

THE QUEBEC SURVEY OF CHILD DEVELOPMENT IN KINDERGARTEN

LSN* of Haut-Saint-François



*Local Services Network



Summary of the Survey

Early childhood is a pivotal period in development. The experiences of children—positive and negative—affect the development of motor, cognitive, social, and language skills. Studies have shown that vulnerability in kindergarten is associated with past social adjustment and school success.¹ Indeed, nearly half of the vulnerable children in kindergarten will have lower-than-average school performance in the fourth grade.

The *Québec Survey of Child Development in Kindergarten* (QSCDK)²—conducted in 2012, 2017, and 2022 by the Institut de la statistique du Québec (ISQ) in all English- and French-language public and private schools in the province (excluding students with special needs or learning difficulties)—measures the development of groups of children. As part of this study, teachers filled out a questionnaire consisting of 103 questions that had been validated and used in other provinces and countries for each of their students.³ It should be pointed out that this questionnaire was based on observable behaviours related to developmental norms and was not designed to evaluate the educational program or teacher or school performance.

5 Domains Assessed

The questionnaire made it possible to assess the proportion of vulnerable children in the following five domains:

Domain	Topics of Interest
Physical health and well-being	General physical development, motor skills, diet and dress, cleanliness, punctuality, alertness
Social competence	Social skills; self-confidence; sense of responsibility; respect of peers, adults, rules, and routines; work habits and autonomy; curiosity
Emotional maturity	Prosocial behaviour and mutual help, fear and anxiety, aggressive behaviour, hyperactivity and inattention, expression of emotions
Cognitive and language development	Interest and skills in reading, writing, and mathematics; adequate language use
Communication skills and general knowledge	Ability to communicate so as to make themselves understood, capacity to understand others, clear articulation, general knowledge



We should keep in mind that not all children considered vulnerable in kindergarten will present difficulties throughout primary school.

Children are considered vulnerable when their score in a domain of development is equal to or lower than the threshold established in Quebec in 2012 (10th percentile of the distribution of results in the first cycle of the survey).

These children are:

- facing a challenge because their mastery of certain aptitudes or skills falls short.
- less well equipped to take full advantage of what school can offer.
- more likely to experience difficulties in school.

Information and mobilization activities will also be provided starting in fall 2023.

Findings for the LSN of Haut-Saint-François



In the Estrie health and social services region, **316 kindergarten teachers** completed the questionnaire for **4,676 children** in **146 schools** between February and May 2022. This represents a response rate of **94.5%**. The following table shows the proportions of five-year-old kindergarten children by domain, vulnerable in at least one developmental domain within the local service network (LSN; RLS in French).

In 2022, **37.9%** of five-year-old kindergarten children in the LSN of Haut-Saint-François were vulnerable in at least one developmental domain, representing nearly **100 children**. This proportion is statistically higher than that in the rest of Quebec for the 2022 survey cycle.

In the LSN, four of the five domains had values statistically higher than in the rest of Quebec, in particular: *physical health and well-being* (17.9%), *emotional maturity* (21.4%), *social competence* (15.9%), and *language and cognitive development* (21.7%).

The *communication skills and general knowledge* domain is comparable to the rest of Quebec.

Proportion of Vulnerable Children by Developmental Domain

Domain	LSN OF HAUT-SAINT-FRANÇOIS				ESTRIE				QUEBEC			
	2012	2017	2022	Change	2012	2017	2022	Change	2012	2017	2022	Change
Physical health and well-being	13,1*	13,1*	17,9 (+)	↑ (n.s.)	9,8	11,4	11,6 (+)	↑ (n.s.)	9,5	10,6	10,3	↓ (n.s.)
Emotional maturity	9,4*	14,4*	21,4 (+)	↑ (s)	10,1	13,3 (+)	12,9 (+)	↓ (n.s.)	9,7	11,5	11,7	↑ (n.s.)
Social skills	6,7*	11,3*	15,9 (+)	↑ (n.s.)	9,7	12,6 (+)	11,8 (+)	↓ (n.s.)	9	10,2	10,6	↑ (s)
Cognitive and language development	9,5*	14,3*	21,7 (+)	↑ (s)	10,7	13,2 (+)	13,3 (+)	↑ (n.s.)	10	11,1	12,1	↑ (s)
Communication skills and general knowledge	7,5*	10,9*	13,4*	↑ (n.s.)	10	11,4	9,8 (-)	↓ (s)	10,8	11,1	11,5	↑ (s)
At least 1 domain	29,7	30,4	37,9 (+)	↑ (n.s.)	26,8	29,4 (+)	30,2 (+)	↑ (n.s.)	25,6	27,7	28,7	↑ (s)

(+/-): Figure significantly higher/lower than in the rest of Quebec (threshold of 0.05)

(s): Significant difference between the 2017 and 2022 cycles (threshold of 0.05 for Estrie and RLSs; 0.01 for Quebec)

(n.s.): Difference not significant between the 2017 and 2022 cycles (threshold of 0.05 for Estrie and RLSs; 0.01 for Quebec)

* Coefficient of variation greater than 15% and less than or equal to 25%

Legend:
Increase ↑
Decrease ↓

Between 2017 and 2022, the proportions of vulnerabilities increased significantly for two developmental domains: *emotional maturity* and *language and cognitive development*. The other domains remained comparable to the rest of Quebec between the two collection periods.



Most Vulnerable Subgroups

The proportion of five-year-old kindergarten children in the LSN vulnerable in at least one domain is higher in certain subgroups: Boys, children under 6 years of age, children living in disadvantaged areas, and children who attended daycare regularly before starting kindergarten. It should be noted that the coefficients of variation for some data are high, requiring cautious interpretation.



Percentage of Vulnerable Children in at least One Domain (2022)



CHARACTERISTICS	LSN OF HAUT-SAINT-FRANÇOIS	ESTRIE	QUEBEC
	% of vulnerable children	% of vulnerable children	% of vulnerable children
Population breakdown	37,9 (+)	30,2 (+)	28,7
By sex			
Boys	42,9	36,6	35,6
Girls	30,7 (+)	23,5 (+)	21,6
By age			
Under 6 years of age	41,1	34,4	32,7
6 years or older	35,1 (+)	26,1	24,7
By spoken languages			
At least French	37,9 (◊)	29,2 (◊)	27,1
English but not French	38**	44,9	37,5
Neither French nor English	NP	51,7 (◊)	38,4
By place of birth			
Canada	37,9 (◊)	29,6 (◊)	28
Outside of Canada	NP	42,3	37,3
According to physical and social deprivation			
Privileged	40,3 (◊)	22,8	23,8
Average	32,7	30,7	28,8
Underprivileged	46,2	39,4 (◊)	34,8
Regular day-care attendance before starting school			
Yes	34,8 (◊)	27	25,8
No	29,1*	40,8	40,9

(+): Figure significantly higher than in the rest of Quebec (threshold of 0.05).

(◊): Figure significantly higher than in Quebec overall (threshold 0.05)

* Coefficient of variation greater than 15% and less than or equal to 25%

** Coefficient of variation greater than 25%. The proportion is given only as an indication.

NP: Due to the low number of children or to respect confidentiality, the data is not presented.

The proportion of five-year-old kindergarten children in the LSN vulnerable in at least one domain is higher among certain subgroups, although the differences are not statistically significant for all crossover variables when compared to the rest of Quebec. More than 4 out of 10 boys are vulnerable in at least one area (42.9%). The proportion is also higher for children under 6 (41.1% vs. 35.1% for children aged 6 and over). Children living in disadvantaged areas have higher proportions (46.2% vs. 40.3% for children in advantaged areas and 32.7% for children in moderately advantaged areas). Lastly, there is a higher proportion of vulnerable children among children who attended daycare regularly before starting kindergarten (34.8% vs. 29.1%) than among those who did not.



The response rate reached **95,2%** in the LSN of Haut-Saint-François

Redaction

Direction de santé publique

Revision and layout

Service des communications et des relations médias

Direction générale

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References

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- 2 Gouvernement du Québec. *Enquête québécoise sur le développement des enfants à la maternelle* <http://www.eqdem.stat.gouv.qc.ca/> [Online.] (Accessed September 19, 2023).
- 3 Instrument de mesure du développement de la petite enfance, © 2000, McMaster University, Hamilton, Ontario, Canada. http://www.eqdem.stat.gouv.qc.ca/enquete_2017/documentation/guide-imdpe-eqdem2017.pdf/ [Online.] (Accessed September 19, 2023).

