Information on the well-being of children in Canada is not as comprehensive as it is in, for example, European countries. However, the data that are available show a mixed picture.

At home, children in Canada enjoy higher average disposable incomes than their peers in many other OECD countries, but income inequality across households means that the child income poverty rate is also higher than average (15%, compared to 13.4% on average).

Parent-child relationships seem comparatively good, with only 3.5% of 15-year-olds in Canada report not talking to their parents before or after school on the last day they went to school – much lower than in some other countries like Mexico or Turkey, for example, where around 10-11% of 15-year-olds are in this situation.

Child health outcomes are varied. Infant mortality remains comparatively high (4.8 deaths per 1,000 births, compared to 3.9 on average), but the low-weight birth rate is comparable to the OECD average (6.3%, compared to an OECD average of 6.5%). The proportion of 15-year-olds engaging in intense physical activity is comparatively high (almost 59%, versus an OECD average of 52.3%), but overweight and obesity rates are also relatively high – almost 28% of 11-15-year-olds in Canada are overweight or obese, compared to an OECD average of 19%

Not all children benefit from optimal conditions for studying: about 18% of 15-year-olds in Canada do not have a desk and quiet place to study at home, 26% do not have books to help with school work, and 36% feel anxious about school tests even if well-prepared. Nevertheless, Canadian teenagers perform very well on the OECD’s PISA reading and mathematics tests, and the proportion of 15-year-olds who plan to pursue higher education is comparatively high.

About 6.3% of 15-19 year olds in Canada are not in employment, education or training, higher than in many other OECD countries and slightly above the OECD average (6.0%). The adolescent (15-19 year old) fertility rate is also relatively high compared to OECD countries.

### How Canada compares to other OECD countries on 19 key measures

#### Home and family environment
- Average disposable household income for children
- Children in relative income poverty
- Adolescents talking to their parents before or after school

#### Jobs and income
- Infant mortality
- Low-weight births
- Adolescents skipping either breakfast or dinner

#### Parent-child relationships
- Adolescents regularly engaging in vigorous exercise
- Children who are overweight or obese
- Children who are regular smokers

#### Health and safety
- Children who feel they belong in school
- Adolescents who report being the victims of bullying
- Reading performance at age 15 (PISA)
- Mathematics performance at age 15 (PISA)

#### Education and school life
- Adolescents with a desk and a quiet place to study at home
- Adolescents with books for school work at home
- Adolescents who feel anxious about school tests
- Adolescents who expect to complete a university degree
- Adolescents who feel like they belong in school
- Adolescents who report being the victims of bullying
- Reading performance at age 15 (PISA)
- Mathematics performance at age 15 (PISA)

#### Activities and life satisfaction
- Adolescents not in education or employment
- Adolescent fertility

### Note

Placements in top/middle/bottom third of OECD countries with available data on each measure. ‘Top third’ (green circle) always represents good relative performance with respect to child well-being, and ‘bottom third’ (red square) poor relative performance. For measures where a larger value is generally ‘better’ (e.g. average disposable household income for children), ‘top third’ means the country is in the top third when countries are ranked largest to smallest value down. For measures where a smaller value is better (e.g. children in relative income poverty), ‘top third’ means the country is in the top third when ranked smallest to largest.

The Child Well-Being Data Portal (CWBDP) gathers data on child well-being and the settings in which children grow up. It provides information on children’s home and family environment, their health and safety, their education and school life, their activities and their life satisfaction, and also links to information on public policies for children. Information covers children from 0 to 17 years of age, although some information is available only for specific ages. Where possible, information is provided for different age groups, from early childhood to adolescence. The data portal also provides a unique source of information on disparities in child well-being by gender, family status, household income level, and parental background.