

Profile of the Social Determinants
of Health in Thunder Bay District,
2018

Social Determinants of Health Statistics

The Thunder Bay District is a lively Northwestern community that is constantly changing and growing. This profile of the Thunder Bay District will help us to better understand how the population experiences the social determinants of health and allow us to follow population changes over time.

This information is intended for use in the planning and development of programs and services at the Thunder Bay District Health Unit (TBDHU). This profile may be of use to researchers, community agencies, and members of the public who have an interest in the health of the Thunder Bay District.

INCOME



13.8% of Thunder Bay District residents reported that they earned a low income.

Impact on Health: Income is considered the most important *determinant* of health because it has an influence on all other living conditions including, access to health services, safe housing, access to healthy food, access to education, and a sense of belonging to a community. As a result, people who are living with low income or living in poverty often experience worse health.

Additional statistics about income and comparisons to Ontario:

Prevalence of low-income individuals based on after-tax low-income measure

- TBDHU (crude; 2015): 13.8%
- Ontario (crude; 2015): 14.4%

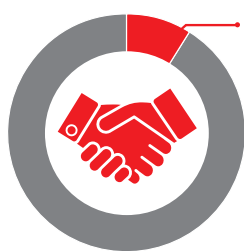
Median household total income

- TBDHU (crude; 2015): \$67,427
- Ontario (crude; 2015): \$74,287

Data Source: Statistics Canada, 2016 Census of Population



EMPLOYMENT AND JOB SECURITY



8.4% of Thunder Bay District residents reported being unemployed.

Impact on Health: People without a job, in a low paying job, or those who have temporary jobs are more at risk for daily stress, mental health problems, and are less able to afford housing and healthy food.

Additional statistics about unemployment and job security and comparisons to Ontario:

Employment Rate (aged 15 years and over)

- TBDHU (crude; 2016): 54.9%
- Ontario (crude; 2016): 59.9%

Unemployment Rate (aged 15 years and over)

- TBDHU (crude; 2016): 8.4%
- Ontario (crude; 2016): 7.4%

Data Source: Statistics Canada, 2016 Census of Population



FOOD SECURITY



10.2% of Thunder Bay District households reported being food insecure.

Impact on Health: Food insecurity means being unable to regularly access nutritious, safe, adequate, and culturally acceptable food. Food insecurity is a strong predictor of poorer physical and mental health.

Additional statistics about food insecurity and comparisons to Ontario:

Household Food Insecurity Rate

- TBDHU (crude household rate; 2013-14): 10.2%
- Ontario (crude household rate: 2013-14): 9.0%

Data Source: Statistics Canada, CCHS - Annual Component

Please see Data Disclaimer (DD) on last page



EDUCATION



22.9% of Thunder Bay District residents, aged 15 years and over, reported that they do not have a high school diploma.

Impact on Health: People with a higher level of education tend to experience better health, higher incomes, more secure employment, and better working conditions than people with less education.

Additional statistics about education and comparisons to Ontario:

No certificate, diploma, or degree (aged 15 years and over)

- TBDHU (crude; 2016): 22.9%
- Ontario (crude; 2016): 17.5%

High school diploma or equivalent* (aged 15 years and over)

- TBDHU (crude; 2016): 25.4%
- Ontario (crude; 2016): 27.4%

* excludes persons with a postsecondary certificate, diploma or degree

Postsecondary certificate, diploma or degree

- TBDHU (crude; 2016): 51.6%
- Ontario (crude; 2016): 55.0%

Data Source: Statistics Canada, 2016 Census of Population



HOUSING



41.8% of Thunder Bay District residents who are renters spent 30% or more of their household income on shelter costs.

Impact on Health: People who are not able to afford safe housing are more at risk for health problems. Unsafe housing can result in the transmission of illnesses due to overcrowding, mould exposure, a lack of clean water and proper sanitation, and a lack of adequate sleep. The high cost of housing can also limit the amount of money people have left over for food, child care and transportation.

Additional statistics about housing and comparisons to Ontario:

Homeowners spending 30% or more of total income on shelter costs

- TBDHU (crude; 2016): 10.3%
- Ontario (crude; 2016): 19.8%

Renters spending 30% or more of total income on shelter costs

- TBDHU (crude; 2016): 41.8%
- Ontario (crude; 2016): 45.7%

Dwellings with Major Repairs Needed

- TBDHU (crude; 2016): 9.5%
- Ontario (crude; 2016): 6.1%

Data Source: Statistics Canada, 2016 Census of Population



EARLY CHILDHOOD DEVELOPMENT



19.8% of children in Thunder Bay District were living in low income families.

Impact on Health: The experiences that take place during early childhood influence how well a child grows into a healthy adult, how well they do in school, and how well they learn to cope with stress. All these factors will play a role on future education, and employment possibilities, and the chance for good health.

Additional statistics about early childhood development and comparisons to Ontario:

Children aged 17 and under living in low income families

- TBDHU (crude; 2015): 19.8%
- Ontario (crude; 2015): 18.4%

Data Source: Statistics Canada, 2016 Census of Population



ACCESS TO HEALTHCARE



87.7% of Thunder Bay District residents reported they had a regular medical doctor.

Impact on Health: People who are not able to access health care due to a lack of available services, isolation in remote communities, a lack of mobility, issues with language and literacy, or due to a lack of income, are at a greater risk for poorer health.

Additional statistics about access to healthcare and comparisons to Ontario:

Has a regular medical doctor

- TBDHU (crude rate; 2015-16): 87.7% (83.5-90.9)
- Ontario (crude rate; 2015-16): 89.9% (89.3-90.5)

Contact with a medical doctor in the past 12 months

- TBDHU (crude rate; 2015-16): 74.7% (70.3-78.6)
- Ontario (crude rate; 2015-16): 73.7% (72.9-74.5)

Data Source: Statistics Canada, CCHS - Annual Component

Please see DD on last page



STRESS



17.5% of Thunder Bay District residents reported they have "quite a lot" of stress in their lives.

Impact on Health: People who experience more stress due to low income, unemployment, unsafe housing, and food insecurity, bad working conditions, discrimination, trauma, or violence, experience more physical strain on their body. Continuous stress weakens the immune system, making people more vulnerable to illness and disease.

Additional statistics about stress and comparisons to Ontario:

Perceived mental health, very good or excellent

- TBDHU (age-standardized; 2015-16): 68.0% (63.7-72.0)
- Ontario (age-standardized; 2015-16): 71.1% (70.2-72.0)

Perceived life stress, quite a lot

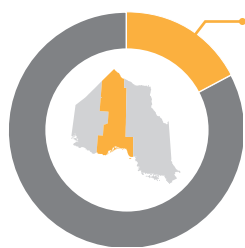
- TBDHU (age-standardized; 2015-16): 17.5% (14.0-21.6)
- Ontario (age-standardized; 2015-16): 22.0% (21.3-22.8)

Data Source: Statistics Canada, CCHS - Annual Component

Please see DD on last page



INDIGENOUS STATUS



18.5% of Thunder Bay District residents reported their identity as Aboriginal.*

Impact on Health: In Canada, people who identify as being part of the First Nations, Métis, or Inuit communities are at risk for more adverse health outcomes related to lower incomes, poor housing, less access to health care, jobs, healthy foods, and education, and more experiences of discrimination, stress, and trauma.

Additional statistics about Aboriginal Status and comparisons to Ontario:

Population that identifies as Aboriginal

- TBDHU (2016): 18.5%
- Ontario (2016): 2.8%

* The wording of this statistic reflects the wording used by Statistics Canada during data collection of the 2016 Census of Population. At this time, 'Aboriginal identity' included persons who reported being an Aboriginal person, that is, First Nations (North American Indian), Métis or Inuk (Inuit) and/or those who reported Registered or Treaty Indian status, that is registered under the Indian Act of Canada, and/or those who reported membership in a First Nation or Indian band. Aboriginal peoples of Canada are defined in the Constitution Act, 1982, section 35 (2) as including the Indian, Inuit and Métis peoples of Canada.



Data Source: Statistics Canada, 2016 Census of Population

SOCIAL SUPPORT



74.3% of Thunder Bay District residents report feeling a strong sense of belonging to their community

Impact on Health: A social support network can play an important role for people in times of stress. Social support can come from many different sources including family, friends, co-workers, and neighbours, and provides people with a sense of belonging to a community. People who do not have social support may experience worse mental, emotional, and physical health.

Additional statistics about social support and comparisons to Ontario:

Sense of belonging to local community, somewhat strong or very strong

- TBDHU (crude rate; 2015-16): 74.3% (69.8-78.2)
- Ontario (crude rate; 2015-16): 70.9% (70.0-71.8)

Data Source: Statistics Canada, CCHS - Annual Component

Please see DD on last page



* Data Disclaimer (DD)

The Canadian Community Health Survey (CCHS) covers the population 12 years of age and over. CCHS results are self-reported and may not be recalled accurately. Excluded from the survey's coverage are: persons living on reserves and other Aboriginal settlements, full-time members of the Canadian Forces, residents of certain remote areas, and the institutionalized population. As a result, the percentages may not represent the true estimates for the general population. Caution should be used when interpreting the data.

References

- Statistics Canada. 2017. Thunder Bay District Health Unit, [Health region, December 2017], Ontario and Ontario [Province] (table). Census Profile. 2016 Census. Statistics Canada Catalogue no. 98-316-X2016001. Ottawa. Released November 29, 2017. <https://www12.statcan.gc.ca/census-recensement/2016/dp-pd/prof/index.cfm?Lang=E> (accessed July 9, 2018).
- Statistics Canada. [Table 13-10-0113-01 Canadian health characteristics, two-year period estimates.](#)

For Further Information

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