
Children in lone-parent families: Change by census subdivisionⁱ

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Highlights

- From 2011 to 2016, across census subdivisions in non-metro census divisions, there was a wide range in the rate of change in the number of children living with in a lone-parent family.
- 31% of census subdivisions had a decline of 3.3% or more while 23% of census subdivisions had a growth of 20% or more in the number of children living with a lone-parent family.

Why look at children with lone-parents?

Children living in a lone-parent family face different experiences compared to children living in a two-parent family.

*The family life of children may have a direct impact on their health, their economic, social and emotional well-being, and on their life course in the long run. For example, family life during childhood may affect the long-term relationship between children and their parents, particularly when the parents are older and need support themselves. Children living in lone-parent families or stepfamilies may also have a greater need for some services (childcare, for example) and may be more exposed to certain situations, such as living in a low-income family. (Statistics Canada. (2017) **Portrait of children's family life in Canada in 2016** (Ottawa: Statistics Canada, Catalogue no. 98-200-X201606) p. 1).*

Assessing the pace of change in the number of children with lone parents will indicate the localities faced with a need to change the scale of their efforts to provide programs for both the parents and the children and youth in lone-parent families.

Findings

Across census subdivisions¹ (CSDs) within non-metro census divisions (CDs), there is a wide range in the pace of change in the number of children living in a lone-parent family.

From 2011 to 2016, 10 CSDs in non-metro CDs experienced a growth of over 43% whereas, at the other end of the distribution, 10 CSDs experienced a decline of more than 27% (Table 1).

¹ A census subdivision is an incorporated town or municipality (or similar jurisdiction, such as an Indian Reserve). For details, see Statistics Canada. (2017) **2016 Census Dictionary** (Ottawa: Statistics Canada, Catalogue no. 98-301).

In fact, among CSDs in non-metro CDs, there is a large(r) share of CSDs (31%) with a decline (of more than 3.3%) in the number of children living with a lone parent and a large(r) share of CSDs (23%) of CSDs with a substantial increase (20% or more) in the number of children living with a lone parent (Table 2).

Discussion

Different localities are experiencing (very) different rates of change. Thus, organizations that aim to provide support to lone parents and their children will also be experiencing very different rates of change in the demand for their services, depending upon their location.

Table 1. Ranking of census subdivisions¹ by percent change in number of children (under 15 years of age) living in a lone-parent family, Ontario, 2011 to 2016

Rank of CSDs within each CD type	CD ID	Name of census division (CD)	CSD ID	Name of census subdivision ¹ (CSD)	Number of children (under 15 years of age) living in a lone-parent census family		Percent change, 2011 to 2016
					2011	2016	
Census subdivisions within metro CDs (showing² the 5 highest and the 5 lowest ranking CSDs)							
1	3524	Halton	3524009	Milton	1,890	2,675	41.5
2	3519	York	3519049	King	300	365	21.7
3	3519	York	3519044	Whitchurch-Stouffville	730	870	19.2
4	3519	York	3519036	Markham	5,960	6,685	12.2
5	3519	York	3519028	Vaughan	5,590	6,165	10.3
18	3529	Brant	3529005	Brant	790	785	-0.6
19	3521	Peel	3521005	Mississauga	19,630	19,380	-1.3
20	3520	Toronto	3520005	Toronto	91,160	88,225	-3.2
21	3519	York	3519054	East Gwillimbury	465	440	-5.4
22	3524	Halton	3524015	Halton Hills	1,580	1,430	-9.5
Census subdivisions in partially-non-metro CDs (showing² the 5 highest and the 5 lowest ranking CSDs)							
1	3512	Hastings	3512036	Madoc	35	70	100.0
2	3552	Sudbury	3552001	French River	40	65	62.5
3	3522	Dufferin	3522021	Shelburne	205	325	58.5
4	3512	Hastings	3512026	Centre Hastings	80	125	56.3
5	3543	Simcoe	3543064	Wasaga Beach	400	565	41.3
148	3558	Thunder Bay	3558059	Marathon	150	115	-23.3
149	3523	Wellington	3523009	Guelph/Eramosa	225	170	-24.4
150	3552	Sudbury	3552023	Sables-Spanish Rivers	110	80	-27.3
151	3558	Thunder Bay	3558062	Pic River 50	45	30	-33.3
152	3507	Leeds & Grenville	3507017	Front of Yonge	60	35	-41.7
Census subdivisions within non-metro CDs (showing² the 10 highest and the 10 lowest ranking CSDs)							
1	3554	Timiskaming	3554036	Armstrong	30	55	83.3
2	3547	Renfrew	3547090	Laurentian Hills	50	85	70.0
3	3548	Nipissing	3548094	Nipissing, Unorganized, North Part	40	65	62.5
4	3509	Lanark	3509010	Drummond/North Elmsley	110	175	59.1
5	3509	Lanark	3509001	Montague	85	135	58.8
6	3538	Lambton	3538016	Enniskillen	45	70	55.6
7	3540	Huron	3540010	Bluewater	110	170	54.5
8	3556	Cochrane	3556014	Black River-Matheson	50	75	50.0
9	3549	Parry Sound	3549022	Burk's Falls	45	65	44.4
10	3509	Lanark	3509015	Tay Valley	80	115	43.8
171	3541	Bruce	3541069	Northern Bruce Peninsula	55	40	-27.3
172	3547	Renfrew	3547035	Bonnechere Valley	90	65	-27.8
173	3556	Cochrane	3556092	Cochrane, Unorganized, North Part	100	70	-30.0
174	3538	Lambton	3538015	Brooke-Alvinston	95	65	-31.6
175	3547	Renfrew	3547030	Madawaska Valley	95	65	-31.6
176	3557	Algoma	3557076	Wawa	125	85	-32.0
177	3532	Oxford	3532045	Blandford-Blenheim	140	95	-32.1
178	3544	Muskoka	3544027	Lake of Bays	55	35	-36.4
179	3538	Lambton	3538025	Sarnia 45	70	40	-42.9
180	3536	Chatham-Kent	3536029	Moravian 47	55	30	-45.5

1. Census subdivisions (CSDs) are incorporated towns, municipalities or similar jurisdictions, such as Indian Reserves. Census subdivisions with less than 30 children (under 15 years of age) living with a lone-parent in 2011 or 2016 are excluded from this table.

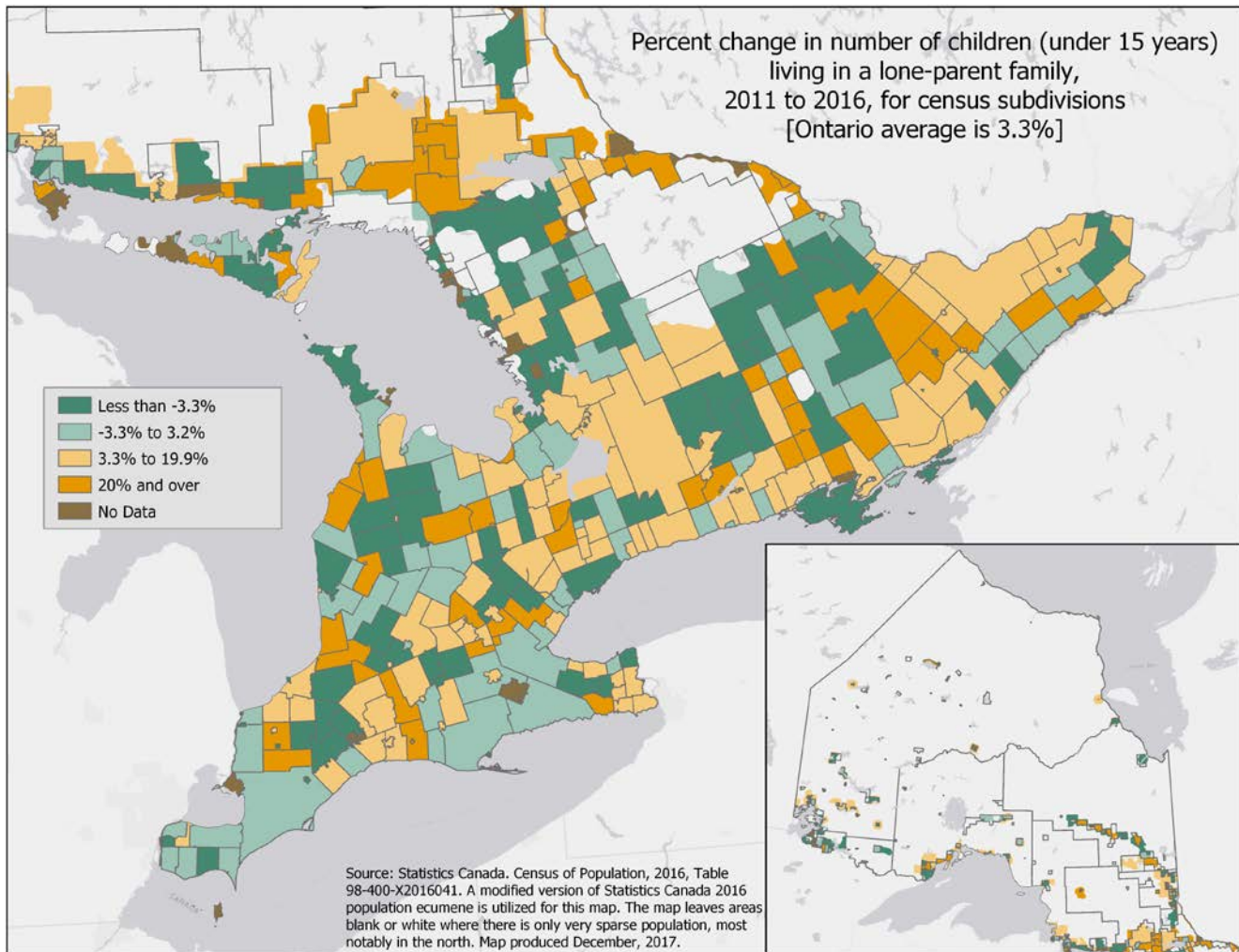
2. For the ranking of all CSDs, see the "Expanded Table 1" at <http://www.ruralontarioinstitute.ca/rural-reports/focus-on-rural-ontario>. Source: Statistics Canada. Census of Population, 2016, Table 98-400-X2016041.

Table 2. Percent distribution of census subdivisions¹ by size of PERCENT CHANGE in number of children (under 15 years of age) who live in a lone-parent census family, Ontario, 2011 to 2016

Percent change from 2011 to 2016 in the number of children (under 15 years of age) who live in a lone-parent census family	Type of census division (CD)			
	Metro CDS	Partially-non-metro CDS	Non-metro CDS	All CDS
	Percent distribution of census subdivisions ¹			
Less than -3.3%	13	26	31	28
-3.3% to 3.2%	25	20	24	23
3.3% to 19.9%	50	34	22	28
20% and over	13	20	23	21
All CSDs ¹	100	100	100	100

1. Census subdivisions (CSDs) are incorporated towns, municipalities or similar jurisdictions, such as Indian Reserves). Only CSDs with more than 5 children in each of 2011 and 2016 are included in this table.

Source: Statistics Canada. Census of Population, 2016, Table 98-400-X2016041.



The Rural Ontario Institute gratefully acknowledges the work of Ray Bollman in preparing this edition of *Focus on Rural Ontario*. Questions on data sources can be directed to RayD.Bollman@sasktel.net. Any comments or discussions can be directed to NRagetlie@RuralOntarioInstitute.ca.

ⁱ This is a companion to the **Focus on Rural Ontario** Fact Sheet entitled “Children in lone-parent families: Change by census division.”