

**Family policies in Quebec and the Rest of Canada:
Implications for fertility, child care, women's paid work and child
development indicators**

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Abstract:

Given its unique demographic situation, and its desire to be in control of its own destiny, Quebec has evolved family policies that differ considerably from the rest of Canada. The Civil Law tradition in Quebec, in contrast to Common Law in the rest of the country, has meant that there was already a tradition of alternative forms of marriage in Quebec. The extent of cohabitation, along with the greater policy attention to family questions, has brought a more Nordic model in Quebec, in contrast to a more Liberal model in the rest of the country. Quebec differs considerably in terms of child care (since 1997) and parental leave (since 2006). Survey data indicate that attitudes to alternative forms of child care have come to differ considerably between Quebec and the rest of Canada. The Nordic model has helped Quebec to avoid particularly low fertility. The child care policy was designed to both improve child welfare and to enhance women's opportunities in employment. Comparisons to other provinces indicate that women's paid work has benefitted, but not child development indicators. It may be that universal programs do not permit as much focus on disadvantaged children, where early intervention has a larger impact.

Keywords: family policy, fertility, child care, work, child development

The different legal traditions and historical context of Quebec compared to the rest of Canada have brought differential understandings regarding cohabitation, seen as a common law union in the rest of Canada, but as a *union libre* or *union de fait* in Quebec. Common law is largely treated as equivalent to marriage, while *union de fait* is more of an alternative to marriage, in terms of the legal obligations toward each other beyond the union. After comparing family policy developments in Quebec to those of the rest of Canada, this paper considers implications in terms of fertility, child care, women's paid work, and child development indicators. The development of family policy has affected levels of childbearing, the uptake of parental leave, especially for men, the attitudes toward and use of day care, the extent of mother's employment, and the evolution of indicators of child development.

Legal traditions and cohabitation

The uniqueness of Quebec family policy can be related to its Civil Law tradition, in contrast to the rest of the country which is based on British Common Law. In particular, the understandings associated with common law unions in provinces other than Quebec have come to be rather different from *union de fait* or *union libre* in Quebec.

In what was then Upper Canada, now Ontario, we could say that the tradition goes back to Middle Ages, where marriage was defined as a vow between consenting adults, regardless of having a witness present. English Common Law eventually required a witness in the person of an Anglican Minister. For those who were not Anglican, or when there was no minister

available, common law marriages without a proper witness could still take place. The First Provincial Parliament of Upper Canada passed the statute on 9 July 1793 that common law marriages were those that were not properly solemnized before a Protestant Parson or Minister of the Church of England. When common law unions increased in the 1970s, family law reform mostly defined common law unions as equivalent to marriage, once they had lasted for durations of three years or longer, or if a child had been born in a union of some permanency. While there are some legal differences between marriages and common law unions, for instance with regard to the “marital home,” the main thrust of the legal tradition has been to treat common law unions as marriages.

In Lower Canada, now Quebec, as in other countries that followed the Civil Law, marriage goes back to Roman Law, as a contract that could be executed by the courts, establishing property and inheritance rights. The Council of Trent (1545-1563) in the Roman Catholic Church established that a marriage was a vow between consenting adults, but it had to be witnessed by a priest. Other unions were not legitimate. Quebec Civil Law came to establish two types of contracts (*régimes matrimoniaux*). The default condition was called *communauté de biens*, where property is held in common and subject to the provisions of inheritance. Couples could choose the alternative of *séparation de biens* where each retains ownership of inheritance. These provisions made the assumption that divorce was essentially non-existent; it took an act of the Parliament of Canada to dissolve a specific marriage in Quebec until 1969. In the late 1970s and early 1980s, the Quebec Legislature slowly took control of marriages, allowing for civil marriages, and defining the default condition as *société d’acquêts*, where property is held in common and there is responsibility toward each other that goes beyond marriage. The *séparation de biens* still exists but a common *patrimoine familial* was added, making the two regimes very similar for most people. In some regards, the alternative of not getting married (*union de fait* or *union libre*), was a deliberate attempt to avoid the provisions of the *patrimoine familial*. Persons in *union libre* can determine their own affairs through contract, but the default assumption is that there is no contract, and thus no supportive obligations to each other, though they have legal obligations to their children.

In effect, various trends have resulted in Quebec being further along the lines of the Kiernan (2001) stages of cohabitation. Le Bourdais and Lapierre-Adamcyk (2004) conclude that while the rest of Canada is at the stage where cohabitation is largely seen as an avenue to test relationships and a form of conjugal life that is predominantly childless, Quebec has entered the stage where cohabitations are socially acceptable and becoming a parent is no longer restricted to marriage, or where cohabitation may even be a substitute or an alternative to marriage.

Besides the legal traditions of Common Law and Civil Law that have especially made for differences in the definitions of cohabitation, there is also a stronger tradition in Quebec of establishing a distinct society, and this includes the area of family policy. While family questions were very much under religious authority into the 1950s, the Quiet Revolution established state control over matters of education, health and welfare. This departure from tradition also prompted a more feminist approach, with authority no longer in the hands of male clergy, but now under the control of a more feminine civil service. Roy and Bernier (2006) further propose that social and policy trends in Quebec are coming to follow a Nordic model.

Family Policies

The policies being considered here include financial transfers to individuals, parental leave and child care. In each of these areas, Quebec has been more active than other provinces.

At the Federal level, universal Family Allowance payments started in 1945 (Blake 2009). In 1993, the family allowance payments and the tax deductions for dependent children were converted into Child Tax Benefits, allowing for more benefits to low income families. At first this change was revenue neutral, but the program has since been augmented by more than the cost of living. The maximum benefits per child were increased by 65% between 1993 and 2012, to reach \$3,485. The payments are reduced for incomes above \$24,183 and they reach zero at family income of \$109,894 for families with one or two children. It is estimated that nine out of ten families with children receive some benefit (Battle 2009). In 2006, a Universal Child Care Benefit of \$1200 per child under six that was added as a further direct financial payment.

Since 1996, there is also a family supplement to Employment Insurance for persons with net family income up to \$25,921 (in 2012 incomes) for families receiving Child Tax Benefits. This increases the replacement rate of Employment Insurance to as much as 80% of insurable earnings, compared to the default replacement rate of 55%. In 2006, 7.7 percent of Employment Insurance claimants received a family supplement. In 2007, a Working Income Tax Benefit, was added to tax benefits (Battle 2009). For single parents and couples, the maximum benefit in 2012 was \$1,762, with reductions to zero at incomes above \$26,952.

In the period 1988-1996, Quebec adopted distinctive family policy through a baby bonus program that followed a French model of larger payments at higher birth orders. For the third and subsequent births, these payments amounted to \$1,600 per year for the first five years of the child's life (Rose 2010).

Following the lead of the Federal Government, since about 1998, the various provinces have added their versions of working income tax benefits. In Quebec, there is the *Prime au travail du Québec* and in Ontario the Child Care Supplement for Working Families (Milligan 2008; Laplante et al. 2011).

Maternity leave was first instituted as part of Unemployment Insurance in 1971. Mothers with the minimum weeks of insurable earnings could claim up to 15 weeks of benefits. As with other Unemployment Insurance benefits, there was a two week waiting period and the benefits used the same replacement rate as regular unemployment insurance. In 1990, 10 weeks of parental leave were added to the 15 weeks of maternity leave, but if both parents took leaves they each had a two week waiting period. In 2001, the parental leave was expanded from 10 weeks to 35 weeks, and there was only one waiting period even if the parental leave was shared. Now called Employment Insurance, the replacement rate is 55% up to a maximum income of \$45,900 (that is, a maximum payment of \$485 per week or \$25,245 per year in 2012).

After several attempts to negotiate an agreement, as of 2006 Quebec has administered its own

parental leave program, which also covers the self employed and does not include a minimum previous weeks of work (Bureau de l'actuaire en chef 2008). This Quebec program offers two options. In the "basic plan" there are 18 weeks of maternity leave (70% replacement rate), plus 5 weeks of paternity leave (70% replacement) and 32 weeks of parental leave (7 weeks at 70% and rest at 55%). In the alternate plan, there are 15 weeks of maternity leave, 3 weeks of paternal leave and 25 weeks of parental leave (all at 75% replacement rate).

By 2006, the take up rate for mothers was 77% in Quebec compared to 62% in the rest of Canada (Marshall 2008). For the 20% of mothers who receive top-up payments from their employers, the average length of maternal leave was 48 weeks in 2008, compared to 46 weeks for mothers without top-up provisions, and 34 weeks for those with no benefits (Marshall 2010). For fathers, the take up rate in 2006 was 56% in Quebec and 11% in the rest of Canada. Over the period 2004 to 2008, this take up rate for fathers increased from 22% to 82% in Quebec, compared to a change from 9% to 12% in the rest of Canada (Marshall 2011). However, Quebec fathers took an average of only 7 weeks in 2006, while the smaller proportion of fathers in the rest of the country who took parental leave had an average of 17 weeks (Marshall 2008).

With uncertainty at the Federal level on questions of child care, and given the criticisms of the Quebec baby bonus policy as being pro-natalist and regressive, in 1997 Quebec converted the associated budget into a very popular \$5 a day child care program, that has since become \$7 a day. The funding for child care increased much more than in other parts of the country. While in 1995 the total allocated funds in Quebec amounted to 38% of those of Ontario, the Quebec funding was over twice that spent in Ontario in 2007/08 (Table 1). Adjusting for inflation, over this period, the public funding of child care increased by 6.7 fold in Quebec compared to 1.4 fold in the rest of Canada.

— Table 1 about here —

In comparison to other countries, Canada has less support for early childhood, that is child care provisions for children under 3, and more investments in middle to late childhood (Thévenon 2011: 65). In terms of the generosity of leave entitlements and of transfers through the tax and benefit system, Canada is more in the middle, being more generous than United Kingdom, Australia and New Zealand, but less than Hungary, Poland, Slovakia and Greece. These comparisons also show Canada near the OECD average in fertility, gender pay gap and child poverty, but with lower enrolment in formal child care, and lower cash support for families (OECD 2011; Gauthier and Philipov 2008: 8-11; see also OECD 2005, Daly 2007, McCain et al. 2011). Within Canada, Quebec has similar levels of direct transfers associated with children, but its parental leave program is more generous with less restrictions and more options, and its funding for child care is more universal and generous.

Family policies and fertility

Canada is among the low fertility countries of the world that have seen an increase in childbearing over the first decade of the 21st Century. In 2003, there were 21 countries with total fertility rates of 1.3 or lower, but by 2008 there were only five such countries (Goldstein et al.

2009). While Canada's fertility was never as low as 1.3, Quebec did have a rate of 1.4 in 1986-88 (ISQ 2010: 39). The analysis of trends by generation suggests that the fertility of Quebec women born after 1956 was enhanced by the Quebec policy, starting with the baby bonus program of the 1988-96 period, and including the subsequent child care and parental leave programs (Lapierre-Adamcyk 2010). For Canada as a whole, there was an increase from 1.51 in 2000 to 1.67 in 2009 (Table 2). The Canadian fertility decline was especially in the period 1965-1972, with the level over the 1976-2009 period being in the range of 1.5 to 1.8 (Beaujot and Kerr 2004: 67; Lapierre-Adamcyk and Lussier 2003; Beaujot 2000).

— Table 2 about here ---

The upward trend has been more pronounced in Quebec, especially in comparison to that of Ontario, the two largest provinces. In 2000 the rates were 1.45 in Quebec and 1.49 in Ontario. By 2009, the Ontario rate had only increased to 1.56 while that of Quebec was 1.74. In the 2010 edition of *Bilan démographique du Québec*, it is estimated that cohort completed fertility is increasing from 1.6 to 1.7 (ISQ 2010). It is expected that the 1960-62 birth cohort of women will have the highest proportion childless at 24% and that this figure will decline to 18% for the 1971-75 cohort. Fertility has also increased in other provinces, with Alberta being noteworthy with an increase from 1.66 in 2000 to 1.89 in 2009.

In avoiding particularly low fertility, Beaujot and Wang (2010) have proposed that Quebec has followed the Nordic model and Alberta has followed the U.S. model. Among the factors that are responsible for low fertility, the risks experienced by young people, and women in particular, are especially relevant (McDonald 2006; see also Bingoly-Liworo 2007; Pacaut et al. 2007; Pacaut 2010). These risks are partly responsible for the delay in family formation. In that context, it is noteworthy that fertility has increased most in Alberta and Quebec, that is in provinces where young families have had the security of either good job opportunities or supportive social policy. Until the 2008 recession, the U.S. model of a strong labour market gave young people security that they could find employment even if they took time off to have children. Wheeler (2008) proposes that “children will be born where the jobs are”. Trovato (2010) also links the Alberta trend with the rapid economic growth in the province.

Gauthier (2008) has theorized that policies would make a difference to childbearing if they help overcome some of the direct costs of children, but these direct costs are not the only element; equally important would be child care, housing availability, flexible hours of work and the availability of part-time work. She further proposes that policies reducing gender inequality in households would be important. What may matter most is not individual policies, but the package of policies, paying attention to the heterogeneity in the population (Gauthier and Philipov 2008; Thévenon and Gauthier 2010).

While Canada's track record is far from that of Nordic countries or France, the movement is in the right direction, with more policy support for families in Quebec than in the rest of Canada. In comparison to other OECD countries, Canadian parental leaves are intermediate, but levels of cash support for families and child care provisions are low, and transfers are concentrated in low income families (Gauthier and Philipov 2008: 8-11; Thévenon 2008). Nonetheless, Canada has

made some progress in the variety of structures that need to be in place for prospective parents to feel that they have support from the society in overcoming some of the costs and barriers: direct transfers, parental leave, child care, and work-life balance features. In their analysis of OECD countries, Luci and Thévenon (2011) find that fertility has increased the most in countries that favour women's paid work, especially through more generous parental leave programs and child care services. In comparison to other OECD countries, Canada's fertility in 2005 was below what one would expect from the level of women's labour force participation (Thévenon 2008). In this comparison, Canada is placed among countries where financial aid to families is focused on families with low income.

Given the heterogeneity across families, it is also useful to have variety in policy support, and progress has been made in this direction. While parental leave has a low replacement rate for those who do not have access to top-up from their employer, its extension to 50 weeks has been an important change. The benefits through Child Tax Benefits is focused on low income families, but around 90 percent of families receive some benefits. Richer families can take more advantage of the tax deductions for child care expenses. The progress in child care has been slow, but the total expenditures have nonetheless increased, especially for the benefit of lone parent and other low income families. Given the diversity in models of family and work, the Universal Child Care Benefit has the advantage of especially supporting families that are less interested in formal child care. In Quebec, the subsidized child care has also benefitted dual-income families.

We are probably safe to say that young people have three competing life course priorities: to live in a durable relationship, to have satisfying secure employment, and to have children (Lapierre-Adamcyk 1990). In small samples taken in classes on the Sociology of Family and Work, some 90 percent place durable relationships and secure employment as "very important" or "important." With regard to having children, the numbers who respond "very important" or "important" is closer to 75 percent. Nonetheless, 90 percent expect to have children. It would seem that, for some 10 to 15% of young people, the childbearing goals would be those most likely sacrificed if life does not go according to plan.

Studies at the individual level support the hypothesis that policy can make a difference. Based on a sample of couples with no children and both working from the Canadian Longitudinal Survey of Labour and Income Dynamics, Morency and Laplante (2010) find support for both the economic and policy contexts. For couples who have after tax incomes in the range of \$10,000 to \$40,000, the decision to have a first child is affected by the amounts of direct financial assistance available in their province of residence, while higher income couples are more affected by the generosity of parental leave. In both cases, the security of the woman's employment plays an important role, as does home ownership, and the man's having access to an employer's pension plan (Laplante et al. 2010, 2011).

The 2006 General Social Survey on Family asked how important various things were to having a child. Based on persons who were married or cohabiting, aged 18-45 and intending to have a (or another) child, Crompton and Keown (2009) find that 54% of women and 38% of men find access to maternity/paternity benefits to be important or very important. The parental benefits

were seen as more important for dual earners, for households with income under \$100,000, for those without a university degree, and those who see work/life balance as important.

Child care

In *Doing better for families*, the OECD (2011) summarizes that Canada has average scores on fertility (rate of 1.7), the gender pay gap (20%) and child poverty (15%), but the formal childcare enrolment stands at 40% compared to an OECD average of 56%.

There are also important differences between Quebec and the rest of Canada (Beaujot et al. 2010). The higher availability and funding of day care in Quebec has prompted higher usage. For instance, 72.6% of respondents with children 0-4 were using child care in Quebec, compared to 41.2% in the rest of Canada (Table 3). For all parents with children 0-4, 42.5% are using day care in Quebec, compared to 15.1% in the rest of Canada. Day care represents 58.5% of total usage of child care in Quebec, compared to 36.6% in the rest of Canada. In both Quebec and the rest of Canada, day care is more often used as the main form of care by respondents who are not married, but this is especially the case in the rest of Canada where the rate for those who are not married is twice that of the respondents living with a partner.

— Table 3 about here —

For those using day care, 15.5% justified this option in terms of it being affordable in Quebec, compared to 6.3% in the rest of Canada, where the justification of convenience was more often used (Beaujot et al. 2010). Similar proportions in Quebec and the rest of Canada, about a quarter, justified the choice of day care in terms of it being best for the child.

It is noteworthy that, compared to 1988 (when the National Child Care Survey was conducted), in 2006 a higher proportion of parents are using the form of child care that they prefer. In 1988, some 40% of respondents had actual care that did not correspond with their preferred care (Beaujot 1997: 283). Among those using child care in 2006, only 15.1% of respondents in Quebec and 24.4% in the rest of Canada would prefer to be using a different form of care (Table 4). Among those who prefer day care, 92.7% are using day care in Quebec and 76.0% in the rest of Canada. For those using day care, 12.4% in Quebec but 18.7% in the rest of Canada would prefer to be using a different form of care. The 2009 Quebec survey of child care usage, needs and preferences confirms that 82% are using their preferred form of child care (Audet and Gingras 2011). The satisfaction rates are over 90% in terms of costs and hours of service. Noteworthy that, for 17% of families, the work or study of parents is not given as the primary reason for the use of regular child care.

— Table 4 about here —

Parental work patterns

The family policy context, especially the greater availability of child care in Quebec, has had noticeable consequences on women's labour force participation (Lefebvre et al. 2011; Godbout

et al. 2011, Rollin 2011). For instance, 65.9% of married/cohabiting women in Quebec with children under five are employed compared to 61.7% in the rest of Canada (Table 5). The differences are in the same direction for women with children 0-4 but without a partner, at 65.8% employed in Quebec compared to 61.5% in the rest of Canada. The higher rates in Quebec are particularly noteworthy in the context that total employment rates are lower in Quebec, for both women and men.

— Table 5 about here —

The average hours worked, for women with a partner and children 0-4, is also higher in Quebec, representing an average of 2.5 hours more per week. However, for women without a partner but with children 0-4, the average is 1.6 hours more of work in the rest of Canada.

Noteworthy also is that women in Quebec with a partner and children under 12 have the strongest preference to work fewer hours (Table 6). For married/cohabiting parents with children 0-4, 31.9% in Quebec compared to 16.2% in the rest of Canada would prefer to work fewer hours for less pay. This difference also applies to men, where 17.0% of married or cohabiting fathers in Quebec with children 0-4 would prefer to work fewer hours with less pay, compared to 7.5% in the rest of Canada.

— Table 6 about here —

While there is a converging trend in the labour market patterns by gender, the average hours worked remains significantly different between women and men (Marshall 2006; 2009). The differences and the preferences are most noteworthy when there are young children present, where the typical pattern is for men to have the strongest labour market attachment and highest hours, while women have lower participation and work hours, and a stronger preference to work fewer hours. Within these patterns, there are nonetheless important differences between Quebec and the rest of Canada. For instance, in the rest of Canada, among married or cohabiting parents with children 0-4, men's average work is 13.2 hours per week more than women, compared to a difference of 7.6 hours in Quebec (Table 5).

Child development indicators

When day care at \$5 per day was introduced in Quebec in 1997, the statement from Quebec Prime Minister Lucien Bouchard spoke of two objectives (Quebec, 1997). The first was to allow Quebec parents to reconcile their work and parental obligations, permitting them to earn the needed family income. The second objective was to ensure that all children are in an environment that permits optimal child development. Day care was seen to contribute not only to work-life balance, but as a tool towards equity and children's equality of opportunity. Through comparisons between Quebec and the rest of Canada, Lefebvre and his colleagues basically conclude that the first objective has been achieved, but not the second.

Based on the National Longitudinal Survey of Children and Youth, the mean standardized Peabody Picture Vocabulary Test (PPVT) scores of four year olds were similar in Quebec and

the rest of Canada for 1994-98, but over the period 1998-2004 the scores decreased in Quebec while they were increasing in the rest of Canada (Lefebvre et al. 2011). For five year olds, the scores have been lower in Quebec than the average for the rest of Canada over the period 2000-04.

Lefebvre and his colleagues are particularly critical of the child care policy in terms of its equity goals. In other provinces, there has been less public funding for child care, but the subsidies have focused on disadvantaged groups, including lone mothers. In Quebec, day care is used less by children in vulnerable environments, and the services they use are of lower quality (Giguère and Desrosiers 2011). In contrast, the higher the mother's education, and the higher the family income, the greater the usage of child care in the Quebec program (Audet and Gingras 2011). While the program has provisions for disadvantaged families, it would appear that other provinces are more successful in tailoring to families with lower incomes. For instance, in the rest of Canada, the usage of day care is twice as high in lone parent families, compared to married or cohabiting parents (Table 3).

These observations can also be related to the literature on the influence of parental work arrangements on child development. In her review of this literature, Waldfogel (2007: 265) concludes that in the first year of life, "there are clear health benefits to parents being able to spend a sustained period of time at home." At ages one and two, there is little evidence that child cognitive development is affected by parental employment, but "the quality of child care matters, and children who are in poor-quality care and for long hours are at risk of developing more behaviour problems." Especially for four-year-olds, the quality of day care may not equal that of junior kindergarten, which is increasingly available outside of Quebec.

Discussion

With a parental leave program offering more options and a higher replacement rate, and higher funding for child care, along with comparable levels of direct payments to families, Quebec has a higher participation of men in parental leave compared to the rest of Canada, more favourable public attitudes to day care, higher usage of formal child care, and more employment and longer work hours on the part of women with children 0-4. These patterns can probably be linked to a greater commitment to social policy in the formation of a distinct society, to a clearer preference for a two-worker model of families, and even to the legal acceptance of cohabitation as an alternate family model. Quebec has moved further toward what Jenson (2004) calls the "investing in children" paradigm. In the rest of Canada there may be more diversity in life course preferences, with a higher proportion oriented toward a parental model of child care. From a labour market perspective, the rest of Canada is more prone to seeing immigration as the solution to shortages.

In other provinces, the subsidization of child care has been more concentrated at lower family incomes (Cleveland et al. 2008: 4; see also Childcare Resource and Research Unit 2009). By concentrating on families in need, and by developing kindergarten programs for four-year-olds, the rest of Canada has made more progress on child development indicators.

It should also be noted that Canada has seen considerable progress toward gender equality. The progress in the public sphere has been especially noteworthy, including higher participation in post-secondary education than men (Andres and Adamuti-Trache 2007), and relatively high levels of labour force participation in comparison to other OECD countries (Thévenon 2008). The progress in the private sphere is slower, but men's participation in housework and child care is increasing, as is their uptake in parental leave (Marshall 2006; Ravanera et al. 2009).

The situation of lone parents has also improved, following in part on a greater emphasis on their labour market integration, through subsidizing education and child care. Especially for lone mothers over 40 years of age, there have been significant gains in education, employment and income over the period 1980-2000 (Myles et al. 2007).

For young people in general, there is a longer period of education and a postponement of the transition to adulthood. Family formation is particularly low for persons who are participating in education, and the extension of education is a frequent alternative for young people who are facing an uncertain labour market. It was thought that the retirement of the baby boom would finally bring better opportunities for young persons, but this large cohort is now delaying its retirement rather than leaving room for the younger generations. While social policy has reduced some of the risks associated with family formation, since 2008 the same cannot be said for youth labour market prospects.

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Box 1. Data and measurement

Tables 3-6 are based on the 2006 General Social Survey, Cycle 20: family transitions. The sample included 23,608 respondents, representing a response rate of 67.4%. All results are weighted but sample sizes are shown unweighted. Tables 3 and 4 are based on 2,314 respondents who had child(ren) under five years in the household. Tables 5-6 are based on 17,730 respondents aged 20-64.

Current use of regular child care (CCA_Q130): "Do you currently use regular child care such as daycare, family daycare provider, nursery school, care by a relative or other caregiver, a before and after school program or some other arrangement? Please include arrangements you have for when you are working, studying, volunteering or other reasons for at least half a day at a time". Domain: respondents with children under 12 years of age in the household.

Reasons for given type of child care (CCA_Q240): What is the main reason why you chose this type of child care for your child/children.

Preferred child care (CCA_Q500, CCA_Q510): If you could choose, would you prefer to use another type of child care for the child/children? Type of child care you would prefer to use.

Labour force participation (ACMCRC): Persons who were classified as either working at a paid job or business, or looking for paid work as their main activity, based on the following question: During the past 12 months, was your main activity working at a paid job or business, looking for paid work, going to school, caring for children, household work, retired or something else?

Studying as main activity (ACMCRC): Persons whose main activity was going to school, based on the following question: During the past 12 months, was your main activity working at a paid job or business, looking for paid work, going to school, caring for children, household work, retired or something else?

Employment: persons who provided a numeric response to the question on number of hours usually worked at all jobs last week for those who had a job or were self-employed at any time last week (WKWEHR_C) plus respondents who did not state or did not know these hours. Those who are not employed are those who were not asked the question on number of hours usually worked at all jobs in a week.

Mean work hours: based on hours worked at all jobs in a week (WKWEHR_C): Number of hours usually worked at all jobs in a week.

Work hours preference (MAR_Q416): Considering your main job, given the choice, would you, at your current wage rate, prefer to work: fewer hours for less pay, more hours for more pay, the same hours for the same pay, or none of the above.

Marital status: married includes persons who are married or living common-law, others include widowed, separated, divorced and single (never married).

Presence and age of children living in the household (CHRTIME6): (1) no child (taken from Childstatus2 or is it CHRINHHD), (2) at least one child under 5, (3) all children between 5 and 12 years, (4) other combinations of ages of child(ren)

Table 1. Child care expenditures, Canada and provinces, 1995, 2007/08.

	1995	2007/08	Change
Canada	995.3	3087.4	3.1
Quebec	203.7	1730.6	8.5
Rest of Canada	791.6	1356.8	1.7
Newfoundland and Labrador	3.0	19.8	6.7
Prince Edward Island	1.7	6.2	3.7
Nova Scotia	11.8	37.2	3.1
New Brunswick	3.2	26.2	8.2
Ontario	541.9	780.4	1.4
Manitoba	45.2	106.0	2.3
Saskatchewan	12.7	47.1	3.7
Alberta	67.6	105.7	1.6
British Columbia	98.7	216.7	2.2
Yukon	1.7	2.5	1.5
Northwest Territories	na.	2.5	na.
Nunavut	4.2	6.4	1.5

Source:

Childcare Resource and Research Unit. 2009: Table 27

Table 2. Total fertility rate, Canada and provinces, 1996, 2000, 2009.

	1996	2000	2009
Canada	1.63	1.51	1.67
Quebec	1.61	1.45	1.74
Rest of Canada	1.64	1.53	1.65
Newfoundland and Labrador	1.31	1.30	1.59
Prince Edward Island	1.74	1.57	1.69
Nova Scotia	1.52	1.41	1.50
New Brunswick	1.46	1.42	1.59
Ontario	1.61	1.49	1.56
Manitoba	1.90	1.82	1.98
Saskatchewan	1.90	1.83	2.06
Alberta	1.75	1.66	1.89
British Columbia	1.55	1.40	1.50
Yukon	1.71	1.63	1.66
Northwest Territories	2.23	2.01	2.06
Nunavut	3.38	3.16	3.24

Sources:

Statistics Canada.2008. Report on the Demographic Situation in Canada 2005 and 2006.Catalogue no. 91-209-XIE, p. 39.

Statistics Canada. 2009. Births. Catalogue no. 84F0210X.

Annual Demographic Statistics, 2000. Catalogue no. 91-213.

Annual Demographic Estimates: Canada, Provinces and Territories. 2009. Catalogue no. 91-215-X 1

Table 3. Type of regular child care currently used, by marital status, respondents with children aged 0-4, Quebec and rest of Canada, 2006.

	Types of regular child care currently used									
	Someone else's home, nonrelative	Someone else's home, relative	Own home, relative	Own home, nonrelative	Daycare centre	Nursery school/preschool	Before, after school	Other child care arrangement	No use of child care	Total
Quebec										
Married	10.6	5.5	1.0	2.7	42.3	5.5	3.3	1.4	27.8	100.0
Other	5.0	10.0	2.5	2.5	45.0	7.5	0.0	5.0	22.5	100.0
Total	10.2	5.8	1.1	2.7	42.5	5.6	3.1	1.6	27.4	100.0
Rest of Canada										
Married	9.5	5.9	4.7	2.7	14.1	1.7	0.7	0.7	59.9	100.0
Other	11.9	3.5	4.9	2.8	28.7	1.4	0.7	1.4	44.8	100.0
Total	9.7	5.8	4.7	2.7	15.1	1.7	0.7	0.8	58.8	100.0
Canada										
Married	9.7	5.9	3.9	2.7	20.3	2.5	1.3	0.9	52.7	100.0
Other	10.4	4.9	3.8	2.7	32.4	2.7	0.5	2.2	40.1	100.0
Total	9.8	5.8	3.9	2.7	21.2	2.5	1.2	1.0	51.8	100.0

Notes:

Married includes cohabiting.

See definitions in Box 1. Of the 2314 respondents with children 0-4, 17 were excluded because they had missing values on current use of regular child care. The sample size was 2297 (406 in Quebec and 1891 in the rest of Canada).

Source: GSS 2006

Table 4. Preferred care by actual care, respondents with children aged 0-4 who were currently using regular child care, Quebec and rest of Canada, 2006.

Actual care type used	Preference for an alternate type of child care								N	Yes*
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8		
Quebec										
1 Someone else's home,	100.0	6.1		4.5	4.1	3.7		4.0	60	25.0
2 Someone else's home,		87.9		4.5	1.4				41	15.6
3 Own home, relative			60.0						21	0.0
4 Own home, nonrelative				63.6	0.9				29	12.5
5 Daycare centre		6.1	30.0	27.3	92.7			48.0	204	12.4
6 Nursery school/preschool					0.5	96.3		12.0	25	22.6
7 Before, after school			10.0		0.5		100.0		120	20.0
8 Other child care arrangement								36.0	19	0.0
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	519	15.1
Rest of Canada										
1 Someone else's home,	98.3	4.0	4.3	5.7	12.7	10.3	29.2	15.5	334	36.9
2 Someone else's home,		92.0		3.8	4.2			3.4	233	18.8
3 Own home, relative			91.3	1.9	5.2	5.1	12.5	5.2	151	29.2
4 Own home, nonrelative				77.4	1.9	2.6		3.4	98	21.6
5 Daycare centre	1.7	4.0	4.3	9.4	76.0	10.3	20.8	39.7	404	18.7
6 Nursery school/preschool							71.8	3.4	43	10.0
7 Before, after school				1.9			37.5	5.2	129	30.8
8 Other child care arrangement								24.1	31	20.0
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	1423	24.4
Canada										
1 Someone else's home,	98.8	3.8	3.8	6.6	9.1	7.6	18.9	12.0	394	34.3
2 Someone else's home,		92.3		3.9	3.0			2.4	274	18.8
3 Own home, relative			87.3	1.3	3.0	3.0	8.1	3.6	172	27.4
4 Own home, nonrelative				72.4	1.5	1.5		2.4	127	19.4
5 Daycare centre	1.2	3.8	7.6	14.5	82.9	6.1	13.5	42.2	608	15.9
6 Nursery school/preschool					0.2	81.8		6.0	68	15.0
7 Before, after school			1.3	1.3	0.2		59.5	3.6	249	24.1
8 Other child care arrangement								27.7	50	12.5
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	1942	21.3

Note:

See definitions in Box 1. Of the 1134 respondents currently using regular child care, 19 had missing values on "would prefer to use another type of care" and a further 6 had missing values on preferred care. The sample size was 1109 (292 in Quebec and 817 in the rest of Canada).

*Yes: percent who indicate that they would prefer to use a different type of child care than the type they are currently using.

Source: GSS 2006

Table 5. Labour force participation, studying as main activity, employment, and hours worked at all jobs in a week, by gender, marital status and presence of children, ages 20-64, Quebec and rest of Canada, 2006.

		Male				Female			
		Labour force participation		Employment	Work Hours	Labour force participation		Employment	Work Hours
		In Labour force	Studying as main activity	Employed	Mean work hours	In Labour force	Studying as main activity	Employed	Mean work hours
Quebec									
Married	No Child	78.3	2.5	79.4	41.6	64.6	4.0	67.6	36.2
	Child(ren) 0-4	92.2	3.2	90.9	43.5	57.6	4.4	65.9	35.9
	All children 5-12	94.4	0.6	94.4	44.9	76.8	2.8	79.6	35.2
	Other	92.5	0.2	93.4	43.8	74.9	1.9	78.1	35.9
	Total	87.2	1.7	87.6	43.1	67.7	3.3	71.6	35.9
Other	No Child	71.3	18.4	78.8	39.4	59.8	22.6	75.0	34.7
	Child(ren) 0-4	...	...	...	...	55.3	13.2	65.8	32.7
	All children 5-12	100.0	0.0	93.8	44.2	69.4	13.9	66.7	36.8
	Other	74.5	0.0	72.3	39.6	82.5	0.8	82.8	37.9
	Total	72.2	16.6	78.8	39.6	64.0	17.9	75.4	35.3
Rest of Canada									
Married	No Child	81.5	2.8	83.4	44.9	67.9	3.5	71.6	38.1
	Child(ren) 0-4	95.1	2.4	94.9	46.6	43.3	1.2	61.7	33.4
	All children 5-12	96.3	0.4	95.4	46.9	67.5	3.1	79.6	34.8
	Other	91.1	0.3	91.3	46.0	71.6	1.1	78.0	36.2
	Total	89.0	1.6	89.6	45.9	64.3	2.2	72.5	36.3
Other	No Child	71.0	20.7	82.8	42.1	61.6	25.3	78.1	38.0
	Child(ren) 0-4	69.6	17.4	69.6	45.3	54.9	8.0	61.5	34.3
	All children 5-12	93.3	3.3	87.9	42.7	68.1	6.2	72.3	39.0
	Other	87.6	0.0	84.7	45.7	75.6	1.5	77.6	38.6
	Total	72.2	19.3	82.9	42.3	64.1	19.2	76.8	38.0
Canada									
Married	No Child	80.7	2.8	82.4	44.1	67.0	3.6	70.6	37.6
	Child(ren) 0-4	94.4	2.6	93.9	45.9	46.2	1.9	62.6	33.9
	All children 5-12	95.9	0.4	95.1	46.4	69.8	3.1	79.6	34.9
	Other	91.3	0.3	91.8	45.5	72.3	1.2	78.1	36.1
	Total	88.5	1.7	89.1	45.2	65.1	2.5	72.3	36.2
Other	No Child	71.1	20.1	81.9	41.5	61.2	24.6	77.3	37.3
	Child(ren) 0-4	72.0	16.0	72.0	45.3	55.3	9.2	62.6	33.9
	All children 5-12	95.6	2.2	89.8	43.2	67.5	8.6	71.0	38.5
	Other	84.3	0.0	81.2	44.1	77.2	1.4	78.8	38.4
	Total	72.2	18.7	81.9	41.7	64.0	18.9	76.5	37.4
Total	No Child	75.5	12.2	82.1	42.7	64.3	13.3	73.7	37.5
	Child(ren) 0-4	93.9	2.9	93.4	45.9	47.3	2.7	62.6	33.9
	All children 5-12	95.9	0.6	94.7	46.2	69.4	4.2	77.7	35.6
	Other	90.8	0.3	91.0	45.4	73.3	1.3	78.2	36.6
	Total	83.3	7.1	86.8	44.2	64.8	7.8	73.7	36.6

Notes: Married includes cohabiting. See definitions in Box 1. For main activity in the past 12 months, the sample size was 17 543(3 458 in Quebec and 14 085 in rest of Canada). For employment, the sample size was 17 730 (3 502 in Quebec and 14 228 in the rest of Canada).

...: less than 10 persons.

Source: GSS 2006

Table 6. Preference to work fewer hours for less pay, more hours for more pay, or the same hours for the same pay, by gender, marital status and presence of children, ages 20-64, Quebec and rest of Canada, 2006.

		Male			Female		
		Fewer Hours	More Hours	Same Hours	Fewer Hours	More Hours	Same Hours
Quebec							
Married	No Child	16.4	9.9	73.6	19.7	9.5	70.8
	Child(ren) 0-4	17.0	9.4	73.5	31.9	5.9	62.2
	All children 5-12	12.5	11.8	75.7	30.8	7.7	61.5
	Other	18.0	7.2	74.9	15.9	11.5	72.5
	Total	16.6	9.1	74.3	21.6	9.4	69.0
Other	No Child	7.8	21.0	71.2	8.4	18.3	73.4
	Child(ren) 0-4	...	...	...	16.0	12.0	72.0
	All children 5-12	30.0	20.0	50.0	9.5	9.5	81.0
	Other	6.9	17.2	75.9	12.3	18.5	69.1
	Total	8.4	20.7	70.8	9.5	17.6	72.9
Rest of Canada							
Married	No Child	11.0	17.6	71.4	11.1	15.4	73.5
	Child(ren) 0-4	7.5	20.4	72.1	16.2	16.4	67.4
	All children 5-12	10.8	15.1	74.1	13.2	15.7	71.2
	Other	11.9	15.4	72.7	11.6	17.9	70.5
	Total	10.6	17.1	72.3	12.3	16.5	71.2
Other	No Child	5.5	37.5	57.0	4.5	31.8	63.7
	Child(ren) 0-4	0.0	18.2	81.8	6.3	39.1	54.7
	All children 5-12	16.7	12.5	70.8	13.5	23.0	63.5
	Other	9.2	17.2	73.6	8.2	25.3	66.5
	Total	5.9	35.9	58.3	5.6	30.5	63.8
Canada							
Married	No Child	12.3	15.7	71.9	13.3	13.9	72.9
	Child(ren) 0-4	9.8	17.8	72.3	19.5	14.3	66.2
	All children 5-12	11.2	14.3	74.5	17.5	13.7	68.8
	Other	13.3	13.6	73.2	12.5	16.5	71.0
	Total	12.0	15.3	72.7	14.5	14.8	70.7
Other	No Child	6.1	33.8	60.1	5.4	28.6	66.0
	Child(ren) 0-4	8.3	16.7	75.0	9.0	31.5	59.6
	All children 5-12	20.6	14.7	64.7	12.6	20.0	67.4
	Other	8.6	17.2	74.1	9.2	23.4	67.4
	Total	6.5	32.5	61.0	6.6	27.4	66.0
Total	No Child	8.9	25.6	65.4	9.5	21.0	69.5
	Child(ren) 0-4	9.8	17.8	72.4	18.2	16.3	65.5
	All children 5-12	11.7	14.4	73.8	16.6	14.9	68.5
	Other	13.0	13.8	73.3	11.9	17.9	70.2
	Total	10.3	20.5	69.2	11.9	19.0	69.1

Note: See definitions in Box 1. The preferred hours response "none of the above (1623)" has been treated as a missing value. The sample size was 11 954 (2 299 in Quebec and 9 655 in the rest of Canada).

...: less than 10 persons.

Source: GSS 2006