

Press release
For immediate release

Impact of Confinement on English-speaking Families

MONTREAL, JUNE 15, 2020 – A survey conducted with over 2,100 Quebec parents released during the Semaine Québécoise de la Paternité reveals that English-speaking families have been hard hit by the impact of confinement. However some have experienced positive changes in co-parenting. This conclusion is based on the analysis of results from 439 English-speaking respondents to a survey commissioned by the Regroupement pour la Valorisation de la Paternité (RVP) and supported by the Community Health and Social Services Network (CHSSN).

Impacts on parents' mental health

Nearly one quarter (23%) of English-speaking respondents experienced psychological distress according to a scientifically recognized index of psychological distress. In comparison to French-speaking families, they were more likely to have experienced fatigue (44% versus 38%) with parenthood being a source of stress for a considerable proportion among them (57% versus 43%), and they expressed a significant doubt regarding whether they are responding appropriately to their children (65% versus 34%).

According to CHSSN's Russell Kueber, these results demonstrate how the crisis has affected English-speaking parents. "English-speaking communities are scattered throughout Quebec and are experiencing specific isolation and inclusion issues that could increase social inequalities in terms of health," says Kueber. In his opinion, this could help explain why English-speaking families have felt the effects of the crisis so strongly.

Some have experienced positive changes in co-parenting

Although heavily affected, English-speaking parents seem to have nonetheless experienced positive outcomes on their co-parenting (working as a team to take care of their children). Almost two thirds (65%) of the English-speaking respondents indicated that confinement measures have changed some of their co-parenting practices, with the changes seen as positive in most cases. By comparison, this proportion was 50% among French-speaking respondents.

A high percentage reported a positive change in terms of: the time spent with the children (67%), the understanding of their needs (47%), the quality of the relationship between them (48%), their ability to empathize with the other parent (34%), task sharing (36%), their communication (36%), the perception of their role as a parent (39%) and that of the other parent (30%).

"Despite the difficulties, this near three-month confinement appears to have led to a realization of the benefits of co-parenting and an increased questioning of certain practices," Russell Kueber

analyzed. “The good news is that many respondents identified some positive co-parenting experiences,” he added.

To view the full survey results (in French)

<https://www.semainedelapaternite.org/fr/nouvelles20200615-sondage-communique>

Methodology

The survey was conducted by the firm SOM on behalf of the Regroupement pour la Valorisation de la Paternité in partnership with the Observatoire des tout-petits, Naître et grandir, the Institut national de santé publique du Québec, and the Community Health and Social Services Network, with 2,115 Quebec parents, including 1,040 fathers and 1,075 mothers, between May 22nd and June 2nd, 2020. Among them were 439 parents that preferred to respond to the questionnaire in English.

About the Semaine Québécoise de la Paternité

The Semaine Québécoise de la Paternité is being held this year from June 15th to 21st, Father’s Day. The event is intended for fathers, mothers, children, the general public, and organizations that support Quebec families. It aims to highlight paternal commitment in daily family living to the well-being of children and to a greater equality between mothers and fathers.

The Semaine Québécoise de la Paternité is an initiative of the Regroupement pour la Valorisation de la Paternité (RVP). The CHSSN is a partner of the event for its Anglophone component. Visit the SQP 2020 website: www.fierdetrepere.com

About the Community Health and Social Services Network

The Community Health and Social Services Network (CHSSN) was created to support the efforts of Quebec’s English-speaking communities aiming to resolve health inequalities and promote community vitality. Launched as a result of the efforts of four founding organizations, the CHSSN now has over 60 projects and partnerships in the primary health care, community development, and public health sectors. The CHSSN’s objective is to contribute to the dynamism of Quebec’s English-speaking communities by building strategic relationships and partnerships within the health and social services system to improve access to services.

For more information or interviews:

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TABLES EXTRACTED FROM THE SURVEY

Table 1

Co-parenting practices during confinement

How much did the current COVID-19 situation and confinement measures affect how you manage your co-parenting, i.e. the level of teamwork with your co-parent?	TOTAL	FRENCH-SPEAKING PARENTS	ENGLISH-SPEAKING PARENTS
A lot/A fair amount	52%	50%	65%
Moderately	18%	19%	11%
Somewhat/Not at all	32%	31%	24%

Red percentages indicate a higher significant difference. Blue percentages indicate a lower significant difference.

Table 2

The positive or negative nature of changes

Is the impact related to COVID-19 that you are reporting regarding your co-parenting generally positive, negative, or mixed?	TOTAL	FRENCH-SPEAKING PARENTS	ENGLISH-SPEAKING PARENTS
Very or generally positive	39%	40%	38%
Mixed	46%	45%	48%
Very or generally negative	15%	15%	14%

Red percentages indicate the higher significant difference. Blue percentages indicate a lower significant difference.

Table 3

Impact of changes to co-parenting resulting from the COVID-19 crisis and confinement measures

Is the current situation making a change in...? (% POSITIVE CHANGE)	TOTAL	FRENCH-SPEAKING PARENTS	ENGLISH-SPEAKING PARENTS
...the time spent with your child or children	67%	67%	67%

...your relationship with your child or children	47%	46%	48%
...your understanding of your child or children's needs	41%	40%	47%
...how you are supported by your employer	32%	32%	29%
...how you perceive your own role as a mother or father	29%	28%	39%
...your ability to show empathy and understand your co-parent	29%	29%	34%
...the sharing of tasks related to the children	28%	27%	36%
...your communication with your co-parent	25%	24%	36%
...how you perceive your role as a co-parent	24%	23%	30%
...sharing the mental load related to your role of mother or father	21%	20%	29%
...how you are supported by the professionals and workers involved in your child or children's lives	20%	19%	28%

Red percentages indicate the higher significant difference. Blue percentages indicate a lower significant difference.

Table 4
Psychological Distress Scale

During confinement, how often did you feel...? (% ALWAYS/OFTEN/SOMETIMES)	TOTAL	FRENCH-SPEAKING PARENTS	ENGLISH-SPEAKING PARENTS
Nervous	64%	65%	61%
Hopeless	36%	36%	29%
Agitated, restless	33%	32%	38%
So depressed that nothing could make you smile	22%	22%	21%

Tired to the point that everything seemed like a chore	39%	38%	44%
Useless	22%	22%	22%
HIGH SCORE (10 TO 24) – PROBABLE PSYCHOLOGICAL DISTRESS	23%	23%	24%

Red percentages indicate the higher significant difference. Blue percentages indicate a lower significant difference.

Table 5
Parenting skills

How much is being a parent for you...? (% A LOT/A FAIR AMOUNT)	TOTAL	FRENCH-SPEAKING PARENTS	ENGLISH-SPEAKING PARENTS
A source of satisfaction	94%	93%	94%
A source of pride	97%	97%	96%
A source of fun	91%	91%	93%
A source of anxiety or stress	45%	43%	57%
A major part of your life	99%	99%	99%
Gives you the belief that you have what it takes	86%	86%	87%
Makes you think you would be a good example for a new parent	75%	74%	80%
Makes it hard to know if you are responding appropriately to your children	37%	34%	65%
Educating your children up to your own requirements	83%	83%	85%

Red percentages indicate the higher significant difference. Blue percentages indicate a lower significant difference.

Table 6
Co-parenting practices

% of positive answers	TOTAL	FRENCH-SPEAKING PARENTS	ENGLISH-SPEAKING PARENTS

Acknowledgement of the other parent (response average)	84%	84%	83%
Parenting consistency (Response average)	83%	83%	82%
Communication between parents (response average)	81%	81%	83%
Task sharing (Response average)	72%	71%	76%

Red percentages indicate the higher significant difference. Blue percentages indicate a lower significant difference.

Table 7
Social circumstances that facilitate co-parenting

% Completely or mostly agree	TOTAL	FRENCH-SPEAKING PARENTS	ENGLISH-SPEAKING PARENTS
Public laws, regulations and policies, and social norms give equal value to both the roles of fathers and mothers	54%	53%	64%
My employer gives equal value to the roles of both fathers and mothers	69%	69%	69%
Educators and teachers give equal value to the roles of both fathers and mothers	76%	76%	77%
Healthcare providers give equal value to the roles of both fathers and mothers	79%	79%	76%
Family service workers give equal value to the roles of both fathers and mothers	73%	73%	75%

Red percentages indicate the higher significant difference. Blue percentages indicate a lower significant difference.