

## Single Mother's in the NWT

Among the many difficulties facing northern women is the high rate of single parent families. As indicated in the statistics below, the vast majority of these single parents are women. In the NWT, the challenge of being a single mother is exacerbated by numerous factors, including the fact that northern women tend to have more children at a younger age, they experience higher rates of poverty, homelessness and overcrowding, substance abuse and other mental health issues, and experience much higher rates of family violence. Availability and affordability of quality childcare services are also major issues, as is the fact that single mothers earn substantially less than single fathers, despite higher average education levels.

The Status of Women Council of the NWT was established under the NWT Status of Women Council Act in April 1990. Our mandate is to work towards the equality of women through:

- advice to the Government of the NWT
- research
- public education and awareness
- community development
- annual events
- interagency cooperation
- advocating on behalf of women
- assistance to women's groups and other groups working on issues of concern to women
- identification and development of opportunities for women

Along with our core work and yearly events, we work on special projects in collaboration with many community organizations on issues concerning Family Violence, Economic, Political and Social Equality, Women's Health and Wellness and Leadership. Our office also continues to provide individual advocacy and support to women, on request, on issues such as immigration, housing and workplace problems.

2006 Census (interpreted by Conference Board of Canada)

- Five census divisions with the highest percentage of single-parent families are all in Canada's North
- In Canada's North, these challenges might be further compounded by problems related to overcrowded housing, low high school graduation rates, and, in some regions, higher unemployment rates
- Inuvik (NWT) have 29.3% single families, highest being 37.5% in Northern Saskatchewan (Division No. 18) and lowest being 6.7% in southern Manitoba (Division No. 5)

(interpreted by statcan)

- Number of lone-parent families increased by 7.8% to 1,414,060 families in Canada
- The majority (80.1%) of the 1,414,100 lone-parent families in 2006 were comprised of women and their children. The remaining 19.9% consisted of lone-parent families headed by men.
- NWT had 2,330 lone-parents families making 21.4% the population a single family home. Growing 12.2% higher than the 2001 census. Total families in the NWT were 10,880.
- 22.2% of lone-parent families had children aged 14 and under.
- 21,225 males and 20,240 females in NWT
- Out of 2,325 lone-parent families 790 where from Yellowknife.
- Mean income in 2005 for a female single parent was 32,842. Income for a male single parent was 42,136.

- Educational attainment total population 15 years and over 15,930 (male) 15,210 (female). With no certificate, diploma or degree 5,475 (male) 4,795 (female). With high school or equivalent 2,745 (male) 3,385 (female). With apprenticeship/trades/diploma 2,265 (male) 680 (female). With collage/cegep/non-university certificate 2,790 (male) 3,275 (female). University certificate or diploma below bachelor level 360 (male) 525 (female). University certificate/diploma/degree 2,300 (male) 2,550 (female)
- Population 15 or over in labour force 12,735 (male) 11,090 (female). Employed 11,195 (male 10,160 (female). Unemployed 1,540 (male) 935 (female). Unemployment rate 10.4%.
- NWT out of 2,325 lone-parent families 1,695 where female and 635 where male headed.

2001 Census (interpreted by Canadian Council on Social Development)

- All NWT was 15.8% female single parent, 5.2% male single parent
- **81.3% single families in Canada were headed by women**