

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

WHO ARE OUR 0-5 YEAR OLDS?

A PORTRAIT OF ENGLISH-SPEAKING 0-5 YEAR OLDS IN THE OUTAOUAIS REGION

The Outaouais region has a population of 392,785 (Institut de la statistique du Québec, 2017). The proportion of the population whose mother tongue is only English is 14.2%. As such, English-speaking residents find themselves in a minority situation. Research shows that minority populations do not always benefit from the same services or have access to the same information, which can affect their health and well-being. It is therefore important to support the development of this minority language community, and this of course begins with its preschoolers.

There are 27,320 children between the ages of 0 and 5 years in the Outaouais. They account for 7.1% of the population (2016 Census). The following report provides a portrait of English-speaking children between the ages of 0 and 5 years in the Outaouais and their family in order to learn more about their current reality and to better understand the challenges they face. This report also serves as a guide for Connexions Resource Centre whose mission is to serve and promote the health, well-being and vitality of the English-speaking population of the Outaouais.

Three main sources of information were used to produce this portrait :

- Statistics Canada 2016 Census
- 2017 Québec Survey of Child Development in Kindergarten
- Online survey conducted among English-speaking families with at least one child between 0 and 5 years of age. (417 respondents between March 12 and 25, 2019)

In Short

English-speaking children aged 5 and under in the Outaouais region...



Recommendations for the Next Five Years

Further promote the services offered by Connexions Resource Centre;

Request and make available existing services and information in English to ensure greater equity;

Increase partnerships to better serve the health and development of English-speaking children in the territories where they are in the minority and are at a higher risk of isolation;

Act early and on an ongoing basis with all the partners in the Outaouais who work with preschoolers in order to better support child development, as well as parental skills;

Strengthen partnerships with the Western Québec School Board and the Centre intégré de santé et des services sociaux (CISSS) de l'Outaouais by forming an advisory committee for English-speaking children aged 0-5 years where all key partners will be invited, including parent representatives;

Develop partnerships with the most vulnerable members of the English-speaking community and place them at the heart of the actions;

Ensure the needs of both families and preschoolers are taken into account in the English-language health and social services access program of the CISSS de l'Outaouais;

Conduct a survey targeting the more vulnerable families to better understand their needs and subsequently work with existing community organizations to help them better support these families;

Target areas of vulnerability where English-speaking children experience the greatest difficulty, namely physical health and well-being, as well as communication skills and general knowledge;

Support English-speaking parents in preparing their children for their first transition into school.

Conclusion

The importance of early and concerted action in a child's development is well known. As proposed in the Ecological Systems Theory, the child, their family and the community in which they live play a critical role in their overall development. Growing up in a minority language community brings an additional challenge. Considering this portrait of English-speaking preschoolers in the Outaouais, Connexions

Resource Centre's role and mission is all the more relevant. In collaboration with its partners, Connexions will develop an action plan that will target English-speaking children aged 0-5 years and help propel them towards a promising future.

As the African proverb aptly says: "It takes a village to raise a child".

