have facial, ear or eye abnormalities. They may also have heart defects, poor co-ordination, and development delays or mental retardation. Other potential problems include behavioural difficulties such as being hyperactive or impulsive, or having a poor attention span. As for smoking during pregnancy, it causes low birth weight and miscarriage. In some studies, it has also been found to cause birth defects and impaired intellectual development (Ministry of Children and Families, 1998).

The above evidence speaks to the importance of health education prior to and during pregnancy, especially for young females who are more likely to be engaged in these high risk activities.

What are some assets/resources?

Building Better Babies is a program to support healthy pregnancies by avoiding alcohol, drugs and tobacco and encouraging breast feeding and good nutrition. The program includes free diet supplements for low income pregnant and breast feeding mothers, drop-in sessions with guest speakers on relevant topics, lifestyle and nutrition counselling, and prenatal classes at no cost. Child minding during drop-in, free recycled infant and maternity clothing, and transportation are also available. For more information, contact (250) 753-6578.

What questions does this raise?

- What education and supports can be provided to high-risk pregnant women to reduce the incidence of Fetal Alcohol Syndrome?
- Why is the incidence of low birth weight on the rise in the Nanaimo Local Health Area?

Where to go for information?

- Information & Research Management Branch, Vital Statistics Agency. Demographic & Summary of Vital Statistics by Local Health Area. Victoria: Vital Statistics Agency, 2002.
- Ministry of Health. Provincial Health Officer's Annual Report. Victoria: Ministry of Health, 1998.
- Ministry of Children and Families. Baby's Best Chance: Parents' Handbook of Pregnancy and Baby Care. Victoria: Province of British Columbia, 1998.
- Townson, Monica. Health and Wealth: How Social and Economic Factors Affect Our Well Being? Toronto: J. Lorimer, 1999.

What are related indicators?

- Population: Lone Parent Families
- Population: Youth and Young Adults (15-24)
- Economic: Poverty
- Education: High School Completion
- Education: Literacy
- Health: Alcohol-Related Deaths
- Health: Teen Pregnancy



Dental Care

Why is it important?

Tooth decay is a common disease. It can affect one's ability to eat, learn, sleep, speak and be accepted by others.

Children as young as one year of age can experience tooth decay. Inadequate daily dental care, lack of fluoride and poor diet contribute to tooth decay. Infant tooth decay frequently occurs when infants are put to bed with a bottle containing a sweet liquid such as fruit juice, milk formula or sweetened drink mix. The liquid bathes the mouth in sugar, and bacteria in the mouth use the sugar to produce acid which destroys the teeth.

Tooth decay is preventable. Primary teeth with extensive decay in the enamel may need to be treated with crowns. (Fillings may not be an option in children because of the small size of their teeth and the concern of recurrent decay.) When the decay has advanced to the pulp, the teeth may need to be extracted. Unfortunately, loss of primary teeth may affect the alignment and spacing of permanent teeth when they grow (Thivierge, 2002).

How is it defined?

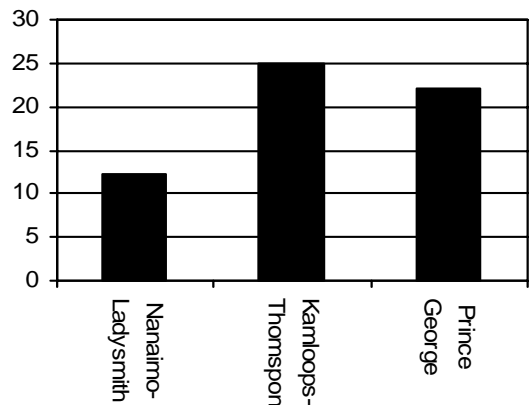
Tooth decay, also called dental caries or cavities, is a bacterial infection that destroys the tooth. Decay results from the action of bacteria and food that live in plaque; a sticky, whitish film on teeth. The plaque bacteria sticking to the tooth enamel use the starch and sugar from food and liquids to produce acid. The acid leaches the minerals from the tooth and this action (also known as demineralization) can cause the breakdown of the tooth.

What is the situation in Nanaimo?

For School District #68 (Nanaimo-Ladysmith), 91.7% of kindergarten students were visually screened for tooth decay in 2001/02. Of these students, 62.6% had "no decay ever," 25.2% had "past decay treated," 10.8% had "decay untreated," and 1.5% had "decay, which required urgent attention."

How do we compare?

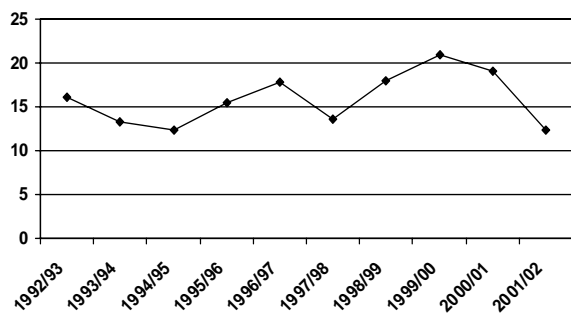
In 2001/02, a far lower percentage (12.3%) of screened kindergarten students in School District #68 (Nanaimo-Ladysmith) had "tooth decay, either untreated or requiring urgent attention" than for both School District #57 (Prince George) (22.1%) and School District #73 (Kamloops-Thompson) (25.0%).



■ Percentage of screened kindergarten students who had "tooth decay, either untreated or requiring urgent attention" in 2001/02

What are the trends?

Between 1992/93 and 2001/02, the percentage of screened kindergarten students with "tooth decay, either untreated or requiring urgent attention" decreased by 3.8 percentage points from 16.1% to 12.3%.



◆ Percentage of Screened Kindergarten Students in School District #68 (Nanaimo-Ladysmith) with Tooth Decay, Either Untreated or Requiring Urgent Attention: 1992/93 - 2001/02

What are some of the issues?

An inadequate or poor diet, along with poor oral hygiene, can significantly contribute to tooth decay. As such, access to information regarding ways to prevent tooth decay and availability of nutritious food, as well as regular check-ups and treatment, including fluoride, can reduce the incidence of tooth decay (Thivierge, 2002).

Once extensive tooth decay is detected, treatment is necessary. In many cases, this treatment may need to be performed in a hospital. In 1999/2000, 160 children aged one to four years and 117 children aged five to nine years were treated at the Nanaimo Regional General Hospital.

What are some assets/resources?

Basic dental and vision care services are available for children and youth under 19 years of age through the Healthy Kids Program. Eligibility includes: children whose families receive BC Employment and Assistance, children in low and moderate income families who are eligible for premium assistance for MSP; and children receiving services from the Ministry of Human Resources. For more information, contact 1 (800) 748-1144.

The Central Vancouver Island Health Unit, provides a wide variety of services, including dental screening and nutrition counselling. For more information, contact (250) 755-6200.

Building Better Babies is a program to support healthy pregnancies by avoiding alcohol, drugs and tobacco and encouraging breast feeding and good nutrition. The program includes free dental health screening because the research suggests a link between periodontal disease and preterm low birth weight babies. The research is also clear that the mother or primary caregiver passes the decay causing germs to her child and, therefore, it is important that the mother have good oral health. For more information, contact (250) 753-6578.

What questions does this raise?

- What is being done to assist low-income adults and the working poor, many of whom do not or are not eligible to receive basic dental care under employer-sponsored insurance plans?
- What is being done to educate and inform parents about the proper care and maintenance of their children's teeth in order to prevent infection?

Where to go for information?

- The Central Vancouver Island Health Region. [Dental Statistics for All Screened Kindergarten Students, 2001/02.](#)
- Thivierge, Bethany. "Tooth Decay." [The Gale Encyclopedia of Medicine, 2002.](#)

What are related indicators?

- Population: Children (0-14)
- Economic: Food Support
- Economic: Income Support
- Children & Youth: Child Poverty
- Education: Literacy
- Health: Low Birth Weight
- Health: Teen Pregnancy



Alcohol-Related Deaths

Why is it important?

Over consumption of alcohol can have adverse health and social effects. Health effects can include cancer of the digestive and respiratory systems, chronic pancreatitis, cirrhosis of the liver, coronary heart disease and psychoses. When abused over an extended period of time, alcohol can directly or indirectly lead to death (Simon Fraser Health Region, 2000).

For pregnant women, alcohol use can result in babies having Fetal Alcohol Syndrome (FAS), which can result in mental, physical and other disabilities. Children born with partial FAS can have behavioural or learning problems (Simon Fraser Health Region, 2000). Social effects can include family violence, homicides, motor vehicle accidents, suicides and workplace problems.

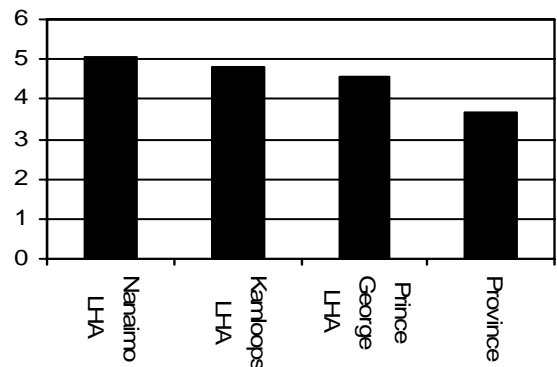
What is the situation in Nanaimo?

In the Nanaimo Local Health Area, there were 57 alcohol-related deaths or 5.07 alcohol-related deaths per 10,000 population in 2000.

In the Nanaimo Local Health Area, the standardized mortality ratio for alcohol-related deaths was 1.43 in 2000. There were 57 alcohol-related deaths and the expected number of alcohol-related deaths based on this area's share of both the Provincial population and the total number of alcohol-related deaths in the Province was 39.8. As such, the ratio of 1.43 is derived by dividing the number of alcohol-related deaths (57) by the expected number of alcohol-related deaths (39.8).

How do we compare?

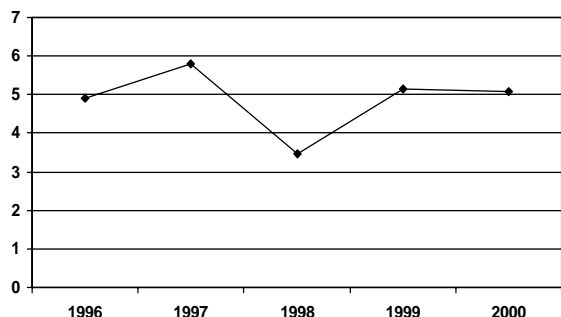
In 2000, there were 5.07 alcohol-related deaths per 10,000 population in the Nanaimo Local Health Area. This rate was higher than for both the Kamloops (4.82) and Prince George (4.55) Local Health Areas and for the Province (3.68).



■ Number of alcohol-related deaths per 10,000 population in 2000

What are the trends?

Between 1996 and 2000, the number of alcohol-related deaths per 10,000 population increased from 4.91 to 5.07 in the Nanaimo Local Health Area.



◆ Number of Alcohol-Related Deaths per 10,000 Population for the Nanaimo LHA: 1996 - 2000

What are some of the issues?

Regarding alcohol consumption by youth, The McCreary Centre Society in its Adolescent Health Survey (1998) of Grades 7 through 12 students in the Central Vancouver Island Region, found that most students (66%) had experimented with alcohol. The percentage of students who had tried alcohol increased with age, rising from 46% of male and 49% of female students aged 14 years and under to 90% of male and 94% of female students aged 17 years and over. Among those students who had used alcohol, 48% had their first drink before the age of 13 years. Additionally, 10% of students had used alcohol on 100 or more days in their lives.

The survey involved 2,179 students in the Central Vancouver Island Region, including students from School District #68 (Nanaimo-Lady-smith).

What are some assets/resources?

The Nanaimo Alcohol and Drug Action Committee is a coalition of community, government and non-government agencies concerned with the alcohol and drug problem in Nanaimo and committed to action that will reduce the harm within the community. For more information, contact (250) 754-1266.

ADAPT Society offers substance abuse prevention and treatment services for youth. It does this through counselling, detoxification and support for youth and their parents. For more information, contact (250) 754-0600.

The Ministry of Health Services' Alcohol and Drug Programs are designed to meet the needs of individuals and families dealing with alcohol and drug related issues. The common goal in all programs is to provide assessment, counselling and prevention services to enable people to make positive lifestyle decisions. For more information, contact (250) 741-5554.

The Communities Addiction Resource Society (Clearview Centre) offers detoxification and supportive recovery programs for adults who are struggling with addictions to alcohol and other drugs. Admission to detoxification is by self-referral, while admission to supportive recovery is limited to women and requires a referral from an alcohol and drug counsellor. For more information, contact (250) 753-9968.

What questions does this raise?

- Given that 48% of students had their first drink before the age of 13 years, what is being done in the schools to reach young children to educate them about alcohol and its potential negative consequences?
- What accounts for the higher number of alcohol-related deaths in the Nanaimo Local Health Area than for the two comparison health areas and for the Province?

Where to go for information?

- Information & Research Management Branch, Vital Statistics Agency. Demographic & Summary of Vital Statistics by Local Health Area. Victoria: Vital Statistics Agency, 2002.
- Simon Fraser Health Region. Health Profile 2000. Burnaby: Simon Fraser Health Region, 2000.
- The McCreary Centre Society. Adolescent Health Survey: Central Vancouver Island Region. Vancouver: The McCreary Centre Society, 2000.

What are related indicators?

- Health: Illicit Drug Deaths
- Health: Low Birth Weight
- Health: Mental Illness
- Health: Suicides
- Public Safety: Crime Rate
- Public Safety: Licensed Liquor Seats
- Public Safety: Youth Crime



Illicit Drug Deaths

Why is it important?

The majority of illicit drug deaths involve young males and the three leading causes of these deaths are suicide, cocaine poisoning and opiate poisoning (Single et al., 1996). AIDS, acquired through the use of illicit drugs, also accounts for an increasing number of deaths. In fact, about 20% of recent AIDS cases are attributable to injection drug use (Single, June 1999).

Illicit drug use also has social implications, as many users resort to crime (especially robbery and theft) to feed their addiction. With regard to violent crime, while alcohol is a far greater factor, illicit drug use is implicated in about 7% of assaults and about 9% of homicides in Canada (Brien et al., April 30, 2002). Other social costs include family breakdown, homelessness, hospitalization, poverty and unemployment.

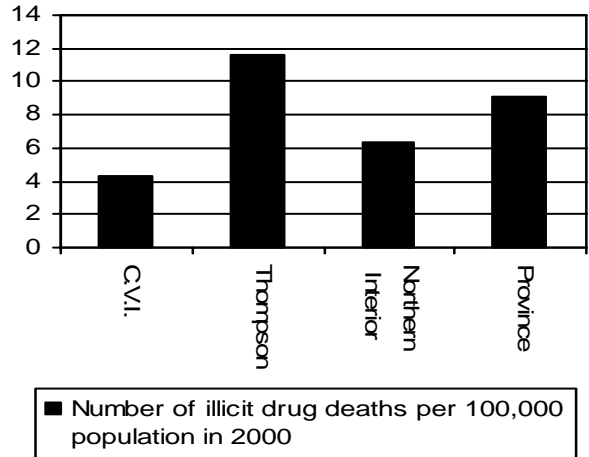
What is the situation in Nanaimo?

In 2000, there were 7 illicit drug deaths or 4.36 illicit drug deaths per 100,000 population in the Central Vancouver Island Health Region.

Information as to illicit drug deaths is not readily available for either the City of Nanaimo or the Nanaimo Local Health Area.

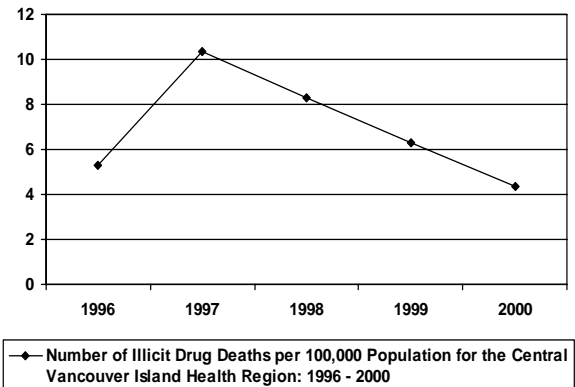
How do we compare?

In 2000, there were 4.36 illicit drug deaths per 100,000 population in the Central Vancouver Island Health Region. This rate was lower than for both the Thompson (Kamloops) (11.65) and Northern Interior (Prince George) (6.30) Health Regions and for the Province (9.10).



What are the trends?

Between 1996 and 2000, the number of illicit drug deaths per 100,000 population decreased from 5.31 to 4.36 in the Central Vancouver Island Health Region.



Who are most at risk?

Rates of illicit drug use (which includes the use of cannabis) are much higher for males (10.1%) than females (4.9%) and rates of use decrease progressively with age from 25.7% for those 15 to 17 years to less than 1.0% for those 55 years or older (Single, June 1999).

What are some of the issues?

Regarding drug use by youth, The McCreary Centre Society in its Adolescent Health Survey (1998) of Grades 7 through 12 students in the Central Vancouver Island Region, found that about 45% of them had used cannabis and 16% had used it 40 or more times. With regard to other drugs, 12% of students had used hallucinogens, 7% had used cocaine, 5% had used amphetamines and 2% had used heroin.

The survey involved 2,179 students in the Central Vancouver Island Region, including students from School District #68 (Nanaimo-Lady-smith).

By comparison, in a multi-site national study of street youth, 71% had used cannabis, 44% had used hallucinogens, 31% had used cocaine, 14% had used tranquillizers and 4% had used heroin (Single, June 1999).

What are some assets/resources?

The Nanaimo Alcohol and Drug Action Committee is a coalition of community, government and non-government agencies concerned with the alcohol and drug problem in Nanaimo and committed to action that will reduce the harm within the community. For more information, contact (250) 754-1266.

Edgewood Chemical Dependency Treatment Centre is an 80-bed inpatient treatment centre for men and women suffering from addictions. It offers detoxification, dual diagnosis treatment and inpatient care, as well as extensive community care planning. For more information, contact (250) 751-0111.

The Reconnect Youth Team, which is funded by the Ministry of Children and Family Development, provides advocacy, harm reduction, prevention, rehabilitation and support services to at-risk and high-risk street-involved children and youth to age 19 years. For more information, contact (250) 754-7737.

Step Stones provides a multidisciplinary team approach in assisting substance using parents to manage their addictions, improving relationships between children and their families, and strengthening connections between families and the child welfare and health systems. For more information, contact (250) 716-7837.

What questions does this raise?

- How do we connect street youth to community services and educate them as to healthy lifestyles that are free of drugs?
- How do we reduce the incidence of HIV/AIDS among injection drug users?

Where to go for information?

- Brien et al. Report on the Impact of Crime and Substance Abuse in Canadian Society. Ottawa: Solicitor General Canada and the Canadian Centre on Substance Abuse, April 30, 2002.
- Information & Research Management Branch, Vital Statistics Agency. Demographic & Summary of Vital Statistics by Local Health Area. Victoria: Vital Statistics Agency, 2002.
- Single, Eric. Substance Abuse and Population Health. Workshop on Addiction and Population Health, Edmonton, June 1999.
- Single et al. The Costs of Substance Abuse in Canada. Ottawa: Canadian Centre on Substance Abuse, 1996.
- The McCreary Centre Society. Adolescent Health Survey: Central Vancouver Island Region. Vancouver: The McCreary Centre Society, 2000.

What are related indicators?

- Economic: Poverty
- Economic: Unemployment
- Health: Alcohol-Related Deaths
- Health: Suicides
- Housing: Homelessness
- Public Safety: Crime Rate
- Public Safety: Youth Crime



Mental Illness

Why is it important?

Mental illness presents serious challenges to the community service and health care sectors in Nanaimo. Mental illness and mood disorders are frequently associated with alcohol and drug misuse, homelessness, poverty and unemployment. In fact, about 8% of total health care spending is devoted to the care and support of people living with mental illness.

People with serious mental illness often exhibit inadequate social skills, lack self-esteem and possess low motivation. Additionally, they frequently neglect their health and are often poor and socially isolated. Some turn to alcohol and drugs for self-medication which both masks and adds to the underlying disease. Others do not get the services they require because they tend to resist traditional care and some require assertive case management to remain in the service system (BC Ministry of Health and Ministry Responsible for Seniors, June 20, 2000).

What is mental illness?

Mental illness can be viewed as the presence of certain bio-psycho-social conditions that can hinder and/or prevent an individual's ability to realize his or her aspirations. Serious mental illness includes schizophrenia, bipolar disorder and major depression. It can also include serious anxiety disorders such as obsessive compulsive disorder, panic disorder, etc.

What is the situation in Nanaimo?

Various projection tools are used to estimate the prevalence of mental illness. The general rule of thumb is that those people with serious mental illness represent about 2% of the population and those people with less serious mental health problems represent about 18% of the population.

If this rule of thumb is used for Nanaimo, then there are about 1,460 people with serious mental illness and about 14,600 people with less serious mental health problems.

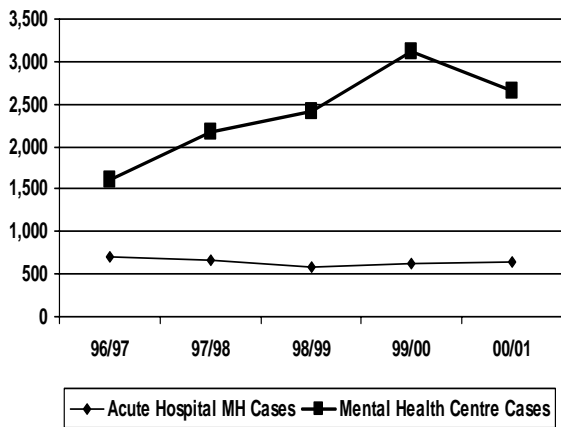
A more accurate picture of the number of people with serious mental illness is provided by the Adult Mental Health Division of the Ministry of Health and Ministry Responsible for Seniors. Based on its statistics, the proportion of Nanaimo adults (15+) with serious mental illness (not including cognitive disorders and developmental disabilities) totalled about 860 in 1998. This figure is based on those people suffering from schizophrenia and bipolar disorder (BC Ministry of Health and Ministry Responsible for Seniors, June 20, 2000).

The above figure is derived by taking the total number of people suffering from schizophrenia (717) and bipolar disorder (1,521) in the Central Vancouver Island Health Region in 1998 and dividing by Nanaimo's proportion (38.6%) of the region's population in that same year.

With regard to more recent statistics for the Nanaimo Local Health Area, there were 642 acute hospital mental health cases and 2,654 mental health centre cases in 2000/01.

What are the trends?

Between 1996/97 and 2000/01, the number of acute hospital mental health cases decreased by 9.8%, while the number of mental health centre cases increased by 65.9% for the Nanaimo Local Health Area. (See chart on following page.)



What are some of the issues?

People with serious mental illness require a number of different types of services and supports that span the health care sector - i.e., community mental health services (including assertive community care, cognitive therapies, housing, out-patient counselling and rehabilitation services), in-patient services, physician services and pharmaceuticals. The absence of some services and supports, and long waitlists for others, places these people at-risk (BC Ministry of Health and Ministry Responsible for Seniors, June 20, 2000).

What are some opportunities?

The Vancouver Island Health Authority recently announced a wide range of new services targeting people with addictions and serious mental illness in Central Vancouver Island. These services include supportive living apartments, transitional and emergency housing, two family care homes with 27/4 care for young adults, and expanded emergency and outreach services.

What are some assets/resources?

The BC Schizophrenia Society, Nanaimo Chapter, offers support to family members, friends and individuals with schizophrenia. It also operates an information kiosk at the Health Information Centre at Harbour Park Mall. For more information, contact (250) 729-9923.

The Canadian Mental Health Association offers a number of programs and services to adults with mental illness, including meal programs, peer advocacy, recreational activities, and supported volunteer and work programs. For more information, contact (250) 756-2121.

Nanaimo Adult Mental Health Services operates a community mobile crisis response team, a crisis stabilization unit, an in-patient unit and a walk-in counselling clinic. It also operates a crisis line. For information, contact (250) 755-3361; and for help with a short term crisis, contact (250) 754-4447.

Nanaimo Child and Youth Mental Health Services serves children and youth aged 1 to 18, and their families who are seeking help with a significant mental health concern. For more information, contact (250) 741-3600.

What questions does this raise?

- How do we change public attitudes and misconceptions regarding mental illness?
- How do we empower and integrate people living with mental illness into our neighbourhoods, enabling them to make a valuable contribution?

Where to go for information?

- BC Ministry of Health and Ministry Responsible for Seniors – Adult Mental Health Division. Foundations for Reform: The Mental Health Policy Framework and Key Planning Tools. June 20, 2000.
- Simon Fraser Health Region. Health Profile 2000. Burnaby: Simon Fraser Health Region, 2000.
- Vancouver Island Health Authority. Central Island To Get More Mental Health and Addictions Services. December 12, 2002.

What are related indicators?

- Health: Alcohol-Related Deaths
- Health: Suicides



Problem Gambling

Why is it important?

Problem gambling has many adverse social impacts. For individuals, it can damage relationships with family and friends, it can lead to personal bankruptcy, and, in extreme cases, it can result in suicide. For individuals with mental illness, it can also become just one more compounding factor. For communities, problem gambling can contribute to crime, domestic violence, homelessness and poverty. It can also negatively impact businesses, as money which may have otherwise be spent on retail goods and services is instead gambled.

How is it defined?

Problem gambling is gambling behaviour which causes disruptions to any major area of life – i.e., physical, psychological, social or vocational. The term includes but is not limited to the condition known as compulsive or pathological gambling, which is a progressive addiction that is characterized by increasing preoccupation with gambling, a need to gamble more money more frequently, irritability or restlessness when attempting to stop, and continuation of the behaviour in spite of mounting serious, negative consequences (National Council on Problem Gambling, 2002).

What is the situation in Nanaimo?

In 2001, the City of Nanaimo funded the development of an information collection program on problem gambling. Currently, 18 agencies submit information on a monthly basis to the program. Based on the information received between April 1 and October 31, 2001, 118 problem gamblers were identified in Nanaimo. Of those problem gamblers that provided personal information about themselves, 56% were male, 70% were Caucasian and 69% were between the ages of 26 and 50 years.

Information Collection from Participating Agencies April 1 - October 31, 2001	
Total Number of Problem Gamblers	118
Gender	
Male	50
Female	39
Unknown	29
Ethnicity	
Caucasian	61
First Nation	19
Asian	1
Unknown	37
Age Categories	
Under 19	3
19-25	5
26-35	18
36-50	38
51-64	16
65+	1
Unknown	37

Between January and November 2001, the Nanaimo Problem Gambling Awareness Program received 77 phone calls. Of these phone calls, 38 or 49% were from gamblers and 22 or 29% were from those affected by gambling. The remaining phone calls were either general inquiries or people in crisis.

Given that the program is just over a year old, historic information was not available.

How do we compare?

According to the Problem Gambling Provincial Help Line's Annual Report, which covers the period from January 1 to December 31, 2001, Nanaimo was second only to the City of Vancouver and ahead of the Cities of Burnaby and Surrey in the number of phone calls made to the help line during 2001. In fact, the help line received 72 calls from Nanaimo residents.

This high number of phone calls from Nanaimo residents may be the result of several inter-related factors, including the location of a casino in Nanaimo, the introduction of a public awareness campaign around problem gambling in 2001 and the lack of a local problem gambling help line and counselling services.

In the first quarter of 2002, Nanaimo ranked sixth with 18 phone calls for help; while in the second quarter of 2002, it ranked fourteenth with nine phone calls for help. This decline may be due in part to the recent availability of a local problem gambling help line and counselling services in Nanaimo.

What has been written?

The National Council of Welfare in its report entitled Gambling in Canada, found that problem gamblers often turn to crime to support their habit after legal sources of funding have been exhausted. In fact, it found that two out of three problem gamblers commit crimes in order to pay off debts or to continue gambling. While the majority of crimes are non-violent such as cheque forgery, embezzlement, insurance fraud and tax evasion, they occasionally escalate to armed robbery and violence.

What are some assets/resources?

The Nanaimo Problem Gambling Program can be reached between 8:30 a.m. and 4:30 p.m. on weekdays at (250) 753-2387. This program provides assistance and referral to problem gambling counselling and other support services in Nanaimo.

After hours, the Problem Gambling Provincial Help Line can be reached at 1 (888) 795-6111.

The Nanaimo Region John Howard Society, through its Think First Program, provides problem gambling information to Grade 6 students. It also provides in-service training and speakers to community groups on the topic of problem gambling. For more information, contact (250) 754-1266.

What questions does this raise?

- How do we encourage responsible gambling among those residents who gamble?
- What will be the potential impacts of computer online gambling?

Where to go for information?

- Nanaimo Region John Howard Society, Problem Gambling Awareness Program.
- National Council of Welfare. Gambling in Canada. Ottawa: National Council of Welfare, Winter 1996.

What are related indicators?

- Economic: Food Support
- Economic: Income Support
- Economic: Poverty
- Economic: Unemployment
- Housing: Homelessness
- Health: Mental Illness
- Health: Suicides
- Public Safety: Crime Rate
- Public Safety: Licensed Liquor Seats



Suicides

Why is it important?

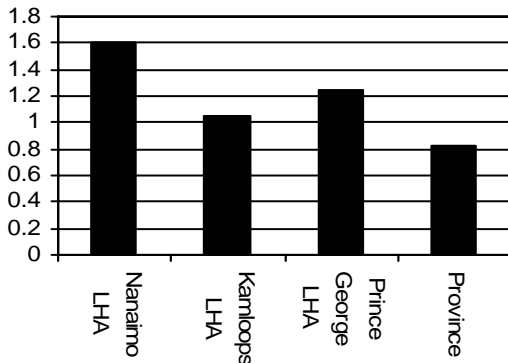
Clinical depression is a prime risk factor for suicide and depression appears to be on the increase, especially among women and youth. Depression is characterized by a depressed mood and/or lack of interest in most things. Symptoms include appetite or sleep disturbance, decreased energy, difficulty concentrating and feelings of worthlessness and/or suicidal thoughts (Statistics Canada, 1999).

What is the situation in Nanaimo?

In the Nanaimo Local Health Area, there were 16 suicides or 1.6 suicides per 10,000 population in 2000.

How do we compare?

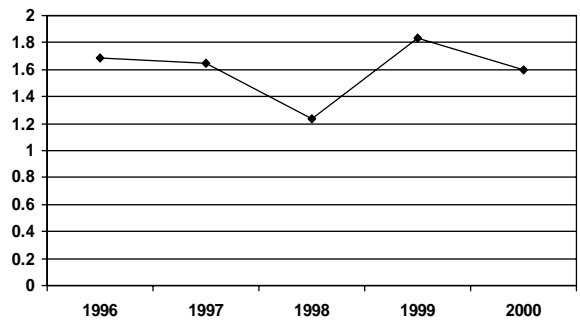
In 2000, there were 1.60 suicides per 10,000 population in the Nanaimo Local Health Area. This rate was higher than for the Kamloops (1.05) and Prince George (1.25) Local Health Areas and for the Province (0.82).



■ Number of suicides per 10,000 population in 2000

What are the trends?

Between 1996 and 2000, the number of suicides per 10,000 population decreased slightly from 1.69 to 1.60 in the Nanaimo Local Health Area. During this period, the number of suicides per 10,000 population reached a low of 1.24 in 1998 and a high of 1.83 in 1999.



◆ Number of Suicides per 10,000 Population for the Nanaimo LHA: 1996 - 2000

Who are most at risk?

According to the National Population Health Survey, 4.3% of Canadians aged 12 years and older reported symptoms strongly suggesting that they had experienced at least one major depressive episode in 1997/98. Depression was most prevalent among those aged 15 to 24 years, declined in mid-life and was lowest among those aged 65 years and older. Depression was also more prevalent among women than men, with almost twice as many women reporting symptoms (Statistics Canada, 1999).

What are some of the issues?

With regard to depression and suicide as they relate to youth, The McCreary Centre Society in its Adolescent Health Survey (1998) of Grades 7 through 12 students in the Central Vancouver Island Region, found that 4% of male and 9% of female students reported feeling emotionally distressed in the month prior to the survey. Additionally, 10% of male and 16% of female students stated that they had seriously considered suicide in the year prior to the survey; while 7% of male and 13% of female students had made a plan about how they would attempt suicide.

The survey involved 2,179 students in the Central Vancouver Island Region, including students from School District #68 (Nanaimo-Lady-smith).

One explanation for the increase in depression and suicide among youth is social isolation. In the United States, the average youth spends about 3.5 hours alone each day, which is more time than is spent with family and friends. Additionally, compared with youth in the 1950s, youth in the 1990s reported fewer, shorter lived and weaker friendships (Putnam, 2000).

What are some assets/resources?

The Nanaimo Crisis Line offers a 24-hour service and is staffed by trained crisis intervention volunteers. It responds to people of all ages in all types of distress, with the goal of empowering and helping them to cope more effectively with their situations. It also facilitates Living Works, which is a two-day suicide intervention workshop. To receive help, contact (250) 754-4447.

The Kids Help Phone is a toll free national telephone counselling service which serves children and youth between the ages of 4 and 19 years. It is staffed by professional counsellors and offers an anonymous and confidential service. It deals with a wide range of problems facing children and youth, including depression, loneliness and suicide. To receive help, contact 1 (800) 668-6868.

Nanaimo Senior Peer Counselling is staffed by trained peer counsellors who listen to seniors, explore their concerns and problems, help them to clarify their needs, refer them to community and professional services, and support them in their decisions. For more information or to receive help, contact (250) 754-3331.

What questions does this raise?

- How can we improve access to counselling and psychiatric services in order to deal more effectively with depression before it escalates to suicidal thoughts?
- What accounts for the higher rate of suicide in the Nanaimo Local Health Area than for the two comparison health areas and for the Province?

Where to go for information?

- Information & Research Management Branch, Vital Statistics Agency. Demographic & Summary of Vital Statistics by Local Health Area. Victoria: Vital Statistics Agency, 2002.
- Putnam, Robert D. Bowling Alone: The Collapse and Renewal of American Community. New York: Simon and Schuster, 2000.
- Statistics Canada. "Psychological Health-Depression." Health Reports. Winter 1999, Vol. 11, No. 3.
- The McCreary Centre Society. Adolescent Health Survey: Central Vancouver Island Region. Vancouver: The McCreary Centre Society, 2000.

What are related indicators?

- Population: Youth and Young Adults (15-24)
- Health: Alcohol-Related Deaths
- Health: Illicit Drug Deaths
- Health: Mental Illness
- Health: Problem Gambling
- Public Safety: Youth Crime

Who are potential health contacts?

- Marg Fraser, Director, Mental Health Programs – Nanaimo, Vancouver Island Health Authority, 1665 Grant Avenue, Nanaimo, BC, V9S 5K7, (250) 755-6257.
- Carolyn Pickett, Problem Gambling Awareness Project, Nanaimo Region John Howard Society, #200-1585 Bowen Road, Nanaimo, BC, V9S 1G4, (250) 754-1266.
- Norman Sillito, Health Information and Research Officer, Population Health, Vancouver Island Health Authority, 1665 Grant Avenue, Nanaimo, BC, V9S 5K7, (250) 740-6990.
- Allison Scott, Problem Gambling Program, Ministry of Public Safety and Solicitor General Gaming Policy and Enforcement Branch, PO Box 9311, Station Provincial Government, 506 Government Street, Victoria, BC, V8W 9N1, (250) 953-3177.
- Anne Williams, Director, Central Vancouver Island Health Region, Vancouver Island Health Authority, 1665 Grant Avenue, Nanaimo, BC, V9R 5K7, (250) 755-6271.

What other references were used in this section?

- Ministry of Health Services. Annual Report - 2001/02. Victoria: Ministry of Health Services, 2002.
- Office of Health Promotion. Health Indicators Workbook: A Tool for Healthy Communities. Victoria: Ministry of Health and Ministry Responsible for Seniors, January 1992.
- Office of the Medical Health Officer. Population Health Report 1999. Nanaimo: Central Vancouver Island Health Region, 2000.
- Statistics Canada. "Personal Health Practices: Smoking, Drinking, Physical Activity and Weight." Health Reports. Winter 1999, Vol. 11., No. 3.

What are other possible health indicators?

- Communicable Disease Cases
- Hospital Utilization Rate
- Immunization Rate for the School Age Population
- Infant Mortality Rate
- Injury Hospitalization Rate
- Injury Mortality Rate
- Life Expectancy for Males and Females
- Potential Years of Life Lost due to External Causes of Death



Housing Indicators Section

Executive Summary:

In Nanaimo, 5,220 households or 55.6% of all renter households paid 30% or more of their gross income on rent in 1996 and, according to Statistics Canada, these households were considered to have housing affordability problems. By comparison, for the Province, 46.1% of all renter households faced housing affordability problems in 1996.

In Nanaimo, the market rental apartment and row house vacancy rate was 3.9% in 2001, which is considered to represent a balanced market between supply and demand. By comparison, for the Province, the market rental apartment and row house vacancy rate was 2.6%. Additionally, average market apartment and row house rents have remained relatively stable since 1998, due in large part to this balanced market. In 2001, the average market rent for a bachelor suite was \$381, the average market rent for a one-bedroom apartment was \$474 and the average market rent for a two-bedroom apartment was \$574.

For those renters who cannot afford a market rental apartment or who prefer ground oriented rental housing with access to gardens and yards, non-market (social) housing and secondary suites have become increasingly important. In Nanaimo, there were 738 non-market housing units in December 2002. As for secondary suites, it is estimated that there are between 3,000 and 4,000 such suites, all of which are unauthorized. Additionally, this form of rental housing is estimated to contribute to about 20% of Nanaimo's total rental housing supply.

In Nanaimo, a recent homelessness study estimated the size of the visible street population at between 20 and 25 people. Additionally, in 2001/02, the number of people using Samaritan House totalled 1,146, while the total number of bed nights totalled 4,922. In 2001, the number of women and children using Haven House totalled 317, while the total number of bed nights totalled 2,896. Homelessness may become even more prevalent given changes to BC Benefits (now BC Employment and Assistance) and to other Provincial government programs and services.

In Nanaimo, 33,790 people or 49.5% of the population changed their place of residence between 1996 and 2001. Additionally, a lower percentage of the population changed their place of residence between 1996 and 2001 than between 1991 and 1996. This may signal more stable neighbourhoods in the future as Nanaimo's population ages.

Highlighted Housing Indicators:

Housing Cost, Vacancy Rates and Rents, Non-Market Housing, Secondary Suites, Homelessness, Mobility



Housing Cost

Why is it important?

BC renters face some of the highest housing costs in all of Canada, with almost half experiencing housing affordability problems. Those facing the most severe problems are the elderly (65+), female headed households (both lone parents and elderly single women), low income individuals who live alone and youth (15-24). For these people and others, just paying the rent often leads to stresses and difficult choices about how to use their remaining income. These stresses can have a negative impact on both health and well being.

What is the situation in Nanaimo?

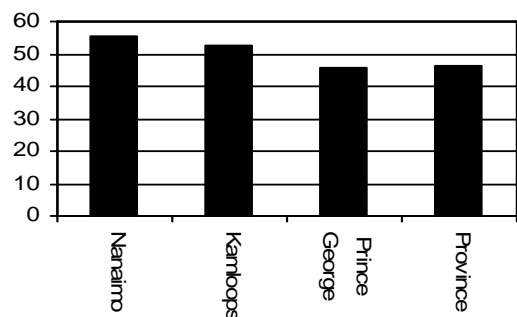
In Nanaimo, 5,220 or 55.6% of all renter households paid 30% or more of their gross household income on rent in 1996 and, according to Statistics Canada, these households were considered to have housing affordability problems.

In 1996, the neighbourhoods with the highest percentages of all renter households who faced housing affordability problems were as follows: Harewood (57.9%), Westwood (58.3%), Five Acres (61.8%), Southend (64.7%) and Townsite (66.1%). Of note, the Downtown (54.0%) had a lower percentage of all renter households who faced housing affordability problems than for Nanaimo-as-a-whole. This lower percentage is likely due to the type of housing available (i.e., bachelor and one bedroom units, older apartments, rooming houses, etc.) than the ability of renter households to pay. In fact, the Downtown had the lowest median household income for one person households in Nanaimo (Urban Aspects Consulting Group Ltd., 1999).

2001 Census data pertaining to housing cost will not be available until May 13, 2003.

How do we compare?

In 1996, Nanaimo had a higher percentage (55.6%) of all renter households who paid 30% or more of their gross household income on rent than for both the Cities of Prince George (45.6%) and Kamloops (52.4%) and for the Province (46.1%).



■ Percentage of all renter households who paid 30% or more of their gross household income on rent in 1996

What are the trends?

Given inconsistencies between the data collected by Statistics Canada in 1991 and 1996, comparisons cannot be made and a trend cannot be discerned. In 1991, the data included all one-family renter households without additional persons with household income greater than \$0; while in 1996, it included all renter households with household income greater than \$0. The latter is far more inclusive, as it includes one-person renter households.

What are some of the issues?

The BC Employment and Assistance Program comprises two components: shelter and support. As part of this new program, the monthly shelter allowance has been reduced for families of three or more. For a family of three, the reduction is \$55 (from \$610 to \$555); for a family of four, the reduction is \$60 (from \$650 to \$590); for a family of five, the reduction is \$75 (from \$700 to \$625); and for a family of six, the reduction is \$120 (from \$780 to \$660). For these families, finding affordable rental housing will be a more difficult task.

Due to Provincial government restructuring, the Nanaimo Community Housing Services Society is no longer operational. This society worked with the government and non-profit sectors to identify local housing issues and to co-ordinate appropriate responses to them. Its absence will likely make it more difficult to facilitate the development of affordable and non-market housing in Nanaimo.

What are some assets/resources?

BC Housing is responsible for the delivery of non-market (social) housing programs. It offers housing assistance to low income households by directly managing non-market housing, subsidizing co-operatives and non-profit societies, providing rent supplements, and administering the HOMES BC construction program. In Nanaimo, there were 738 non-market housing units in December 2002. For information on these units, including development names and locations, application requirements and number of units by bedroom size, refer to BC Housing's website (www.bchousing.org) under the heading: "The Link - Housing Listings."

What questions does this raise?

- What can be done to create a healthy rental housing supply catering to a variety of different income levels and needs?
- What accessible, creative and/or sustainable housing options can be developed to enable low-income households to purchase their own housing?

Where to go for information?

- Statistics Canada. Selected Characteristics for Census Divisions and Sub-Divisions, 1996 Census - 100% and 20% Sample Data. Cat. No. 95-191-XPB.
- Urban Aspects Consulting Group Ltd. Building Capacity: A Housing Needs Assessment. Nanaimo: City of Nanaimo, 1999.

What are related indicators?

- Economic: Food Support
- Economic: Income Support
- Economic: Poverty
- Economic: Unemployment
- Housing: Homelessness
- Housing: Non-Market Housing
- Housing: Secondary Suites
- Housing: Vacancy Rates and Rents



Vacancy Rates and Rents

Why is it important?

A contributing factor to rent increases is the vacancy rate. The fewer market rental apartments and row houses vacant, the less competitive the rental market. Less supply, coupled with strong demand, drives up prices. When prices exceed 30% of a rental household's gross income, then that household is considered by Statistics Canada to have a housing affordability problem.

The Canadian Mortgage and Housing Corporation considers a vacancy rate of 2.5% to represent a balanced market between supply and demand.

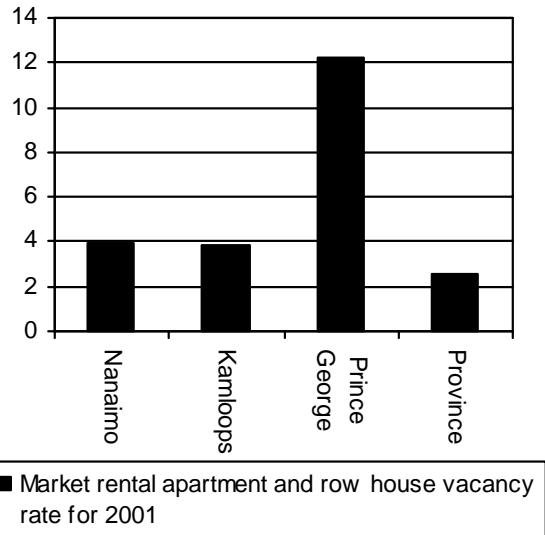
What is the situation in Nanaimo?

In Nanaimo, the market rental apartment and row house vacancy rate was 3.9% in 2001. While this is considered to represent a balanced market between supply and demand, it is sharp decline from the rate of one year earlier (9.2%).

The vacancy rate represents vacancies for all market rental apartments and row houses, no matter what the price. Usually, much higher vacancies exist for higher-priced, luxury units than for lower-priced, modest family units (Layton, 2000). Of note, the vacancy rate does not include both condominium rentals or secondary suites.

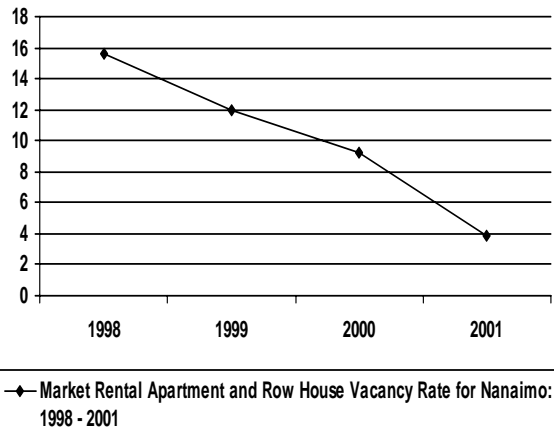
How do we compare?

In 2001, Nanaimo had a similar market rental apartment and row house vacancy rate than for the City of Kamloops (3.8%) but a lower rate than for the City of Prince George (12.2%). In addition, it had a higher rate than for the Province (2.6%).



What are the trends?

For the four year period between 1998 and 2001, the market rental apartment and row house vacancy rate for Nanaimo decreased by 11.7 percentage points from 15.6% to 3.9%.



The market rental apartment and row house vacancy rate may continue to decline, as few new apartments and row houses are built specifically for rental purposes in Nanaimo and as the existing rental housing stock ages and is replaced. The cost of building and operating rental housing exceeds market rents in every major centre in Canada (Layton, 2000). As a result, most new rental housing will be in the form of condominium rentals and secondary suites in Nanaimo, which are considered to be less stable forms of rental housing.

Since 1998, average market rental apartment and row house rents have remained relatively stable in Nanaimo, due in large part to the balanced market between supply and demand. The following chart details the average market rental apartment rents for bachelor, one and two bedroom units for Nanaimo between 1998 and 2001.



What are some of the issues?

With a lower market rental apartment and row house vacancy rate and few new rental market apartments and row houses being built, there may be more pressure on rents to increase, which may result in more renter households experiencing housing affordability problems in Nanaimo.

What are some assets/resources?

The M'Akola Housing Society provides affordable rental housing for families and single parents of aboriginal ancestry who are in core need of housing. Currently, its projects include over 500 units of affordable rental housing on Vancouver Island. For more information, contact (250) 756-4217.

The Tenants' Rights Action Coalition provides information to tenants about their rights and suggests ways for them to resolve conflicts with landlords. It offers the Tenants Survival Guide, which is a plain language guide to the Residential Tenancy Act, and a Provincial Tenant Hotline (1 800 665-1185), which provides free information on tenants' rights.

What questions does this raise?

- What can be done to encourage the private sector to develop market rental apartments and row houses?
- What legislative tools can be used to preserve the existing stock of affordable rental housing in Nanaimo?

Where to go for information?

- Canadian Mortgage and Housing Corporation, Rental Market Report, 2002.
- Layton, Jack. Homelessness: The Making and Unmaking of a Crisis. Toronto: Penguin, 2000.

What are related indicators?

- Economic: Personal Income
- Housing: Housing Cost
- Housing: Non-Market Housing
- Housing: Secondary Suites



Non-Market Housing

Why is it important?

In Nanaimo, 55.6% of all renter households paid 30% or more of their gross income on rent in 1996 and, according to Statistics Canada, these households were considered to have housing affordability problems. This large percentage of all renter households who experienced affordability problems was not unique to Nanaimo, as 46.1% of all renter households in the Province faced similar problems in 1996.

The Federal government, in spite of the above affordability problems, began to phase out its commitment to funding new non-market housing in 1992, totally withdrawing in 1994. This move resulted in the loss of about two-thirds of the previous funding base. Since 1994, the Provincial government has sought to build new non-market housing in partnership with community sponsors and municipal governments. As a result of the new funding realities, the supply of non-market housing has fallen far behind demand.

What is the situation in Nanaimo?

In Nanaimo, there were 738 non-market housing units, including 34 units managed by BC Housing, in December 2002. Of these units, 401 or 54.3% were for seniors and adults with disabilities, 281 or 38.1% were for families and 56 or 7.6% were for single people. Of note, 93 units or 12.6% of all units were operated by the M'Akola Housing Society and were open only to those persons of aboriginal ancestry.

Of the 738 non-market housing units in Nanaimo, 249 or 33.7% were located in the Downtown in December 2002. The remainder were primarily located in those neighbourhoods directly east and south of the Downtown.

With regard to waitlist information for non-market housing in Nanaimo, each non-profit housing provider keeps track of this information for the developments in which it operates. There are currently 31 non-market housing developments and 10 non-profit housing providers in Nanaimo, each with its own placement system and tracking process.

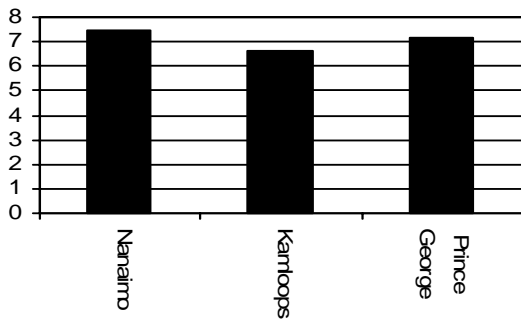
In conversations with representatives of non-profit housing providers in Nanaimo, it was noted that there are many more calls than people who actually apply. If there is no immediate vacancy, it was stated that people are reluctant to take the time to apply, thus the number of applications or people on the waitlist does not provide an accurate measure of the number of people in need of non-market housing.

As part of the report Reducing Homelessness: A Community Plan for Nanaimo (July 2001), it was reported that there were about 300 people on the waitlist for non-market housing in Nanaimo and that the average wait time ranged from three to twenty-four months, with one provider reporting a wait time of six years.

Based on the conversations with representations of non-profit housing providers in Nanaimo, there are still several hundred people on the waitlist for non-market housing and representatives reported little turnover in units. As such, the wait time has not improved and for some providers, it has actually lengthened.

How do we compare?

In December 2002, non-market housing as a percentage of the total rental housing supply was higher for Nanaimo (7.5%) than for the Cities of Kamloops (6.6%) and Prince George (7.2%).



■ Non-market housing as a percentage of the total rental housing supply in December 2002

What are some of the issues?

As part of Building Capacity: A Housing Needs Assessment (1999), a number of issues were raised with regard to non-market housing in Nanaimo. It was noted that several of the seniors non-market housing developments are managed by non-profit housing providers whose members are themselves getting older and who are all volunteers. As such, there was concern amongst these providers about their continued ability to manage. Additionally, many of the non-market housing developments were built some time ago and require increasing maintenance and, in some cases, significant upgrading, yet the rent levels are too low to carry these costs.

What are some assets/resources?

BC Housing is responsible for the delivery of non-market (social) housing programs. It offers housing assistance to low income households by directly managing non-market housing, subsidizing co-operatives and non-profit societies, providing rent supplements, and administering the HOMES BC construction program. For information about BC Housing and its programs, contact (250) 475-7550 or refer to its website at (www.bchousing.org).

The Canadian Mortgage and Housing Corporation guarantees mortgages to non-profit organizations for non-market housing, provided they can contribute 15% to 25% of the equity. It also makes up to \$75,000 available to help them to develop projects, and it has a staff person available to advise municipalities and non-profit organizations.

What questions does this raise?

- What are other municipalities doing to facilitate the development of non-market housing?
- What can the City of Nanaimo, in partnership with other levels of government and the non-profit and private sectors, do to facilitate the development affordable and non-market housing in Nanaimo?

Where to go for information?

- Nanaimo Working Group on Homelessness Issues. Reducing Homelessness: A Community Plan for Nanaimo, BC. Nanaimo: Human Resources Development Canada, July 2001.
- Tenants' Rights Action Coalition, "Social Housing Partnerships." Network. Volume 3, Issue 1, January 2000.
- Urban Aspects Consulting Group Ltd. Building Capacity: A Housing Needs Assessment. Nanaimo: City of Nanaimo, 1999.

What are related indicators?

- Population: Lone Parent Families
- Population: Seniors (65+)
- Economic: Food Support
- Economic: Income Support
- Economic: Poverty
- Economic: Unemployment
- Housing: Vacancy Rates and Rents
- Housing: Homelessness
- Housing: Housing Cost
- Housing: Secondary Suites



Secondary Suites

Why is it important?

For tenants, secondary suites provide access to neighbourhoods from which they may otherwise be excluded, offer ground-oriented accommodation without the prohibitive cost of home ownership, and, in many cases, offer individuals and families a more desirable living space in terms of gardens and yards.

For homeowners, secondary suites provide help with mortgage payments and allow first time buyers the option of home ownership. As for house rich but cash poor seniors, secondary suites offer greater financial flexibility and the comfort of knowing that others are in the house.

For communities, secondary suites can provide increased density, often with minimal environmental impact. They can also offer more inclusive neighbourhoods that make better use of existing municipal infrastructure. On the downside, secondary suites can contribute to parking problems and can strain existing municipal infrastructure and services.

What is the situation in Nanaimo?

The City of Nanaimo estimates that there are currently between 3,000 and 4,000 secondary suites in Nanaimo. As such, secondary suites contribute to about 20% of the total rental housing supply in Nanaimo. The City further estimates that between 20% and 25% of all new housing is built to accommodate secondary suites.

What are the trends?

The City of Nanaimo estimates that the number of secondary suites has increased from between 2,000 and 3,000 in the early-1990s to between 3,000 and 4,000 in 2002.

This form of rental housing may become increasingly important, as fewer market rental apartments and row houses are built. In fact, the cost of building and operating market rental apartments and row houses exceeds market rents in every major centre in Canada (Layton, 2000).

What is the policy in Nanaimo?

The City of Nanaimo's policy for dealing with illegal secondary suites is as follows: (1) respond only to written complaints from individuals residing within a 100 metre radius of the illegal suite and which allege a life safety hazard exists; (2) where the complaint involves a single illegal suite located in a single family dwelling and an inspection has identified safety infractions, the owner will be given 45 days to correct the deficiencies; (3) notice on Title under Section 700 of the Municipal Act will be recommended on all properties on which an illegal suite is located; and (4) when an illegal suite has been identified and any safety issues noted have not been corrected within 45 days, or where the suite is under construction or is located in a structure where an occupancy certificate has not been issued, legal action will be initiated to remove the suite.

Upon receipt of written notice that a secondary suite exists, the City of Nanaimo's Property Section will modify the user rate files to indicate an extra sewer unit and an extra garbage unit for that property folio. The owner of the property will be sent a registered letter advising him or her of the additional charges. The charges will continue until written notification is received from Building Inspectors or Bylaw Services, or until the City Collector is otherwise convinced that the secondary suite no longer exists.

The City of Nanaimo does not warrant that the property is being legally used or otherwise conforms to any Provincial or municipal regulations and reserves the right to enforce any such regulation in accordance with their terms.

What are some of the issues?

Because secondary suites are not permitted, tenants who live in them often believe that they are not covered by the Residential Tenancy Act, and many are afraid to exercise their rights under the Act. They often believe that they will lose their home if government officials get involved in a dispute. Conversely, homeowners are often caught in a “no-win” situation: building and fire inspectors are unable to appraise the condition of the suite without closing it down and the cost of upgrading the suite to meet municipal standards can be prohibitively expensive (Tenants’ Rights Action Coalition, 1999).

What are some assets/resources?

The Tenants’ Rights Action Coalition provides information to tenants about their rights and suggests ways for them to resolve conflicts with landlords. It offers the Tenants Survival Guide, which is a plain language guide to the Residential Tenancy Act, and a Provincial Tenant Hotline (1 800 665-1185), which provides free information on tenants’ rights.

What questions does this raise?

- How do we ensure that secondary suites meet basic health and safety standards?
- How do we inform tenants of secondary suites of their rights and responsibilities under the Residential Tenancy Act?

Where to go for information?

- Permits, Bylaw and Property Services, City of Nanaimo, (250) 755-4439.
- Tenants’ Rights Action Coalition, Secondary Suites: A Tenant Survey, 1999.

What are related indicators?

- Economic: Personal Income
- Economic: Poverty
- Housing: Homelessness
- Housing: Housing Cost
- Housing: Mobility
- Housing: Non-Market Housing
- Housing: Vacancy Rates and Rents



Homelessness

Why is it important?

The Nanaimo Working Group on Homelessness Issues, in its report Reducing Homelessness: A Community Plan for Nanaimo, BC (July 2001), defined two types of homelessness: absolute and at-risk.

Absolute homelessness refers to those people who are living with no physical shelter - i.e., on the street, in doorways, in parkades, in parks and on beaches, as well as those people living temporarily in emergency shelters or transition houses. According to the City of Toronto's Homelessness Action Task Force (1999), these people are at far greater risk for acute illness, chronic health problems, infectious disease and premature death than the general population. They are also at far greater risk for alcohol and drug addiction, mental health problems and suicide.

At-risk of homelessness refers to those people who are living in spaces or situations that do not meet basic health and safety standards, do not offer security of tenure and present affordability problems. According to the BC Ministry Responsible for Housing (1999), these people are at greater risk for acute illness and chronic health problems, and many are only one paycheque or support payment away from joining the ranks of the absolutely homeless.

What is the situation in Nanaimo?

In 1999, the BC Ministry of Health's Annual Report acknowledged that Nanaimo is one of five smaller cities in British Columbia, outside of the Greater Vancouver Area, that is experiencing an increasing number of absolutely homeless people.

In its report, the Nanaimo Working Group on Homelessness Issues, estimated the size of the visible street population at between 20 and 25 at any given time in Nanaimo. Of note, this estimate does not include people who are "couch surfing" at the homes of friends or relatives.

In October 2002, there were 20+ emergency shelter beds at Samaritan House. These beds serve homeless men, women, families and/or youth under 19, with proper approval. Additionally, there were between 14 and 18 transition house beds at Haven House. These beds serve women and children fleeing abuse. Both facilities are operating at or near capacity and both regularly turn-away people.

In 2001/02, the number of people using Samaritan House totalled 1,146, while the number of bed nights totalled 4,922. In 2001, the number of women and children using Haven House totalled 317, while the number of bed nights totalled 2,896.

In addition to the absolutely homeless, a sizable percentage of the population is at-risk of homelessness in Nanaimo. For example, there were 4,635 unattached individuals and 3,325 economic families living below the low-income cut-offs in 1995; 5,220 renter households with housing affordability problems in 1996; and 4,700 unemployed individuals in 2001. Additionally, there were estimated to be 275 people with schizophrenia and 590 people with bipolar disorder (two forms of severe mental illness) in 1998.

Other segments of the population that are at-risk of homelessness include people with disabilities, people with alcohol and drug misuse issues, recent immigrants and refugees, those with criminal justice system involvement and the working poor.

While it is all but impossible to estimate the exact number of people who are at-risk of homelessness in Nanaimo, it is clear that it is a substantial number. Of note, some people are far more at-risk than others, as they may be characterized as having more than one of the above risk factors.

What are the trends?

Between 1997/98 and 2001/02, the total number of clients using Samaritan House increased by 24.3% from 922 to 1,146; while the total number of bed nights increased by 54.1% from 3,193 to 4,922. Between 1999 and 2001, the total number of bed nights for Haven House decreased by 5.8% from 3,073 to 2,896.

What are some of the issues?

Recent changes to BC Benefits (now BC Employment and Assistance) may increase poverty levels in Nanaimo, which may contribute to higher rates of homelessness. These changes include the reduction of support payments for some recipients, the elimination of earnings and income exemptions, the tightening of eligibility criteria for a child care subsidy and time limits with regard to the receipt of assistance (Pov-Net, April 2002).

What are some assets/resources?

Samaritan House is funded by the Ministry of Human Resources and BC Gaming. It is a 20+ bed emergency shelter serving homeless men, women, families and youth under 19, with proper approval. It provides meals and showers and offers support services, including referral to community and government services, assistance in securing housing and brief counselling. People using the facility may stay from one to seven days, with extensions granted to accommodate housing or social needs. For more information, contact (250) 753-1474.

Haven House offers between 14 and 18 transition beds to women and children fleeing abuse. In addition to shelter and food, it provides crisis and ongoing counselling, referrals and support groups, with the latter being open to women in the community. It also provides support groups for children who witness abuse. For more information, contact (250) 754-0764. To reach its crisis line, contact (250) 756-0616.

What questions does this raise?

- What is being done to monitor the homelessness situation in Nanaimo?
- What will be the impact on homelessness of the new emergency shelter being developed by the Salvation Army?

Where to go for information?

- BC Ministry Responsible for Housing. Homelessness, June 1999.
- Homelessness Action Task Force. Taking Responsibility for Homelessness: An Action Plan for Toronto. Toronto: City of Toronto, 1999.
- Nanaimo Working Group on Homelessness Issues. Reducing Homelessness: A Community Plan for Nanaimo, BC. Nanaimo: Human Resources Development Canada, July 2001.

What are related indicators?

- Economic: Food Support
- Economic: Income Support
- Economic: Poverty
- Economic: Unemployment
- Housing: Housing Cost
- Health: Alcohol-Related Deaths
- Health: Illicit Drug Deaths
- Health: Mental Illness
- Health: Problem Gambling
- Health: Suicides



Mobility

Why is it important?

Changing residence can have a destabilizing effect on neighbourhoods. Often, new residents or those that change residence frequently are less willing to participate in the life of a neighbourhood. New residents are less likely to have supportive networks of friends and neighbours, to join in organized activities or to vote in municipal elections. Additionally, those children that change schools, especially those that do so frequently, have lower math scores, more grade failures and higher levels of behavioural problems than those children who stay put (Ross and Roberts, 1999).

What is the situation in Nanaimo?

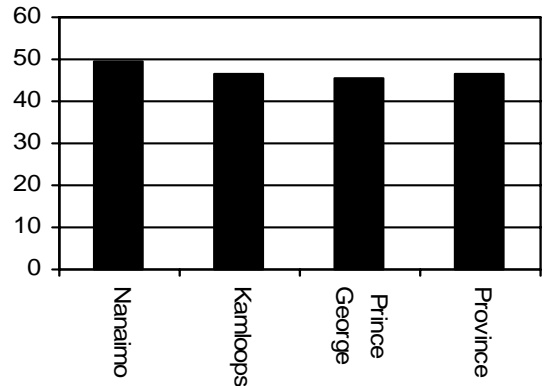
In Nanaimo, 33,790 people or 49.5% of the population changed their place of residence between 1996 and 2001.

2001 Census information pertaining to mobility by neighbourhood was not readily available for Nanaimo. As such, 1996 Census information is cited below.

Within Nanaimo, the neighbourhoods with the highest percentages of their populations that changed their place of residence between 1991 and 1996 were as follows: Southend (60.8%), Diver Lake (62.1%), North Harewood (65.1%), the Downtown (66.2%), Woodgrove (69.5%), and Protection (84.1%).

How do we compare?

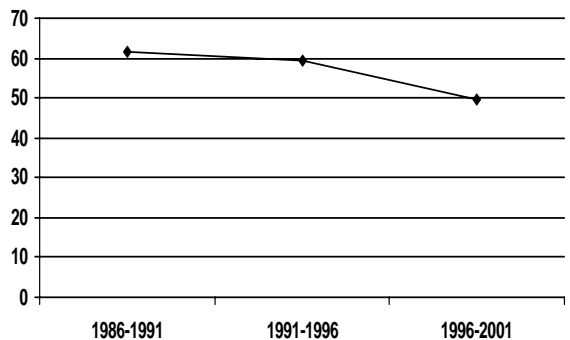
Between 1996 and 2001, Nanaimo had a higher percentage (49.5%) of its population that changed their place of residence than for the Cities of Kamloops (46.6%) and Prince George (45.5%) and for the Province (46.3%).



■ Percentage of the population that changed their place of residence between 1996 and 2001

What are the trends?

In Nanaimo, a lower percentage of the population changed their place of residence between 1996 and 2001 (49.5%) than between 1991 and 1996 (59.4%) and 1986 and 1991 (61.7%).



◆ Percentage of the Population that Changed Their Place of Residence in Nanaimo: 1986-1991, 1991-1996 and 1996-2001

This decrease may signal more stable neighbourhoods in the future, especially given Nanaimo's aging population. BC Stats PEOPLE Run 26 data projects that between 2001 and 2026, the percentage of persons 65+ will increase from 15.4% to 21.0%.

Of note, less than 30% of all British Columbians aged 65+ changed their place of residence between 1991 and 1996 (BC Stats, 1998).

What has been written?

The Nanaimo Downtown Plan states that consideration should be given to the use of incentives to develop affordable and special needs housing. It also states that this housing could include non-market rental housing suitable for low income singles and students and seniors housing, including assisted living options. This type of housing would enable more people to remain in their homes and within the Downtown, which would contribute to neighbourhood stability.

Other municipalities have enacted housing policies that contribute to neighbourhood stability. These policies include encouraging the development of housing which enables the elderly to age in place and housing that incorporates lifetime home design, as well as making home ownership more attainable to those with low incomes and young families. Of note, in a recent study in the United States, it was found that while only one in four homeowners expects to move in the next five years, two of three renters expect to move in the next five years. This study also found that homeowners are far more likely to be involved in community affairs than are renters. (Putnam, 2000).

What are some assets/resources?

The Newcomers Club is a non-denominational, non-profit social club to assist women who are new to Nanaimo. Typically, a business meeting is followed by a guest speaker and then social time. For more information, contact (250) 390-0616.

Welcome Wagon provides information to new residents about businesses, community agencies, government services, public transit routes and schools in Nanaimo. For more information, contact (250) 756-9794 or access its website at (welcometonanaimo@shaw.ca).

What questions does this raise?

- How do new residents access information about community services and supports?
- What can be done to encourage new residents to become more active and involved in community life?

Where to go for information?

- BC Stats, Finance and Corporate Relations. Mobility and Migration between 1991 and 1996, June 1998.
- City of Nanaimo. Nanaimo Downtown Plan. Bylaw 2002, No. 6000.038.
- Putnam, Robert D. Bowling Alone: The Collapse and Revival of American Community. New York: Simon and Shuster, 2000.
- Ross, David P. and Paul Roberts. Income and Child Well Being: A New Perspective on the Poverty Debate. Ottawa: Canadian Council on Social Development, 1999.

What are related indicators?

- Population: Population Growth
- Population: Seniors (65+)
- Participation: Charitable Giving
- Participation: Municipal Voting
- Participation: Volunteerism
- Public Safety: Crime Prevention Programs
- Public Safety: Crime Rate

Who are potential housing contacts?

- Gord Fuller, Program Manager, Samaritan House Emergency Shelter, 355 Nicol Street, Nanaimo, BC, V9R 4T5, (250) 753-1474.
- Ev Smith, House Supervisor, Haven House, PO Box 311, Nanaimo, BC, V9R 5L3, (250) 754-0764.
- Toby Seward, Senior Manager, Permits, Bylaw and Property Services, City of Nanaimo, 455 Wallace Street, Nanaimo, BC, V9R 5J6, (250) 755-4424.

What other references were used in this section?

- Canadian Public Health Association. Position Paper on Homelessness and Health. Ottawa: Canadian Public Health Association, 1997.
- City of Nanaimo. Nanaimo Downtown Plan. Bylaw 2002, No. 6000.038.
- City of Nanaimo. Plan Nanaimo. Bylaw 1996, No. 6000.
- Regional District of Nanaimo. Growth Management Plan. Lantzville: Regional District of Nanaimo, January 30, 1997.
- Urban Futures Incorporated. Population and Housing Projections for the Regional District and City of Nanaimo, 2001 to 2031. Nanaimo: City of Nanaimo, August 2002.

What are other possible housing indicators?

- Housing Price Index
- Number of Dwellings by Dwelling Type
- Period of Housing Construction



Leisure & Recreation Indicators Section

Executive Summary:

There are about 50 arts and cultural groups and organizations in Nanaimo. These groups and organizations involve hundreds of people as performers, players and presenters and appeal to patrons both within and outside of Nanaimo. Given the number of groups and organizations, it is not possible to provide detailed information for each group or organization.

The focal point of heritage interpretation and preservation efforts in Nanaimo is the Nanaimo District Museum. This facility operates year-round and offers exhibitions, events, outreach, programs and school activities. In 2001, 31,984 people visited the museum and the Bastion historic site, as well as participating in a museum sponsored activity, event or program. In 2001, 777 people visited the Nanaimo Community Archives, which is mandated to preserve and provide historical records to the public.

Regarding heritage preservation, the City of Nanaimo has designated six heritage buildings and its [Heritage Building Register](#) contains 141 buildings (including the six municipally designated buildings), 56 of which are located in the Downtown Heritage Conservation Area.

In Nanaimo, there were 536.52 hectares of municipally operated parks and open spaces or 7.35 hectares per 1,000 population in 2002. Of this total, there were 110 neighbourhood parks comprising 43 hectares; 13 community parks comprising 52 hectares; 20 city-wide parks comprising 366 hectares; 29 public beaches and beach access points comprising nine hectares; and one designated natural conservation area comprising 22 hectares.

In addition to municipally operated parks and open spaces, the Provincial government operates Newcastle Island and Petroglyph Provincial Parks comprising 302 hectares, the Nature Trust of BC operates Buttertubs Wildlife Sanctuary and Morrell Nature Sanctuary comprising 111 hectares, and the Pacific Estuary Conservation Program operates the Nanaimo River Estuary comprising 153 hectares.

There are also four community schools operating in Nanaimo, which are collectively called the Harewood Family of Community Schools. These schools encourage families living in the surrounding area to utilize the school buildings, facilities, fields and gardens for educational, recreational and social opportunities. In 2001/02, over 70,000 people utilized the various programs at these community schools.

Highlighted Leisure and Recreation Indicators:

Arts and Culture, Heritage, Parks and Open Spaces



Arts and Culture

Why is it important?

Arts and cultural activities are associated with community betterment and a high quality of life. The benefits can include a better understanding of the different cultures present within a community, enhanced community pride and spirit, and increased social interaction and togetherness. Benefits can also include leadership and volunteer opportunities.

From an economic standpoint, arts and cultural activities can attract new businesses, encourage commercial and real estate projects, and foster tourism. In fact, in a study of 142 businesses, most agreed that cultural amenities were important quality of life factors in their location decisions (Canadian Parks/Recreation Association, 1997). Additionally, employment in the arts and cultural field is labour intensive, unlike many high technology activities.

What is the situation in Nanaimo?

There are about 50 arts and cultural groups and organizations in Nanaimo. These groups and organizations involve hundreds of people as performers, players and presenters and appeal to patrons both within and outside of Nanaimo. For example, the Port Theatre staged 217 events and had 84,521 patrons in 2001. On a smaller scale, the L'Association des Franco-phones de Nanaimo staged a Maple Sugar Festival, which was attended by over 5,000 people and the Nanaimo Conservatory of Music staged four recitals and various choir concerts, which were attended by about 1,000 people in 2001.

Given the number of groups and organizations, it is not possible to provide detailed information for each group or organization as part of this indicator.

What are the trends?

Given the number of groups and organizations in the arts and cultural field in Nanaimo and the large number of groups and organizations who do not record the number of patrons or who do not track this information over time, no overall trend could be discerned.

What has been written?

As part of the Downtown Plan (2002), it states that there are significant economic and social benefits to having a strong arts, cultural and entertainment industry in Nanaimo. Economically, it notes that the benefits can include economic growth and tourism potential. Socially, it notes that the benefits can include artistic and cultural expression and enjoyment. The plan makes a number of suggested actions, including the creation of a unique niche for the Downtown by positioning the area as a centre for arts and cultural activities.

The Nanaimo Cultural Strategy (July 2001) reaffirms the many economic and social benefits of developing and promoting culture in all its forms. It describes a vision for cultural development, an administrative structure and a funding program, as well as goals and strategies to facilitate cultural development. Some of the major strategies include the creation of a Downtown "Cultural District;" the establishment and administration of an endowment fund for arts and culture; and the implementation of a co-ordinated marketing strategy for cultural organizations, programs and services. With regard to the first strategy, the cultural district would be created by locating new facilities or redeveloping existing facilities for cultural purposes.

What are some of the issues?

A brief questionnaire was administered to arts and cultural groups and organizations in Nanaimo. In total, 12 responses were received and the following issues were identified: competition for scarce dollars, lack of recognition and sponsorships, no facility to accommodate smaller audiences, limited studio space at reasonable rents, scheduling conflicts and uncertain funding. Another issue was the lack of public awareness regarding arts and cultural groups and organizations in Nanaimo and the many economic and social benefits that they provide to residents.

What are some assets/resources?

City Council formed the Nanaimo Cultural Committee to provide advice on cultural issues both to City Council and to the Parks, Recreation and Culture Commission. It also formed the Cultural Fund to be administered by the Cultural Committee. This fund provides operating grants to both amateur and professional cultural organizations, as well as seed funds for emerging groups. For more information about the Cultural Committee, call (250) 756-5201.

In May 2000, the Cultural Strategy Sub-Committee was formed to develop the Nanaimo Cultural Strategy (July 2001) (described earlier). This strategy can be accessed on the City's website at: (www.city.nanaimo.bc.ca/a_parks), along with the newsletter entitled: Culturally Speaking: Nanaimo Cultural Committee Info Bulletin.

For a calendar of cultural events and a directory of arts and cultural groups in Nanaimo, access the Centre for the Arts – Nanaimo's website at: (www.artsnanaimo.ca). A directory of arts, dance and social groups, including contact information, is also available by calling (250) 756-5201.

Community schools provide art, dance and music opportunities for members of families in inner city neighbourhoods on an ongoing basis. For more information, contact (250) 753-4511.

What questions does this raise?

- How do we increase public awareness of the economic and social benefits of arts and cultural development in Nanaimo?
- How do we increase interest and participation in and support for the arts to ensure that this sector remains healthy and vibrant?

Where to go for information?

- Canadian Parks/Recreation Association. The Benefits Catalogue. Gloucester, Ontario: Canadian Parks/Recreation Association, 1997.
- City of Nanaimo. Nanaimo Downtown Plan. Bylaw 2002, No. 6000.038.
- Cultural Strategy Steering Committee. Nanaimo Cultural Strategy. Nanaimo: Parks, Recreation and Culture, July 2001.

What are related indicators?

- Leisure & Recreation: Heritage
- Leisure & Recreation: Parks and Open Spaces
- Participation: Volunteerism



Heritage

Why is it important?

Heritage interpretation and preservation can lead to improved community pride and spirit. These emotions are often reinforced by visitors who express interest in the host's way of life. This interest can revive lost cultural traditions and provide a market for local handicrafts. Heritage interpretation and preservation can also retain a community's unique sense of place, allow for architectural diversity in the built environment and foster emotional security in people by maintaining links with the past.

Additionally, heritage interpretation and preservation can lead to economic opportunities. The improvement of a community's quality of life (i.e., the attractiveness of a particular community as a place to live and work) associated with heritage preservation, may be a factor in a firm's decision to establish, expand or relocate in that community. Heritage interpretation and preservation can also foster tourism and retain tourists in the community for longer periods of time.

What is the situation in Nanaimo?

The focal point of heritage interpretation and preservation efforts in Nanaimo is the Nanaimo District Museum. This facility operates year-round and offers exhibitions, events, outreach, programs and school activities.

In 2001, 11,903 people visited the museum and 12,748 people visited the Bastion historic site. Another 2,855 people participated in a museum event, 3,572 people participated in a museum program and 775 people participated in a museum outreach activity. Additionally, 131 students participated in a school program. Thus, in 2001, 31,984 people visited the museum and the Bastion or participated in a museum sponsored activity, event or program.

The Nanaimo Community Archives are mandated to preserve and provide historical records to the public. The archival program consists of identification and acquisition of significant community records, transfer and description of municipal records, and preservation and conversation of records. In 2001, 777 people visited the archives, a 73.1% increase since 1997.

The City of Nanaimo has six municipally designated heritage buildings, five of which are located in the Downtown Heritage Conservation Area. These heritage buildings are the Bastion (98 Front Street), Beban House (2290 Bower Road), the Bank of Commerce/Great National Land Building (5-17 Church Street), the Earl Block/Grassick's Building (2-4 Church Street), the Esquimalt and Nanaimo Railway Station (321 Shelby Street) and the Rowbottom Residence (100 Cameron Road). This level of legal protection means that these buildings cannot be demolished.

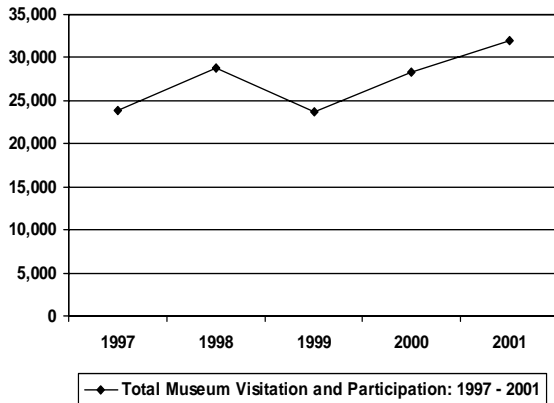
The City of Nanaimo's [Heritage Building Register](#) lists 141 buildings (including the six listed above), 56 of which are located in the Downtown Heritage Conservation Area.

With regard to heritage policy, it is contained in three documents: [Plan Nanaimo](#), the [Nanaimo Heritage Action Plan](#) and the [Downtown Residential Conversion Tax Incentive Program](#). All three documents are available on the City of Nanaimo's website: (www.city.nanaimo.bc.ca).

Plan Nanaimo contains the following provisions: integrate consideration of heritage resource management with the City's development approval process and local area planning process; maintain and enhance publicly owned heritage assets; maintain the Nanaimo Community Heritage Commission for guidance and leadership on community heritage issues; and consider protecting sites of high historical or archaeological value through future park land acquisition.

What are the trends?

Between 1997 and 2001, the number of people visiting the Nanaimo District Museum and the Bastion, as well as participating in a museum event, outreach program or school activity, increased by 34.0% from 23,873 to 31,984 people.



For 2002, the number of people visiting the Nanaimo District Museum and the Bastion, as well as participating in a museum event, outreach program or school activity is projected to be 32,150 people.

What has been written?

With regard to heritage preservation, the City of Nanaimo's Downtown Plan states: "continue to encourage the conversion of Downtown heritage buildings to residential use by way of financial incentives which are available through the City's Downtown Residential Conversion Tax Incentive Program." It also states: "a tax incentive program will be available for the conversion of upper story heritage buildings for residential use in early 2002."

The Downtown Plan also stresses the need to "create a unique niche for the Downtown by positioning the area as a centre for arts and cultural activities." The Nanaimo District Museum and the Bastion will play a key role in any such development in the Downtown.

What are some of the issues?

Several significant heritage buildings on the register are at risk of demolition and/or are suffering from neglect. These buildings include: the E & N Railway Station, the Foundry, Merchants Bank and St. Andrew's United Church. There is also a need to update the City of Nanaimo's Downtown Design Guidelines and to develop a building documentation and salvage policy.

What are some assets/resources?

The Nanaimo District Museum, located in Piper Park, enables visitors to experience the city's aboriginal heritage and its coal mining past, as well as learn about the adjacent Bastion historic site. It offers educational and school programs and sponsors events and outreach activities. For more information, contact (250) 753-1821.

The Nanaimo Community Archives, located at 150 Commercial Street, can be reached by calling (250) 753-4462.

The 10-member Nanaimo Community Heritage Commission provides guidance and leadership on heritage issues. For more information about the commission and its work, contact the City's staff liaison at (250) 755-4472.

The City of Nanaimo's Development Services Department makes available (free) copies of its Heritage Building Register. This register is also available on the City of Nanaimo's website at: (www.city.nanaimo.bc.ca). For each building, a profile is provided, which includes information as to name, address, architectural style and year of construction, as well as a heritage value statement. To obtain a copy of the register, contact (250) 755-4472.

What are related indicators?

- Leisure & Recreation: Arts and Culture
- Leisure & Recreation: Parks and Open Spaces



Parks and Open Spaces

Why is it important?

Parks and open spaces are important contributing factors to the quality of life in communities. They assist in conserving plants and trees; they contribute toward controlling air, noise and water pollution; they are used as a means of gaining exercise; they link neighbourhoods and provide non-motorized access; they offer opportunities for recuperation, relaxation and release from stress; and they provide a place to meet, play and socialize.

Parks and open spaces also increase property values in their vicinity and are a major factor in the relocation decisions of both households and businesses. Both the availability of nearby nature and an individual's degree of involvement with it contribute to neighbourhood satisfaction levels (Canadian Parks/Recreation Association, 1997).

What is the situation in Nanaimo?

In Nanaimo, there are 536.52 hectares of municipally operated parks and open spaces or 7.35 hectares per 1,000 population. Of this total, there are 110 neighbourhood parks (three of which are operated by community associations) comprising 43 hectares; 13 community parks (one of which is operated by a community association) comprising 52 hectares; 20 city-wide parks comprising 366 hectares, 29 public beaches and beach access points comprising nine hectares; and one designated natural conservation area comprising 22 hectares.

As for municipally operated outdoor park facilities, there are 59 playgrounds (three of which are operated by Volunteers in Parks), 32 tennis courts, 28 ball diamonds and sports fields, three lacrosse courts, one lawn bowling green and one outdoor swimming pool.

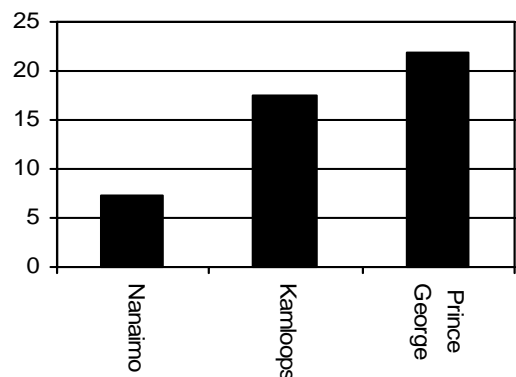
With regard to the trail system, there are seven paved trails 28 kilometres in length and 28 not paved trails 55 kilometres in length. As for the latter, five are not municipally operated.

In addition to municipally operated parks and open spaces, the Provincial government operates Newcastle Island and Petroglyph Provincial Parks comprising 302 hectares, the Nature Trust of BC operates Buttertubs Wildlife Sanctuary and Morrell Nature Sanctuary comprising 111 hectares, and the Pacific Estuary Conservation Program operates the Nanaimo River Estuary comprising 153 hectares.

As such, there are 1,102 hectares of parks and protected areas in Nanaimo or about 13% of its total land area.

How do we compare?

Nanaimo had a lower rate of municipally operated parks and open spaces per 1,000 population (7.35 hectares) than for both the Cities of Kamloops (17.47 hectares) and Prince George (21.96 hectares) in 2002. Of note, comparison information was not readily available for the Province.



■ Number of hectares of municipally operated parks and open spaces per 1,000 population in 2002

The previous chart does not take into consideration parks and open spaces operated and/or owned by senior levels of government or private foundations and trusts. If these parks and open spaces were included for Nanaimo, then there would be 15.1 hectares of parks and open spaces per 1,000 population in 2002.

What are the trends?

In Nanaimo, municipally operated parks and open spaces increased by 9.9% from 488 hectares in 1996 to 536.52 hectares in 2002. During this same period, Nanaimo's population increased by just over 4.0%. Stated differently, in Nanaimo, there were 6.96 hectares of municipally operated parks and open spaces per 1,000 population in 1996 and 7.35 hectares of municipally operated parks and open spaces per 1,000 population in 2002.

What are some of the issues?

Given that 51.3% of parks and open spaces in Nanaimo are operated and/or owned by senior levels of government and private foundations and trusts, the municipality has little control over these areas, other than through negotiation. On the other hand, residents have full access to these parks and open spaces, while the municipality is not responsible for their maintenance and upkeep.

Seniors will comprise an increasing percentage of Nanaimo's population in the future. In fact, between 2001 and 2026, the percentage of seniors in the Nanaimo Local Health Area is projected to increase from 15.4% to 21.0%, while the total number of seniors is projected to increase by 113.8% from 14,650 to 31,328 (BC Stats, 2001). This shift will result in increasing demands for more passive and less physically demanding leisure activities. As such, there may be increased demand for arts, social and spectator events, as well as leisurely activities such as bird watching, golf and pleasure walking (Balmer, 1993).

What are some assets/resources?

The Parks, Recreation and Culture Department produces a Leisure Guide, which is available at both Beban and Bowen Parks and the Nanaimo Aquatic Centre. To register for programs, residents can apply on-line and by phone (250 756-5200) or fax (250 753-7277). Information about and links to area clubs and special events can also be accessed on-line by using the following website: (www.city.nanaimo.bc.ca/a_parks).

The Parks, Recreation and Culture Department offers a Leisure Economic Access Program, which provides discounted course fees, free access to recreational programs for children and youth under 19, and subsidized access for adults (see Appendix 7). For more information, contact (250) 756-5200.

What questions does this raise?

- Can the current rate of municipal park space be maintained in the face of population growth?
- How will an aging population impact municipal park space and recreational programs/services in the future?

Where to go for information?

- Balmer, Ken. "Macro Trends Prescribe Canada's New National Vision for Recreation and Parks." Leisure Watch Canada. Volume 2, Number 3, 1993.
- BC Stats. PEOPLE Projection Run 26. Victoria: Ministry of Management Services, 2001.
- Canadian Parks/Recreation Association. The Benefits Catalogue, 1997.

What are related indicators?

- Population: Population Growth
- Population: Seniors (65+)
- Leisure & Recreation: Arts and Culture
- Leisure & Recreation: Heritage

Who are potential leisure and recreation contacts?

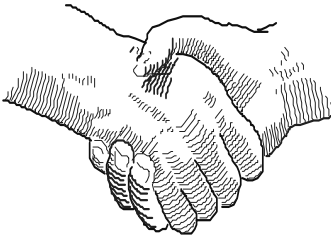
- Tom Hickey, Director, Parks, Recreation and Culture, City of Nanaimo, 2300 Bowen Road, Nanaimo, BC, V9T 3K7, (250) 756-5200.
- Bob Kuhn, Staff Liaison, Nanaimo Cultural Committee, Parks, Recreation and Culture, City of Nanaimo, 2300 Bowen Road, Nanaimo, BC, V9T 3K7, (250) 756-5201.
- Christine Meutzner, Manager, Nanaimo Community Archives, 150 Commercial Street, Nanaimo, BC, V9R 5G6, (250) 753-4462.
- Chris Sholberg, Heritage Planner, Development Services Department, City of Nanaimo, 455 Wallace Street, Nanaimo, BC, V9R 5J6, (250) 755-4472.
- Debbie Trueman, General Manager, Nanaimo District Museum, 100 Cameron Road, Nanaimo, BC, V9R 2X1, (250) 753-1821.

What other references were used in this section?

- City of Nanaimo. Nanaimo Downtown Plan. Bylaw 2002, No. 6000.038.
- City of Nanaimo. Plan Nanaimo. Bylaw 1996, No. 6000.
- Development Services Department. What Is A Heritage Register?: Questions and Answers. Nanaimo: City of Nanaimo, 2002.

What are other possible leisure and recreation indicators?

- Number of Community Celebrations and Festivals
- Participation in Structured Extracurricular Activities



Participation Indicators Section

Executive Summary:

The participation indicators highlighted in this section contribute to a community's social capital, which is defined as the features of social organization such as networks, norms and trust that facilitate co-operation and co-ordination for mutual benefit (Putnam, 2000). Social capital can also be defined as the ties that bind us to one another – i.e., the formal and informal social networks within a community (Patten, 2001). It is created when community members come together out of a shared purpose that goes beyond personal benefit or gain.

The basic idea of social capital is that one's family, friends and peers constitute an important asset, one that can be called upon in times of crisis, enjoyed for its own sake and leveraged for material gain. Those communities endowed with a rich stock of civic associations and social networks are in a stronger position to confront poverty and vulnerability, to resolve disputes and to take advantage of new opportunities (Woolcock, 2001).

With regard to Nanaimo, the three highlighted participation indicators are: volunteerism, charitable giving and municipal voting.

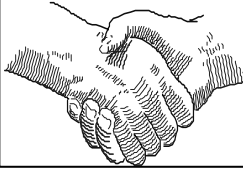
In 2001, Volunteer Nanaimo had 1,126 volunteers on file. In addition, many other community agencies recruit and train people as volunteers to assist in their operations. For example, the Nanaimo District Museum recorded 4,392 volunteer hours in 2001 and Literacy Nanaimo trained 51 volunteer tutors in 2001.

In 2000, 12,480 taxfilers or 22.3% of all taxfilers made a charitable donation in Nanaimo. While the percentage of all taxfilers making a charitable donation was higher in 2000 than in 1998; it was lower than for the Province (23.9%). In 2000, all taxfilers, who reported making a charitable donation in Nanaimo, contributed in excess of \$8.9 million to charitable agencies and organizations, much of which was spent in Nanaimo.

On November 16, 2002, 16,478 eligible voters or 39.0% of all eligible voters in Nanaimo voted in the municipal election. The percentage of all eligible voters who voted in the municipal election of 2002 was higher than for the municipal election in 1999 (37.1%) and 1996 (32.1%) but was lower than for the municipal election in 1993 (43.7%).

Highlighted Participation Indicators:

Volunteerism, Charitable Giving, Municipal Voting



Volunteerism

Why is it important?

In British Columbia, nearly one-third of the population aged 15+ or about one million people volunteered for a charitable or non-profit organization between November 1, 1996 and October 31, 1997. These volunteers contributed a total of 169 million hours, or the equivalent of more than 88,000 full-time, year-round jobs. In fact, British Columbians contributed more hours during the year on average (169) than volunteers in any other province (Saunders, 2000).

These volunteers are essential in developing, improving and sustaining charitable and non-profit organizations. Volunteers are involved in everything from coaching and teaching youth, to fundraising, to providing meals and transportation to the disabled and seniors, to serving as board members. These and many other activities benefit a wide range of organizations, the community-at-large, and the volunteers themselves.

What is the situation in Nanaimo?

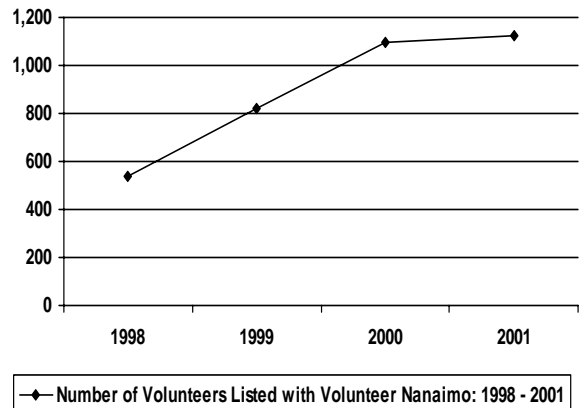
In Nanaimo, Volunteer Nanaimo had 1,126 volunteers on file in 2001. Of these volunteers, 270 or 24% were male and 856 or 76% were female. Volunteer Nanaimo provides training and support to volunteers and co-ordinates people who want to volunteer with community agencies and groups that require volunteers in Nanaimo.

In addition to Volunteer Nanaimo, many other community agencies recruit and train people as volunteers to assist in their operations. For example, the Nanaimo District Museum recorded 4,392 volunteer hours in 2001, a 47.5% increase since 1997. Additionally, Literacy Nanaimo trained 51 volunteer tutors in 2001.

Given the number of community agencies that recruit and train volunteers, the different types of recording systems (i.e., number of volunteers versus hours volunteered) and the potential for duplication, it is difficult to estimate the number of volunteers and the hours volunteered in Nanaimo. To determine the number would require an extensive study or a co-ordinated recording system involving all community agencies that rely on volunteers.

What are the trends?

Between 1998 and 2001, the number of volunteers listed with Volunteer Nanaimo increased by 108.9% from 539 to 1,126.



What are some of the issues?

In Canada, the nature of volunteering is changing, with an increasing number of hours being contributed by a declining number of volunteers. In 2000, just over 6.5 million Canadians volunteered their skills and time to community agencies and groups between October 1, 1999 and September 30, 2000. This was almost one million fewer volunteers than the estimated number of volunteers that volunteered their skills and time in 1997 (Hall, McKeown and Roberts, 2001).

What has been written?

Warren Dow, in his paper entitled The Voluntary Sector: Trends, Challenges and Opportunities for the New Millennium (September 1997), states that the post-war Baby Boom generation, which comprises nearly one-third of the population, is coveted by the voluntary sector both for its sheer size and the breadth of its education, experience and skills. Dow notes that until recently, many of them have been too busy raising families or building their careers to devote time to volunteering.

Dow comments that time is actually on the side of the voluntary sector waiting to tap into this vast human resource potential; as within five to ten years, the majority of their children will be old enough and their careers well-established enough to free up some of their time for volunteering. In fact, he adds, that the oldest Baby Boomers are now turning 55, and, due to corporate downsizing and lifestyle choices, it is expected that a large number of them will be retiring early and still have many years ahead of them to do productive work on boards and in other volunteer capacities.

What are some assets/resources?

Volunteer Nanaimo provides training and support to volunteers and co-ordinates people in the community who wish to volunteer with community agencies and groups that require volunteers. It also acts as an information centre for community agencies and groups. For more information or to register as a volunteer, contact (250) 753-3720.

The CAP curriculum, which is offered in public secondary schools in Nanaimo, includes the importance of volunteering. The requirements are for a minimum of 30 hours volunteer time for graduation. Elementary schools, particularly community schools, also enlist community volunteers to assist with many different facets of school life. All volunteers in schools must have a criminal record check and work under the direction of staff.

Literacy Nanaimo provides administrative support to the following two programs: Be Enthusiastic About Reading and Be Enthusiastic About Math. Program volunteers assist elementary school students with reading and math skills during the school day. For more information, contact (250) 754-8988.

What questions does this raise?

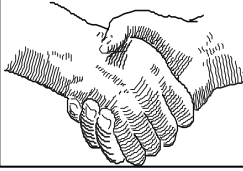
- What is being done to involve retirees and seniors in volunteer activities? This will be of increasing importance as more and more Baby Boomers reach retirement age.
- What is the best way for community volunteers to work within the public school system?

Where to go for information?

- Dow, Warren. The Voluntary Sector: Trends, Challenges and Opportunities for the New Millennium. Vancouver: Volunteer Vancouver, September 1997.
- Hall, Michael, Larry McKeown and Karen Roberts. Caring Canadians, Involved Canadians: Highlights from the 2000 National Survey of Giving, Volunteering and Participating. Ottawa: Ministry of Industry, 2001.
- Ministry of Community Development, Cooperatives and Volunteers. Building Our Communities, December 1999.
- Saunders, Stephanie. Giving and Volunteering in British Columbia: Results from the National Survey of Giving, Volunteering and Participating. Toronto: Canadian Centre for Philanthropy, 2000.
- Volunteer Nanaimo, Volunteer Stats: 1998-2001.

What are related indicators?

- Population: Seniors (65+)
- Participation: Charitable Giving
- Participation: Municipal Voting
- Public Safety: Crime Prevention Programs



Charitable Giving

Why is it important?

Charitable organizations reflect society's commitment to help those who are in need. They create a culture of concern and caring, and appeal to those people who share that concern. Charitable organizations raise money from the general public, from businesses and corporations, and from organized philanthropies and religious institutions.

In BC, the charitable sector, which consists of non-profit organizations that are registered under the Income Tax Act to receive donations which can be claimed as tax credits, continues to grow. In August 1999, there were 10,240 charitable organizations in the Province, which represented an increase of more than 1,900 charitable organizations since 1991 (Ministry of Community Development, Co-operatives and Volunteers, December 1999).

How do we measure it?

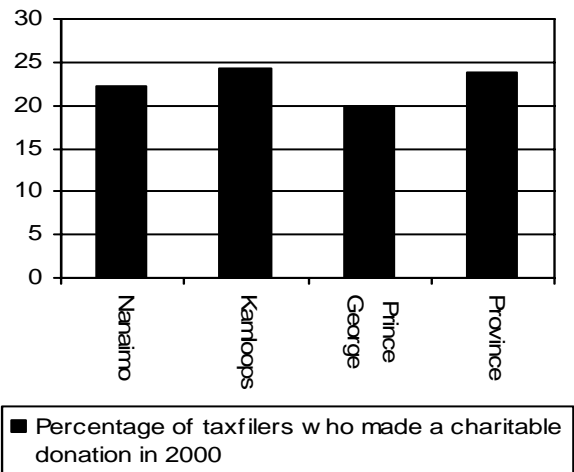
The most reliable indicator of trends in charitable giving is provided by the annual report from Revenue Canada on donations claimed for T1 tax returns. However, it should be noted that tax return data underreports the actual individual support for charitable organizations, as many donors do not claim their donations because they did not receive a receipt (as in the case of many small donations), did not keep receipts, did not recall many small donations, or may have not been aware of the tax benefit that is available. Taxfiler data shows that less than one in four taxfilers claim a charitable donation for credit. Nevertheless, the consistency of the reporting means that it is still the best indicator of changes in charitable giving.

What is the situation in Nanaimo?

In Nanaimo, 12,480 taxfilers or 22.3% of all taxfilers made a charitable donation in 2000. The average age of charitable donors was 55 and the average donation increased with each age group. For example, the average donation was \$440 for those aged 25 to 34, while the average donation was \$970 for those aged 65+ (Statistics Canada, 2002).

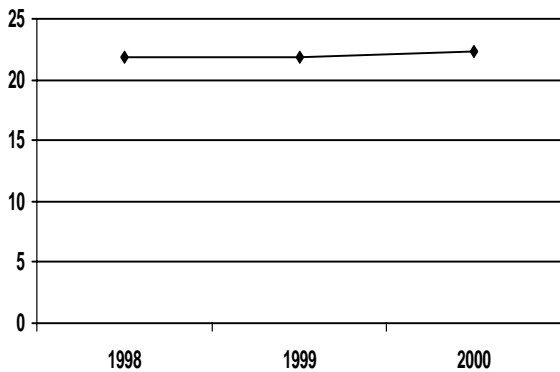
How do we compare?

In 2000, Nanaimo had a higher percentage of its taxfilers who made a charitable donation (22.3%) than for the City of Prince George (20.0%) but a lower percentage than for the City of Kamloops (24.3%) and for the Province (23.9%).



What are the trends?

Between 1998 and 2000, the percentage of Nanaimo taxfilers who made a charitable donation increased by 0.4 percentage points from 21.9% to 22.3%.



Percentage of Nanaimo Taxfilers Who Made A Charitable Donation in Nanaimo: 1998 - 2000

The Nanaimo Local Health Area (see Appendix 2) has an aging population, as evidenced by the fact that the percentage of the population 65+ is projected to increase from 15.4% in 2001 to 21.0% in 2026 (BC Stats, 2001). Given that taxfilers 65+ donate on average more than twice the amount as taxfilers 25 to 34, it can be anticipated that the number of taxfilers making a charitable donation and the size of donations will likely increase in the future.

An aging population will also benefit planned giving programs. Planned giving is comprised of gifts realized at some future date, as in the case of a bequest or an insurance policy which is left to mature and requires some type of legal instrument (e.g., a will).

What are some of the issues?

With new constraints being placed on community and social services due to recent Provincial cutbacks, charitable giving and volunteering will become increasingly important. For some charitable and non-profit organizations, this support may be necessary to ensure their survival, while for others, it may enable them to maintain existing levels of programs and services.

What are some assets/resources?

In 2000, Nanaimo taxfilers, who reported making a charitable donation, contributed in excess of \$8.9 million to charitable agencies and organizations, much of which was spent in Nanaimo.

The City of Nanaimo offers community service grants to social agencies providing advocacy, preventative and self-help services to residents of Nanaimo. The grants are given to fund services required by significant segments of the population and that are not funded exclusively by other levels of government. The maximum grant is \$5,000 per organization per year. In 2001, the City allocated \$18,035 in community service grants; while from January to October 2002, it allocated \$17,500 in grants. For more information, contact (250) 755-4412.

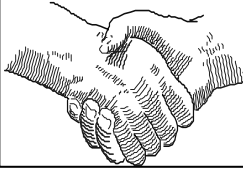
The Nanaimo Community Foundation, founded in 1982, holds donations in perpetuity and uses the income earned to support community agencies and organizations in Nanaimo. Since its founding, it has granted more than \$600,000. For information about the foundation, including information about making a donation or applying for a grant, contact (250) 714-0047.

Where to go for information?

- BC Stats. PEOPLE Projection Run 26. Victoria: Ministry of Management Services, 2001.
- Ministry of Community Development, Co-operatives and Volunteers. Building Our Communities, December 1999.

What are related indicators?

- Population: Seniors (65+)
- Economic: Personal Income
- Participation: Municipal Voting
- Participation: Volunteerism



Municipal Voting

Why is it important?

Voting is a basic way for residents to participate in decision-making, particularly at the municipal level.

Municipal governments are entrusted by the public to make decisions for them with regard to residential, agricultural, commercial, industrial and recreational land uses; the allocation of public infrastructure (e.g., parks, roads, sewer and water services); bylaw enforcement; economic development; and stewardship of heritage sites. More recently, some municipalities have taken on expanded roles, including developing policies and plans dealing with cultural and social issues (e.g., affordable housing, child care and multiculturalism) and environmental sustainability. As such, this level of government and the decisions it makes has a major impact on our lives.

Voting is also an instructive proxy measure of broader social change. Compared to demographically matched non-voters, voters are more likely to attend community meetings, to co-operate with fellow residents on community affairs, to make charitable donations and to volunteer (Putnam, 2000).

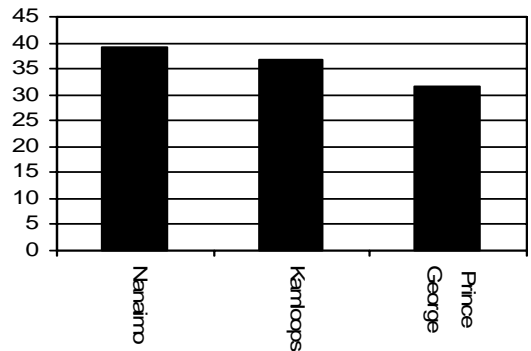
What is the situation in Nanaimo?

In Nanaimo, 16,478 eligible voters or 39.0% of all eligible voters voted in the municipal election of November 16, 2002.

Of the 15 polling stations in Nanaimo, not including the advanced poll, the most active polling stations were McGirr Road (2,719), Departure Bay (2,271), Dufferin (1,516), Georgia Avenue (1,128), St. Andrews (1,057) and Uplands (1,054). These polling stations accounted for 62.4% of all recorded votes.

How do we compare?

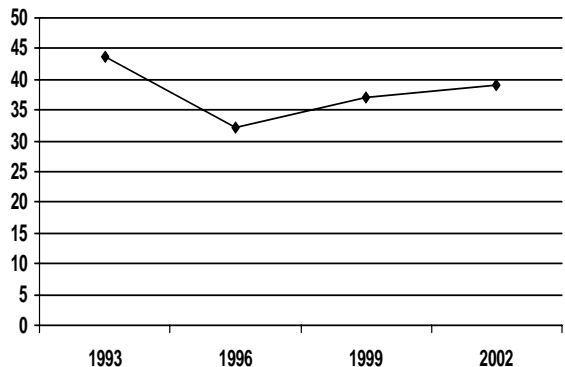
In the 2002 municipal election, Nanaimo had a higher rate of voter turn-out (39.0%) than for both the Cities of Kamloops (36.6%) and Prince George (31.5%).



■ Percentage of all eligible voters who voted in the municipal election of November 16, 2002

What are the trends?

In Nanaimo, the percentage of all eligible voters who voted in the municipal election of 2002 was higher than for the municipal election in 1999 (37.1%) and 1996 (32.1%) but was lower than for the municipal election in 1993 (43.7%).



◆ Percentage of All Eligible Voters Who Voted in Nanaimo: 1993 - 2002

What are some of the issues?

The low rate of voter turn-out is not limited to the 2002 municipal election, as 37.1% of eligible voters voted in the 1999 municipal election, 32.1% of eligible voters voted in 1996 municipal election and 43.7% of eligible voters voted in the 1993 municipal election.

The reasons for the low voter turn-out are probably many but some blame may lie with the process itself. The at-large system, whereby eligible voters vote for candidates representing Nanaimo-as-a-whole and not just a part of it (e.g., a neighbourhood) results in a large number of candidates, making it more difficult for eligible voters to become informed about each candidate and his or her platform on the issues.

In the 2002 municipal election, there were five candidates for Mayor (with one elected), 29 candidates for Council (with eight elected) and 20 candidates for the School Board (with nine elected) in Nanaimo.

What are some assets/resources?

The City of Nanaimo posts a "City Page" on its website. This page lists civic information, community events, public hearings and notices, etc. It also posts the minutes from past Council meetings and a schedule of future Council and steering committee meetings on its website. The City of Nanaimo's website can be accessed at: (www.city.nanaimo.bc.ca).

Shaw Cable provides live coverage of all regular Council meetings and devotes special programming to municipal affairs.

There are three newspapers which provide local coverage of community events, issues and politics in Nanaimo. These newspapers are the Harbour City Star, the Nanaimo Daily News and the Nanaimo Bulletin.

What questions does this raise?

- During the past three Federal and Provincial elections, what trends have been observed with regard to voter turn-out in Nanaimo?
- What can be done locally to encourage residents to take a more active role in municipal planning and decision-making processes?
- Would a ward system, whereby residents vote for candidates representing their neighbourhood, increase voter turn-out?

Where to go for information?

- City Clerk's Office, City of Nanaimo, (250) 755-4405.
- Putnam, Robert D. Bowling Alone: The Collapse and Revival of American Community. New York: Simon and Shuster, 2000.

What are related indicators?

- Population: Population Growth
- Housing: Mobility
- Participation: Charitable Giving
- Participation: Volunteerism

Who are potential participation contacts?

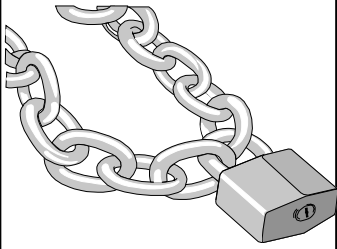
- Derek Adams, Account Executive, Statistics Canada, Pacific Region, 600-300 West Georgia Street, Vancouver, BC, V6B 6C7, 1 (800) 263-1136.
- Jim Bowden, City Clerk, City Clerk's Office, City of Nanaimo, 455 Wallace Street, Nanaimo, BC, V9R 5J6, (250) 755-4405.
- Marjorie Driscoll, Executive Director, Volunteer Nanaimo, 170 Wallace Street, Nanaimo, BC, V9R 5B1, (250) 753-3720.

What other references were used in this section?

- Patten, Monica. Measuring the Ties that Bind. Ottawa: Community Foundations of Canada, 2001.
- Torjman, Sherri. Strategies for a Caring Society. Ottawa: Caledon Institute for Social Policy, 1998.
- Woolcock, Michael. "The Place of Social Capital in Understanding Social and Economic Outcomes." Isuma: Canadian Journal of Policy Research, Vol. 2, No. 1, Spring 2001.

What are other possible participation indicators?

- Membership in Parent Advisory Committees
- Membership within the Major Religious Denominations
- Number of Charitable and Non-Profit Organizations by Category
- Number of Citizen Advisory Committees
- Number of Citizens Attending Regularly Scheduled Council Meetings
- Number of Informal Social Contacts



Public Safety Indicators Section

Executive Summary:

In Nanaimo, there were 141 Criminal Code offences reported per 1,000 persons in 2001, a 37.1% reduction since 1992. Despite this reduction, Nanaimo still has a higher crime rate than for the Province, which had 114 Criminal Code offences reported per 1,000 persons in 2001. Additionally, there were 344 youths (12-17) charged with Criminal Code offences in 2001, a 34% reduction since 1996. Despite these reductions, data from public opinion polls and victimization surveys indicate that many people believe that crime is on the increase. These studies report that victimization rates decrease significantly with age, while levels of fear of crime increase with age. Additionally, they report that the proportion of females who fear crime is three to four times higher than for males.

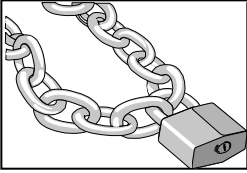
In Nanaimo, there are four Community Policing Stations; one each in the north and south, one serving the Downtown, and one in Cedar, which is just south of Nanaimo. While the stations provide crime prevention programs that are unique to the neighbourhoods they serve, they also have programs in common, including Block Parents, Citizens on Patrol, Crime Free Multi-Housing and Neighbourhood Watch. For Nanaimo, there were 787 Block Parents, 40 Citizens on Patrol, 42 managers who had taken the Crime Free Multi-Housing training and an estimated 2,400 homes involved in Neighbourhood Watch in October 2002. Regarding the 42 managers, they were responsible for the care and maintenance of 1,510 units.

Legal aid assists those people who have a legal problem but cannot afford to hire a lawyer. As such, it facilitates access to justice for them. In 2001, there were 4,295 applicants for legal aid at the Nanaimo Office, of which 2,473 or 57.6% were referred for legal aid. With regard to the applications, 1,369 or 31.9% were family and 1,339 or 31.2% were criminal. The remainder with immigration, intake, poverty and human rights cases. In 2002/03, legal representation services were reduced significantly for family law matters and discontinued for poverty law and human rights cases. Poverty law focuses on administrative and civil law problems that affect the poor.

In Nanaimo, there were 23,246 licensed liquor seats or 0.32 licensed liquor seats per person in December 2002 (not including concert hall and stadium seats). In the Downtown, there were 6,474 licensed liquor seats or 1.59 licensed liquor seats per person in December 2002 (not including concert hall and stadium seats).

Highlighted Public Safety Indicators:

Crime Rate, Youth Crime, Crime Prevention Programs, Legal Aid Cases, Licensed Liquor Seats



Crime Rate

Why is it important?

In BC, there were 114 Criminal Code offences reported per 1,000 persons living in jurisdictions served by municipal and RCMP police forces in 2001, a 0.9% increase from the crime rate in 2000. Prior to this slight increase, the crime rate dropped each year between 1991 and 2000. In fact, for the decade in question, the crime rate dropped by 25.7%.

Given that crime contributes to fear, mistrust and social isolation, as well as negatively impacting property values, a low crime rate is associated with a higher quality of life.

How is it measured?

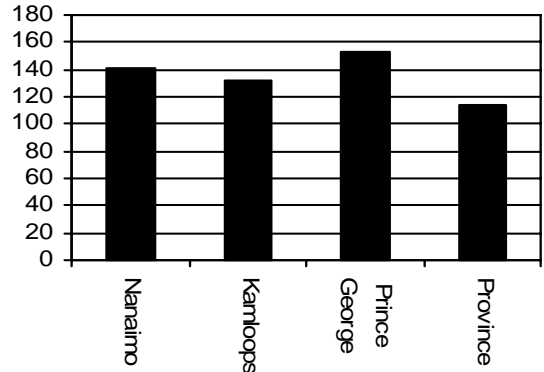
The crime rate is the number of Criminal Code offences reported for every 1,000 persons. It is often a better measure of trends in crime than the actual number of offences because it allows for population growth.

What is the situation in Nanaimo?

In Nanaimo, there were 141 Criminal Code offences reported per 1,000 persons in 2001.

How do we compare?

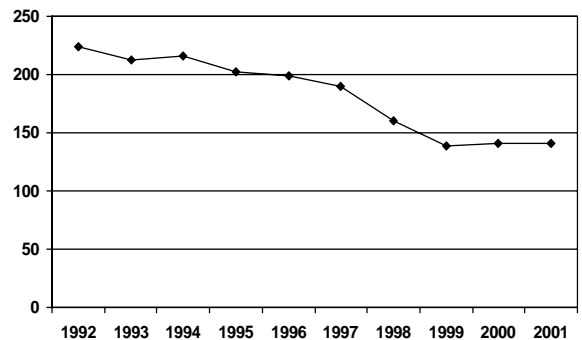
In 2001, Nanaimo had a lower crime rate (141) than for the City of Prince George (153) but a higher crime rate than for the City of Kamloops (132) and for the Province (114).



■ Number of Criminal Code offences reported per 1,000 persons in 2001

What are the trends?

Between 1992 and 2001, Nanaimo's crime rate decreased by 37.1% from 224 to 141 Criminal Code offences reported per 1,000 persons. Of note, between 1999 and 2001, the crime rate actually increased by 1.4%.



◆ Crime Rate for Nanaimo: 1992 - 2001

What has been written?

The discussion paper entitled The Case for Change: A Social Development Strategy for Nanaimo, states that alcohol and drug problems, organized crime and poverty, especially in the Downtown, combine to create an environment that is not welcoming to businesses, families and visitors alike. With regard to alcohol and drugs, a new federal government study states that their use is a major contributing factor in up to half of examined crimes. In fact, drinking too much alcohol was the main contributing factor in one-third of homicides and violent assaults (Anderssen, May 1, 2002).

What are some of the issues?

Despite the decreasing crime rate over the past decade, data from public opinion polls and victimization surveys report that many people believe that crime is on the increase. These studies show that victimization rates decrease significantly with age, while levels of fear of crime increase with age. Additionally, they report that the proportion of females who fear crime is three to four times higher than for males (Ministry of Attorney General, 2000).

As a result of fear of crime, many elderly persons and females limit their activities, especially at night; while others have become virtual shut-ins. Additionally, many charities have limited their door-to-door activities and car and home alarms (usually false) have become daily occurrences.

What are some assets/resources?

The Nanaimo RCMP has decentralized its operations to include several Community Policing Stations and a number of crime prevention programs. Community Policing Stations can be found in the Downtown, the 49th Parallel Shopping Plaza, the Southgate Shopping Plaza and Woodgrove Mall.

As for crime prevention programs, they include but are not limited to: Block Parents, Citizens on Patrol, Crime Free Multi-Housing, Neighbourhood Watch and Speed Watch, as well as the School Liaison Program. For information on these programs, access the RCMP's website at: (www.rcmpanaimo.ark.com).

What questions does this raise?

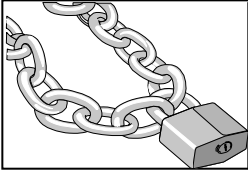
- How can we design our neighbourhoods so as to reduce crime?
- What can be done to reduce the fear of crime in our neighbourhoods, especially among the elderly and females?

Where to go for information?

- Anderssen, Erin. "Study Proves Liquor's Role in Crime." The Globe and Mail. May 1, 2002, A. 8.
- Matthews, Carol. The Case for Change: A Social Development Strategy for Nanaimo. Nanaimo: Social Development Strategy Steering Committee, 2001.
- Ministry of Attorney General – Public Safety and Regulatory Branch, Police Services Division. Crime in British Columbia: A Summary, 2000.
- Ministry of Attorney General – Public Safety and Regulatory Branch, Police Services Division. Police and Crime Summary Statistics: 1992-2001, 2002.

What are related indicators?

- Population: Population Growth
- Population: Seniors (65+)
- Health: Alcohol-Related Deaths
- Health: Illicit Drug Deaths
- Health: Mental Illness
- Health: Problem Gambling
- Public Safety: Crime Prevention Programs
- Public Safety: Legal Aid Cases
- Public Safety: Licensed Liquor Seats
- Public Safety: Youth Crime



Youth Crime

Why is it important?

In BC, the number of youths (12-17) charged with Criminal Code offences experienced a significant reduction between 1991 and 1999. In fact, the youth charge rate (i.e., the number of youths charged per 1,000 youths) has fallen from 71.9 in 1991 to 36.7 in 1999. Despite this reduction, the public perception is that youth crime is rampant, the result of several high profile crimes involving youth, and this is creating an atmosphere of fear (Ministry of Attorney General, 2000). This fear is having a number of negative consequences (e.g., lower levels of trust, reluctance to get involved, etc.).

How is it measured?

Since it is not possible to identify a crime as one committed by a youth unless the police actually solve the offence, data on youth crime are dependent on the identification of the offender by the police. As such, this indicator counts the number of youths (12-17) for whom the police have filed a Report to Crown Counsel alleging responsibility for an offence. It does not necessarily imply the swearing of an information against, or the prosecution or conviction of a youth.

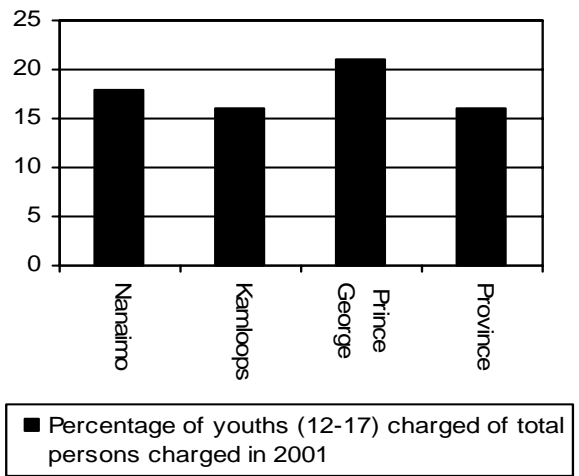
What is the situation in Nanaimo?

In Nanaimo, there were 344 youths (12-17) charged with Criminal Code offences in 2001. As a percentage of all persons charged, youth accounted for 18% of all charges in 2001.

Of note, this information was not readily available at the neighbourhood level in Nanaimo.

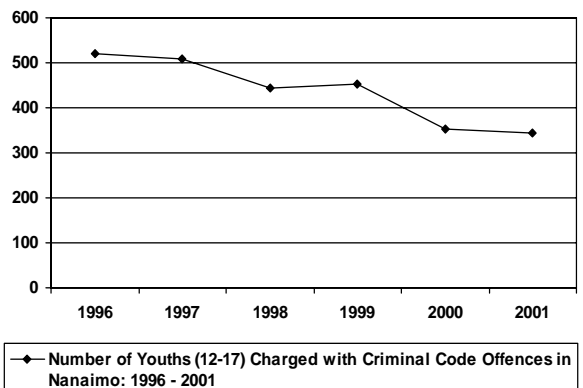
How do we compare?

In Nanaimo, the percentage of youths (12-17) charged with Criminal Code offences of total persons charged with Criminal Code offences (18%) was lower than for the City of Prince George (21%) but higher than for the City of Kamloops (16%) and for the Province (16%).



What are the trends?

Between 1996 and 2001, the number of youths (12-17) charged with Criminal Code offences in Nanaimo decreased by 34.0% from 521 to 344.



What has been written?

In BC, youths are more likely to be charged with property crime offences than are adults (59% of youths and 45% of adults). As for violent crimes, youths are less likely to be charged with such offences than are adults (21% of youths and 33% of adults). Regarding other crimes, such as arson, disturbing the peace, trespassing and vandalism, youths are slightly less likely to be charged with such offences than are adults (20% of youths and 22% of adults) (Ministry of Attorney General, November 1998).

What are some of the issues?

In a comprehensive survey of youth in custody in BC, conducted by The McCreary Centre Society for the Ministry of Children and Family Development, it was found that these youth are much more likely than others in their same age group to have a serious health problem (e.g., attention deficit disorder, depression, etc.), to have been in government care, to have experienced physical or sexual abuse, to have serious emotional health problems, and to have very high rates of risky behaviours (e.g., alcohol and drug use, smoking, etc.).

The above findings speak to the need to address the underlying causes of youth crime, such as poor parenting, abuse, mental and physical health problems, substance misuse, etc. It also speaks to the need for guidance and support to those who are potentially at-risk of youth crime.

What are some assets/resources?

The Reconnect Youth Team, which is funded by the Ministry of Children and Family Development, provides advocacy, harm reduction, prevention, rehabilitation and support services to at-risk and high-risk street-involved children and youth to age 19 years. It also provides repatriation services for youth to return home to their family and/or neighbourhood. For more information, contact (250) 754-7737.

ADAPT Society offers substance abuse prevention and treatment services for youth. It does this through counselling, detoxification and support for youth and their parents. For more information, contact (250) 754-0600.

The Community Action Team for Sexually Exploited Youth is comprised of professionals who are working against the sexual exploitation of children and youth in Nanaimo. For more information, contact (250) 741-5718.

The Nanaimo Youth Services Association provides a wide range of programs and services for youth and young adults. Its Supportive Living Program provides life skills for youth who are in government care. For more information, contact (250) 754-1989.

What questions does this raise?

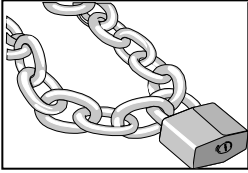
- Does the statistical information reflect what is happening on the street?
- How many children under 12 are involved in criminal activity?
- How many incidents are not reported because of fear of reprisal?
- How many stays of procedure are entered?
- How often are alternative measures or diversions from court utilized?

Where to go for information?

- Ministry of Attorney General – Public Safety and Regulatory Branch, Police Services Division. "Youth Crimes." [BC Crime Trends](#). November 1998, Issue #2.
- The McCreary Centre Society. [Time Out: A Profile of BC Youth in Custody](#). Burnaby: The McCreary Centre Society, 2001.

What are related indicators?

- Population: Youth and Young Adults (15-24)
- Children & Youth: Children and Youth in Care
- Public Safety: Crime Prevention Programs
- Public Safety: Crime Rate



Crime Prevention Programs

Why is it important?

Up until recently, the police primarily relied on a reactive style of law enforcement. That is, they responded to public complaints. In the 1990s, community-based policing – which involves citizens as partners in the process of reducing and controlling the problems of crime, fear of crime and neighbourhood decay – became more widely accepted. As part of this philosophical shift, municipalities adopted a number of community-based and proactive public safety initiatives. In Nanaimo, this took the form of Community Policing Stations.

What is the situation in Nanaimo?

The first Community Policing Station was established in South Harewood in 1992. Today, there are four stations; one each in the north and south, one serving the Downtown, and one in Cedar, which is just south of Nanaimo. The stations are a partnership with the municipal government and various businesses and they serve both to decentralize police services and to act as platforms for volunteer groups.

The stations offer a number of crime prevention programs that are unique to the neighbourhoods they serve. They also offer a number of programs in common, including Block Parents, Citizens on Patrol, Crime Free Multi-Housing and Neighbourhood Watch. This indicator will focus on these four programs. Of note, this indicator is not intended to act as a report card; instead, it is intended to illustrate the extent of community involvement in police services in Nanaimo.

Block Parents is a community-based program whereby responsible adults who care about the well being of children and other persons display a red and white sign which identifies their home as a safe refuge when a need arises. In October 2002, there were 787 block parents in Nanaimo.

Citizens on Patrol is a group of community volunteers who assist the police by patrolling the streets during high crime periods. They have a communications system which includes a dispatcher who is in contact with the local RCMP Detachment. They also carry data base instruments to check for stolen vehicles. In October 2002, there were 40 citizens on patrol in Nanaimo.

Crime Free Multi-Housing is a three phase program designed to help managers of apartments and multi-housing complexes to keep crime, drugs and other illegal activities off their properties. Phase one equips managers with the necessary skills to identify and deal with problems before they occur and require police involvement. Phase two requires managers to meet the minimum security requirements as specified under Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design. Phase three involves the training of tenants to be the “eyes and ears” of the apartment or multi-housing complex. This phase requires the manager to host a police sponsored crime prevention meeting. In October 2002, 42 managers had taken the training in Nanaimo. These managers were responsible for the care and maintenance of 1,510 units.

Neighbourhood Watch encourages neighbours to work together, to alert each other to the potential of crime and to look out for one another's interests. It provides an effective means of reducing the opportunity for crime to occur. In October 2002, there were about 160 areas (i.e., two to three streets) and an estimated 2,400 homes involved in this program in Nanaimo.

Neighbourhood information as to participation in crime prevention programs was not available, given limitations in the data base program being used at the Nanaimo Crime Prevention Office.

What are the trends?

Historic information as to participation in crime prevention programs was not available, as this information has not been tracked on a consistent and co-ordinated basis. As such, this indicator will serve as a benchmark for such information.

What are some assets/resources?

For more information about the four highlighted crime prevention programs and others, as well as volunteer opportunities, access the following website (www.rcmpnanaimo.ark.com) or contact (250) 755-3208.

The Nanaimo Crime Prevention Program is a registered society acting as a parent body for most of the crime prevention programs affiliated with the Nanaimo RCMP. It provides tax relief in the form of a business charity number and a GST rebate to its affiliates. It also provides a charitable receipt in return for all donations received. For more information or to make a donation, contact either (250) 754-2345 or (250) 755-3208.

The School Liaison Officer Program has six full-time school liaison officers; one for each high school in Nanaimo. Each officer has an office in the high school and is equipped with a cell phone and pager. The officer's first priority is school safety, then prevention and education. The program offers a blend of proactive and reactive policing. In addition to his or her assigned high school, each officer also has between five and seven feeder elementary schools that he or she is also responsible for monitoring. The focus in the elementary schools is prevention and education, with an emphasis on bullying and drugs. For more information, contact (250) 755-3208.

The City of Nanaimo Youth Council, along with the RCMP and the School District, is working to create safe zones around schools. These safe zones would be free of bullying, drugs and other potentially harmful activities. For more information, contact (250) 741-5718.

The Victim Services Program is staffed by people trained to help victims and is free of charge. Its services include: assistance in applying for criminal injury compensation, crisis intervention and emotional support, information on the progress of the police investigation, preparation for court and referral to other agencies. For more information, contact (250) 755-3208.

What questions does this raise?

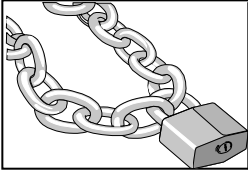
- What are other municipalities doing in the area of community-based crime prevention?
- What can be done to increase participation in crime prevention programs in Nanaimo?

Where to go for information?

- Nanaimo Crime Prevention Association, [Programs](http://www.rcmpnanaimo.ark.com), (www.rcmpnanaimo.ark.com).
- Sinstadt, Mike, Corporal, Nanaimo Crime Prevention Office, (250) 755-3208.

What are related indicators?

- Participation: Volunteerism
- Public Safety: Crime Rate
- Public Safety: Youth Crime



Legal Aid Cases

Why is it important?

Legal aid assists those people who have a legal problem but cannot afford to hire a lawyer. As such, it facilitates access to justice for them.

Legal representation is available for financially eligible clients who face serious criminal, family and immigration law problems. This service is provided primarily by lawyers in private practice on a fee for service basis and is largely restricted to: cases in which representation is constitutionally required; family matters where violence is an issue; refugee and deportation hearings; and legal proceedings arising from a mental disorder.

Legal advice is available through the Brydges Line (which is a toll free line for people who are arrested or detained) and duty counsel and pilot projects for family and welfare law consultation services.

What is legal aid?

Legal aid is provided by the Legal Services Society under the Legal Services Society Act. The society's mandate is: to help low income people resolve their legal problems and facilitate access to justice for them; and to establish and administer an effective and efficient system for providing legal aid to low income people in BC.

The society currently delivers legal aid and information services through a new service delivery model launched in September 2002. The goal is to provide a variety of legal services, ranging from public legal information to legal representation in court. The society maintains a presence in BC communities through seven regional centres and 22 local agent offices, one of which is located in Nanaimo.

Who is eligible for legal aid?

To receive legal representation, a person must: (1) have a legal problem covered by the Legal Services Society guidelines; and (2) his or her income and assets must be below the specified limits (see Appendix 8).

An applicant needs to provide proof of income and the value of his or her assets when he or she applies for legal aid. If the applicant is refused legal aid, then he or she can appeal the decision by completing a form available at his or her local legal aid office.

What is the situation in Nanaimo?

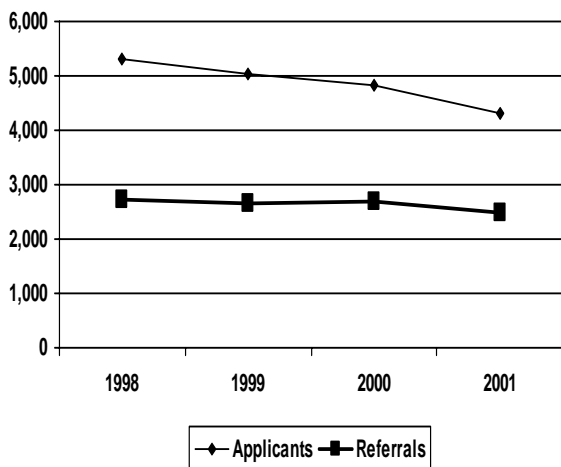
In 2001, there were 4,295 applicants for legal aid at the Nanaimo Office, of which 2,473 or 57.6% were referred for legal aid. With regard to the applications, 1,369 or 31.9% were family and 1,339 or 31.2% were criminal. The remainder were immigration, intake, poverty and human rights cases. Of note, intake cases are a record of assistance provided to people seeking help with "other civil" (poverty) law problems that require only brief service or legal problems that are not covered by the tariffs (e.g., criminal or family law). Due to funding cuts, this service was eliminated in 2002/03.

Case Type	Applicants	Referrals
Criminal	1,339	1,076
Family	1,369	994
Immigration	10	7
Intake Case	1,061	-
Poverty & Human Rights	516	396
Totals	4,295	2,473

With regard to the age and gender of applicants for legal aid at the Nanaimo Office in 2001, 2,156 or 50.2% were 35 to 64 years, 1,827 or 42.5% were 18 to 34 years, 190 or 4.4% were under 18 years, and 122 or 2.8% were 65 years or older. As for gender, 2,319 or 54% were male and 1,976 or 46% were female.

What are the trends?

Between 1998 and 2001, the number of applicants for legal aid at the Nanaimo Office decreased by 19.2% from 5,313 to 4,295; while the number of referrals decreased by 9.1% from 2,720 to 2,473.



What are some of the issues?

Due to funding reductions, legal representation services were reduced significantly for family law matters and discontinued for poverty law and human rights cases in 2002/03.

Poverty law focuses on administrative or civil law problems that affect the poor. Typically, these problems deal with mental and physical health or safety, and affect a client's ability to clothe, feed and provide shelter for his or her family. It includes areas such as BC Employment and Assistance, Employment Insurance, Residential Tenancy and Workers' Compensation, as well as some types of civil litigation.

What are some assets/resources?

To apply for legal aid in Nanaimo, contact (250) 754-1266. If you are female, you may also contact the Nanaimo Women's Centre at (250) 753-0633 on Tuesdays and Thursdays. If you are unable to apply in person, you can apply over the phone by calling the Legal Services Society Call Centre at 1 (866) 577-2525.

For legal information, contact the Law Line at 1 (866) 577-2525. Law Line staff can provide answers to legal questions and they can refer callers to other information and services.

What questions does this raise?

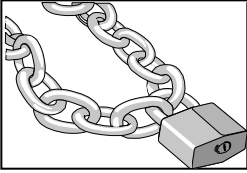
- What can be done to increase public awareness about legal aid – i.e., its availability and its benefits?
- What will be the impacts of cuts to legal aid in Nanaimo, particularly in the areas of human rights and poverty law?

Where to go for information?

- Legal Services Society. "Legal Aid." Just the Facts. Vancouver: Legal Services Society, 2002. (www.lss.bc.ca)
- Legal Services Society, Nanaimo Legal Aid Statistics, December 2002.

What are related indicators?

- Economic: Income Support
- Economic: Poverty
- Economic: Unemployment
- Public Safety: Crime Rate
- Public Safety: Youth Crime



Licensed Liquor Seats

Why is it important?

Licensed liquor establishments can have both positive and negative impacts on the neighbourhoods in which they are located.

The positive impacts of licensed liquor establishments can include entertainment and social interaction, jobs which appeal to young adults and property tax revenues. They can also be used to revitalize dormant or under-utilized downtown areas by attracting people to these areas after dark.

However, if licensed liquor establishments are poorly managed and under regulated, or if they are over concentrated in a particular neighbourhood, they can have negative impacts. These impacts can include damage or vandalism to private property, extra police costs, intimidation of other people, noise and other disturbances to residents.

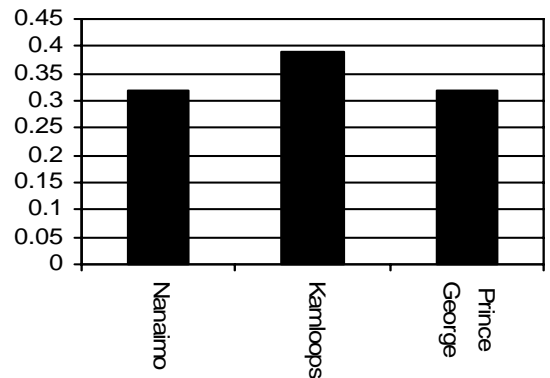
What is the situation in Nanaimo?

In Nanaimo, there were 23,246 licensed liquor seats or 0.32 licensed liquor seats per person in December 2002 (not including concert hall and stadium seats). Of this total, 5,012 seats or 21.6% were located in bars, cabarets and pubs, with the remainder being located in dining lounges and lounges.

In the Downtown, there were 6,474 licensed liquor seats or 1.59 licensed liquor seats per person in December 2002 (not including concert hall and stadium seats). Of this total, 2,632 seats or 40.6% were located in bars, cabarets and pubs, with the remainder being located in dining lounges and lounges.

How do we compare?

In Nanaimo, the number of licensed liquor seats per person (not including concert hall and stadium seats) (0.32) was the same as for the City of Prince George and lower than for the City of Kamloops (0.39) in December 2002.



■ Number of licensed liquor seats per person in December 2002

What are the trends?

Historical information pertaining to the number of licensed liquor seats, both for Nanaimo and the Downtown, was not readily available. As such, the number of licensed liquor seats for December 2002 will act as benchmark information.

How are liquor licenses processed?

For new and amended liquor licenses, once a request is received by the City Clerk's Office, it is forwarded to the various City Departments, the Hospitality Industry Liquor License Advisory Committee and the RCMP, and in certain cases, to the Nanaimo City Centre Association, for their comments. When these comments are received, the applications are put before Council for their information.

A decision on the liquor license application is deferred for two weeks to receive input from the general public. After the two week deferral, the item is again placed on the Council agenda for consideration. The applicant and the Liquor License Inspector are notified of whether or not Council has an objection to the application.

What has been written?

As part of the report Proportions of Crimes Associated with Alcohol and Other Drugs in Canada (April 30 2002), it was noted that there is a close association between substance abuse and criminal activity. In fact, 38% of Federal inmates reported being under the influence of alcohol when they committed the most serious crime in their current sentence. The report also noted that violent crimes such as assault and murder were more often associated with the use of alcohol, while crimes such as robbery and theft tended to have a stronger link to illicit drugs.

What are some of the issues?

The Nanaimo Downtown Partnership (NDP) in an open letter to City Council (dated December 11, 2002) outlined a number of liquor related issues primarily regarding changes in Provincial liquor licensing.

These changes include the enabling of bars, cabarets and pubs to operate on-site liquor stores; the enabling of restaurants to operate lounges with capacities of up to 40 seats or 20% of their restaurant seating (whichever is lower); and the extension of operating hours, with municipal approval, to 4:00 a.m.

The NDP is concerned that these changes will enhance access to liquor and increase public disturbances related to liquor, particularly in the Downtown.

What are some assets/resources?

The Central Vancouver Island Crisis Society, as part of its Nanaimo Resource Directory, lists a number of addiction services, many of which target alcohol misuse. For a copy of this directory, contact (250) 753-2495.

The Nanaimo Alcohol and Drug Action Committee is a coalition of community, government and non-government agencies concerned with the alcohol and drug problem in Nanaimo and committed to action that will reduce the harm within the community. For more information, contact (250) 754-1266.

What questions does this raise?

- Are there adequate services and supports to assist those people who want to take control of their alcohol misuse – e.g., detox services, dual diagnosis programs, residential treatment, etc.?
- What can be done to encourage and promote more responsible use of alcohol, especially with regard to youth?

Where to go for information?

- City Clerk's Office, City of Nanaimo, (250) 755-4405.
- Department of the Solicitor General of Canada. Proportions of Crimes Associated with Alcohol and Other Drugs in Canada. April 30, 2002.
- Downtown Nanaimo Partnership. Liquor Control Strategy – Response to Consultant's Report at City Council's Public Hearings: January 16 and 20, 2003, December 11, 2002.

What are related indicators?

- Health: Alcohol-Related Deaths
- Health: Illicit Drug Deaths
- Health: Low Birth Weight
- Health: Problem Gambling
- Public Safety: Crime Rate

Who are potential public safety contacts?

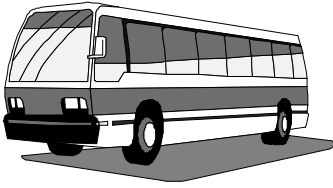
- Harla Batinovic, Client Support Analyst, Liquor Control and Licensing Branch, Ministry of Public Safety and Solicitor General, 1019 Wharf Street, Victoria, BC, V8W 2Y9, (250) 387-6974.
- Iain James, Ministry of Attorney General, Police Services Division (Vancouver), 815 Hornby Street, Vancouver, BC, V6Z 1T9, (604) 945-1550.
- Sandy Shreve, Communications/FOI Co-ordinator, Legal Services Society, 1500-1140 West Pender Street, Vancouver, BC, V6E 4G1, (604) 601-6004.
- Mike Sinstadt, Corporal, Crime Prevention Programs, Nanaimo RCMP Detachment, 303 Prideaux Street, Nanaimo, BC, V9R 2N3, (250) 755-3208.
- Annie Thuveson, Youth Justice Conferencing Specialist, Youth Justice Department, Ministry of Children and Family Development, #301-190 Wallace Street, Nanaimo, BC, V9R 5B1, (250) 741-5718.

What other references were used in this section?

- Ministry of Attorney General – Public Safety and Regulatory Branch, Police Services Division, “Crime Rates.” BC Crime Trends, Issue #1, June 1998.
- Ministry of Education. “Citizenship and Responsibility.” Annual Report 1998/1999.

What are other possible public safety indicators?

- Emergency Response Times
- Municipal Police Cost and Strength
- Number of Mischief and Property Damage Offences
- Number of Motor Vehicle Thefts
- Number of Non-Sexual Assaults
- Number of Residential Break and Enter Offences
- Number of Sex Offences
- Police Case Burden
- Traffic Accident Deaths



Transportation Indicators Section

Executive Summary:

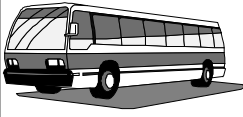
The Nanaimo Regional Transit System serves the Cities of Nanaimo and Parksville, the Town of Qualicum Beach and several Electoral Areas. These Electoral Areas include Electoral Area A (Cassidy, Cedar, South Wellington and Yellowpoint), Electoral Area D (East Wellington, Lantzville and Pleasant Valley), Electoral Area E (Nanoose Bay), Electoral Area G (Dashwood, Englishman River and French Creek) and Electoral Area H (Bowser, Deep Bay, Qualicum Bay and Shaw Hill). Regional transit encompasses a bus system and HandyDART service.

For the Nanaimo Regional Transit System, the average daily weekday bus ridership was 9,679 in February 2002. By comparison, the average Saturday bus ridership was 5,814 and the average Sunday bus ridership was 2,258 in February 2002. With regard to bus ridership, adults (45.5%) and students (34.8%) comprised the vast majority of all riders in February 2002. Seniors (7.1%) and those people with a BC Bus Pass (12.5%) comprised the remainder of all riders in February 2002.

For the Nanaimo Regional Transit System, there were 1,572 registered clients for HandyDART in 2001. With regard to client trips, there were 84,937 combined ambulatory and wheelchair/scooter trips in 2001. Additionally, there were 4,072 taxi supplemental trips and 2,502 taxi saver trips in 2001. As for client trips by purpose, the most often cited purpose was to access day programs (21,982 or 48.4%). Other purposes included dental or medical appointments (8,758 or 19.3%) and social visits (7,032 or 15.5%).

Highlighted Transportation Indicators:

Public Transit Usage, HandyDART Usage



Public Transit Usage

Why is it important?

Public transit is of critical importance to those residents who cannot afford a car or who are not able or eligible to drive a car. These residents include but are not limited to children and youth, the elderly, people with disabilities, and those with low incomes.

For the above residents, accessibility, availability, convenience, cost, coverage and scheduling issues related to public transit will have a major impact on their lives. As a result of these issues, many will experience difficulties accessing community services, gaining employment and maintaining social contacts. Others may place their safety at risk, as they may resort to accepting rides from strangers or walking alone after dark.

Public transit also has positive economic and environmental impacts, including improving air quality, reducing traffic congestion and supporting tourism.

What is the situation in Nanaimo?

For the Nanaimo Regional Transit System, the daily weekday ridership was 9,679 in February 2002. By comparison, the average Saturday ridership was 5,814 and the average Sunday ridership was 2,258 in February 2002.

With regard to ridership, adults (45.5%) and students (34.8%) comprised the vast majority of all riders in February 2002. Seniors (7.1%) and those people with a BC Bus Pass (12.5%) comprised the remainder of all riders in February 2002 (Nanaimo Regional Transit System, October 2002).

The most common purposes for using public transit were work (23.1%), shopping (18.4%) and college (17.9%).

The vast majority of public transit usage was by regular riders (i.e., those who use public transit at least twice per week). By neighbourhood, residents of Cedar, Chase River, the Downtown and Harewood were most likely to be riders.

With regard to alternatives to public transit, the top alternatives were walking (27.9%) and as a car passenger (23.2%). Additionally, 15.9% of riders had no option, while 11.0% of riders had access to a car in which to drive. Of concern, 2.6% of riders identified hitchhiking as an alternative (Nanaimo Regional Transit System, December 1 and 2, 1999).

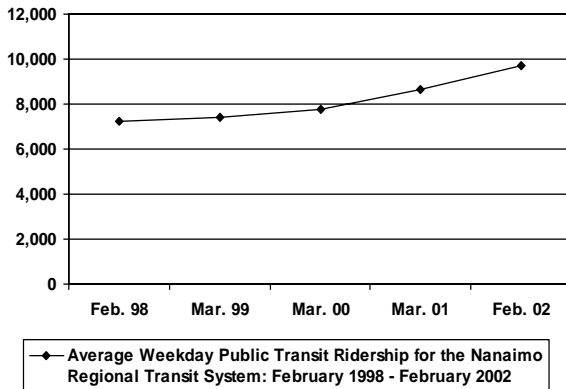
How do we compare?

In a public opinion survey of selected transit systems across BC, the Nanaimo Regional Transit System had higher rates of usage (8.7%) among respondents who regularly travel to school or work. By comparison, public transit usage was 3.2% for Penticton, 4.3% for the Comox Valley, 4.7% for the Central Fraser Valley, 5.5% for Campbell River and 7.6% for Prince George (Groundworks, May 26, 2000). Kamloops was not included in the survey.

As for satisfaction with the public transit system, the above public opinion survey reported that the Nanaimo Regional Transit System had lower levels of respondents who stated that it was excellent or good (45.3%) than for other systems. By comparison, satisfaction using excellent and good as a basis was 58.4% for the Central Fraser Valley, 62.4% for Kelowna, 65.0% for Campbell River and 73.3% for Penticton (Groundworks, May 26, 2002). Kamloops was not included in the survey.

What are the trends?

Between February 1998 and February 2002, average weekday public transit ridership increased by 33.3% from 7,262 to 9,679 for the Nanaimo Regional Transit System.



What are some of the issues?

As part of the earlier mentioned public opinion survey, the main reasons for non-usage of the Nanaimo Regional Transit System were: do not like public transit or prefer car (31.9%), limited routes or no service near home (17.2%), do not require public transit (16.8%), infrequent service (16.1%), takes too long (10.5%), stops too far from home (8.8%) and schedules do not correspond with school or work (7.4%) (May 26, 2000).

The City of Nanaimo's Engineering Department cited several public transit related issues, including the lack of wheelchair accessible bus stops and the limited availability and poor condition of bus shelters.

As of January 1, 2003, cash fares will be going up by 25 cents, while passes and tickets will be going up by an average of approximately 15%, for the Nanaimo Regional Transit System.

What are some assets/resources?

The Regional District of Nanaimo, as part of its website (www.rdn.bc.ca) includes service information on "Regional Transit." More specifically, it highlights fares, routes, schedules, special services and transit news. To reach the automated transit information line for Nanaimo, contact (250) 390-4531. For general inquiries for Nanaimo, contact (250) 390-6565.

What questions does this raise?

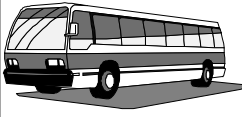
- How will the new rates affect public transit usage, especially among those with low incomes?
- What can be done to better plan neighbourhoods to accommodate public transit?
- What can be done to deal with public transit issues (as identified in public opinion surveys) and encourage public transit usage?
- What can be done to increase the number of wheelchair accessible bus stops?

Where to go for information?

- Groundworks Strategic Marketing Solutions. Nanaimo Transit System Report: Public Opinion Survey. Nanaimo: BC Transit, May 26, 2000.
- Nanaimo Regional Transit System. Ridership/User Group Statistics. October 2002.
- Nanaimo Regional Transit System. Summary of On-Board Passenger Survey Results. Based on Survey Conducted on December 1 and 2, 1999.

What are related indicators?

- Population: Population Growth
- Population: Children (0-14)
- Population: Youth and Young Adults (15-24)
- Population: Lone Parent Families
- Population: People with Disabilities
- Population: Seniors (65+)
- Economic: Poverty



HandyDART Usage

Why is it important?

HandyDART provides door to door transportation for people with special needs who are unable to access regular public transit. As such, it assists these people to live a more independent life, while enabling them to access education, employment, health, recreation, shopping and other opportunities. It also enables them to maintain social contacts with family members and friends.

What is the situation in Nanaimo?

For the Nanaimo Regional Transit System, there were 1,572 registered clients for HandyDART in 2001.

With regard to client trips, there were 84,937 combined ambulatory and wheelchair/scooter trips in 2001. Additionally, there were 4,072 taxi supplemental trips and 2,502 taxi saver trips in 2001.

With regard to client trips by purpose, the most often cited purpose was to access day programs (21,982 or 48.4%). Other purposes included dental or medical appointments (8,758 or 19.3%) and social visits (7,032 or 15.5%).

Client Trips - Purpose	#	%
Day Program	21,982	48.4%
Dental/Medical	8,758	19.3%
Social Visit	7,032	15.5%
Shopping	3,160	7.0%
Personal Business	2,162	4.8%
Employment	1,370	3.0%
Personal Care	682	1.5%
Education	297	0.7%

Information as to client age, gender and type of disability or limitation was not readily available, given the software program being used. Additionally, information by neighbourhood was not readily available.

What are the trends?

Given that a new software program was put into use in late-2000 in order to track all client trips and the purpose of the trip, historical information was not readily available.

As such, the number of client trips and the purpose of the trip for 2001 will act as benchmark information.

What are some of the issues?

In 2001, those persons 80+, who are often referred to as the frail elderly, represented 3.8% of the population in the Nanaimo Local Health Area. BC Stats PEOPLE Run 26 data projects that by 2026, the percentage of persons 80+ in the Nanaimo Local Health Area will increase by 1.1 percentage points to 4.9%, while the total number of persons 80+ will more than double from 3,638 to 7,383.

The projected more than doubling of the population 80+ in the Nanaimo Local Health Area by 2026 will place enormous strains on the HandyDART system. As such, the system will have to expand or new services will have to be contemplated if existing service levels are to be maintained.

What are some assets/resources?

HandyDART is available to anyone with a disability or limitation that prevents him or her from using regular transit. To be eligible, one must register for the service by providing information about himself or herself, the disability or limitation in question, and whether he or she will be riding alone or with an attendant.

There are two types of trip service, regular subscription trips and one-time trips. Service is provided Monday to Friday, 7:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m. and Saturday and Sunday, 9:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. There is no service on statutory holidays. For more information or to register for the service in the Nanaimo Area, call (250) 390-3000.

Meals on Wheels delivers hot meals to people's houses everyday except Sunday. The service enables the elderly, especially the frail elderly, to remain at home. It also assists people who have recently been released from hospital after an operation. Clients can be referred by a concerned family member, a doctor or a nurse. Of note, the fee for each meal is \$4.00. For more information, contact (250) 753-1300.

What questions does this raise?

- What are other municipalities doing to meet the transportation requirements of people with special needs?
- What else can be done to assist people with special needs to remain at home and yet play an active role in community life?

Where to go for information?

- HandyDART Department, Transportation Services, Regional District of Nanaimo, (250) 390-3000.

What are related indicators?

- Population: Population Growth
- Population: People with Disabilities
- Population: Seniors (65+)

Who are potential transportation contacts?

- Mike Donnelly, Regional Transit, Regional District of Nanaimo, 6300 Hammond Bay Road, Nanaimo, BC, V9T 6N3, (250) 390-6565.
- Brian Warner, Supervisor, HandyDART Department, Regional Transit, Regional District of Nanaimo, 6300 Hammond Bay Road, Nanaimo, BC, V9T 6N3, (250) 390-3000.

What other references were used in this section?

- Groundworks Strategic Marketing Solutions. Nanaimo Regional Transit System: Report on Focus Groups and Informal Survey. Nanaimo: Nanaimo Regional Transit System, BC Transit, December 2, 1998.
- ND Lea Consultants Ltd. Transportation and Mobility Study. Nanaimo: Regional District of Nanaimo, June 2001.
- Regional District of Nanaimo. Transit Business Plan for the Regional District of Nanaimo. Nanaimo: Regional District of Nanaimo, June 1998.

What are other possible transportation indicators?

- Daily or Peak Hour Traffic Volume Counts
- Number of Audible Signals
- Number of Bus Shelters
- Number of Kilometres of Marked Bicycle Routes
- Number of Kilometres of Paved and Unpaved Trails
- Number of Kilometres of Sidewalks
- Number of Registered and Insured Motor Vehicles
- Number of Wheelchair Accessible Bus Stops
- Travel Times by Automobiles

Appendix 1: Methodology

How was this project designed and implemented?

The following methodology identifies the five major steps that were taken to develop this Social Status Report:

Step 1: Formation of a Social Development Strategy Steering Committee

The first step was the formation of a Social Development Strategy Steering Committee (herein referred to as the steering committee), which included representation from a wide variety of community groups, government agencies and service providers. This steering committee met on four occasions and it took an active role in selecting the indicators, identifying the potential data sources, collecting the information and revising the report.

Step 2: Identification of Indicators

Based on a literature review and previous indicator work, the consultant prepared a list of possible indicators for Nanaimo. The steering committee reviewed and revised this list and agreed to proceed with just over fifty indicators. Given the difficulty in obtaining information for some indicators, this list was later pared down to the current fifty indicators.

Step 3: Data Collection and Analysis

The consultant, in close consultation with the steering committee, developed a strategy for acquiring the desired data through contact with agencies, groups and organizations that were in possession of the data. These data sources are highlighted as part of each indicator and, where applicable, they include contact information. The most important, extensive and reliable data source is that provided by the Census, which is collected and published every five years by Statistics Canada. The Census highlights a number of indicators by municipality and it enables comparison of data between municipalities and between different years.

Comparative geographical data makes it possible to determine the position of Nanaimo relative to other municipalities and the Province. For the purposes of this social status report, the steering committee agreed that the two comparison or case study municipalities were the Cities of Kamloops and Prince George. Both of these municipalities have populations which are similar in size to that of Nanaimo and both municipalities have economies that are also heavily reliant on the resource sector. Additionally, both comparison or case study municipalities are dealing with issues shared by Nanaimo such as diversifying the economy, maintaining community service levels, reducing reliance on the residential tax base (by encouraging business and industrial development), and retaining youth after high school graduation. As for differences, both comparison or case study municipalities have younger populations than does Nanaimo.

When available, data was collected by neighbourhood in Nanaimo. This data is only reported for those neighbourhoods with the highest or lowest percentages, depending on the indicator in question.

Comparative historic data makes it possible to determine trends that are occurring within Nanaimo. For the purposes of this report, the steering committee decided that 1991 and 1996 would act as benchmarks, given that the Census was conducted in these two years. It was also decided that if 2001 Census data is available, that it be used. For indicators not tracked by the Census, the most current data available was used.

Step 4: Discussion of Draft Formats

Before preparing this report, it was important to select a report format that would organize the information to be presented. As such, the consultant collected and reviewed formats used in other community impact profiles, report cards and status reports. In some cases, the formats consisted mainly of statistical information (presented in the way of charts and tables) with a minimum of analysis; while in other cases, they were comprised primarily of text. To facilitate discussion by the steering committee, the consultant presented a proposed format. Based on the input received, this format was revised accordingly.

Step 5: Preparation of this Social Status Report

Based on the agreed upon format and the information collected from the listed data sources, the draft social status report was completed in December 2002. The report was organized according to ten sections, with between two and eight indicators in each section. The draft report was shared with the steering committee for their comments and suggestions. Applicable sections were also shared with data sources in order to get their feedback, especially with regard to the analysis of the data. Based on all the comments and suggestions received, the draft report was revised accordingly and the final report was completed in early-May 2003.

What were the limitations?

This project faced a number of limitations which need to be considered when interpreting the findings and making any decisions based on them. First, it relied entirely on secondary information, thus the consultant had little or no control over the accuracy or reliability of this information. When possible, the consultant attempted to validate the information by checking with the Census or other data sources. Second, some of the data sources used different boundaries when collecting information. In most cases, this information was available by municipality but this was not always the case. Third, some of the information provided is based on the 1996 Census, which is at least seven years old. Finally, the indicators presented were selected by the steering committee and do not represent an exhaustive listing: they represent what the steering committee felt was important at the time, based on the interests that were involved and the information that was available from secondary data sources.

Appendix 2: Nanaimo Local Health Area

The Nanaimo Local Health Area had a population of 95,307 people in 2001. The Local Health Area stretches from the bridge on the Old Chemainus Highway to Nanoose and includes the communities of Gabriola, Ladysmith, Lantzville and Nanaimo. It also includes the aboriginal populations of Kulleet Bay and Shell Beach near Ladysmith, the aboriginal population in Nanoose and the four aboriginal reserves (1, 2, 3 and 4) in or near Nanaimo. Of note, reserve number 1 is in the Downtown and reserve number 2, 3 and 4 are in Cedar.

Appendix 3: Economic Development Initiatives

The following economic development initiatives and organizations are intended to retain existing jobs within Nanaimo, while facilitating the creation of new ones. The initiatives and organizations are briefly described here; however, more detail can be found on the associated websites.

BusinessCARE is a business retention and expansion program. It provides the City of Nanaimo with a mechanism to both listen to and respond to the needs of local business people. An essential component of this program is a response team, which is comprised of local leaders who have the commitment, expertise and knowledge to help business people to resolve their concerns and issues.

Film Nanaimo is mandated to attract film and video production activity to the region. This industry requires diverse skills and is particularly well suited to young workers. For 2003, Film Nanaimo was instrumental in attracting two feature film productions that have plans to shoot in Nanaimo. For more information, refer to: www.filmnanaimo.com.

Tourism Nanaimo is mandated to develop the local tourism product and to market that product to key tourist markets. The City of Nanaimo provides significant annual funding to Tourism Nanaimo. For 2003, the City is proposing to allocate \$500,000 for tourism spending, which represents a significant increase from the \$200,000 it allocated in 2002.

The **Community Futures Development Corporation** provides entrepreneurial training for new business start-ups and provides expansion financing for growing companies that do not qualify for financing from traditional lenders. Its activities directly contribute to new business creation and job growth.

Nanaimo is a member of **InvestBC**. This is a Province-wide marketing team that is working to attract new inbound investment into the Province and to create new jobs and wealth for communities.

Nanaimo is a member of the **LinxBC Call Centre Team**, which is a partnership among seven communities in BC, the Provincial government and Telus. LinxBC is focused on attracting inbound customer service and technical help desk call centre operations to BC.

Nanaimo is a member of the **Mid-Island Science Technology and Innovation Council**, which serves technology companies on Vancouver Island north of Victoria. This council connects technology companies to the resources that they need and contributes to new job creation in the technology sector. For more information, refer to: www.mistic.bc.ca.

Nanaimo is a member of the **Pacific Offshore Energy Group**, which is mandated to ensure that Island communities benefit from any offshore oil and gas exploration activity. For more information, refer to: www.poeg.ca.

Nanaimo is a member of the **Vancouver Island Economic Developers Association**. This association has developed an inbound investment strategy focused on the marine sector.

Appendix 4: School Meals Program

School District #68 offers a School Meals Program, which provides meals to students who come to school hungry. More specifically, it provides affordable, nutritious meals to children in need and promotes healthy eating and physical activity.

The type of program offered at each school site is largely determined by school personnel. During 2001/02, the School Meals Program provided:

- three elementary schools with a catered breakfast program;
- one secondary school with a drop-in breakfast program;
- three elementary schools with an on-site lunch program;
- three alternate schools with an on-site lunch and snack program;
- seven elementary schools and four secondary schools with a catered lunch program;
- one elementary school with a snack program;
- one elementary school prepares lunch for five students.

With one exception, where the program is offered at a school site, it is made available to all children and families within the school community. Parents are asked to pay a minimum contribution towards the meal, if possible. The actual cost of the meal is outlined on the meals sheet which is distributed each month.

The School Meals Program also provides support to several school which are not officially part of the program. To this end, it recovers food from the 23 sites and redistributes any surplus food to other sites. The catered program serves an average of 1,139 meals per day, the on-site program serves an average of 238 meals per day and the other programs offer substantial snacks to about 150 students per day. In addition to the 23 schools served through the program, three schools provide a lunch program through a grant from the Canadian Living Foundation. Although each of these school sites works closely with the School Meals Program, they are not officially part of the program.

Appendix 5: Changes to BC Benefits

Recent changes to BC Benefits (now BC Employment and Assistance) will have far reaching effects for those people who are homeless or living in poverty, lone parent families, the unemployed, working parents who are dependent on subsidized child care, and youth who are no longer able or willing to live at home, among others.

These changes, most of which came into effect on April 1, 2002, are briefly summarized below. For more information on these and other changes, access PovNet's website at (www.povnet.org) or the Ministry of Human Resources' website at: (www.mhr.gov.bc.ca).

Application:

People applying for assistance must first complete a three week job search, during which time they are not eligible to receive benefits. For those people who are applying for disability status or who have been discharged from hospital, acute care or continuing care, they do not have to complete the job search but they still have to wait three weeks before being eligible to receive benefits.

Asset Limits:

This refers to the amount of cash or other assets a person or family can have and still be eligible for assistance. People applying for assistance must meet two asset limit tests. As for cash, the maximum is \$150 for single people and \$250 for all other family units. If a person or family has over the maximum limit and is otherwise eligible, the amount over is taken off the first month's assistance. With regard to the general asset exemption limit test (that applies at the time of application and every month afterwards while in receipt of assistance), the maximum is \$1,500 for single people and \$2,500 for all other family units. Additionally, one motor vehicle is exempt, as long as there is no more than \$5,000 equity in that vehicle.

Basic Rates:

Income assistance comprises two components: shelter and support.

The monthly shelter allowance has been reduced for families of three or more. For a family of three, the reduction is \$55 (from \$610 to \$555); for a family of four, the reduction is \$60 (from \$650 to \$590); for a family of five, the reduction is \$75 (from \$700 to \$625); and for a family of six, the reduction is \$120 (from \$780 to \$660). For each additional person after six, the reduction is \$35.

Support rates have been reduced for lone parents who are employable and whose youngest child is over three and couples and single people who are employable and who are between the ages of 55 and 64. For the former, the reduction is \$51 per month (from \$376.58 to \$325.58). For the latter, the reductions range from \$46.92 per month for a single person (55-59) to \$144.84 per month for a couple (60-64).

Crisis Grants:

Maximum amounts were established for crisis assistance for clothing, food and shelter. For clothing, the maximum annual amount is \$100 per person or \$400 per family, whichever is less. For food, the maximum monthly amount is \$20 per person. For shelter, the maximum annual amount is equal to the maximum shelter rate for a single person or family for one month. Cumulatively, the maximum annual amount for crisis assistance is equal to two months assistance (both shelter and support) for a single person or family at the time of the request.

Earnings and Income Exemptions:

People who are employable and people on Disability 1 are no longer allowed to earn extra income without it being deducted from their assistance. People on Disability 2 are allowed to earn up to \$300 without it being deducted from their assistance. (In the past, the old exemption was \$200 per month and 25% of a person's earned income.) Exemptions for CPP Orphan's benefits, Family Maintenance and Worker's Compensation benefits have been eliminated. This means that these benefits are now deducted dollar for dollar from a person's assistance.

Security Deposits:

People receiving money for a security deposit will have to pay the deposit back at the rate of \$20 per month. (In the past, a deposit was repayable when the tenancy ended.) Additionally, they are limited to a maximum of two outstanding security deposits.

Lone Parent Work Requirement:

Lone parents who are employable are now expected to seek a job when their youngest child turns three. (In the past, they were expected to seek a job when their youngest child turned seven.) During the job search period, they are still eligible for assistance, job placement and training-for-jobs programs, as well as subsidized child care. As in the past, lone parents are not required to seek a job if they are caring for a disabled child or if they are temporarily excused from seeking a job.

Subsidized Child Care:

Fewer families are now eligible for a child care subsidy. In fact, the amount of money a family can earn and be eligible for a subsidy was reduced by \$285 per month (from \$500 to \$215). Parents who earn more than this limit may continue to receive a subsidy; however, it will be reduced by 60 cents on each dollar of additional net income.

Work Entry Benefits:

People on assistance will no longer receive money to purchase clothes for work or to cover local transportation costs during the first month of a new job. (For a lone parent, the work entry benefit was a one time payment of \$200.) Additionally, the transition to work benefit has been eliminated. (For families with children, this benefit paid up to \$150 per month for child care and transportation costs incurred during the first 12 months after they went off of assistance and into a job.)

Child in the Home of a Relative:

Children and youth living with relatives who are legal guardians are now considered to be part of that family. Therefore, they are no longer eligible for Child in the Home of a Relative Assistance.

Time Limits:

People who are employable are now limited to a cumulative 24 months of assistance every 60 months. After reaching this limit, single people and couples (where both adults are at the limit) receive no assistance and couples with one adult at the limit receive \$300 less in assistance per month. For families with children, lone parents receive \$100 less in assistance per month, two parent families with one parent at the limit receive \$100 less in assistance per month and two parent families with both parents at the limit receive \$200 less in assistance per month.

Appendix 6: Low-Income Cut-Offs

Statistics Canada's Low-Income Cut-Offs:

The following chart outlines the low-income cut-offs for family size and community size in 1995.

Family Size	Cities of 500,000+	100,000 to 499,999	30,000 to 99,999	Less than 30,000	Rural Areas
1	16,061	14,107	13,781	12,563	10,933
2	21,769	19,123	18,680	17,027	14,823
3	27,672	24,307	23,744	21,644	18,839
4	31,862	27,982	27,338	24,922	21,690
5	34,811	30,574	29,868	27,228	23,699
6	37,787	33,185	32,420	29,554	25,724
7+	40,640	35,696	34,872	31,789	27,668

Measuring Poverty:

Each Census, Statistics Canada releases figures on the number of people living below its low-income cut-offs. Many community service agencies and the media interpret these cut-offs as poverty numbers. Consequently, there are headlines stating that 1.5 million children live in poverty in Canada.

This raises the question of where should the poverty line be set? According to David P. Ross and Paul Roberts in their report entitled *Income and Child Well Being: A New Perspective on the Poverty Debate* (1999), they state that children who live in families with incomes below the low-income cut-offs have poorer health, behaviour and learning outcomes, and they live in considerably worse family and neighbourhood conditions than children in families at higher income levels. They note that this should be of concern in any discussion about the proper level of the poverty line.

In Canada, poverty lines are used primarily to estimate the number of poor people but they are rarely used as a goal for redistribution policies. For example, income assistance rates in all provinces fall well below the low-income cut-offs. Ross and Roberts believe that a poverty line should not only be used as a way to estimate the number of poor people but it should also be used as a threshold below which society will not tolerate income inequality.

Ross and Roberts believe that discussions about establishing the correct poverty line not only divert attention away from the plight of the poor but also away from a debate about the purpose of a poverty line, and of the need to set a floor with regard to income inequality. In their report, they pose the question: "Should a poverty line simply reflect the line of money needed for the physical basics of survival or should it be set at a level that enables people to be socially engaged in their community?" In conclusion, they note that only when 'we' know the objective to be served by setting a floor on income inequality can 'we' define what is necessary in order to achieve that objective.

Appendix 7: LEAP Card

Approval for a Leisure Economic Access Program (LEAP) card entitles adults and their family members to a 50% discount on course fees (any course \$70 or under, or if the course is over \$70, then it pays \$35 and participants pay the rest) once per session. The card also entitles adults to use arenas, fitness gyms and pools for public admission sessions at 50% off the regular admission charge. For children under 19 years, a skate/swim pass is issued which allows 50 free skates and swims throughout the year. All program participants are advised that some programs may not be eligible for the discount. They are also advised that the skate/swim pass will not be replaced under any circumstances even if lost or stolen.

Program eligibility is open to adults, children and seniors and the program subsidy is approximately \$50,000 per year beyond the regular fees charged to the public.

Appendix 8: Legal Aid Financial Guidelines

You are financially eligible for legal aid if your net household income and assets are at, or below, the following Legal Services Society financial guidelines.

Income:

The net monthly household income guidelines are listed in the table below. If your net monthly household income is the same as, or less than, the amount given in the column that applies to you, you are financially eligible for legal aid.

Household Size	Criminal Cases	All Other Cases
1	\$925	\$1,002
2	\$1,388	\$1,504
3	\$1,620	\$1,755
4	\$1,792	\$1,941
5	\$1,975	\$2,140
6	\$2,147	\$2,326
7+	\$2,294	\$2,486

Your monthly income includes your net income from all sources within your family. It includes money from foster care, maintenance payments and student loans. It does not include the BC Family Bonus, the Child Tax Benefit, GST payments or tuition or book fees under the Federal and Provincial students loans.

An intake worker at your legal aid office will calculate your net income by adding your income from all relevant sources, then subtracting deductions.

Allowable deductions include the following:

- child or spousal maintenance payments – ordered by a court or agreed to in a separation agreement – that you or your partner are paying;
- cost of an interpreter's service if you do not speak English and need an interpreter to prepare for court;
- day care expenses;
- court fines that, if not paid, will mean that you or your partner will go to jail;

- medication that you must personally pay for and that a doctor says is necessary for you or your dependents.

Assets:

An intake worker from your legal aid office will look at the value of your assets (things you own like a car, cash and RRSPs) to determine your financial eligibility for legal aid. There are five different asset categories: family home, real estate (except the family home), vehicles, business assets and personal property.

Each category has different limits but generally you may have some personal property (e.g., modest household furnishings), a small amount of liquid assets (e.g., bank accounts and cash) and equity (the value of the asset minus the amount you owe on it) of \$5,000 or less in vehicles, and still be eligible for legal aid.

In general, the intake worker will consider your assets as disposable (i.e., able to be sold) unless you:

- cannot sell the assets in a reasonable time or get credit or a loan using the asset as security;
- cannot use your share or an asset because it is included in a marriage dispute; or
- have received a court order preventing you from selling your assets.