



Urban Aboriginal Peoples Study

CALGARY REPORT



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Environics Institute

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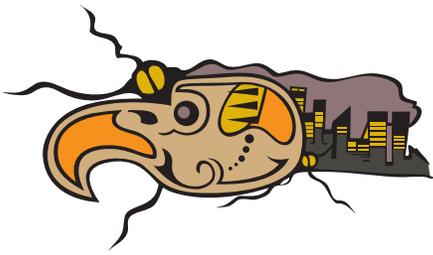


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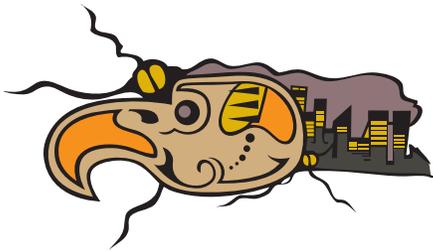


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UAPS Steering Committee and staff

The *UAPS* Steering Committee has devoted considerable time, energy and expertise to the successful management and execution of the study. Michael Mendelson (The Caledon Institute), David Eaves (Independent), May Wong (Environics Institute), Amy Langstaff (Environics Institute), Doug Norris (Environics Analytics), Michael Adams (Environics Institute), Keith Neuman (Environics Research Group), Sonya Kunkel (Environics Research Group), Sarah Robertson (Environics Research Group), Jay Kaufman (KTA) and Karen Beitel (KTA) have all played an important role in bringing this study to fruition.

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- funding academic studies related to polling and public opinion; and
- working with media partners to disseminate the results of its research.

Founded in 2006, the Institute has already conducted a number of groundbreaking studies, including a survey of Canadian Muslims, a survey of the people of Afghanistan, and a study (undertaken in partnership with Canada's World) of Canadians' personal engagement with people and issues around the world.

The Environics Institute sees public opinion research as a valuable lens through which Canadians can examine and better understand their own diverse and evolving society.

About the Environics Institute

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What is the *Urban Aboriginal Peoples Study* and why now?

The *Urban Aboriginal Peoples Study (UAPS)* is a snapshot of the hundreds of thousands of Aboriginal people who now live in urban centres. Conducted by the Environics Institute, and guided by an Advisory Circle of recognized experts from academia and from Aboriginal communities, the study is an enquiry into the values, experiences, identities and aspirations of First Nations peoples, Métis and Inuit living in Canada's major urban centres.

The urban Aboriginal population in Canada now numbers over 600,000 and is at an all time high. There are now more Aboriginal people living in urban centres across Canada than there are living in Aboriginal territories and communities on reserves, in Métis settlements and in Inuit communities. Aboriginal people now constitute a permanent presence in Canadian cities, and promise to be an important part of multicultural urban Canada.

The *UAPS* sprang from discussions with diverse stakeholders and opinion leaders across the country who recognized these trends, as well as the need for well-designed empirical research that would credibly express evolving urban Aboriginal perspectives.

How was the research done?

The *UAPS* investigated a range of issues including (but not limited to) urban Aboriginal peoples' communities of origin, Aboriginal cultures, community belonging, education, work, health, political engagement and activity, justice, relationships with Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal people, life aspirations and definitions of success, and experiences with discrimination.

The study involved *in-person* interviews, one to two hours in length, with 2,614 Métis, Inuit and First Nations (status and non-status) individuals living in 11 Canadian cities from Halifax to Vancouver. With input from the *UAPS* Advisory Circle, individual questions were organized under four overarching themes:

- *identity*: who are you?
- *experiences*: what's your everyday life like?
- *values*: what's important in your life?
- *aspirations*: what do you want for your future?

In each city, the Environics Institute engaged a small team of local Aboriginal people to construct a 250-person sample and organize the interviews. Key to the study's legitimacy was that the sample be representative of the urban Aboriginal population: that it not select solely among those living in serious poverty or those who are succeeding. The Institute used the 2006 Canadian Census profile of Aboriginal people in each city (defined as the Census Metropolitan Area, or CMA)) to design an "ideal sample," based on such characteristics as identity group, age, educational attainment and gender. Local research teams in each city then searched out individuals that fit this sample profile.

The study also investigated how non-Aboriginal people view Aboriginal people in Canada today, through a telephone survey with 2,501 non-Aboriginal urban Canadians living in these same cities (excluding Ottawa).

What did the study find?

Many of the UAPS findings suggest that Canadian cities are becoming sites of connection, engagement and cultural vitality for a large number of Aboriginal peoples. Although many segments of First Nations, Métis and Inuit populations in Canada face substantial challenges, the picture in cities is more diverse – and in many cases more hopeful – than public perceptions and media coverage often acknowledge.

In April 2010, the Institute released a national report of the study's findings (*Urban Aboriginal Peoples Study – Main Report*, www.UAPS.ca). Among the main findings described in the report:

- **For most, the city is home, but urban Aboriginal peoples stay connected to their communities of origin.** Six in ten feel a close connection to these communities – links that are integral to strong family and social ties, and to traditional and contemporary Aboriginal culture. Notwithstanding these links, majorities of First Nations peoples, Métis and Inuit consider their current city of residence home (71%), including those who are the first generation of their family to live in their city.
- **Almost eight in ten participants say they are “very proud” of their specific Aboriginal identity (i.e., First Nations, Métis or Inuk).** Slightly fewer – 70 percent – say the same about being Canadian.
- **Urban Aboriginal peoples are seeking to become a significant and visible part of the urban landscape.** Six in ten feel they can make their city a better place to live, a similar proportion to non-Aboriginal urban dwellers.
- **Six in ten are not concerned about losing contact with their culture, while a minority totally (17%) or somewhat (21%) agree that they are concerned.** As well, by a wide margin (6:1), First Nations peoples, Métis and Inuit think Aboriginal culture in their communities has become stronger rather than weaker in the last five years.
- **They display a higher tolerance for other cultures than their non-Aboriginal neighbours:** Seventy-seven percent of urban Aboriginal peoples believe there is room for a variety of languages and cultures in this country, in contrast to 54 percent of non-Aboriginal urbanites.
- **A majority believe they are viewed in negative ways by non-Aboriginal people.** Three in four participants perceive assumptions about addiction problems, while many feel there are negative stereotypes about laziness (30%), lack of intelligence (20%) and poverty (20%).
- **Education is their top priority, and an enduring aspiration for the next generation.** Twenty percent want the next generation to understand the importance of education, 18 percent hope younger individuals will stay connected to their cultural community and 17 percent hope the next generation will experience life without racism.



What does the *UAPS* tell us about Aboriginal peoples who live in Calgary?

According to the 2006 Census, Aboriginal peoples account for 2.5 percent of the total population of Calgary. This is smaller than the per capita concentrations in the Prairie cities and Thunder Bay, but larger than in Vancouver, Toronto and Montreal. Although Calgary is one of the fastest-growing cities in Canada, the growth of the Aboriginal population (26%) between 2001 and 2006 outpaced that of the total population (13%), as is the case in all *UAPS* cities.

The *UAPS Calgary Report* is the tenth of a series of city reports, following the release of the main report of the *UAPS* on April 6, 2010. In Calgary, the main survey consisted of in-person interviews with 249 First Nations peoples (status and non-status), Métis and Inuit (18 years and older), between April 7 and August 6, 2009.

An analysis of the *UAPS* Calgary data reveals the following about the identities, experiences, values and aspirations of Aboriginal residents of Calgary:

- **A majority of Aboriginal peoples in Calgary consider the city to be their home.** At the same time, strong links to their communities of origin are more evident here than in many other *UAPS* cities, in part because Calgary has a larger than average proportion of first generation residents (i.e., Aboriginal peoples born and raised in a community other than Calgary).
- **This does not preclude a sense of satisfaction with their current city, on par with other *UAPS* participants.** Aboriginal peoples like living in Calgary, due to the quality of life and the city life available to them. They also tend to believe they can make a positive difference in the city. Their main concern centres on common urban pressures such as traffic and pollution.
- **There is strong Indigenous pride among Aboriginal peoples in Calgary.** Most are very proud of their specific First Nations/Métis/Inuk identity and of their collective *Aboriginal* identity. A majority are also very proud of being Canadian, although this is more widespread among Métis in Calgary.
- **Yet, they are also among the most concerned about their ability to retain their cultural identity.** In part, this may be a reflection of lower awareness of and participation in Aboriginal cultural activities than average. Aboriginal peoples in Calgary are also the least convinced of any *UAPS* city that Canada is tolerant of a variety of languages and cultures.
- **Most *UAPS* participants (across all cities) feel discrimination of Aboriginal peoples is a pervasive problem that majorities have personally experienced, and this is similarly true in Calgary.** Aboriginal peoples in Calgary believe drug and alcohol abuse is dominant stereotype associated with the Aboriginal population. A minority believe that non-Aboriginal attitudes are improving, but the balance of opinion in Calgary is that they remain unchanged.
- **Aboriginal peoples in Calgary value Aboriginal services in the city.** Half say they rely at least occasionally on Aboriginal services and organizations in Calgary, similar to most other *UAPS* cities, with employment centres most widely identified as useful. Regardless of how much interaction they have with Aboriginal services, there is broad agreement they are needed in addition to mainstream services, particularly when it comes to Aboriginal addiction programs, child and family services, housing services and health centres.

- **The top life aspirations for Aboriginal peoples in Calgary are completing their education and raising a family.** These are largely consistent with the life aspirations of Aboriginal peoples living in other *UAPS* cities, although they express more interest than average in home ownership, giving back to the Aboriginal community and finding a life partner.
- **Family and friends, and a balanced lifestyle are considered the most important ingredients of a successful life.** Aboriginal peoples in Calgary place greater than average importance on financial independence and home ownership (particularly compared to *UAPS* participants in larger cities), as well as on living in traditional ways. .

How do non-Aboriginal residents of Calgary perceive Aboriginal people?

As part of the *UAPS*, Environics surveyed a representative sample of non-Aboriginal Canadians to learn how they view Aboriginal peoples and what informs these views. The results of the non-Aboriginal survey are based on telephone interviews conducted from April 28 to May 15, 2009 with 250 non-Aboriginal people in each of the same 10 urban centres in which the main survey was conducted: Vancouver, Calgary, Edmonton, Thunder Bay, Saskatoon, Winnipeg, Thunder Bay, Toronto, Montreal and Halifax (excluding Ottawa). In all, 2,501 non-Aboriginal urban Canadians (“NA urban Canadians”) participated, providing a rich picture of how NA urban Canadians see Aboriginal people in cities today.

Topics explored in the survey include non-Aboriginal urban Canadians’ perceptions of Aboriginal people in Canada, their awareness of Aboriginal peoples and communities in their cities, their contact and interaction with Aboriginal people, their perspectives on how well institutions respond to the needs of Aboriginal people, their knowledge of salient Aboriginal issues (i.e., Indian residential schools, acceptance of differential systems of justice), and the importance of Aboriginal history and culture in the minds of NA urban Canadians.

A closer look at the responses of non-Aboriginal residents of Calgary yielded the following insights into their attitudes toward Aboriginal people, their awareness of Aboriginal people and communities in their city, their perceptions of the top issues facing Aboriginal people today and, finally, their perceptions of future relations with Aboriginal people. Specifically:

- **Among non-Aboriginal people in Calgary, there is no single common top-of-mind impression of Aboriginal peoples.** Similar to other *UAPS* cities, impressions revolve primarily around their history as the first inhabitants of Canada and their First Nations/Métis/Inuit identities.
- **Opinions are divided about whether Aboriginal people have unique rights and privileges as the first inhabitants of Canada, or are just like other cultural or ethnic groups in Canadian society.** Belief in the unique rights of Aboriginal people is most common in the largest cities of Montreal, Toronto and Vancouver.
- **A segmentation analysis of Calgary residents reveals that the largest proportion are *Cultural Romantics*: idealistic individuals with a strong belief in Aboriginal peoples’ artistic and cultural contributions.** However, Calgary also has a larger than average proportion of *Dismissive Naysayers*, who tend to view Aboriginal peoples and communities negatively.

- **Calgary residents know Aboriginal people live in their city, but they are not as aware of an Aboriginal *community* (either physical or social) as are residents of cities with larger relative Aboriginal populations.** A majority of non-Aboriginal Calgarians have at least occasional contact with Aboriginal people, but few know Aboriginal people as close friends, neighbours and co-workers, which is understandably more common in the Prairie cities and Thunder Bay.
- **Alcohol and substance abuse is perceived to be the most important issue facing the Aboriginal population in Canada overall, while discrimination is considered the top challenge for urban Aboriginal peoples.** The balance of opinion in Calgary is that the problems faced by Aboriginal people in Canada have largely been caused by the attitudes of other Canadians and the policies of government than by Aboriginal peoples themselves. A majority of Calgary residents have heard about Indian residential schools, and this group tends to believe that these schools have contributed to the challenges facing Aboriginal communities today.
- **Calgary residents are among the most likely of those in any *UAPS* city to recognize that Aboriginal people experience discrimination, and clearly believe they endure at least as much discrimination as other groups in Canadian society.**
- **Non-Aboriginal residents of Calgary are ultimately divided about the current state of relations between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal peoples, but are among the most pessimistic, together with residents of other western cities.** Moreover, optimism that relations are changing for the better is lower than in most other *UAPS* cities.

Next steps

All *UAPS* reports are freely available via the study's website, www.uaps.ca.

The Environics Institute is also committed to making the study data accessible to the public. The results of all the *UAPS* survey questions can be freely accessed through data tables on the website, or by contacting the Institute directly (see the Acknowledgements section of this report for contact details).

In addition, the recent release of the *UAPS* main report offers a unique window into establishing new and meaningful dialogue with Aboriginal Peoples in Canada's major cities. More than ever, a public forum in Canadian cities across the country is required that brings people from all sectors, Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal, together to take action on the needs of and opportunities for urban Aboriginal communities in this country.

To that end, the *UAPS Public Engagement Strategy* has been designed using the study as a platform for community dialogue and discussion. The broad goal of this strategy is to promote collaborative engagement of Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal people in determining the implications of *UAPS* research findings for urban Aboriginal communities. The Institute hopes to organize forums in each *UAPS* city that bring together Aboriginal organizations, policy-makers and *UAPS* participants to build a deeper collective understanding of the values and experiences of urban Aboriginal peoples, and identify the next steps for supporting the urban Aboriginal community in a given city.

For more information on *UAPS* public engagement, please contact Ginger Gosnell-Myers, *UAPS* Public Engagement Director, at ginger.gosnell-myers@environics.ca.

About the Research

BACKGROUND. The urban Aboriginal population in Canada now numbers over 600,000 and is at an all time high. The largest Aboriginal community is no longer a reserve but Winnipeg itself, with a diverse Aboriginal population that exceeds 60,000 people. Urban Aboriginal populations are permanent populations, and promise to be an important part of multicultural urban Canada.

The *Urban Aboriginal Peoples Study* sprang from discussions with diverse stakeholders and opinion leaders across the country that recognized these trends, as well as the need for well-designed empirical research that would credibly express evolving urban Aboriginal perspectives. Throughout 2009, the Environics Institute, a not-for-profit foundation established by Environics Research co-founder Michael Adams that supports original research on important issues of public policy and social change, oversaw with its Advisory Circle community-based research in 11 Canadian cities: Halifax, Montreal, Ottawa, Toronto, Thunder Bay, Winnipeg, Regina, Saskatoon, Edmonton, Calgary and Vancouver.

The objectives of the *UAPS* are to better understand the perspectives of urban Aboriginal peoples as complex individuals and communities, and provide new insights that stimulate dialogue between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal urban communities across Canada. Designed to be an enquiry about the values, experiences, identities and aspirations of Aboriginal peoples living in cities, the study investigated a range of issues including (but not limited to) urban Aboriginal peoples' communities of origin, Aboriginal cultures, community belonging, education, work, health political engagement and activity, justice, relationships with Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal people, life aspirations and definitions of success, and experiences with discrimination.

UAPS IN CALGARY. The *UAPS Calgary Report* constitutes the tenth of a series of city reports, following the release of the main report of the *UAPS* on April 6, 2010. In Calgary, the main survey consisted of in-person interviews with 249 First Nations peoples (status and non-status), Métis and Inuit (18 years and older) between April 7 and August 6, 2009.

Key to the study's legitimacy was that the sample be representative of the Aboriginal population in Calgary: that it not select solely among those living in serious poverty or those who are succeeding. The Institute used the 2006 Canadian Census profile of Aboriginal people in Calgary to design an "ideal sample," based on such characteristics as identity group, age, educational attainment and gender. The Calgary research team, consisting of a Project Co-ordinator (Nathan Elliot) and a team of interviewers, then searched out individuals who fit this sample profile. The research team worked with local Aboriginal agencies and other organizations to build community awareness and support for the study, and to identify survey participants.

The table on the next page presents a profile of the final sample of participants, by such characteristics as identity, gender, age and education. At the analysis stage, data were weighted so that the final sample accurately reflects the distribution of the population according to the 2006 Census. The table presents the actual number of participants (unweighted) within each subgroup, as well as the weighted proportion each subgroup represents within the total sample.

The results contained in this report are based on the total sample, and are reported separately in some cases for First Nations peoples and Métis, but the sample size is not sufficiently large to allow for analysis by characteristics such as age and education.

In addition to the main survey, a telephone survey was conducted with 250 non-Aboriginal residents of Calgary (18 years and older) between April 28 and May 15, 2009. This is an important component of the *UAPS* because it reveals how the non-Aboriginal population views the experiences of Aboriginal peoples, reflecting some of the barriers and opportunities facing the Aboriginal community. The margin of error for a probability sample of 250 is plus or minus 6.2 percentage points, 19 times in 20.¹

Further details on the methodology of both *UAPS* surveys can be found in the main report on the *UAPS*, available at www.uaps.ca.

IN THIS REPORT. *The Urban Aboriginal Peoples Study – Calgary Report* is organized into eight chapters.

Chapter 1, The Urban Context, provides a demographic snapshot of the Aboriginal population in Calgary, and information on where study participants are from, how long they have lived in the city, and the strength of their connection to Calgary and to their home community.

Chapter 2, Identity and Culture, delivers the key findings on Aboriginal peoples' expressions of Aboriginal identity and their connection to Aboriginal culture in the city.

Chapter 3, Experiences with Non-Aboriginal People, summarizes how Aboriginal peoples living in Calgary feel perceived by the non-Aboriginal population-at-large.

Chapter 4, Experiences with Aboriginal Services and Organizations, explores study participants' perceptions of and interactions with Aboriginal services and organizations in Calgary.

Chapter 5, Urban Experiences, explores how Aboriginal peoples feel about living in Calgary.

Chapter 6, Urban Aspirations, delves further into contemporary Aboriginal urban experience and explores Aboriginal peoples' life aspirations and definitions of success.

Chapter 7 is a Special Theme in the Calgary report: **Confidence in the Criminal Justice System**.

Chapter 8, Non-Aboriginal Perspectives, the final chapter of the report, captures non-Aboriginal Calgarians' perceptions of Aboriginal peoples, including their awareness of and level of contact with Aboriginal people, their knowledge of salient Aboriginal issues, and the perceived importance of Aboriginal history and culture.

An overview at the beginning of each chapter summarizes the main *UAPS* findings.

Unless otherwise noted, all of the numbers in the graphs are percentages.

UAPS participant profile in Calgary

	# (Unweighted)	% (Weighted)
IDENTITY		
First Nations	136	40
Status	133	39
Non-status	3	1
Métis	104	60
Inuit	9	*
GENDER		
Men	113	45
Women	136	55
AGE		
18-24	52	19
25-44	136	52
45+	61	29
EDUCATION		
No diploma	67	25
High school diploma	68	29
College degree	64	36
University degree	50	10
HOUSEHOLD INCOME		
<\$10,000	53	21
\$10,000 - \$30,000	66	29
\$30,000 - \$60,000	63	27
\$60,000+	45	14
Refused	22	9
LIVING SITUATION		
Renting an apartment or house	159	66
Homeowner	35	13
Living with friends or family	31	12
Renting a room in a rooming house/hostel	10	3
Living in a temporary shelter	3	*
ELDER		
Yes	16	7
No	233	93

* Less than 1%

¹ Because the sample for the main survey is based on individuals who initially "self-selected" for participation, no estimate of sampling error can be calculated for the main survey. It should be noted that all surveys, whether or not they use probability sampling, are subject to multiple sources of error, including but not limited to sampling error, coverage error and measurement error.

1.0 The Urban Context

The urban Aboriginal population in Canada now numbers over 600,000 and is at an all time high. There are now more Aboriginal people living in urban centres across Canada than there are living in Aboriginal territories and communities on reserves, in Métis settlements and in Inuit communities. Aboriginal people now constitute a permanent presence in Canadian cities, and promise to be an important part of multicultural urban Canada.

This chapter begins with a demographic snapshot of the Aboriginal population in Calgary based on the 2006 Census. It then presents Aboriginal peoples' responses to a series of questions included in the *UAPS* designed to establish where members of the Aboriginal population in Calgary come from, how long they have lived in Calgary, and how they feel about the city (i.e., do they consider Calgary or another community to be home?).

Key findings

- ***UAPS* participants in Calgary have long-standing ties to the city.** They are largely first generation residents (i.e., born and raised somewhere other than Calgary), and more so than average for the *UAPS* cities. Nonetheless, many are long-term urban residents: half of first generation residents have lived in Calgary for 10 years or longer, and just one in ten arrived in the past two years.
- **Aboriginal peoples move to Calgary primarily for work opportunities and for family reasons – and, to a lesser extent, for education – reasons that are largely shared by Aboriginal peoples in all 11 *UAPS* cities.** However, work and family are more widely mentioned in Calgary than average.
- **The majority of Aboriginal peoples in Calgary – even first generation residents – consider the city to be their home, and few are planning to return to live in their home community one day.** At the same time, Aboriginal peoples in Calgary retain links to their community of origin, whether it be their own or that of their parents/grandparents, and this sense of connection is stronger than average for the *UAPS* cities.

1.1 The Aboriginal population in Calgary

According to the 2006 Census, a total of 26,575 people in the Calgary census metropolitan area (CMA) identified themselves as Aboriginal, that is, as First Nations, Métis or Inuit. Aboriginal peoples account for 2.5 percent of the total population of Calgary, which is smaller than the per capita concentrations in the Prairie cities and Thunder Bay, but larger than in Vancouver, Toronto and Montreal.

As of 2006, Métis are the majority Aboriginal identity group in Calgary (56%). First Nations peoples account for 41 percent of the Aboriginal population, while one percent identify themselves as Inuit, and three percent offer other or multiple responses.

As is the case in other urban centres, Calgary has a relatively young and growing urban Aboriginal population:

- Although Calgary is one of the fastest-growing cities in Canada, the growth of the Aboriginal population (26%) outpaced that of the total population (13%) between 2001 and 2006. During this time period, the rate of growth was much greater for Métis (40%) than for the First Nations population (15%).
- The Aboriginal population living in Calgary is much younger than the non-Aboriginal population (with a median age of 27 years, compared to 36 years for the non-Aboriginal population); this is consistent with the pattern observed Canada-wide.²
- Compared to non-Aboriginal residents, the Aboriginal population, in addition to being younger, is less likely to have completed a post-secondary education, and has lower incomes and higher unemployment rates. Aboriginal youth in the city are also more likely than non-Aboriginal children to be living in a single-parent household.

² The median age is the point where exactly one-half of the population is older and the other half is younger.

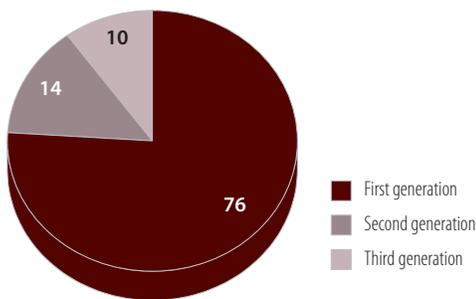
1.2 Residency in the city

Three in four UAPS participants in Calgary are the first generation of their family living in the city, a proportion that is higher than average for urban Aboriginal peoples.

In 2006, half of the Aboriginal population in Canada lived in urban centres (including large cities or census metropolitan areas and smaller urban centres), up from 47 percent in 1996. In turn, the proportion of the Aboriginal population that lives on-reserve or in rural (off-reserve) locations has declined. The movement of Aboriginal people to Canadian urban areas has been occurring for several decades, with Aboriginal populations in some cities constituting the largest Aboriginal communities in Canada.

Exploring the movement of Aboriginal people over time to Calgary is beyond the scope of the UAPS. Nonetheless, the survey did provide the opportunity to document one distinction considered particularly relevant to the urban Aboriginal experience: Are you originally from the city (i.e., born and raised in Calgary) or are you from somewhere else?

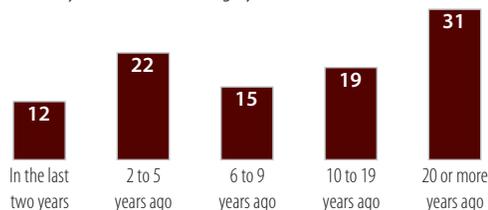
First, second and third generation Calgary residents



The data revealed two main groups of people: those who were born and raised somewhere other than Calgary (“first generation”); and those who were born and raised in Calgary but whose family is from another place (“second generation”). A third, smaller group is comprised of Aboriginal peoples born and raised in Calgary whose parents and/or grandparents are also from Calgary (“third generation”).

In Calgary, three in four (76%) UAPS participants are “first generation” residents born and raised in a community, town, city or reserve other than Calgary; this is almost equally true for First Nations peoples and Métis. “Second generation” residents born and raised in Calgary whose parents and/or grandparents are from another place represent just over one in ten (14%) of the Aboriginal population and another one in ten (10%) are “third generation” residents of the city (i.e., Aboriginal peoples born and raised in Calgary whose parents/grandparents are also from Calgary). Notably, the proportion of first generation residents among the Aboriginal population in Calgary is higher than the average of all 11 UAPS cities.

Time of arrival*
When did you first come to Calgary?



* Subsample: Among those who were not born or raised in Calgary.

Among first generation residents, half are long-term residents of Calgary. Five in ten (50%) first came to Calgary at least 10 years ago, including three in ten (31%) who arrived 20 or more years ago. The other half (49%) have arrived in the past 10 years, but just one in ten (12%) arrived in the past two years. To look at it another way, the average year of arrival in Calgary among first generation UAPS participants is 1995; this is on par with the average arrival time for first generation UAPS participants in other cities.

1.3 Reason for moving

Three main reasons fuel the move to Calgary: employment opportunities, family and, to a lesser extent, education.

Why do Aboriginal peoples move to Calgary?

Among the wide variety of reasons cited by first generation *UAPS* participants in Calgary for why they first moved, employment and family emerge at the top of the list, followed by education. While work and family are among the top reasons for moving in all *UAPS* cities, both are more widely mentioned in Calgary than average.

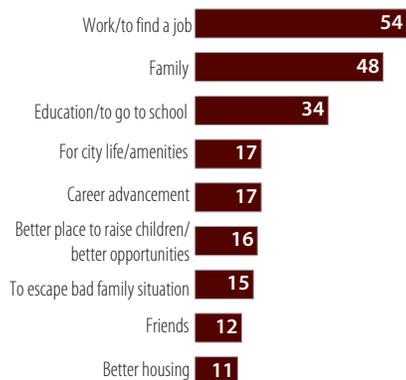
When asked (unprompted, without response options offered) why they first moved to Calgary, the most common reasons are for employment opportunities (54%) and the opportunity to be closer to family (48%). Third on the list is the pursuit of education (34%).

First generation residents of Calgary are more likely than average to say they moved to the city for career advancement (17%), because they thought it would be a better place to raise their children (16%), to be near friends (12%) or for better housing (11%). Other reasons include the perception of better amenities in the city (17%), to escape a bad family situation (15%) and/or for training opportunities (8%). Six percent or fewer each mention other reasons for moving to Calgary, such as for better health care, social services, and/or less expensive housing.

First Nations peoples are more likely than Métis to say they moved to Calgary for education, a career, a better place to raise their children, better health care or training opportunities.

Top reasons for moving to Calgary*

What is the most important reason why you first moved to your city?



*Subsample: Among those who were not born or raised in Calgary.

1.4 Connection to Calgary

Calgary is “home” for most Aboriginal peoples in the city, a view that is similar to the average for the *UAPS* cities.

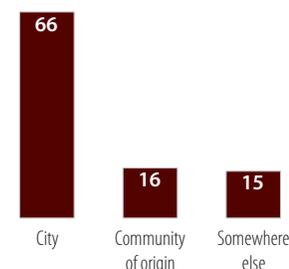
Almost all of those who have lived in Calgary their whole lives, not surprisingly, consider the city to be their home (89% of second generation residents). Six in ten (62%) first generation residents (i.e., those not born or raised in the city) also consider Calgary their home, although this feeling is not as widespread as among those born and raised there.

Overall, when asked “Where is home for you?” two out of three (66%) Aboriginal peoples in the city say it is Calgary.³ Fewer than two in ten each equate “home” with their community of origin (16%) or with another community (15%). The view that the city where they live is “home” is similar to that found among urban Aboriginal participants in general, and is similar for First Nations peoples and Métis in Calgary.

Although *UAPS* participants report an important connection to the city in which they are living, their sense that Calgary is home does not preclude a relationship with their community of origin. The following section (1.5 Connection to Community of Origin) explores this relationship.

Where is home for you?*

Where is *home* for you? Is it your city of residence, your home community, or somewhere else?



* Subsample: Those who were not born or raised in Calgary; those who have lived in Calgary all their life and whose parents/grandparents are from another place.

³ The question “Where is home for you?” was not asked of third generation *UAPS* participants (10% of *UAPS* participants in Calgary).

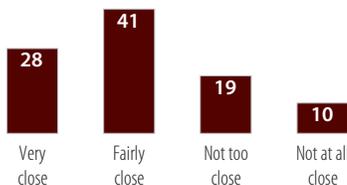
1.5 Connection to community of origin

A majority of Aboriginal peoples in Calgary retain links with their community of origin, whether it be their own or that of their parents/grandparents, and this sense of connection is stronger than average.

Previous research has found that many urban Aboriginal peoples have maintained links with their community of origin (i.e., one's home community or the home community of parents/grandparents) because of the proximity of First Nations and Métis communities to cities, the history of mobility of Aboriginal peoples, the fact that the land is such a fundamental source of traditional and contemporary culture, and the continuance of strong family and social ties to the communities.⁴

Connection to community of origin*

How close a connection do you feel to your home community?
How close a connection do you feel to the place where your parents and grandparents are from?



* Subsample: Those who were not born or raised in Calgary; those who have lived in Calgary all their life and whose parents/grandparents are from another place.

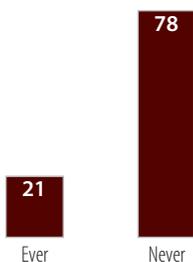
Such connections are clearly evident among *UAPS* participants in Calgary, who are more likely than average to say they maintain at least a fairly close connection to their community of origin. This is due at least in part to the larger than average proportion of Aboriginal peoples who are the first generation in their family living in Calgary.

Overall, seven in ten of first and second generation residents⁵ say they feel a very (28%) or fairly (41%) close connection to their community of origin, while the remaining three in ten say they feel not too close (19%) or not at all close (10%) to these communities.

It is clear from the data that the majority of *UAPS* participants in Calgary maintain links to their communities of origin, even though many have long tenure within the city. Moreover, two in ten (21%) first generation residents report they have moved back to their home community at least once since they moved to Calgary (representing 16% of *UAPS* participants in Calgary overall), although this is lower than average among first generation *UAPS* participants. Most (78%) say they have never moved back to their home community since first arriving in Calgary.

Have you moved back to your home community?*

Since you first moved to Calgary, have you ever moved back to your home community?



Note: Less than one percent said dk/na

* Subsample: Those who were not born or raised in Calgary.

Most Aboriginal peoples in Calgary do not intend to return to their communities of origin to live permanently in the future, although some (first and second generation) either plan to return or remain undecided.

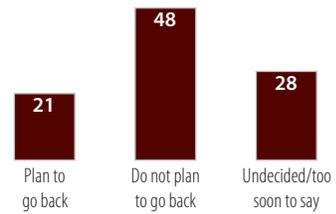
4 *Urban Aboriginal Task Force Final Report, 2007, p.65.*

5 This question was not asked of third generation *UAPS* participants (10% of *UAPS* participants in Calgary).

When asked if they plan to go back and live in their communities of origin permanently one day (whether it be another community, town, city or reserve),⁶ two in ten (21%) say they plan to return. This is the case for minorities of both first and second generation residents. Five in ten (48%) say they do *not* plan to return and three in ten (28%) say they are undecided or that it is too soon to say. These findings are similar for Métis and First Nations peoples in the city, and for those found among urban Aboriginal participants in general.

Plans to go back to live in community of origin*

Do you plan to go back to live in your home community/place where your parents/grandparents are from permanently one day, or not?



* Subsample: Those who were not born or raised in Calgary; those who have lived in their city of residence all their life and whose parents/grandparents are from another place.

6 The question “Do you plan to go back to live in your home community (either your own or that of your parents/grandparents) permanently one day?” was not asked of third generation UAPS participants (10% of UAPS participants in Calgary).

2.0 Identity and Culture

One of the reasons cited in existing research for the increased tendency of people to identify as Aboriginal (a major factor in the substantial increases in urban Aboriginal populations between 1981 and 2006⁷) is that contemporary urban Aboriginal peoples, in particular, are more positive about their Aboriginal identity than at any time in the past.⁸

Key aspects of Aboriginal identity considered in this chapter include knowledge of family history, pride in Aboriginal and Canadian identities, community belonging, and the continuing intergenerational effects of “colonial projects” upon the identities of Aboriginal peoples in Canadian cities, namely Indian residential schools, mission and day schools, and other policies of assimilation. This chapter also examines other critical aspects of identity, such as participation in urban Aboriginal cultures.

In the midst of these challenges, Aboriginal peoples in Calgary express a strong sense of pride in their unique identity, but many are concerned about their ability to retain this identity.

Key findings

- **There is strong Indigenous pride among Aboriginal peoples in Calgary, and pride in one’s Aboriginal roots does not preclude pride in being a *Canadian*.** Most Aboriginal peoples in the city are *very* proud of both their specific *First Nations/Métis/Inuk* identity and of their collective *Aboriginal* identity. A majority are also very proud of being *Canadian*, although this is less widespread among First Nations peoples in Calgary.
- **A majority say they know their Aboriginal ancestry well, consistent with those in other UAPS cities.** A greater sense of family and cultural survival is the primary way knowledge of their family tree has made a difference for Aboriginal peoples in Calgary. Those who are less knowledgeable about their ancestry attribute this primarily to a lack of opportunity, rather than a lack of interest.
- **The legacy and effects of Indian residential schools persist widely among Aboriginal peoples in Calgary.** Nine in ten First Nations peoples and five in ten Métis have had either personal or family experience with Indian residential schools. Most Aboriginal peoples in Calgary with first- or second-hand Indian residential schools experience say it has had at least some impact in shaping their life and who they are today.
- **The sense of Aboriginal cultural vitality is weaker in Calgary than average.** Just under six in ten urban Aboriginal peoples are aware of Aboriginal cultural activities in the city, well below the levels in other cities like Vancouver, Toronto, Thunder Bay and Halifax. Moreover, they have a more modest sense of cultural vitality, being among the least convinced that local Aboriginal culture has become stronger in the past five years. Nonetheless, those who are aware of such activities are as likely as those in other cities to participate in them.
- **There are mixed opinions among Aboriginal peoples in Calgary about their ability to retain their cultural identity in the city, although they are more concerned than their counterparts in most other UAPS cities.** First Nations peoples in Calgary are more concerned on this front than are Métis.

7 Statistics Canada.

8 Craig Proulx, “Aboriginal Identification in North America Cities,” the *Canadian Journal of Native Studies*, 2006:26:2, p.405.

- There is no consensus among Aboriginal peoples in Calgary about the type of community – mostly Aboriginal, mostly non-Aboriginal, or equally Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal – to which they belong. Many UAPS participants in Calgary report strong social connections to their own identity group in the city and to members of other Aboriginal groups, although the latter is more widespread among Métis than among First Nations peoples.

2.1 Pride in Aboriginal and Canadian identity

Most Aboriginal peoples in Calgary are very proud of both their specific Indigenous identity and their collective Aboriginal identity. First Nations peoples in Calgary take noticeably less pride in being “Canadian.”

An important part of the UAPS was to understand how proud urban Aboriginal peoples are of their identity and, specifically, to what extent their pride is tied to three distinct aspects of identity: being *First Nations/Métis/Inuk*, *Aboriginal* and *Canadian*.

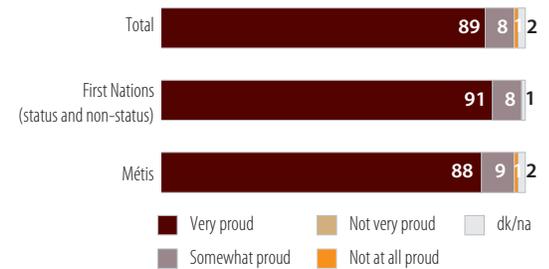
The results show that Aboriginal peoples in Calgary take the most pride in their specific Aboriginal identity – that is, their *First Nations, Métis or Inuk* identity – but that majorities also express strong pride in being part of a larger *Aboriginal* identity and in being *Canadian*.

PRIDE IN BEING FIRST NATIONS/MÉTIS. Most (89%) Aboriginal peoples in Calgary say they are very proud of their specific Aboriginal identity (i.e., *First Nations, Métis or Inuk*). Strong pride is equally evident among First Nations peoples (91%) and Métis (88%). Residents of Calgary are similar to urban Aboriginal peoples in general in the degree of pride they take in their specific Aboriginal identity.

PRIDE IN BEING ABORIGINAL. Most (83%) Aboriginal peoples in Calgary are also very proud of their *Aboriginal* identity. Again, strong pride is similar among First Nations peoples (88%) and Métis (80%). This high level of pride in being *Aboriginal* is largely consistent with that of urban Aboriginal peoples in the other UAPS cities (with the exception of Winnipeg, where it is noticeably lower due to the Métis population in that city).

Pride in being *First Nations/Métis/Inuk*

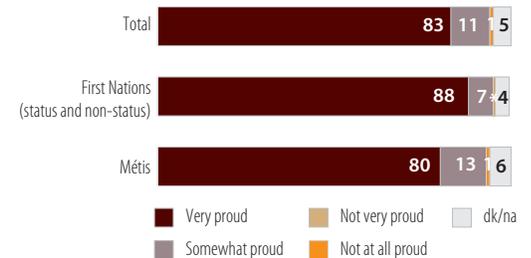
Would you say you are very, somewhat, not very, or not at all proud to be *First Nations/Métis/Inuk*?



Note: Total data include Inuit (n=9)

Pride in being *Aboriginal*

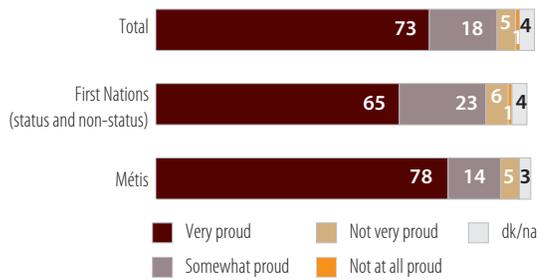
Would you say you are very, somewhat, not very, or not at all proud to be *Aboriginal*?



* Less than one percent
Note: Total data include Inuit (n=9)

Pride in being *Canadian*

Would you say you are very, somewhat, not very, or not at all proud to be *Canadian*?



Note: Total data include Inuit (n=9)

PRIDE IN BEING CANADIAN. Three in four (73%) Aboriginal peoples in Calgary also take great pride in being *Canadian*, a sentiment that is more common in the smaller *UAPS* cities (including Calgary) than in the larger urban centres (Vancouver, Toronto and Montreal). In Calgary, the degree of pride in being *Canadian* is greater among Métis (78%) than among First Nations peoples (65%).

What else shapes urban Aboriginal peoples' pride in their *First Nations/Métis/Inuk*, *Aboriginal* and *Canadian* identities? The sample size for Calgary alone (249 survey participants) is too small to allow for a detailed analysis by socio-demographic factors. However, the national *UAPS* survey data (across all 11 cities) indicate that pride in these aspects of identity vary by age, sense of community and knowledge of their family tree. For instance, majorities in all socio-demographic groups are very proud of their *First Nations/Métis/Inuk* identity, but strong pride is most evident among older urban Aboriginal peoples (aged 45 years or older), those who feel they belong to a mostly or exclusively Aboriginal community, and those who know their family tree very well.

2.2 Influence of Aboriginal ancestry

Knowledge of family tree

Six in ten Aboriginal peoples in Calgary know their Aboriginal ancestry at least fairly well, with parents being the primary source of this information.

The legacy of policies of assimilation in Canada and their outcomes have contributed to multiple, ongoing challenges experienced by Aboriginal peoples, not least of which is the disconnection from their heritage and culture that many have experienced, and the resulting struggle to reclaim and reconstruct their Aboriginal identity.

The UAPS results indicate there are varying degrees of familiarity with their family tree (i.e., who their Aboriginal ancestors are) among Aboriginal peoples in Calgary. Six in ten know their family tree very (26%) or fairly (36%) well, while just under four in ten say they know their family tree not very (21%) or not at all (14%) well. These findings are similar to the average for all 11 UAPS cities. In Calgary, degree of familiarity with their family tree is similar for Métis and First Nations peoples.

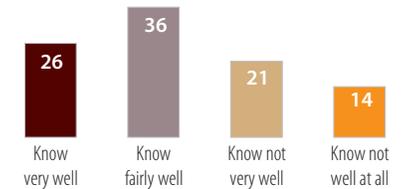
By far, parents are the key source of this information. When asked from where or from whom they have learned what they know about their Aboriginal ancestry (asked unprompted, without offering response choices), Aboriginal peoples in Calgary identify their parents as their main source of learning (54%).

Smaller groups of Aboriginal peoples say they have learned what they know about their family tree from grandparents (27%), extended family (24%), immediate family relatives such as aunts and uncles (19%), or siblings (6%). A range of non-family sources is also mentioned, such as home communities and community members, Elders, archives and historical records, genealogy courses, and the Internet or social networking sites, but none by more than five percent of the population.

Aboriginal peoples in Calgary are similar to urban Aboriginal peoples in general in terms of sources of family history information. The sources of learning are generally similar for both First Nations peoples and Métis in Calgary, although First Nations peoples are more likely to say they learned this information from their grandparents.

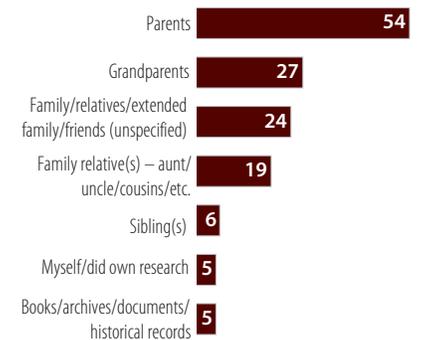
Extent of knowledge of family tree

How well do you know your family tree, that is, who your Aboriginal ancestors are?



Sources of learning about family tree/ Aboriginal ancestry

From where or from whom have you learned what you do know about your family tree?



The impact of knowing one's family tree on the personal lives of Aboriginal peoples in Calgary:

It has made a great impact on my life. My grandmother was very supportive. She was a very traditional woman. She knew our family tree, and taught me about it.

It has given me my identity. To understand where you came from is to understand your values.

It has made a big impact on me and my children to know where we came from. I feel more connected to my community.

Being a Métis, and being related to a Métis leader, helps me to connect with the community, and to be accepted as an Aboriginal.

It inspires me, and gives me confidence to know who I am and where I come from.

When I introduce myself, I say my Blood Indian name and then my English name. This is to acknowledge my heritage with others at a meeting or event.

First of all, I was taught not to be proud, as an Indian in a residential school. Then, when I was in my 20s, I taught myself to be Indian-proud.

Huge impact – got me involved in working with Aboriginal people. Having done research into my family tree gave me the opportunity to share information, pictures and stories with my family. It's addictive: I've started doing others' family trees.

You learn a sense of the past, how interesting family can be.

Impact of knowing one's family tree

A greater sense of family and cultural survival is the primary way knowledge of their family tree has made a difference for Aboriginal peoples in Calgary. Those without such knowledge attribute it overwhelmingly to a lack of opportunity rather than a lack of interest.

Beyond how well they know about their family tree, what does this knowledge mean to urban Aboriginal peoples' sense of themselves?

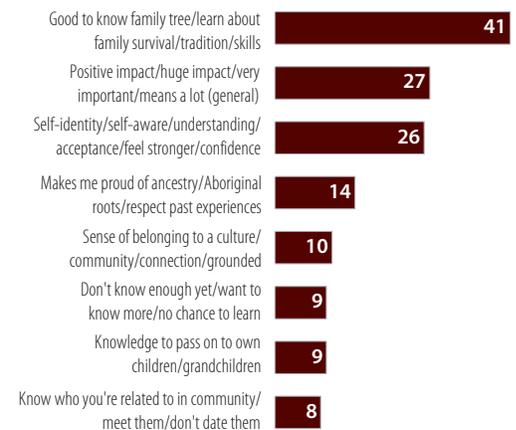
Both First Nations peoples and Métis in Calgary believe that knowledge of their family tree has had a significant personal impact on their lives and how they see themselves. UAPS participants cite three main ways in which knowing their family tree has contributed to their lives:

- **Understanding of family survival and cultural endurance.** Aboriginal peoples in Calgary say that, through knowing their family tree, they have learned stories of family survival, endurance and long-held cultural traditions that have deeply affected them (41%). This impression is more prevalent in Calgary than among urban Aboriginal peoples in general.
- **A positive impact.** One in four (27%) Aboriginal peoples in Calgary emphasize the positive impact that knowledge of their Aboriginal ancestry has had on their lives.
- **Greater self-identity and self-awareness.** One in four (26%) Aboriginal peoples in Calgary also mention the greater sense of self-identity and self-awareness they have derived from knowing about their Aboriginal ancestry.

Smaller proportions talk about how knowledge of their family tree has made them proud of their Aboriginal "roots" and instilling a greater respect for their families' past (14%), given them a sense of belonging and community (10%), and given them something to pass on to their children and grandchildren (9%). One in ten say that knowing their family tree has had only a minor impact (5%) or no significant personal impact (8%) on their lives. Just one percent say it has had a negative impact.

Impact of family tree

What has it meant for you personally, or what impact has it made on your life, to learn what you do know about your family tree?



There are so many stories that make each family unique.

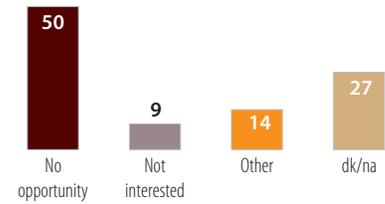
Why do some Aboriginal peoples in Calgary know their family tree and others do not?

The full range of potential reasons is not possible to capture in this study. The *UAPS* simply asked those who do not feel they know their family tree very well if this was due to lack of interest or opportunity. As is the case in other *UAPS* cities, lack of opportunity, not lack of interest, is the main reason why Aboriginal peoples in Calgary say they do not know their family tree very well.

Aboriginal peoples in Calgary who do not know their family tree very well are much more likely to say this is because they have had no opportunity to learn more (50%) than to say it is because they are not interested (9%). Four percent or fewer each cite other reasons, such as procrastination on their part or the information being lost from their family. One in four (27%) are unable or unwilling to say why they have not learned more about their family tree. These reasons are similar for both Métis and First Nations peoples in Calgary.

Reason for lack of knowledge of family tree*

Is the main reason you have not learned more about your family tree because you have not had the opportunity, or because you are not particularly interested?



* Subsample: Those who do not feel they know their family tree "very well."

2.3 Indian residential schools

Personal involvement with residential schools

Two in three Aboriginal peoples in Calgary say they have been affected by Indian residential schools, either personally or through a family member. Personal experience is much more common among First Nations peoples than Métis.

On June 11, 2008 the Government of Canada issued a formal apology to the former Aboriginal students of residential schools, affirming the disruptive impact of historical policies and legislation. The apology formally recognized that “this policy of assimilation was wrong, has caused great harm, and has no place in [this] country.”⁹

The Indian residential school system predates Confederation and grew out of the missionary experience in Canada’s early history. Indian residential schools existed, at one time or another, in all Canadian provinces and territories except Newfoundland, New Brunswick and Prince Edward Island.

The residential school system left in its wake a tragic legacy. It is estimated that as many as 150,000 Aboriginal children attended these institutions. Many former students have reported undergoing hardship, forcible confinement and physical and sexual abuse while attending the schools. In addition, these students were not allowed to speak their language or practice their culture. While most residential schools were closed by the mid-1970s, the last school did not close until 1996.¹⁰

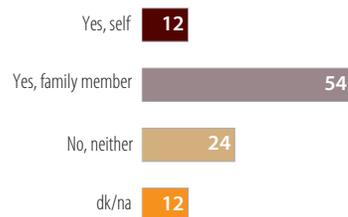
First Nations, Métis and Inuit children had varied residential school experiences, both in intensity and duration. Regardless, the residential school had a direct impact on Survivors and has spilled over to their descendants, creating challenges pertaining to identity, culture and parenting.¹¹

Most *UAPS* participants in Calgary say they have been affected by Indian residential schools, either personally or through a family member. Two-thirds (66%) say they themselves (12%) and/or a family member (54%) were a student at a federal residential school or a provincial day school. This is on par with the extent of experience reported by urban Aboriginal participants in general.

As is the case across most *UAPS* cities, First Nations peoples in Calgary report more widespread experience with residential schools than do Métis, both in terms of personal attendance (24%, compared to 4% of Métis) and family attendance (69%, compared to 44% of Métis).

Indian residential schools

Were you, or any member of your family, ever a student at a federal residential school or a provincial day school?



9 Canada, Office of the Prime Minister, “Prime Minister Harper offers full apology on behalf of Canadians for the Indian Residential Schools system,” *Stephen Harper, Prime Minister of Canada* [website], www.pm.gc.ca/eng/media.asp?id=2149 (accessed December 2009).

10 Environics Research Group, report prepared for the Indian Residential Schools Resolution Canada and the Truth and Reconciliation Commission, *2008 National Benchmark Survey*, May 2008., p.9.

11 Although status Indians formed the majority of attendees at any given time, many Métis children were accepted, often to boost school enrolment figures. Meanwhile, the number of Inuit children grew quickly in the 1950s when a network of schools was built across the North. Roughly 10% of the Aboriginal population in Canada self-identify as Survivors of the residential school system. *Aboriginal People, Resilience and the Residential School Legacy*, Aboriginal Healing Foundation Series, 2003.

Impact of residential schools on lives today

Eight in ten Aboriginal peoples in Calgary with first- or second-hand experience of Indian residential schools say this has had at least some impact in shaping their lives and who they are today.

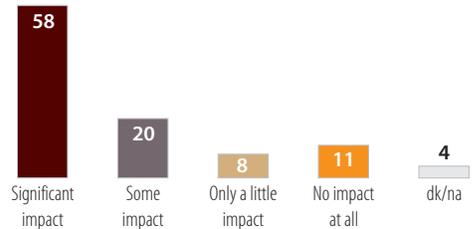
The Indian residential school experience continues to shape the lives of urban Aboriginal peoples today. Among those Aboriginal peoples in Calgary who say they or a family member were a student in one of these schools, eight in ten say this experience, or the experience of their family member, has had either a significant impact (58%) or some impact (20%) in shaping their life and who they are today. This represents half (50%) of all UAPS participants in Calgary.

Aboriginal peoples in Calgary are more likely than average to feel the Indian residential schools experience has had a *significant* impact on their lives, along with those living in Vancouver (60%), Montreal (60%) and Toronto (58%).

Within Calgary, the reported impact is similar for First Nations peoples and Métis.

Impact of Indian residential schools*

To what extent has [this experience/or the experience of your family member] shaped your life and who you are today?



* Subsample: Those who were, or whose family member was, a student at a federal residential school or a provincial day school.

2.4 Aboriginal cultural activity in the city

Perceived availability of Aboriginal activities

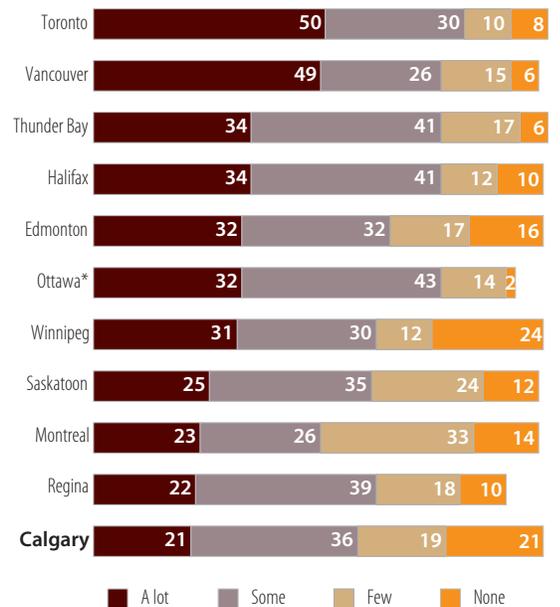
Just under six in ten Aboriginal peoples in Calgary say there are Aboriginal cultural activities available in the city, but fewer than in other cities believe there are “a lot” of such opportunities.

There are mixed views about the availability of Aboriginal cultural activities in Calgary. More than half of Aboriginal peoples in Calgary say there are either a lot (21%) or some (36%) Aboriginal cultural activities available in the city, while four in ten say there are only a few (19%) or no (21%) such activities available to them.

The proportion in Calgary who believe there are *a lot* of Aboriginal cultural activities available to them is among the lowest of the UAPS cities (similar to Saskatoon, Regina and Montreal). Of all UAPS participants, Aboriginal peoples living in Toronto (50%) and Vancouver (49%) are, by far, the most likely to believe there are *a lot* of Aboriginal cultural activities where they live.

Aboriginal cultural activities available in your community, by city

Are there any, a lot, some, a few or no Aboriginal cultural activities available in your community?

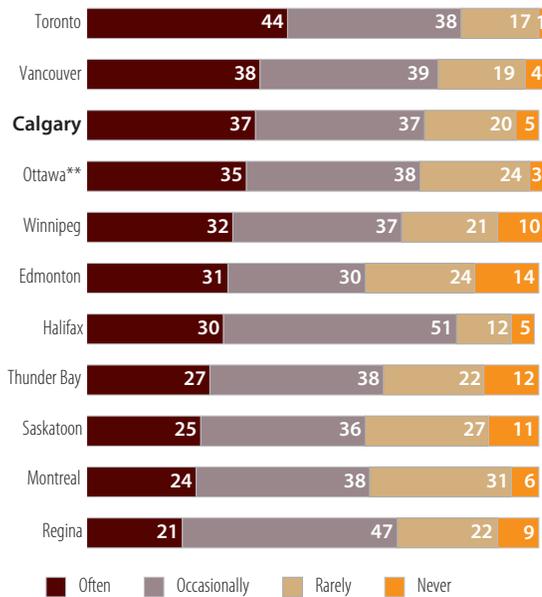


* Inuit only

Note: Percentages do not add to 100% due to those who said they don't know, or chose not to answer the question

Frequency of participation in cultural activities,* by city

How often do you personally participate in these Aboriginal cultural activities?



* Subsample: Those who have Aboriginal cultural activities available in their community.
** Inuit only

Frequency of participation in cultural activities

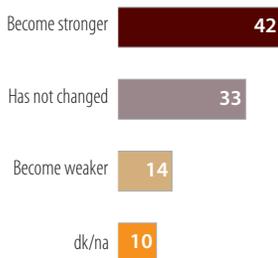
Three in four Aboriginal peoples in Calgary aware of cultural activities in their city participate at least occasionally, and the rate of frequent participation is similar to the average.

Despite a limited perception that Aboriginal cultural activities are available in Calgary (compared to other UAPS cities), reported participation among those aware of such activities is similar to the average. Among Aboriginal peoples who say Aboriginal cultural activities are available in Calgary, three in four say they often (37%) or occasionally (37%) participate in these activities; one in four indicate they rarely (20%) or never (5%) do. First Nations peoples and Métis in Calgary who are aware of such activities report similar rates of participation.

Strength of Aboriginal culture

Strength of Aboriginal culture

In the last five years, do you think that Aboriginal culture in your community has become stronger, become weaker or has not changed?



Four in ten Aboriginal peoples in Calgary believe the Aboriginal cultural in their city is getting stronger, a view that is less pronounced than in most other UAPS cities.

There is a muted sense of optimism about the direction of Aboriginal culture in Calgary in recent years. Overall, four in ten (42%) Aboriginal peoples in Calgary think that Aboriginal culture in the city has become stronger in the past five years. Only a minority (14%) say it has become weaker, although this viewpoint is more common than average for the UAPS cities. Another one in three (33%) say Aboriginal culture has not changed in the past few years; 10 percent offer no opinion on the direction of Aboriginal culture in Calgary.

Optimism about the direction of Aboriginal culture is most evident in Vancouver (70%) and Toronto (70%) compared to other UAPS cities.

2.5 Maintaining Aboriginal cultural identity

Most valued aspects of Aboriginal culture

Aboriginal peoples in Calgary believe Aboriginal customs and traditions, family values and languages are the most important aspects of Aboriginal culture to be passed on to future generations.

When Aboriginal peoples in Calgary were asked what aspects of Aboriginal culture are most important to be passed on to their children or grandchildren, or to the next generation (unprompted, without response options offered), they are most likely to identify Aboriginal customs and traditions (68%), family values (64%) and languages (61%).

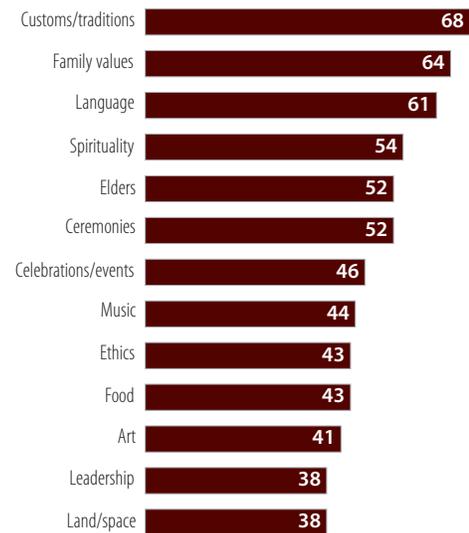
About five in ten each say it is important that next generations know about Aboriginal spirituality (54%), Aboriginal ceremonies (52%), Elders (52%), and celebrations and events (46%). Closer to four in ten each mention music (44%), food (43%), ethics (43%), art (41%), land (38%) and leadership (38%). Two percent or fewer each mention a range of other aspects of Aboriginal culture.

To a great extent, this set of cultural priorities is similar to that found among urban Aboriginal peoples in general. Within Calgary, First Nations peoples place greater emphasis than do Métis on passing on Aboriginal languages to coming generations.

Most important aspects of Aboriginal culture to pass to next generation

In your opinion, what aspects of Aboriginal culture are most important to be passed on to your children or grandchildren, or to the next generation?

Top mentions



Concern over losing cultural identity

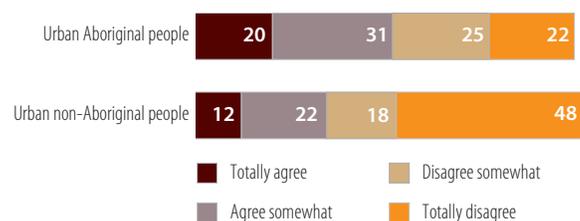
Aboriginal peoples in Calgary are divided about their ability to protect their cultural identity, although they are more concerned than their counterparts in most other UAPS cities.

As the previous results demonstrate, many Aboriginal peoples in Calgary are aware of and involved in Aboriginal cultural activities, and have a sense of cultural growth. At the same time, there are mixed opinions about the potential loss of their cultural identity, and Aboriginal peoples in Calgary are less confident about this issue than those in most other UAPS cities (with the exception of Saskatoon and Toronto).

When presented with the statement “I am concerned about losing my cultural identity,” Aboriginal peoples in Calgary are evenly divided: half (47%) disagree at least somewhat that this is a possibility, but the other half (51%) agree at least somewhat. Moreover, strong confidence (22% totally disagree) is balanced by strong concern about this issue (20% totally agree), whereas strong confidence tends to outweigh strong concern in most other cities. In Calgary, First Nations peoples are more likely than Métis to express strong concern about the loss of their identity (30% and 14%, respectively).

Concern over losing cultural identity

Do you totally agree, agree somewhat, disagree somewhat or totally disagree with the following statement: “I am concerned about losing my cultural identity.”



ABORIGINAL VERSUS NON-ABORIGINAL PERCEPTIONS. As part of the UAPS, a separate survey was conducted with non-Aboriginal residents of the same 10 cities (excluding Ottawa). Some questions were asked in both the main and the non-Aboriginal surveys, to allow for direct comparisons between the two groups.

In Calgary, strong confidence about their ability to protect their cultural identity is twice as prevalent among non-Aboriginal residents (48% totally disagree with the statement “I am concerned about losing my cultural identity”) than among Aboriginal residents (22%). Among non-Aboriginal Canadians, only Montrealers express a significant degree of concern about the loss of cultural identity.

2.6 Community and connections

Aboriginal peoples in Calgary define their community in a variety of ways, but family and friends are top-of-mind.

Communities play a pivotal role in shaping individual identities. Parents, family, friends, neighbours, members of one's own Aboriginal group, other Aboriginal persons and non-Aboriginal persons transmit social values and understandings that influence Aboriginal identity in cities.

In order to better understand what community ties are important, and determine what community means in the lives and identities of Aboriginal peoples living in Canadian cities, the *UAPS* explored how participants define their community, along with their sense of belonging and connection to various groups and entities.

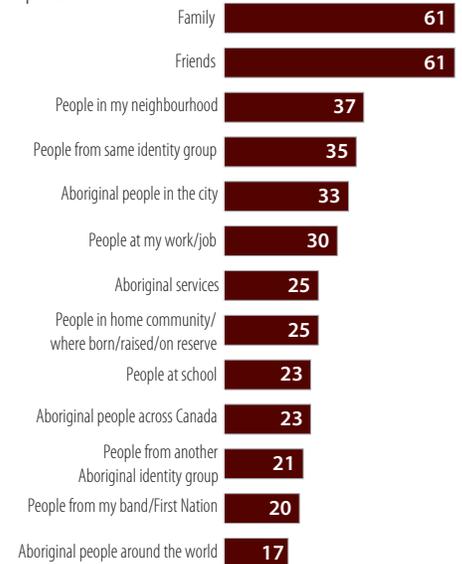
Who or what do urban Aboriginal peoples in Calgary consider to be a part of their community? *UAPS* data show that attachments to family and friends are top-of-mind for First Nations, Métis and Inuk residents of Calgary, views that are consistent with those living in other *UAPS* cities.

When asked (unprompted, without response options offered) who they consider to be part of their community, Aboriginal peoples in Calgary most frequently identify family (61%) and friends (61%). These are the top two mentions among urban Aboriginal participants in general.

Smaller proportions mention people in their neighbourhoods (37%), people from their own identity/cultural group (35%), Aboriginal people in general in the city (33%), people they work with (30%), Aboriginal services such as friendship centres, healing centres, counseling centres, etc. (25%), people in their home community (25%), people at school (23%), Aboriginal peoples from across Canada (23%), people from other Aboriginal cultural groups (21%), people from their band/First Nation group (20%) and/or Aboriginal peoples from around the world (17%).

Who or what do you consider to be a part of your community?

Top mentions



Belonging to Aboriginal versus non-Aboriginal communities

Aboriginal peoples in Calgary generally feel that they belong to communities that are not exclusively “Aboriginal” or “non-Aboriginal,” but are somewhere in between.

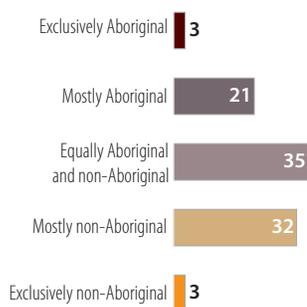
To what extent do Aboriginal peoples in Calgary feel they belong to an Aboriginal or non-Aboriginal community?

The survey finds no consensus regarding the type of community to which Aboriginal peoples feel they belong. Similar proportions say they belong to a community that is equally Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal (35%), or mostly non-Aboriginal (32%); another two in ten (21%) say they belong to a mostly Aboriginal community. Very few describe their community as exclusively Aboriginal (3%) or exclusively non-Aboriginal (3%).

The views of Aboriginal residents of Calgary are similar to those of urban Aboriginal participants in general. Within Calgary, First Nations peoples and Métis hold similar views on the extent to which their community is Aboriginal or non-Aboriginal.

Belonging to Aboriginal versus non-Aboriginal community

Do you feel that the community you belong to is...?



Connection to Aboriginal peoples in the city

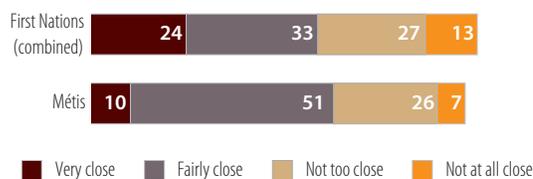
Urban Aboriginal peoples generally feel connected to their own Aboriginal identity group in Calgary. Métis feel a closer connection than do First Nations peoples to Aboriginal groups other than their own.

CONNECTION TO OWN ABORIGINAL GROUP. How close a connection do Aboriginal peoples in Calgary have to members of their own Aboriginal group?

Overall, both First Nations peoples and Métis are more likely than not to feel a close connection to other members of their Aboriginal group. Just under six in ten (57%) First Nations peoples feel either a very or fairly close connection to other members of their First Nation in Calgary. A similar proportion (61%) of Métis feel a close connection to other Métis in Calgary. In both cases, the sense of connection is similar to that expressed in other *UAPS* cities.

Connection to Aboriginal group, by identity group

How close a connection do you feel [to members of your own Aboriginal group]?



Note: Percentages do not add up to 100% due to those who said they don't know, or chose not to answer this question.

First Nations peoples are just as likely to feel a close connection to members of *other* First Nations in Calgary (59% very or fairly close) as to members of their own First Nation. First Nations peoples living in the largest urban centres (Toronto, Vancouver and Montreal) are the most likely among all *UAPS* participants to report a close connection to members of *other* First Nations.

CONNECTION TO OTHER ABORIGINAL PEOPLE IN THE CITY. How strong a connection do First Nations peoples and Métis feel to members of other Aboriginal groups in Calgary? Métis tend to feel much more connected to other Aboriginal peoples in the city (55% feel either a very or fairly close connection to First Nations peoples and Inuit) than do First Nations peoples (42% feel either a very or fairly close connection to Métis and Inuit). This is the pattern observed in most *UAPS* cities except Winnipeg (where First Nations peoples are equally likely to feel connected to other Aboriginal peoples, likely by virtue of being the minority Aboriginal group in the city).

Friendships in the city

Majorities of Aboriginal peoples in Calgary report close friendships with both Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal peoples. However, the former is more common among First Nations peoples, while the latter is more common among Métis.

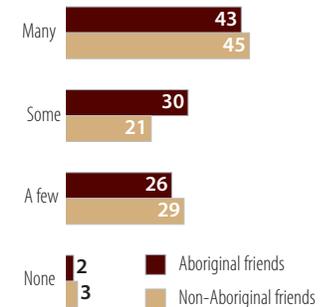
Beyond their sense of connection to members of their own or other Aboriginal groups, the *UAPS* survey asked First Nations peoples, Métis and Inuit living in Calgary about the extent of their Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal friendships.

FRIENDSHIPS WITH ABORIGINAL PEOPLE. Overall, seven in ten (73%) Aboriginal peoples in Calgary say they have many (43%) or some (30%) close friends in the city who are Aboriginal, and this is similar to that found among urban Aboriginal participants in general. First Nations peoples are more likely than Métis to say they have *many* Aboriginal friends (54%, compared to 36% of Métis),

FRIENDSHIPS WITH NON-ABORIGINAL PEOPLE. *UAPS* participants in Calgary (66%) are slightly less likely to say they have at least some close friends who are non-Aboriginal, a situation which is similar to that of urban Aboriginal participants in general. In this case, Métis are more likely than First Nations peoples to say they have *many* non-Aboriginal friends (52%, compared to 36% of First Nations peoples).

Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal friends

Do you have many, some, a few, or no close friends in Calgary who are Aboriginal/non-Aboriginal?



3.0 Experiences with Non- Aboriginal People

The Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples 1996 report devoted a chapter, *Urban Perspectives*, to the experiences of Aboriginal peoples living in urban centres. The chapter begins with cultural identity and then proceeds to a section on racism. The segue is intentional, as the consequences of racism and discrimination on identity can be profound – generations of Aboriginal people have struggled to assert their identity amidst a pervasive sense that they are perceived negatively by the non-Aboriginal population-at-large.

Most *UAPS* participants (across all cities) feel discrimination of Aboriginal people is a pervasive problem, and that stereotypical attitudes are frequently expressed through negative behaviours, such as insults and unfair treatment, that the majority have personally experienced – and this is similarly true for Aboriginal peoples in Calgary.

This chapter also explores encounters and experiences with non-Aboriginal services in the city such as schools, banks, the health care system, and government programs such as social assistance programs and employment and training programs.

Key findings

- **Aboriginal peoples in Calgary – like their counterparts in other *UAPS* cities – widely believe that they are viewed negatively by non-Aboriginal people.** There is a very strong perception among Aboriginal peoples in Calgary that non-Aboriginal people hold a wide range of negative and distorting stereotypes about them, the most prominent being about alcohol and drug abuse. Although a minority believe that these attitudes may be changing for the better, the balance of opinion is that they remain unchanged.
- **Almost all Aboriginal peoples in Calgary agree that others behave in an unfair or negative way toward Aboriginal people.** A majority say they have personally been teased or insulted because of their Aboriginal background, on par with the experiences of Aboriginal peoples in other *UAPS* cities. At the same time, Aboriginal people in Calgary are more likely than not to feel accepted by non-Aboriginal people.
- **Aboriginal peoples in Calgary report a substantial amount of contact with non-Aboriginal services, particularly banks and the health care system.** Positive assessments of these experiences largely outweigh negative ones, with the exception of the child welfare system, where (as in most other cities) negative experiences outweigh positive ones. Negative experiences are generally related to being treated poorly by the people who deliver the services, rather than concerns about the overall effectiveness of the services or about the process of accessing them.

3.1 How Aboriginal peoples feel they are perceived by non-Aboriginal people

Non-Aboriginal perceptions – positive or negative

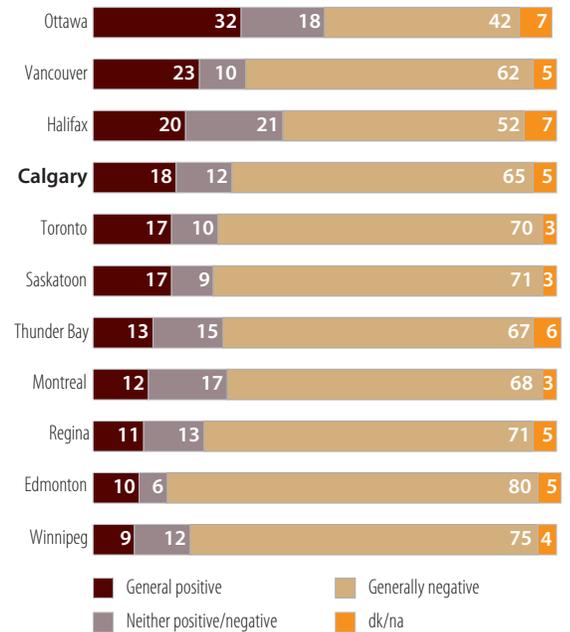
Aboriginal peoples in Calgary generally believe that they are seen in a negative light by non-Aboriginal people.

A majority of Aboriginal peoples in Calgary believe that non-Aboriginal people view them negatively, a perception that is consistent with that expressed in other UAPS cities.

Two in three (65%) UAPS participants in Calgary believe non-Aboriginal people’s impression of Aboriginal people is generally negative. Two in ten (18%) think non-Aboriginal people’s impressions are generally positive, and 12 percent think they are neither positive nor negative. These perceptions are similar among First Nations peoples and Métis in Calgary.

Perceptions of non-Aboriginal people’s impressions of Aboriginal people

Do you think non-Aboriginal people’s impression of Aboriginal people is generally positive or negative?



Common stereotypes of Aboriginal people, in the words of Aboriginal peoples in Calgary:

Drunk, depend on handouts from government, stupid and violent.

Lazy, drunk, homeless and don't belong anywhere.

Alcoholism, homelessness, that we're all rolling in free money, get a free education and are all young parents.

Unemployable, dependent on the government for money. That we get money when we turn 18, that we get free houses, health care, education and don't pay taxes.

I'm disturbed by what non-Natives think. When you are in public, all they see are Natives who are alcoholics and drug dealers. They seem to look for negatives instead of any positives.

Indians drink too much.

Criminals and single, abused or abusive mothers. Child welfare issues. Fetal Alcohol Syndrome problem. Unemployed. Drugs and sniffing glue.

That Aboriginal people are ignorant, drunk, and unable to care for themselves and their families. Are uneducated and their culture is inferior to non-Aboriginals.

Always hear stories of drug abuse, reserve problems and gambling. The successes that First Nations and Métis have don't tend to be discussed as often. I get sick and tired of all the "Indian jokes" that float around too.

Perceptions of non-Aboriginal stereotypes of Aboriginal people

Addiction problems dominate the list of negative and distorting stereotypes that non-Aboriginal people are believed to hold about Aboriginal peoples.

Métis, First Nations peoples and Inuit in Calgary believe non-Aboriginal people hold a wide range of stereotypes of Aboriginal people, and that these focus overwhelmingly on addiction problems (alcohol and drug abuse). Some of the stereotypes they believe non-Aboriginal people hold are presented in participants' own words in the sidebar on this page.

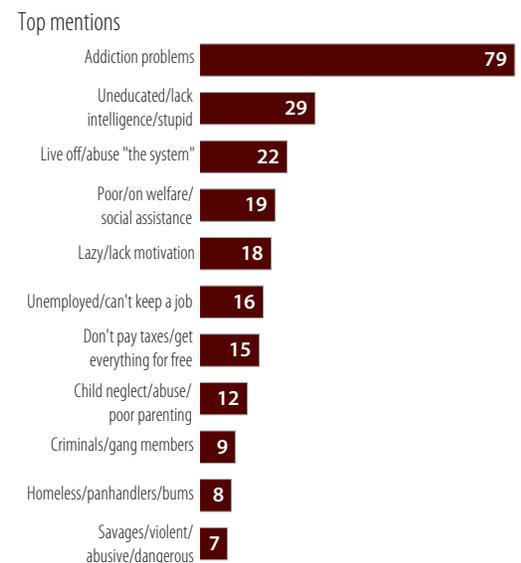
Specifically, when UAPS participants in Calgary are asked (unprompted, without response options offered) what they believe are the most common stereotypes that non-Aboriginal people hold about Aboriginal people, one stereotype dominates: eight in ten (79%) believe that non-Aboriginal people associate them with drug and alcohol abuse.

Three in ten believe they are seen as lacking intelligence or education (29%), and close to two in ten each believe non-Aboriginal people think Aboriginal people take unfair advantage of government benefits (22%), are poor and on welfare (19%), are lazy and unwilling to work hard to get what they want and need (18%), are perennially unemployed and unable to keep a job (16%), and/or don't pay their taxes (15%). A wide range of other negative stereotypes is mentioned, such as the perception that Aboriginal people are poor or abusive parents, often in criminal gangs, homeless and/or violent.

First Nations peoples and Métis in Calgary have generally similar views of the negative stereotypes associated with Aboriginal peoples, although Métis are more likely to believe Aboriginal peoples are seen as taking unfair advantage of government benefits.

Common stereotypes of Aboriginal people

What do you believe are the most common stereotypes that non-Aboriginal people hold about Aboriginal people, if any?



Do Aboriginal peoples believe non-Aboriginal impressions are changing?

The balance of opinion is that there has been little change in non-Aboriginal people's impressions of Aboriginal people over the past few years, although three in ten are optimistic that attitudes are improving.

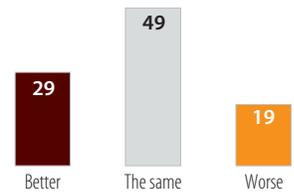
In Calgary, the view that perceptions of Aboriginal people have not changed in recent years outweighs the belief that they are improving, while a small minority think perceptions have deteriorated.

When asked about the change in non-Aboriginal people's impression of Aboriginal people over the past few years, half (49%) of Aboriginal peoples in Calgary think impressions have stayed the same. Three in ten (29%) think impressions have become better, while two in ten (19%) believe impressions have gotten worse over the past few years.

Aboriginal peoples in Calgary are more likely than average to perceive no change in non-Aboriginal people's impressions; by comparison, optimism that attitudes are improving is strongest in Vancouver (53%) and Toronto (48%). In Calgary, First Nations peoples and Métis have similar views about this issue.

Change in impressions

Over the past few years, do you think that non-Aboriginal people's impression of Aboriginal people has gotten better, or worse or stayed the same?



3.2 Experiences of discrimination

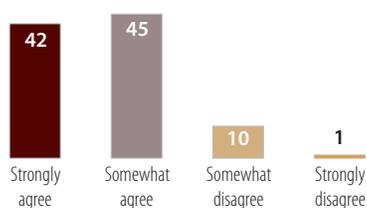
Group and personal experiences

Close to nine in ten Aboriginal peoples in Calgary agree that others behave in an unfair or negative way toward Aboriginal people as whole. Three in four report that they personally have been teased or insulted because of their Aboriginal background.

Not only do Aboriginal peoples in Calgary feel that they are viewed negatively by their non-Aboriginal neighbours, but they also report widespread experience (personally and as a group) with negative treatment or unfair treatment because of who they are.

Negative behaviour

"I think others behave in an unfair/negative way toward Aboriginal people."

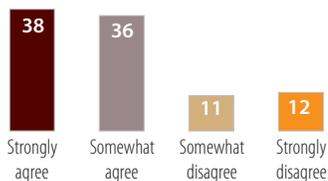


NEGATIVE AND UNFAIR BEHAVIOUR TOWARD ABORIGINAL PEOPLES IN GENERAL. Most Aboriginal peoples in Calgary agree with the statement "I think others behave in an unfair/negative way toward Aboriginal people." Just under nine in ten strongly (42%) or somewhat (45%) agree with this statement; only 11 percent disagree.

This perception is equally strong in Calgary as in most other *UAPS* cities. Within Calgary, Métis and First Nations peoples are equally likely to strongly agree that Aboriginal peoples receive unfair treatment.

Unfair treatment

"I have been teased or insulted because of my Aboriginal background."



PERSONAL EXPERIENCE WITH INSULTS AND TEASING BY NON-ABORIGINAL PEOPLES.

Most Aboriginal peoples in Calgary also say they have personally experienced insulting treatment because of who they are. When posed with the statement "I have been teased or insulted because of my Aboriginal background," three in four strongly (38%) or somewhat (36%) agree; relatively few somewhat (11%) or strongly (12%) disagree.

The reported experiences of Aboriginal peoples in Calgary generally mirror those of Aboriginal peoples in other *UAPS* cities. Métis and First Nations peoples in the city are equally likely to report having been insulted because of who they are.

Sense of acceptance

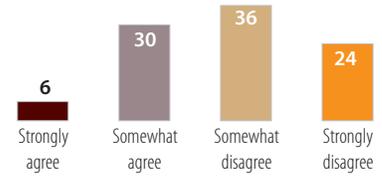
A majority of Aboriginal peoples in Calgary feel accepted by non-Aboriginal people, although a significant minority do not.

Despite their difficult experiences, Aboriginal peoples in Calgary are more likely than not to feel accepted by non-Aboriginal people.

Six in ten (60%) UAPS participants in Calgary strongly (24%) or somewhat (36%) *disagree* with the statement “I don’t feel accepted by non-Aboriginal people.” However, a substantial minority of one in three (36%) strongly (6%) or somewhat (30%) agree that they do not feel accepted. These sentiments are similar among Métis and First Nations peoples in Calgary.

The degree of acceptance felt by Aboriginal people in Calgary is similar to that expressed by urban Aboriginal peoples in general.

Sense of acceptance by non-Aboriginal people
“I don’t feel accepted by non-Aboriginal people.”



Impact of experiences with non-Aboriginal people

For the most part, Aboriginal peoples in Calgary feel their experiences with non-Aboriginal people have shaped their lives and identities in positive ways.

For the most part, Aboriginal peoples in Calgary indicate that their experiences with non-Aboriginal people have, ultimately, compelled them to become stronger, more motivated individuals.

When asked in what ways, if any, their experience with non-Aboriginal people has shaped their life and who they are today (unprompted, without response options offered), Aboriginal peoples in Calgary are most likely to frame the impact in a positive light. Summarized, their responses fall into the following two main categories:

- **Greater motivation.** A greater sense of motivation and desire to achieve (41% of mentions) is the top way in which Aboriginal peoples in Calgary feel their experiences with non-Aboriginal people have had an impact. They express this greater sense of motivation in multiple ways, including the belief that their experiences with non-Aboriginal people made them put more emphasis on their education, made them more ambitious and drove them to work harder, and made them want to disprove Aboriginal stereotypes.
- **Mentoring and a sense of direction.** Two in ten (21%) Aboriginal peoples in Calgary report that a non-Aboriginal teacher, professor or other individual provided a positive experience, helped them change perspectives, gave them opportunities or gave them guidance about “how to stay out of trouble.”

One in ten (11%) Aboriginal peoples in Calgary believe they developed more tolerance and acceptance of other people through their experiences with non-Aboriginal people. Specifically, they feel these experiences made them less prejudiced and judgmental, and better able to adapt to the non-Aboriginal world around them. One in ten (11%) say their experiences with non-Aboriginal people have given a greater sense of themselves as Aboriginal peoples.

One in ten (13%) Aboriginal peoples in Calgary also cite ways in which their experiences with non-Aboriginal peoples have had a *negative* impact on their lives. These individuals cite such negative experiences as exposure to racism and discrimination, distrust and anger, shame, and loss of their connection to their Aboriginal identity and language.

A total of two in ten Aboriginal peoples in Calgary either say their experiences with non-Aboriginal people have had no impact at all on them (8%), or are unable or unwilling to answer the question (10%).

3.3 Experiences with non-Aboriginal services and organizations

Extent of contact with specific services

Aboriginal peoples in Calgary report a substantial amount of contact with non-Aboriginal services, particularly banking services and the health care system.

As a final dimension to better understanding urban Aboriginal peoples' perceptions of and experiences with non-Aboriginal people, the UAPS asked participants about their experiences with non-Aboriginal services and organizations. Specifically, the survey explored how much contact they have with these services and organizations, and the nature of their experience.

To what extent do Aboriginal peoples in Calgary have contact with non-Aboriginal services or organizations? Of the seven non-Aboriginal service types included in the survey, banks or credit unions (89%), and the health care system (83%) have been the most widely used within the past year.

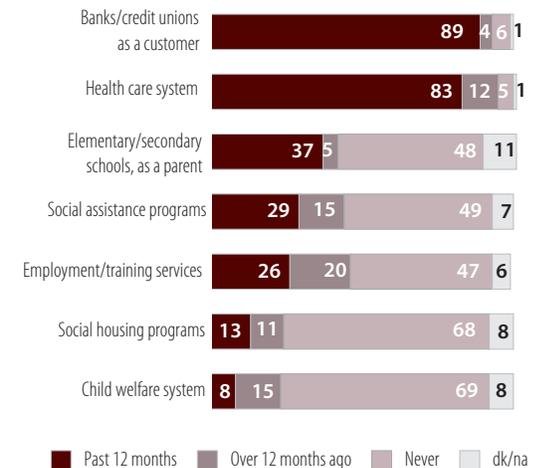
There is a substantial gap between these two non-Aboriginal services and others in degree of contact reported. One-third or fewer report recent involvement with the city's elementary and secondary schools as a parent (37%), and/or use of social assistance programs (29%), or of non-Aboriginal employment and training services (26%).

Aboriginal peoples in Calgary are least likely to report recent experience with the child welfare system and social housing programs. Very small proportions report using social housing programs (13%) or the child welfare system (8%) within the past year; in both cases, majorities have never used them (68% and 69%, respectively).

The general pattern of use of these services in Calgary is similar to average for the UAPS cities. Reported contact with these non-Aboriginal services and organizations is also largely similar for First Nations peoples and Métis in Calgary, with the exception of social housing programs, for which recent use is more widely reported by First Nations peoples (20% vs. 8% of Métis).

Contact with non-Aboriginal services and organizations

Have you made use of or been in contact with the following non-Aboriginal services in Calgary in the past 12 months, over 12 months ago or never?



Note: Percentages don't add up to 100% due to those who said they don't know, or chose not to answer this question.

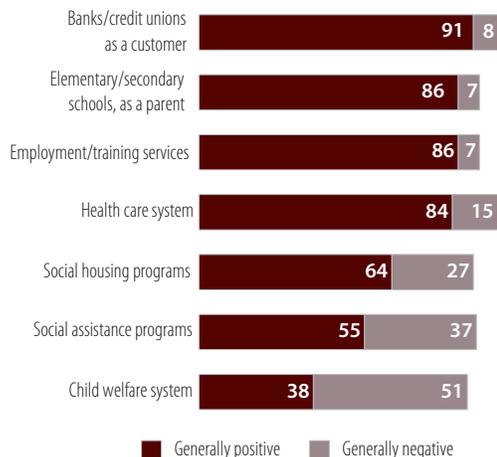
Assessing experiences with non-Aboriginal services

With the exception of child welfare services, positive experiences far outweigh negative ones among those who have been in contact with non-Aboriginal services in Calgary.

Positive experiences with non-Aboriginal services in Calgary outweigh negative ones, with the exception of experiences with the child welfare system.

Experience with non-Aboriginal services*

Was your experience with this service generally positive or generally negative?



*Subsample: Those who have used the services

Note: Percentages don't add up to 100% due to those who said they don't know, or chose not to answer this question.

Aboriginal peoples in Calgary who have ever used or made contact with these non-Aboriginal services¹² were asked if the experience was generally positive or generally negative. They are most likely to report positive experiences with banks and credit unions (91%), employment and training services (86%), elementary or secondary schools (86%), and the health care system (84%). In each of these cases, relatively few (ranging between 7% and 15%) say their experience was negative.

Positive experiences are also the norm for slightly fewer, but still majorities, of those who have accessed social housing programs (64%) and social assistance programs (55%).

However, among Aboriginal peoples in Calgary who have had contact with the child welfare system, negative perceptions of this experience (51%) outweigh positive ones (38%).

Compared to Aboriginal peoples who have used these services in other cities, Aboriginal peoples in Calgary are among the most positive about their experiences with elementary and secondary schools.

12 In most cases, the sample size of those who have used or accessed the service is too small to compare perceptions for First Nations peoples and Métis in Calgary.

NEGATIVE EXPERIENCES. Aboriginal peoples who have had negative experiences with non-Aboriginal services were asked to describe the experience (unprompted, in their own words). Some of these experiences are presented in the sidebar on this page.

The most common concern is being treated poorly. Just under half (47%) of Aboriginal peoples in Calgary say their experience was negative because of racism or discrimination; they were treated unfairly or disrespectfully; or they encountered staff that were mean or rude, or lacked empathy, or didn't understand their needs or culture.

One in four (23%) question the effectiveness of the service, saying it was not supportive, unhelpful and didn't actually achieve its goal. Two in ten (20%) had problems with process, particularly long waiting lists or wait periods. Eight percent have concerns that the services lack resources, such as qualified staff or funding, and therefore provide poor or disorganized service.

Other negative experiences relate to having an application rejected (10%), being misinformed or misdiagnosed (1%), or being removed as a child from their home (2%).

What Aboriginal peoples in Calgary say about their negative experiences with non-Aboriginal services:

Social services (child welfare) has too much power. They hire too many non-Aboriginal people. There are too many non-Aboriginals in positions of authority.

I found, when I went into the bank, the way I was dressed and being Native, they treated me like I was going to rob the place, and hurt their little white environment they had going there.

When I was trying to get social assistance, the workers treated me like I was worthless because I was Aboriginal and pregnant.

Social assistance was so negative. It didn't seem like they wanted to help. The social worker was very hard to get along with.

Poor customer service, illogical decisions, which I am challenging, poor follow-through that was promised and involved me having to advocate for myself.

A doctor immediately separated me from other Aboriginal people by saying "you must be one of the few who made it" because I seem educated and speak well. I tried to educate the doctor about prejudice, as I found this generalization was unfair to others.

My social worker acts as if she is paying me out of her own pocket.

The people at the social assistance office were unsupportive. I felt like I was being treated that way because I am Native.

4.0 Experiences with Aboriginal Services and Organizations

As part of understanding urban Aboriginal peoples' experiences in Canadian cities today, the *UAPS* explored study participants' perceptions of and interactions with Aboriginal services and organizations. Growing out of the friendship centre movement, a large network of institutions has emerged within urban Aboriginal communities that provide a range of services such as, but not limited to, education, training, employment, economic development, child care, health, housing, cultural support and corrections. Of note, over the last two decades in particular, urban Aboriginal organizations are assuming key roles in the delivery of health services. Many aspects of urban Aboriginal life are mediated through a vast array of Aboriginal cultural, artistic, heritage, educational, economic, community development and political institutions.

There is considerable reliance on Aboriginal services and organizations in Calgary, and *UAPS* participants in this city are clearly convinced of the importance of these services to the well-being of their community.

Key findings

- **Half of Aboriginal peoples in Calgary use and rely at least occasionally on Aboriginal services and organizations in the city.** Employment centres are considered the most useful. Lack of use stems primarily from the perception that these services are not needed (as opposed to not being accessible or helpful).
- **Regardless of how much interaction they have with Aboriginal services, there is broad agreement among Aboriginal peoples in Calgary that they are very important.** This is considered to be most important in the case of addiction programs, child and family services, housing services and health centres.

4.1 Use of urban Aboriginal services and organizations

Extent of use of services

Half of Aboriginal peoples use and rely on Aboriginal services and organizations in Calgary at least occasionally, which is on par with reported use in most other UAPS cities.

Many Aboriginal services and organizations promote culture and identity for urban Aboriginal peoples through the types of services they offer, the events they sponsor and simply through their existence as Aboriginal organizations in Calgary. The *UAPS* asked participants how often, and why, they use these services and organizations, and which they find most useful.

Half of Aboriginal peoples in Calgary often (24%) or occasionally (26%) use or rely on the city's Aboriginal services or organizations, while half rarely (23%) or never (23%) do. Reported use is similar to that found in most other *UAPS* cities, but is not as widespread as in Toronto (69%) and Vancouver (68%), and among Inuit in Ottawa (67%). Within Calgary, reported use is similar among First Nations peoples and Métis.

What else explains the use of Aboriginal services and organizations in cities? The sample size for Calgary alone (249 survey participants) is too small to allow for a detailed analysis by socio-demographic factors. However, the national *UAPS* data (across all 11 cities) indicates that use varies by age and income, but not by length of time in the city. Frequent use of Aboriginal services and organizations is more common among Aboriginal peoples aged 45 years and older, and the less affluent (use of these services and organizations steadily declines as household income increases). However, use of Aboriginal services is similar among those new to their city (i.e., those who arrived in their city within the last two years) and long-time residents (i.e., those who arrived in their city 20 or more years ago).

Use of Aboriginal services or organizations

How often do you use or rely on Aboriginal services or organizations in Calgary?



Why urban Aboriginal peoples in Calgary use and rely on Aboriginal services and organizations:

As a single mother of six children, I need the support of those services. I've mainly dealt with Métis housing, but I feel these Aboriginal services are much needed.

Utilized services for education-related purposes – faxing, phone, computer and for information purposes as well.

You can make a connection with other Aboriginal people. Depending on your need, most Aboriginal people have a better idea of where you are coming from.

They can tell me what resources there are and also connect me.

I feel more comfortable working with Aboriginal services because I feel they understand me (rather than going to a white company). That is just my personal preference.

To get back in the community, to spiritually reconnect because I can't go back home to my own reserve.

To bring resources into the school classroom, such as Elders, dance groups, drum groups, cultural groups, speakers, use to provide references to my students.

Reasons for use

As in other cities, Aboriginal services and organizations in Calgary are used both for their specific resources, and for their sense of community and belonging.

Beyond asking Aboriginal peoples in Calgary how often they use and rely on Aboriginal services and organizations, the UAPS also explored why some use these services more regularly than others (unprompted, without response options offered).

WHY THEY USE. Aboriginal peoples in Calgary who are regular users¹³ of the city's Aboriginal services and organizations indicate that these serve a dual purpose – the provision of specific services and a welcoming, supportive atmosphere. These are largely consistent with the main reasons for use mentioned in other UAPS cities. Some of these reasons are illustrated in verbatim comments in the sidebar on this page.

- **Specific resources.** Half (48%) of regular users of Aboriginal services and organizations are motivated by a desire/need for specific resources. Programs and social services, services related to Aboriginal benefits or advocacy, education and employment services, and health supports are the most typical resources they describe using.
- **A positive environment.** Four in ten (39%) users of Aboriginal services and organizations in Calgary say they are drawn by the presence of positive environments, whether it is the supportive community, personal relationships, connections to Aboriginal culture, sharing circles and Elders, or the convenience that they offer.
- **Employee/volunteer.** A small proportion (7%) of UAPS participants in Calgary are connected to Aboriginal services and organizations because they are either employed by them, or volunteer their time and services.

13 Those who report using services often or occasionally (50% of UAPS participants in Calgary overall).

WHY THEY DON'T USE. Those who rarely or never use Aboriginal services and organizations (46% of UAPS participants in Calgary overall) typically indicate they have no need for them (44%). Considerably fewer do not use them because they are unaware of what services and organizations are available in their city (11%), because the services aren't helpful (7%), or because they can't access or don't qualify for these services (5%). Three in ten (28%) are unable or unwilling to answer the question, more than in any other UAPS city except Winnipeg, which may also reflect a lack of a perceived need to consider such services. Some of the reasons why Aboriginal services are not used more often are illustrated in verbatim comments in the sidebar on this page.

Most useful Aboriginal services and organizations

Users of Aboriginal services in Calgary identify employment centres and, to a lesser extent, friendship centres, as the most useful to them.

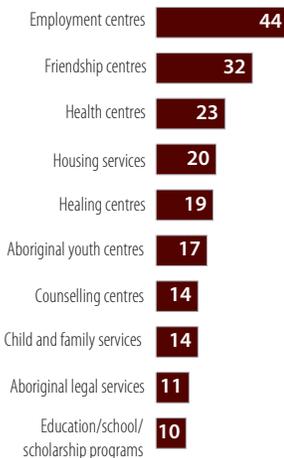
Aboriginal peoples who have used Aboriginal services and organizations in Calgary have found a wide range of these to be useful, but first and foremost value Aboriginal employment centres (44%). Three in ten (32%) identify friendship centres as useful, although this is less widespread than average for the UAPS cities. Close to two in ten each have found health centres (23%), housing services (20%), healing centres (19%) and youth centres (17%) to be useful. Several other Aboriginal services and organizations are mentioned as particularly useful by close to one in ten each, including Aboriginal child and family services, counselling centres, legal services and Aboriginal education/scholarship-related services.

Most useful Aboriginal services and organizations*

What kinds of Aboriginal services or organizations have you found to be particularly useful?

Within Calgary, First Nations peoples are more likely than Métis to report having found Aboriginal child and family services, youth services and legal services as particularly useful.

Top mentions



*Subsample: Those who have used Aboriginal services in their city.

Why urban Aboriginal peoples in Calgary do not use or rely on Aboriginal services and organizations:

Because I've never been on unemployment, had troubles with rent or had family difficulties. There's not been a need.

I feel like I'm independent and I have the competence to do the things I need to do for myself.

I have never accessed these services, but as a child, my mother always took me to the friendship centre that used to be located in Chinatown.

My goal is to not be dependent on any system. To me, that is a form of government control.

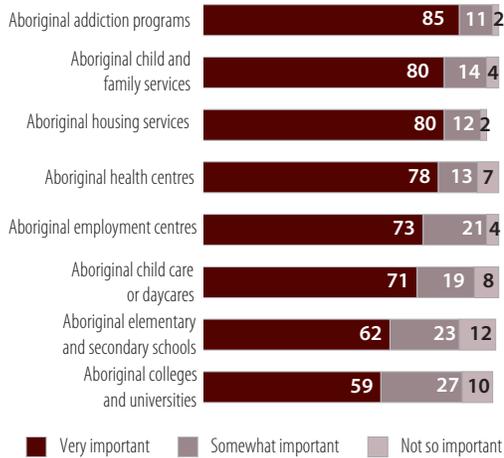
A lot of paperwork to go through and their locations are far from where I live.

4.2 Importance of Aboriginal services in addition to non-Aboriginal services

Large majorities of Aboriginal peoples in Calgary believe it is very important to also have Aboriginal services, particularly addiction programs, child and family services, housing services and health centres.

Importance of Aboriginal services

How important do you think it is that the following Aboriginal services exist in addition to non-Aboriginal ones?



Note: Percentages don't add up to 100% due to those who said they don't know, or chose not to answer this question.

The results of the UAPS in Calgary confirm that Aboriginal peoples in the city feel there is a definite need for Aboriginal services to complement or supplement non-Aboriginal ones.

More than three in four each say it is very important to have Aboriginal addiction programs (85%), Aboriginal child and family services (80%), Aboriginal housing services (80%) and Aboriginal health centres (78%). Seven in ten each say the same about Aboriginal employment centres (73%), and Aboriginal child care or daycares (71%). Six in ten each say it is very important to have Aboriginal elementary and secondary schools (62%), and Aboriginal colleges and universities (59%). In all cases, most of the remaining participants say having Aboriginal services is somewhat important, and no more than 12 percent say any of these services are unimportant.

The perceived importance in Calgary of having these Aboriginal services is consistent with urban Aboriginal participants in general. Within Calgary, First Nations peoples place greater importance than do Métis on having Aboriginal child and family services.

In general, how do Aboriginal peoples feel about the city they live in? Beyond the themes discussed so far in this report, the *UAPS* also explored how much participants like living in Calgary, their reasons for choosing their neighbourhood (and the extent to which they feel they have a choice), how much they believe they can make Calgary a better place to live, along with their openness to other languages and cultures.

Key findings

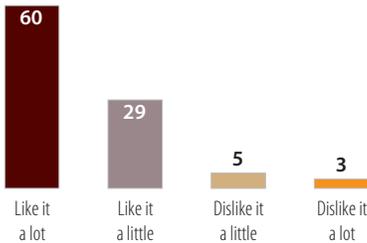
- **Most urban Aboriginal peoples (across all cities) like living in their cities, and this is also true for Aboriginal peoples living in Calgary.** Residents like Calgary for the quality of life, urban amenities, the employment opportunities, and the presence of family and friends. As with urban Aboriginal peoples in other cities, they also feel the stresses of living in a busy fast-paced city, and are concerned about crime and violence.
- **Affordability of housing is the most common reason for choosing a neighbourhood in Calgary.** At the same time, Aboriginal peoples in Calgary are as likely as those in other cities to feel they have choice about where they live.
- **Aboriginal peoples believe they can make Calgary a better place to live.** Six in ten are confident that they can make a positive difference in their city, on par with confidence expressed by Aboriginal peoples in other cities, but somewhat lower than the level of confidence expressed by non-Aboriginal residents of Calgary.
- **Aboriginal peoples in Calgary are the least certain of *UAPS* participants that Canada is accepting of a variety of languages and cultures.**

5.1 Satisfaction with city life

Most Aboriginal peoples in Calgary like living in their city because of the general quality of life, the urban amenities, the job opportunities, and the presence of family and friends.

Like living in Calgary

How much do you like living in your city?
Would you say you like it or dislike it?



Urban living can be difficult for many Aboriginal people. They typically face urban violence, poverty and health challenges on a greater scale than the population-at-large. However, there is another side to these urban communities, a side not often featured in popular discourse and media. Thousands of First Nations people, Métis and Inuit are establishing themselves, or continuing long histories of multi-generational residence, in Canadian cities, including Calgary.

Almost all Aboriginal peoples say they like living in Calgary. When asked, six in ten (60%) like it a lot, while another three in ten (29%) indicate they like it a little. One in ten dislike living in their city a little (5%) or a lot (3%). These sentiments are similar to those expressed by *UAPS* participants in general. Satisfaction with living in Calgary is also similar for Métis and First Nations peoples in the city.

What do *UAPS* participants like most and least about living in Calgary? General quality of life, the recreation and entertainment activities available in a large city, employment opportunities, and the presence of family and friends are among Calgary's most appreciated features, while the pressures associated with life in a large city are generally what they like least about Calgary.

LIKE MOST. When asked what they like most about living in Calgary (unprompted, without response options offered), Aboriginal peoples are most likely to cite four main features:

- **Quality of life.** The most common reason Aboriginal peoples like living in Calgary is the quality of life it offers. One in three (36%) indicate this is what they most like about living in the city. This is related to the resources and services (12%), the availability of green spaces (11%) and the family-oriented neighbourhoods (10%).
- **City life.** One in four (27%) Aboriginal peoples say they enjoy the city life available to them in Calgary, including the recreation and entertainment opportunities (12%), the fast pace (10%), access to cultural events (7%) and the social life (6%).
- **Jobs.** Two in ten (21%) appreciate the career and employment opportunities available to them in Calgary. This is more likely to be mentioned in the Prairie cities and Calgary than in the other *UAPS* cities.
- **Presence of family and friends.** Another major reason why Aboriginal peoples like living in Calgary is the presence of family and friends (18%). This perspective is more common among those living in the Western cities and Thunder Bay than in other cities.

Aboriginal peoples in Calgary are more likely than average to say they appreciate the sense of freedom they find in Calgary (16%) and the friendliness of the community (15%). Smaller proportions enjoy the concentration of Aboriginal peoples in the city (9%), and the sense that Calgary offers the best of both urban and rural qualities (9%).

Only six percent of Aboriginal peoples in Calgary say they like living in Calgary for the social acceptance found there, similar to other smaller urban centres – and in sharp contrast to the large urban centres of Montreal (34%), Toronto (33%) and Vancouver (19%).

LIKE LEAST. When Aboriginal peoples are asked what they like least about living in Calgary, a range of concerns are identified, but one issue, urban pressures, predominates. In fact, concern about these issues is similar to that found in Canada's three largest urban areas.

- **Urban pressures.** Five in ten (48%) dislike certain urban pressures, such as traffic, the higher cost of living, overpopulation, and overdevelopment/gentrification. Urban pressures are as much of a concern for Aboriginal peoples in Calgary as for those living in Toronto (55%), Vancouver (45%) and Montreal (45%), where they are, by far, the primary issue.
- **Crime.** Three in ten (29%) Aboriginal peoples in Calgary say they are concerned about crime in the city, including both violent crime and vandalism (24%), and gang violence (12%). This is similar to the level of concern in the Prairie cities and Halifax (ranging from 30% to 45%), and notably higher than in Vancouver, Toronto, Montreal and Thunder Bay.

Smaller proportions of *UAPS* participants (fewer than 10% each) mention other features they dislike about living in Calgary, including racism, general feelings of not being safe, the transit system and housing. Two percent say there is nothing that they dislike about the city.

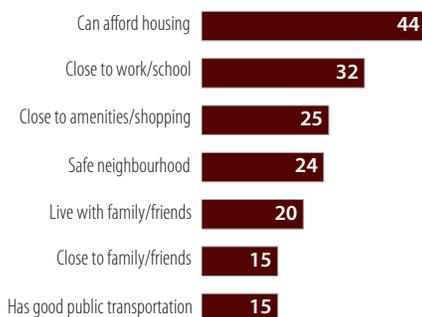
5.2 Reasons for choice of neighbourhood

The availability of affordable housing is the most common reason for Aboriginal peoples' choice of neighbourhood in Calgary. Three in four feel they have choice about where to live.

Aboriginal peoples in Calgary choose their neighbourhood for a range of reasons, but they are most likely to have been influenced by the availability of affordable housing.

Why do you live in your neighbourhood?

Why do you live in the neighbourhood you do?



When asked why they live in their neighbourhood (unprompted, without response options offered), Aboriginal peoples in Calgary are most likely to say it is because they can afford the housing (44%); this reason is more widely mentioned in Calgary than average.

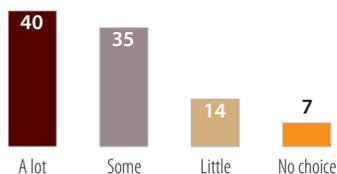
Aboriginal peoples in Calgary are also more likely than average to say they chose their neighbourhood because of its proximity to work and/or school (32%), and to services and amenities (25%). Other important considerations include a safe environment for themselves and their families (24%), being able to live *with* (20%) or *close to* (15%) family and friends, and good public transit (15%). Nine percent or fewer each offer other reasons, such as or proximity to a child's school or daycare, proximity to a spiritual or cultural centre, living in the neighbourhood where they grew up, and being close to other Aboriginal people.

First Nations peoples and Métis indicate largely similar reasons for choosing their neighbourhood, but First Nations peoples are more likely than Métis to mention proximity to public transit.

EXTENT OF CHOICE. To what extent do Aboriginal peoples in Calgary feel they have a choice about the neighbourhood they live in? When asked directly, three in four feel they have either a lot (40%) or some (35%) choice about where they live in their city, and just two in ten feel they have either a little (14%) or no choice at all (7%). These sentiments are similar to those expressed by urban Aboriginal peoples in general.

How much choice do you feel you have in where you live?

To what extent do you feel you have a choice about the neighbourhood you live in? Do you feel you have...?



5.3 Personal impact on city

Six in ten Aboriginal peoples in Calgary think they can make the city a better place to live.

In addition to enjoying living in their city, Aboriginal peoples in Calgary are more confident than not that they can make the city a better place to live.

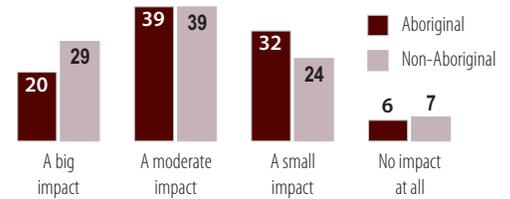
A majority of Aboriginal peoples in Calgary think people like themselves can have either a big (20%) or moderate (39%) impact in making the city a better place to live; four in ten believe that they can have only a small impact (32%) or no impact at all (6%) on their city. First Nations peoples are more confident than are Métis that they can have a big impact (28% and 15%, respectively).

This sense of being able to make a difference is similar to that of urban Aboriginal participants in general, although it trails the sense of empowerment found in Vancouver and Toronto (35% and 37%, respectively, say they can have a big impact).

Similarly, Aboriginal participants' belief in their ability to be positive agents of change in Calgary is not as strong as that of non-Aboriginal people: Aboriginal peoples (59%) are somewhat less likely than non-Aboriginal people (68%) to feel they can have at least a moderate impact on Calgary.

Making Calgary a better place to live

Overall, how much impact do you think people like you can have in making your city a better place to live?



5.4 Attitudes toward multiculturalism

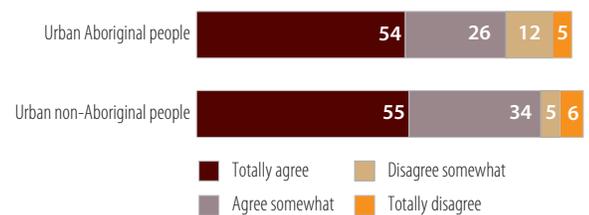
Compared to Aboriginal peoples in other cities, Aboriginal peoples in Calgary are less convinced that Canada can accommodate a variety of languages and cultures.

Most Aboriginal peoples in Calgary totally (54%) or somewhat (26%) agree that Canada is a country where there is room for a variety of languages and cultures. However, this view is less widespread in Calgary than in the other UAPS cities, where upwards of seven in ten totally agree with this statement.

ABORIGINAL AND NON-ABORIGINAL PERSPECTIVES. Using data from the UAPS survey of non-Aboriginal people, Aboriginal peoples (54%) and non-Aboriginal peoples (55%) in Calgary share similar views about the extent to which Canadian society is tolerant of a variety of languages and cultures. This is different from the pattern in other UAPS cities, where Aboriginal peoples express a much stronger belief that there is room for other languages and cultures than do non-Aboriginal people.

There is room for a variety of languages and cultures in this country

Do you totally agree, agree somewhat, disagree somewhat or totally disagree with the following statement: "There is room for a variety of languages and cultures in this country."



6.0 Urban Aspirations

An important goal from the outset of the *UAPS* was to learn about urban Aboriginal peoples' aspirations. The *UAPS* Advisory Circle and research team sought to include questions in the *UAPS* that would consider urban Aboriginal peoples, so often described in terms of "need" or "lack," from a more positive vantage point, in order to learn what they most wanted for their life and those of future generations, and how they defined success.

Pursuing higher education proved to be the leading life aspiration of urban Aboriginal peoples. Not only did they see higher education as a path to a good job or career for their own generation, many said that they hope higher levels of education will be key to how future generations of Aboriginal people distinguish themselves from their ancestors. This is also true for Aboriginal peoples in Calgary, whose top life aspirations are largely consistent with those held by Aboriginal peoples living in other *UAPS* cities.

Key findings

- **The leading life aspirations for Aboriginal peoples in Calgary are higher education, raising a family and home ownership.** Learning the importance of education and completing school is also the most prominent hope for future generations of Aboriginal peoples.
- **For Aboriginal peoples in Calgary, the definition of success revolves around family and friends, and a balanced lifestyle.** Compared to *UAPS* participants in other cities, they also place greater importance on home ownership and a traditional lifestyle.

6.1 Life aspirations

The top life aspirations for Aboriginal peoples in Calgary are completing one's education, raising a family and home ownership.

What do Aboriginal peoples in Calgary consider to be a good life? To explore what urban Aboriginal peoples aspire to for their futures, *UAPS* participants were asked (unprompted, without response options offered) what three things they most want to achieve in their lifetime.

The top goals for Aboriginal peoples are to complete their education (33%), to raise or provide for a family (30%), and home ownership (25%). Also important is having a good job or career (18%), seeing one's children/grandchildren going to school and succeeding in life (17%), giving back to the Aboriginal community (13%), financial independence (12%), getting married or finding a life partner (11%), owning one's own business (11%) and living a happy life (10%).

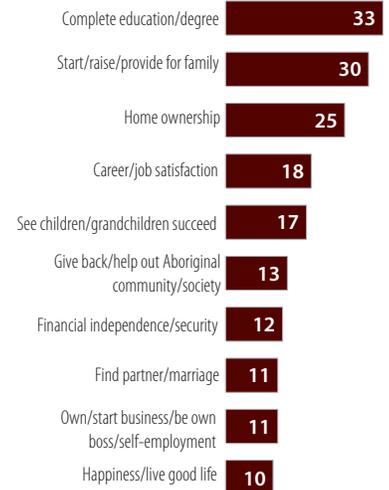
A wide range of other aspirations is mentioned by fewer than 10 percent each, including living a long and healthy life, travelling, a peaceful life, and staying close to their family and community.

The life aspirations of Aboriginal peoples in Calgary are largely consistent with those held by Aboriginal peoples living in the other *UAPS* cities. However, they are more likely than average to mention owning a home, giving back to the Aboriginal community and finding a life partner.

Life aspirations

What are three things that you most want to achieve in your lifetime?

Top mentions



6.2 Definitions of “success”

Aboriginal peoples in Calgary most associate success with family and friends, and a balanced life. They also place greater importance than average on home ownership and a traditional lifestyle.

The UAPS asked urban Aboriginal peoples to rate the importance of eight factors to their idea of a successful life: financial independence; having a strong connection to their Aboriginal identity or background; owning a home; having a good job or a successful career; being close to family and friends; living a balanced life; living in a traditional way; and raising healthy, well-adjusted children who contribute to their community.

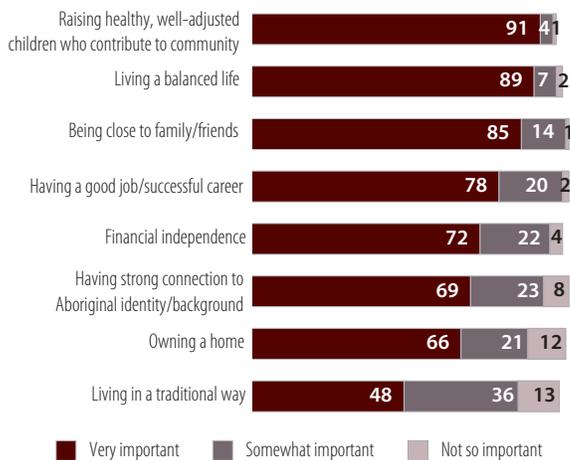
Aboriginal peoples in Calgary are most likely to consider family and a balanced lifestyle central to a successful life. Nine in ten each say it is *very important* to raise healthy, well-adjusted children who contribute to their community (91%), to live a balanced life (89%), and to be close to family and friends (85%).

Close to eight in ten place the same degree of importance on having a good job or successful career (78%), while slightly fewer think that financial independence (72%), having a strong connection to their Aboriginal identity or background (69%), and owning a home (66%) are very important. For each of these elements, most of the remainder say they are somewhat important in defining a successful life, while no more than 12 percent say they are not so important.

Definition of a successful life

People define a successful life in a many different ways.

Please tell me if the following are very important, somewhat important or not so important to your idea of a successful life.



By comparison, Aboriginal peoples in Calgary have mixed opinions about the importance of living in a traditional way: half (48%) say it is very important to a successful life, while one-third (36%) say it is somewhat important and just over one in ten (13%) believe it is not so important.

Aboriginal peoples in smaller urban centres, including Calgary, place greater relative importance on financial independence and owning a home than do those living in the largest urban centres (Vancouver, Toronto, Montreal). A traditional life is also considered more important in Calgary (as well as in Halifax) than elsewhere.

For the most part, First Nations peoples and Métis in Calgary possess similar ‘universal’ notions of a successful life, but First Nations peoples place greater importance on having a strong connection to their Aboriginal identity or background.

6.3 Hopes for the future

Aboriginal peoples in Calgary hope that future generations recognize the importance of education and finish school.

When Aboriginal peoples in Calgary are asked to think about the future and in what ways they hope their children's and grandchildren's lives (or the lives of the next generation) will be different from their own (unprompted, without providing response options), their most prominent hopes are for education.

Aboriginal peoples in Calgary are most likely to hope that future generations learn the importance of education and finishing school (22%). Other wishes for future generations include a society without racism and discrimination (17%), that they become more aware of, involved in and connected to their Aboriginal cultural community (16%), that they live happier and more stable and happier lives (15%), and that they be financially independent (15%). One in ten each hope that future generations avoid addictions, take pride in their Aboriginal heritage and make better decisions than they themselves have done. These, and other hopes, are presented in participants' own words in the sidebar on this page.

These aspirations are largely similar to those expressed by urban Aboriginal peoples in general, although Aboriginal peoples in Calgary are among the most likely to mention a desire for future generations to lead happier, healthier and more stable lives, and to achieve financial independence.

In Calgary, Métis and First Nations peoples express similar hopes for future generations, although First Nations peoples are more likely than Métis to hope that future generations will be connected to their Aboriginal culture, and Métis are more likely than First Nations peoples to wish them financial independence.

The hopes of Aboriginal peoples in Calgary for future generations:

Graduate from school. Be positive members of society. Stay out of trouble. Stay away from drugs and alcohol. Live off-reserve.

I hope they have the opportunity to know who they are and where they come from, and that they have strong leaders and fathers.

For them to have a stronger sense of identity and belief in the Aboriginal way of life, and follow that way of life. To do good for our people and our culture. I want them to not have to deal with the stereotypes and social barriers that have been present in my time.

I would like my daughter to be smarter than I was when I was young, to wait to have children. I would hope that she would see how hard it was for me. I want her to go to university and get a fancy degree, to live the young single life instead of getting shackled up and married. I want grandchildren, but not in the next 15 years.

If I ever have children, I would like them to finish school. Not only just high school like I did, but go into university or maybe a trade. Well, whatever they want, but to really stick to it and complete it, and then work and save money, so that they can live comfortably, and not have to worry about money.

I hope they are more aware of their own culture, more spiritually-connected, and formally educated at a younger age.

That the next generation will be more environmentally-wise and focused on their education.

7.0 Special Theme: Justice

Aboriginal peoples are over-represented as offenders in the criminal justice system. According to Statistics Canada, in 2007/2008, Aboriginal people represented just five percent of Alberta's total population, but made up 35 percent of individuals sentenced to custody in the province's correctional system.¹⁴ In other words, the representation of Aboriginal adults in provincial sentenced custody in Alberta is seven times their representation in the general population.

In this context, it is not surprising that Aboriginal peoples in Calgary are more likely than not to support the idea of a separate Aboriginal justice system.

Key findings

- **Aboriginal peoples in Calgary do not have great confidence in the criminal justice system in Canada, consistent with other UAPS cities.** Moreover, a slim majority endorse the concept of creating a separate Aboriginal system, in part from the belief that the current system is biased against Aboriginal peoples.
- **Majorities of Aboriginal peoples in Calgary support the idea of a criminal justice system that incorporates alternate approaches to justice.** Aboriginal peoples in Calgary believe alternate approaches (such as incorporating Aboriginal concepts of justice, or having Aboriginal police, judges and courts) would help reduce Aboriginal crime rates, improve community safety and increase their confidence in the criminal justice system in Canada.

¹⁴ Statistics Canada. 2009. Incarceration of Aboriginal people in adult correctional services. *The Daily*. July 21. Statistics Canada Catalogue no. 11-001-XIE.

7.1 Confidence in the criminal justice system

Opinions about the criminal justice system in Canada are divided, but few Aboriginal peoples in Calgary express great confidence in the system, similar to other UAPS cities.

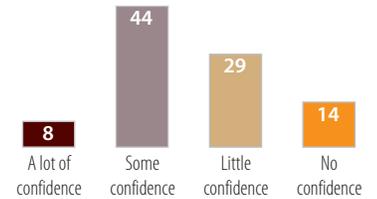
Aboriginal peoples in Calgary hold mixed opinions about Canada’s criminal justice system. Although five in ten (52%) have at least some confidence in this system, few (8%) have a lot of confidence. Just over four in ten say they have little (29%) or no (14%) confidence in the criminal justice system. These views are similar for First Nations peoples and Métis in Calgary.

No more than one in ten in any UAPS city express a great deal of confidence in the criminal justice system. Lack of confidence is most evident among Aboriginal peoples in Vancouver (64%), Saskatoon (63%), Winnipeg (60%), Toronto (59%) and Edmonton (55%). Elsewhere, as in Calgary, slight majorities say they have at least some confidence in the criminal justice system (with the exception of Montreal, where opinion is equally divided).

What influences urban Aboriginal peoples’ confidence in the criminal justice system? The sample size for Calgary alone (249 survey participants) is too small to allow for a detailed analysis by socio-demographic factors. However, the national UAPS survey data (across all 11 cities) suggest that confidence is lower among urban Aboriginal peoples who have had some type of serious involvement with the justice system in Canada (i.e., they have been a victim of a crime, a witness to a crime, or arrested or charged with a crime). The proportion of Aboriginal peoples in Calgary who report serious involvement of this sort (46%) is similar to the average for all 11 UAPS cities (52%).

Confidence in Canada’s system of justice

In general, would you say you have a lot of confidence, some confidence, little confidence or no confidence in the criminal justice system in Canada?



7.2 Support for an Aboriginal justice system

Good idea or bad idea

Support for a separate Aboriginal justice system outweighs opposition among Aboriginal peoples in Calgary, a finding that is consistent with views in most UAPS cities.

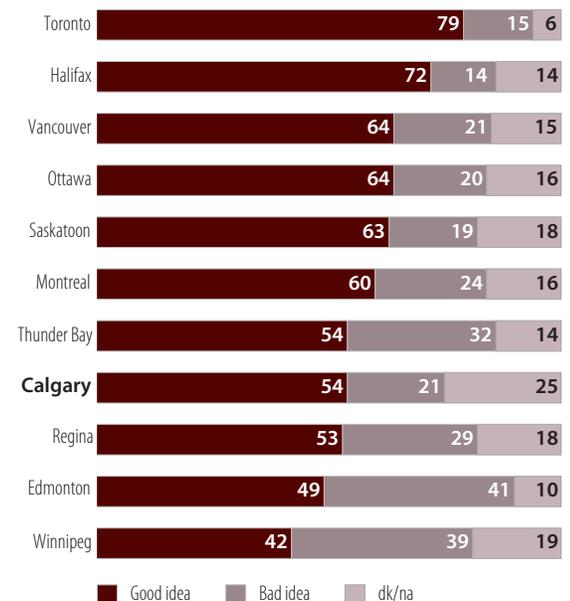
Aboriginal peoples in Calgary are more likely to support than to oppose the creation of an Aboriginal justice system separate from the mainstream system.

Just over five in ten (54%) Aboriginal peoples in Calgary think creating an Aboriginal justice system separate from the mainstream system is a good idea, clearly outweighing the two in ten (21%) who believe it is a bad idea. One in four (25%) offer no opinion. Views are largely similar between First Nations peoples and Métis in Calgary.

Support for the idea of a separate Aboriginal justice system is highest in Toronto (79%) and Halifax (72%). Opposition to the concept is a minority view in all cities, but is highest among Aboriginal peoples in Edmonton (41%) and Winnipeg (39%). In Winnipeg, this greater skepticism is driven by the majority Métis population, while in Edmonton there is an evident desire for both Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal people to be treated equally to avoid (further) discrimination.

Aboriginal justice system

Do you think creating an Aboriginal justice system separate from the mainstream system is a good idea or bad idea?



Reasons why Aboriginal peoples in Calgary think creating an Aboriginal justice system separate from the mainstream system is

...a good idea:

I feel Aboriginal justice, such as the circle (sentencing) to determine retribution and justice for wrongdoers, is one of the most highly developed, evolved form of justice administration in the world (backed up by research). I feel it is a balanced approach that addresses the concerns of everyone involved – perpetrator, as well as victim and/or family members. This is a holistic approach that focuses on healing and moving forward, rather than punishment and condemnation.

It will motivate individuals to work within the justice system rather than against it. It might inspire them to be a police officer, judge or lawyer.

The impact of the residential system has created a cycle of violence that continues in the Aboriginal community. This needs to be dealt with.

Non-Aboriginals only pay fines. Aboriginals always get sent to jail.

The mainstream system is a punitive system; the Indigenous system is restorative, based on making amends.

Aboriginal people are by far the largest group of people behind bars, and they are misrepresented and misunderstood.

WHY A GOOD IDEA. When asked why they think creating an Aboriginal justice system separate from the mainstream system is a *good* idea (unprompted, without response options offered), supporters in Calgary are most likely to say they believe it would offset a current justice system that they perceive to be biased and that treats Aboriginal people unjustly (25%). Others base their support on the belief that a separate system would offer a setting that is culturally more comfortable for Aboriginal people (17%); that it would provide greater rehabilitation/healing and reduce recidivism (13%); that it is a promising alternative for an existing system that is not working for Aboriginal peoples (13%); that Aboriginal people would be better served by a system that allows them to be judged within their own value system and by their own peers, and that respects Aboriginal history and culture (9%); or, because Aboriginal peoples are over-represented in the jail population (9%).

WHY A BAD IDEA? Aboriginal peoples in Calgary who think creating a separate system is a *bad* idea were also asked the reason for their opinion (unprompted, without response options offered). Those opposed to this idea are most likely to say it is because they feel Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal people should be treated equally to avoid discrimination (38%). Other reasons for opposing a separate system include the view that a separate system would unnecessarily segregate and isolate Aboriginal people (20%), cause resentment within the broader population (17%) and/or concerns about favouritism in situations where healing circles are used (11%).

Perceived impact of alternate approaches

Aboriginal peoples in Calgary believe that alternate approaches to justice would help reduce Aboriginal crime rates, improve confidence in the justice system and improve community safety.

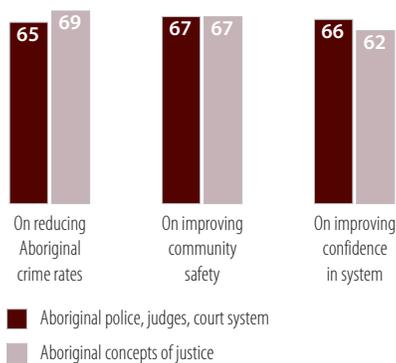
Aside from their opinions about the value of an Aboriginal justice system, what do Aboriginal peoples in Calgary think would make a difference in reducing Aboriginal crime rates, improving community safety and improving their own confidence in the criminal justice system? Urban Aboriginal peoples were asked to evaluate the potential impact of two alternate approaches to justice:

- A system that incorporates Aboriginal police, Aboriginal judges and an Aboriginal court system to work with Aboriginal people who come in contact with the criminal justice system; and
- A system that incorporates Aboriginal concepts of justice, such as sentencing circles and healing circles, Aboriginal laws, and alternatives to punishment such as reconciliation and restoration.

Overall, majorities feel both approaches would have a beneficial impact. Between six and seven in ten Aboriginal peoples in Calgary say that each of these two approaches would have at least a moderate impact on reducing Aboriginal crime rates, improving community safety and improving their confidence in the justice system. These views are consistent with those of urban Aboriginal peoples in general.

Impact of alternate approaches to justice

Big or moderate impact



...or a bad idea:

Why segregate? There's nothing different. The only thing would be culture. They don't take other cultures in the Canadian justice system into consideration, so why consider Aboriginal culture as needing to be separate?

A crime is a crime, no matter what.

The system we have right now works. Justice for one, justice for all.

I'm not sure they would give a criminal an appropriate sentence if that criminal was a relative or distant relative. I feel that relatives often get special treatment in the Aboriginal community.

Everything would be too messed up. Non-Aboriginals would be complaining about it. I just don't think it would be a good idea.

We want the respect of everybody else, so why should we have a separate justice system? If we do, then everyone else will say we are being lenient on our people and they will resent us even more.

8.0 Non-Aboriginal Perspectives

For several years, Environics Research Group has been tracking the attitudes of non-Aboriginal Canadians toward the concerns of Aboriginal peoples through two ongoing syndicated Environics studies: *FOCUS Canada*, a survey of 2,000 adult Canadians conducted continuously since 1976, and *North of 60° and Remote Community Monitor*, a survey of residents in the three territories, Nunavik and Labrador, conducted annually between 1999 and 2007. Over time, one evident trend in Canadians' attitudes is the growing awareness of an Aboriginal urban presence and a prioritizing of issues related to Aboriginal people in cities over others, such as the settling of native land claims.

As part of the *UAPS*, Environics surveyed a representative sample of Canadians to learn how they view Aboriginal people and what informs these views. The results of the non-Aboriginal survey are based on telephone interviews conducted from April 28 to May 15, 2009 with approximately 250 non-Aboriginal people in each of the 10 of the urban centres in which the main survey was conducted: Vancouver, Calgary, Edmonton, Regina, Saskatoon, Winnipeg, Thunder Bay, Toronto, Montreal and Halifax (excluding Ottawa). In all, 2,501 non-Aboriginal urban Canadians participated, providing a rich picture of how NA urban Canadians see Aboriginal people in cities today.

Topics explored in the survey include non-Aboriginal perceptions of Aboriginal people in Canada, their awareness of Aboriginal peoples and communities in their cities, their contact and interaction with Aboriginal people, their perspectives on how well institutions respond to the needs of Aboriginal people, their knowledge of salient Aboriginal issues (i.e., Indian residential schools, acceptance of differential systems of justice), and the importance of Aboriginal history and culture in the minds of non-Aboriginal residents of Calgary.

8.1 Perceptions of Aboriginal peoples

Top-of-mind impression

There is no single common impression of Aboriginal peoples among non-Aboriginal people in Calgary, but those most widely expressed relate to their history as the first inhabitants of Canada or to their First Nations/Métis/Inuit identities.

What are the top-of-mind impressions of Aboriginal peoples among non-Aboriginal people in Calgary? When asked (unprompted, without response options offered), non-Aboriginal people in Calgary express a variety of impressions of Aboriginal peoples, but are most likely to cite the following impressions:

- **First inhabitants.** "The first people" – individuals native to Canada who possess special status by virtue of their original inhabitancy of the country – is the first impression of Aboriginal peoples for more than one in ten (14%) non-Aboriginal people in Calgary.
- **First Nations/Métis/Inuit.** For just over one in ten (13%) non-Aboriginal people in Calgary, what comes to mind is simply First Nations, Métis or Inuit, or other terms that are sometimes used to describe Aboriginal peoples, such as Indians or natives. (There is no indication whether these are positive, neutral or negative impressions.)
- **History and culture.** One in ten (11%) non-Aboriginal people in Calgary associate Aboriginal peoples with history, art and other cultural traditions.
- **Mistreatment.** The most top-of-mind impression for another one in ten (10%) non-Aboriginal Calgarians is of perceptions of abuse and mistreatment experienced by Aboriginal peoples at the hands of Canadian citizens and governments.

- **Reserves.** Another one in ten (8%) first associate Aboriginal peoples with reserves.

Small proportions of non-Aboriginal people in Calgary cite negative first impressions of Aboriginal people, including the perception that most are on welfare or “ask for handouts” (6%), that they are lazy and make minimal contributions to society (6%), that they get special tax breaks or privileges (4%), or suffer from alcoholism or substance abuse (3%).

Other associations with Aboriginal peoples include poverty and poor living conditions (4%), family and friends (4%), diversity of race or language (4%), isolation or segregation from society (3%), or a lack of opportunity and a struggle to succeed (3%). One in ten (12%) cannot say what first comes to mind when they think of Aboriginal peoples.

Are non-Aboriginal impressions changing in Calgary?

A majority of non-Aboriginal residents of Calgary say their impressions of Aboriginal people have not changed in the past few years. Worsening impressions, although they are held by a small minority, are more common in Calgary than average.

Non-Aboriginal Calgary residents are more likely to say their impressions of Aboriginal peoples are unchanged in recent years than to report their views have changed for better or worse.

Six in ten (61%) non-Aboriginal people in Calgary say their impressions of Aboriginal peoples have stayed the same over the past few years. Of the minority who report shifting impressions of Aboriginal peoples, similar proportions say their impressions have improved (23%) or worsened (15%). Although only a small minority, Calgary residents are among those more likely to report their impressions of Aboriginal peoples has recently worsened, similar to Thunder Bay and most other western cities; in contrast, worsening impressions are least common in Vancouver, Toronto, Montreal and Halifax.

REASONS FOR IMPROVING IMPRESSIONS. Non-Aboriginal residents of Calgary who say their impressions of Aboriginal people have improved over time cite three main reasons for this:

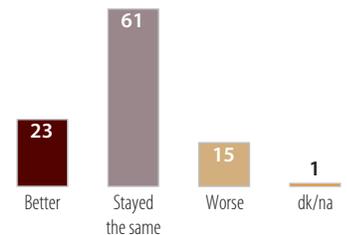
- **Personal relationships.** A personal relationship with an Aboriginal person has contributed to better impressions for one-third (35%) of this group.
- **Visibility.** One in four (24%) cite a more visible and positive presence in the local community and media as the main reason their impression of Aboriginal peoples has improved.
- **Perception of progress.** One in five (21%) attribute their improved impressions to improvements in the economic, social or educational circumstances of Aboriginal peoples.

Fewer associate their more positive impressions with specific knowledge gained through educational or awareness courses (11%), or with a better general understanding of Aboriginal culture or issues (7%).

REASONS FOR WORSENING IMPRESSIONS. The small minority of non-Aboriginal residents of Calgary who report their impressions of Aboriginal peoples have worsened attribute this change to two main factors: the perception that Aboriginal peoples rely on “handouts” and make minimal societal contributions (36%, representing 5% of all non-Aboriginal Calgary residents), or the perception that they suffer from alcoholism or substance abuse (34%).

Stable impressions

Over the past few years, has your impression of Aboriginal people gotten better or worse, or stayed the same?

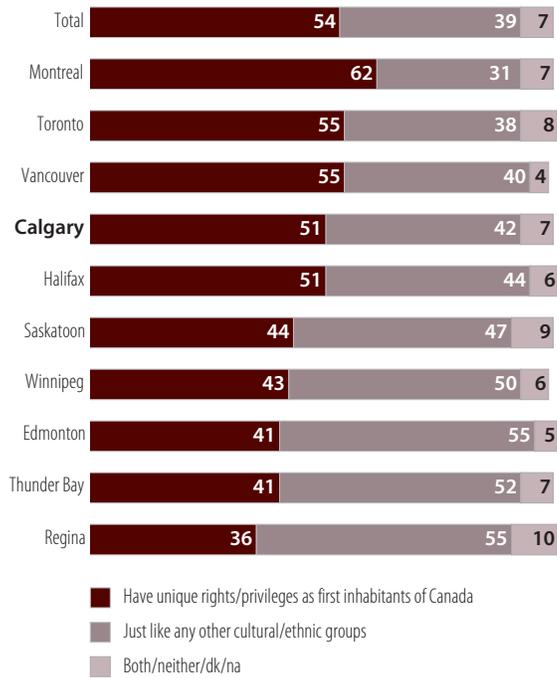


8.2 Unique rights and privileges

Calgary residents are divided about whether Aboriginal peoples have unique rights and privileges as the first inhabitants of Canada or are just like other cultural or ethnic groups in Canadian society.

Unique rights and privileges, or just like other groups?

Which of the following two statements best represents how you think about Aboriginal people?



Non-Aboriginal residents of Calgary are divided in their views about whether Aboriginal people possess a distinct status or are just the same as other cultural or ethnic groups in Canada.

Half (51%) of non-Aboriginal people in Calgary believe Aboriginal peoples have unique rights and privileges as the first inhabitants of Canada, whereas four in ten (42%) feel Aboriginal peoples are just like other cultural or ethnic groups in Canada's multicultural society (5% say they are both equally or neither, while 2% do not have an opinion).

Views in Calgary are most similar to those in Halifax, Vancouver, Toronto and Montreal, where the belief that Aboriginal people have unique rights and privileges tends to outweigh belief that they are no different from other cultural or ethnic groups. Typically, it is residents of cities with larger relative Aboriginal populations who are more likely to hold this latter view.

8.3 The big picture: explaining views of Aboriginal peoples among non-Aboriginal residents of Calgary

A segmentation analysis of Calgary residents reveals that they are most likely to be Cultural Romantics (individuals who take a positive view of the contribution that Aboriginal peoples make to the nation's cultural makeup), although the city has a larger than average proportion of Dismissive Naysayers (people who take a negative view of First Nations peoples, Métis and Inuit).

The overall picture of attitudes toward Aboriginal peoples in Calgary can best be viewed by a moving to another level of analysis that involved an in-depth look at the survey items to uncover broad viewpoints or segments among non-Aboriginal people living in the UAPS cities.

Specifically, this in-depth look involved determining if there are patterns of views among non-Aboriginal urban Canadians that run deeper than their answers to specific questions. To determine this, a segmentation of the data was performed. The goal of the segmentation was to find natural clusters among non-Aboriginal urban Canadians based on their overall attitudes toward Aboriginal culture, responsibility and contribution to Canadian society in order to encapsulate non-Aboriginal urban Canadians' broader viewpoints of Aboriginal people.

An analysis of a large number of questions posed in the UAPS reveals four distinct *world views* of Aboriginal people among non-Aboriginal urban Canadians:

- **Dismissive Naysayers.** They tend to view Aboriginal peoples and communities negatively (i.e., unfairly entitled and isolated from Canadian society).
- **Inattentive Skeptics.** Uninformed and unaware, they typically believe Aboriginal peoples are just the same as other Canadians.
- **Cultural Romantics.** Idealistic and optimistic, they have a strong belief in Aboriginal peoples' artistic and cultural contributions.
- **Connected Advocates.** They have a high level of contact with Aboriginal peoples, and a strong belief that Aboriginal peoples often experience discrimination.

Calgary residents are most likely to be Cultural Romantics (39%), followed by Dismissive Naysayers (33%). Another one in five (22%) are Connected Advocates, while Inattentive Skeptics (6%) represent a very small proportion of non-Aboriginal people in Calgary. Dismissive Naysayers are more prominent and Inattentive Skeptics are less prominent in Calgary compared to average, similar to the situation in the Prairie cities.

Cultural Romantics (39%)



Dismissive Naysayers (33%)



Connected Advocates (22%)



Inattentive Skeptics (6%)



8.4 Awareness and perceptions of an Aboriginal community in Calgary

Awareness of an Aboriginal community in Calgary

Virtually all non-Aboriginal residents of Calgary are aware that there are Aboriginal peoples living in the city, and many are also aware of the existence of an Aboriginal community, although to a lesser extent than in cities with a large relative Aboriginal population.

The UAPS non-Aboriginal survey asked non-Aboriginal residents of Calgary how aware they are of Aboriginal people and communities in the city. Awareness of Aboriginal peoples in the city is almost universal, and many are also aware of an Aboriginal *community* (i.e., a physical area or neighbourhood, or a social community) in their midst.

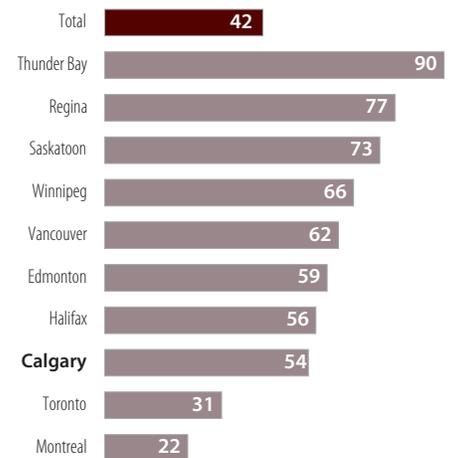
Virtually all (98%) Calgary residents say they know there are Aboriginal peoples living in their city, a high level of awareness that is consistent across most cities except Toronto and Montreal.

A slim majority (54%) of Calgary residents are also aware of an Aboriginal *community* in their city. This is noticeably higher than the level of awareness among non-Aboriginal residents of Toronto and Montreal, but lower than in Thunder Bay (90%), Regina (77%) and Saskatoon (73%).

What explains the variation among non-Aboriginal urban Canadians in their awareness of Aboriginal people and communities in their city? The most obvious explanation is that the relative size of Aboriginal populations is higher in Prairie cities and Thunder Bay than in Toronto and Montreal, making a distinct Aboriginal group and/or community more apparent to non-Aboriginal urban Canadians in the first group of cities. However, this does not entirely explain the variation in levels of awareness among cities with larger relative Aboriginal populations. Other factors include how Aboriginal people are dispersed across city neighbourhoods, the existence of urban reserves in some cities, and the nature and physical location of Aboriginal organizations in these cities.¹⁵ For instance, among those aware of an Aboriginal community or Aboriginal people living in their city, awareness of any Aboriginal organizations that are run by and provide services for Aboriginal people ranges from a high of 75 percent in Thunder Bay to a low of only 11 percent in Montreal (in Calgary, 44% are aware of any Aboriginal organization in their city).

Aware of Aboriginal community in my city

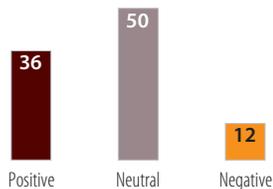
Are you aware of an Aboriginal community in your city?
By community, I mean either a physical area or neighbourhood, or a social community.



¹⁵ Katherine A.H. Graham and Evelyn Peters, *Aboriginal Communities and Urban Sustainability*, Canadian Policy Research Networks, Discussion Paper F27, December 2002.

Presence of Aboriginal people and communities*

Do you think that this Aboriginal community/ presence of Aboriginal people is positive, neutral or negative for your city?



* Subsample: Those who are aware of either an Aboriginal community or Aboriginal people in Calgary.

Positive or negative presence

Most non-Aboriginal people in Calgary believe the presence of Aboriginal peoples has a positive or neutral impact on the city.

How do Calgary residents perceive Aboriginal peoples and communities in their city? When asked, Calgary residents who are aware of Aboriginal people and communities in the city offer mixed views about whether this presence is positive or neutral, with a minority who describe it as negative for Calgary.

Half (50%) of non-Aboriginal residents aware of Aboriginal people or communities in Calgary believe this is a neutral presence in their city. One in three (36%) think this presence is positive, and one in ten (12%) describe the impact as negative. These views are close to the average for non-Aboriginal people across all the UAPS cities.

Contributions and challenges

Calgary residents who regard Aboriginal people and communities in their city positively typically point to their contributions to Calgary's economy, and to its artistic and cultural diversity.

REASONS FOR POSITIVE VIEWS. Among Calgary residents who think the presence of Aboriginal people and communities is positive for their city, in what ways do they think Aboriginal people contribute? When asked (unprompted, without response options offered), they are most likely to think Aboriginal peoples and communities contribute to Calgary in the following main ways:

- **Enrich urban art and culture.** One in three (34%) believe Aboriginal people and communities make great contributions to Calgary's artistic and cultural life.
- **Add cultural diversity.** Three in ten (30%) believe Aboriginal people and communities add to the general cultural mosaic of Calgary.
- **Stimulate city economy.** Calgary residents note the economic contributions Aboriginal people and communities make to Calgary as employees and employers of local businesses (27%), and by paying taxes (7%).

Smaller proportions say that Aboriginal peoples make positive contributions to the city through their environmental knowledge and activism (10%), and their participation in Aboriginal outreach and community programs (8%). One in ten (9%) note that Aboriginal people and communities contribute to Calgary in that they, like anyone else regardless of ethnic or cultural group, are citizens who make an equal contribution to life in their city.

REASONS FOR NEGATIVE VIEWS. The subsample of Calgary residents who believe the presence of Aboriginal peoples is negative for the city (n=26) is too small for meaningful conclusions. However, the findings suggest there is no single reason for negative views, with these assessments associated with a range of perceptions such as increased crime and poverty, substance abuse, and the strain placed on health care and other social programs.

Contact with Aboriginal people

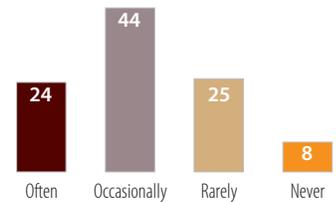
The majority of non-Aboriginal residents of Calgary have at least occasional contact with Aboriginal people, but not to the same extent as those in the Prairie cities and Thunder Bay.

A majority of non-Aboriginal people in Calgary are in contact with Aboriginal peoples in their daily lives, although not to the same extent as those in the Prairie cities and Thunder Bay. One in four (24%) Calgary residents say they often encounter Aboriginal people and another four in ten (44%) do so occasionally. The remainder rarely (25%) or never (8%) have contact with Aboriginal people.

Not surprisingly, NA urban Canadians in cities with larger relative Aboriginal populations (i.e., Winnipeg, Regina, Saskatoon and Thunder Bay) are the most likely to regularly encounter Aboriginal people, while this is least common in Toronto and Montreal.

Contact with Aboriginal people

Do you personally have contact with Aboriginal people often, occasionally, rarely or never?



Aboriginal friends, neighbours and co-workers

Very few Calgary residents know Aboriginal people as close friends, neighbours or co-workers, which is understandably more common in cities with larger relative Aboriginal populations.

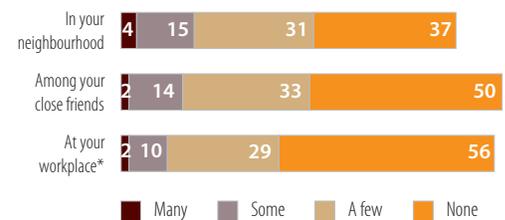
Aside from casual contact, how many Calgary residents know Aboriginal people, either as close friends, neighbours or co-workers? Among Calgary residents who are aware of Aboriginal people and communities in the city, only a small proportion know many or some Aboriginal people as neighbours (19%), close friends (16%) or as co-workers (12% of those who are currently employed). In each case, the remainder say they know only a few or no Aboriginal people in those ways.

As could be expected, the proportions of NA urban Canadians who have at least some Aboriginal people as neighbours, close friends and co-workers are higher in cities with larger relative Aboriginal populations, such as Regina, Winnipeg, Saskatoon and Thunder Bay.

When asked if they have any interest in having more Aboriginal friends, five in ten (49%) Calgary residents who are aware of Aboriginal people and communities in the city say they are. Relatively few (11%) say they are not interested, but four in ten say "it depends" (34%) or are uncertain (6%). The level of interest in Calgary in having more Aboriginal friends is similar to that in the Prairie cities and Thunder Bay, but lower than in Vancouver and in the cities east of Thunder Bay.

Numbers of Aboriginal people

How many of your neighbours/co-workers/friends are Aboriginal? Many/some/a few, or none?



* Excludes those who do not work

8.5 Perceived barriers facing Aboriginal people

Most important issues facing Aboriginal people in Canada and in cities

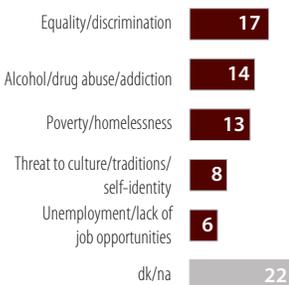
Most important issue in Canada (top mentions)

In your opinion, what is the most important issue facing Aboriginal people in Canada today?



Most important issue in cities (top mentions)

And in your opinion, what is the most important issue facing Aboriginal people living in cities across Canada today?



Alcohol and substance abuse is perceived to be the most important issue facing the Aboriginal population in Canada today, while discrimination is also considered a top challenge for urban Aboriginal peoples.

MOST IMPORTANT ISSUE. When non-Aboriginal people in Calgary are asked to identify the one issue they consider to be the most important facing Aboriginal people in Canada today (asked unprompted, without offering response choices), the problem most frequently mentioned is alcohol and substance abuse (15%). Also mentioned are threats to culture and identity (8%), poverty and homelessness (8%), land claims issues (7%), social issues/isolation (7%) and lack of education (6%). A wide range of other potential problems are mentioned, but none by more than four percent (each) of Calgary residents. Fifteen percent offer no opinion regarding the main issue facing Aboriginal people in Canada today.

Residents of Calgary are the most likely of non-Aboriginal residents in the *UAPS* cities to mention substance abuse as a leading issue for Aboriginal peoples in Canada. They are less likely to mention land claims as an issue (particularly by comparison to residents of Montreal and Toronto).

MOST IMPORTANT ISSUE IN CITIES. When non-Aboriginal people in Calgary are asked to specify the important issues facing Aboriginal people living in Canadian cities (asked unprompted, without offering response choices), they are most likely to identify discrimination (17%), followed by alcohol and substance abuse (14%), and poverty and homelessness (13%), all of which are more widely mentioned in Calgary than average for the *UAPS* cities.

Calgary residents also perceive urban Aboriginal people to be dealing with threats to culture and identity (8%), unemployment (6%), lack of education (4%), and social issues, isolation or lack of integration (3%). A number of other issues are mentioned, but none by more than two percent each. One in five (22%) do not identify any issues facing Aboriginal people in Canadian cities today.

Indian residential schools

The majority of Calgary residents are aware of Indian residential schools, and this group tends to believe that the challenges faced by Aboriginal communities are, at least to some extent, a result of this experience.

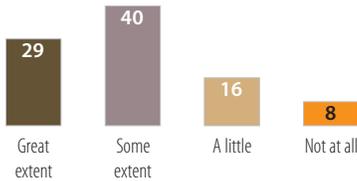
The survey examined awareness of Indian residential schools among non-Aboriginal people in Calgary, and their views about the consequences of this experience for Aboriginal people.

AWARENESS. Six in ten (61%) non-Aboriginal residents of Calgary report they have read or heard something about Indian residential schools. This level of awareness is higher than average for non-Aboriginal residents of the 10 cities included in the study, but is lower than in Regina, Saskatoon, Winnipeg and Thunder Bay.

IMPACT. Residents of Calgary who are aware of residential schools also recognize that these institutions have had a significant impact on Aboriginal peoples. Of those who are aware of residential schools, seven in ten think that the challenges faced by Aboriginal communities today are, to a great extent (29%) or to some extent (40%), the result of Aboriginal peoples' experiences in residential schools. A minority see little (16%) or no (8%) relationship between the two. Views among non-Aboriginal people in Calgary about the impact of residential schools are similar to the average seen across all UAPS cities.

Impact of Indian residential schools*

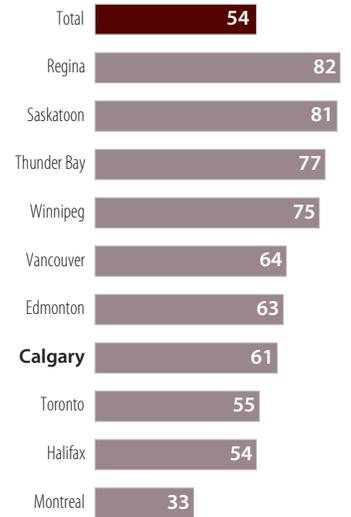
To what extent do you think that the challenges facing Aboriginal people communities today are a result of Aboriginal peoples' experiences in residential schools?



* Subsample: Among those aware of Indian residential schools

Aware of Indian residential schools

Have you read or heard anything about Indian residential schools?

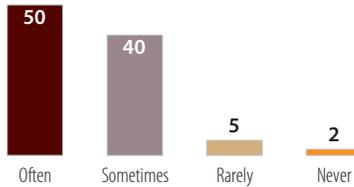


Perceptions of discrimination

Almost all non-Aboriginal residents of Calgary think Aboriginal people experience discrimination at least some of the time. Moreover, the view that Aboriginal people face greater discrimination than do Jews, Chinese and Muslims is more common in Calgary than average.

Discrimination

Do you think that Aboriginal people are often, sometimes, rarely or never the subject of discrimination in Canadian society today?



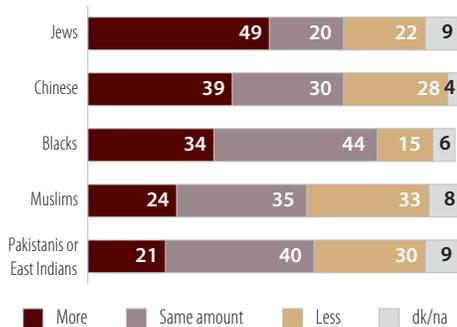
There is widespread recognition among non-Aboriginal residents of Calgary that Aboriginal peoples are the subject of discrimination in Canadian society today. Nine in ten Calgary residents believe Aboriginal peoples often (50%) or sometimes (40%) face discrimination. Only seven percent believe they rarely or never do. Notably, the view that Aboriginal peoples are often the victims of discrimination is among the most widespread in Calgary, as well as in Thunder Bay and Regina.

Furthermore, majorities of non-Aboriginal people in Calgary think Aboriginal people are subject to the same, if not more, discrimination relative to other groups in Canadian society. Five in ten (49%) think Aboriginal people endure *more* discrimination than do Jews, four in ten say the same about Chinese (39%) and one-third about Blacks (34%). Close to one-quarter (each) say Aboriginal peoples endure more discrimination than do Muslims (24%), and Pakistanis or East Indians (21%).

Perceptions that Aboriginal people face *more* discrimination relative to Jews and Blacks are more common among non-Aboriginal people in western cities (including Calgary). Calgary residents are also more likely than average to believe Aboriginal peoples experience greater discrimination than do Muslims.

Discrimination against Aboriginals relative to other minorities

In Canada, do you think Aboriginal people are subject to more, less or about the same amount of discrimination as each of the following groups?



Main source of problems facing Aboriginal peoples

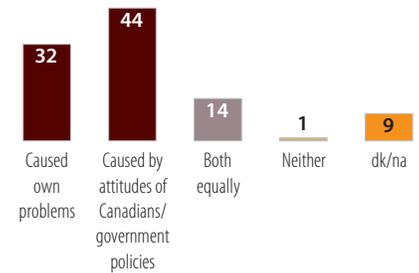
The balance of opinion in Calgary is that the problems faced by Aboriginal peoples have largely been caused by the attitudes of Canadians and the policies of governments rather than by Aboriginal peoples themselves.

Non-Aboriginal residents of Calgary have a tendency to believe that many of the problems facing Aboriginal peoples are largely due to external factors over which they have no control. More than four in ten (44%) attribute the problems facing Aboriginal peoples to the attitudes of Canadians and the policies of government, compared to three in ten (32%) who say these are problems that Aboriginal peoples have brought upon themselves. Fourteen percent say both factors are equally responsible, while one in ten (9%) offer no opinion.

These views are closer to those expressed in Vancouver and the cities east of Winnipeg than to those expressed in the Prairie cities (where opinion is divided between the two viewpoints) and Thunder Bay (where a plurality point to the attitudes of Canadians and policies of governments).

Responsibility for problems

In your opinion, have Aboriginal people in Canada largely caused their own problems or have the problems been caused primarily by the attitudes of Canadians and the policies of governments?

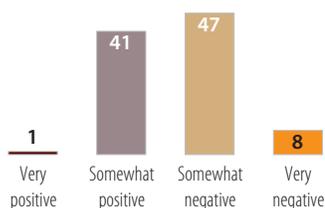


8.6 Relations with Aboriginal people and the future

Perceptions of current relations

Current relations between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal people

Would you describe the current relations between Aboriginal people and non-Aboriginal people in Canada today as very positive, somewhat positive, somewhat negative or very negative?



Non-Aboriginal residents of Calgary are ultimately divided about the current state of relations between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal people, but are among the most pessimistic, together with residents of other western cities.

There is no consensus among Calgary residents about the state of current relations between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal people, but they are more likely to be pessimistic than optimistic. A slight majority (55%) believe current relations are negative, while four in ten (42%) describe them as positive; few have extreme perceptions of current relations (i.e., say they are very positive or negative).

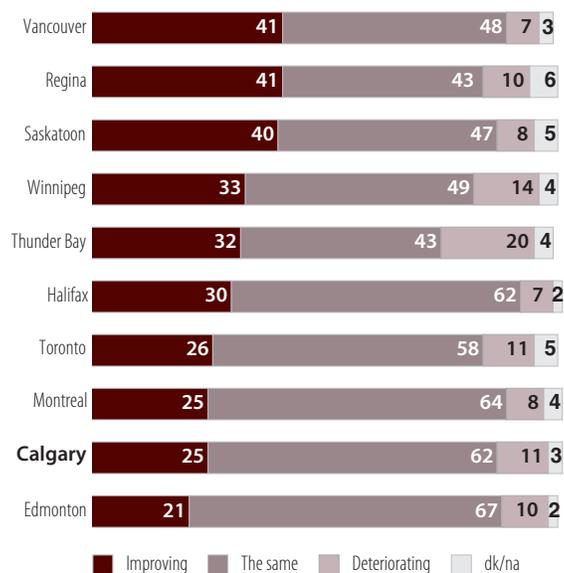
The view that current relations are negative is most pronounced in Edmonton (62%), but is also held by majorities in Thunder Bay (55%), Winnipeg (55%) and Regina (53%), as well as Calgary (55%). In contrast, non-Aboriginal residents of Vancouver, Halifax and Toronto are more optimistic than pessimistic about their relationship with Aboriginal people. Montrealers and residents of Saskatoon are most evenly divided between the two viewpoints.

Perceptions of change

Most non-Aboriginal residents in Calgary believe that relations with Aboriginal peoples are not changing, and optimism that things are changing for the better is lower than in other UAPS cities.

Changing relations

Do you think relations between Aboriginal people and non-Aboriginal people in Canada are improving, deteriorating or staying about the same?



Most non-Aboriginal people in Calgary perceive little change in the evolution of the Aboriginal-non-Aboriginal relationship. Six in ten (62%) say relations are staying the same, while one in four (25%) think relations are improving and one in ten (11%) say they are deteriorating.

Calgary residents are among the most likely to perceive the status quo in relations between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal people, and among the least likely to be optimistic that relations are improving, together with those living in Montreal, Toronto and Edmonton. By comparison, optimism is highest in Vancouver, Regina and Saskatoon.

Future quality of life for Aboriginal peoples

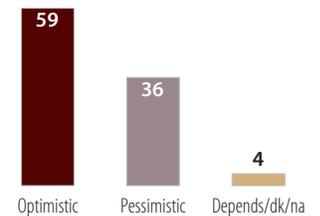
Six in ten non-Aboriginal residents of Calgary are optimistic that Aboriginal peoples' quality of life will approach that of the rest of the population's in the next generation, a view that is similar to that expressed in other cities.

Looking to the future, what do Calgary residents foresee for the quality of life of Aboriginal peoples in their city? Residents of Calgary are largely optimistic that Aboriginal peoples' quality of life in the city will improve to the same level as that of non-Aboriginal people in the next generation. Six in ten (59%) Calgary residents are optimistic about such progress, compared to one in three (36%) who are pessimistic. The degree of optimism about Aboriginal peoples' future quality of life is remarkably similar in all UAPS cities, including Calgary.

How do Calgary residents think their city can help ensure a better quality of life for Aboriginal peoples? When asked (unprompted, without response options offered), non-Aboriginal people in Calgary suggest a range of approaches, but most commonly cite fair and/or equal treatment or opportunity for Aboriginal peoples (17%), followed by greater educational (12%) and employment (11%) opportunities, community/social outreach programs (9%), quality affordable housing (9%) and more respect for cultural differences (8%). A wide range of other approaches are mentioned, but none by more than five percent (each) of the population. One-quarter (25%) of Calgary's non-Aboriginal residents have no suggestions for ways in which their city can help ensure a better quality of life for Aboriginal peoples.

Views of future quality of life

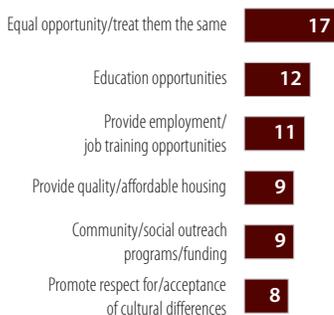
Looking to the future, are you optimistic or pessimistic that the quality of life for Aboriginal people in your city will improve to the same level as non-Aboriginal people in the next generation?



How to ensure a better quality of life

(top 6 mentions)

What do you think is the most important way Halifax can help ensure a better quality of life for Aboriginal people?



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