Brandon
POVERTY COMPASS

A resource guide of statistics relating to poverty in Brandon

2016
What Home Means to Me, Anonymous artist of the A Place to Call Home project
ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

The 2016 Brandon Poverty Compass is a publication of the Brandon Neighbourhood Renewal Corporation (BNRC) and is made possible by the Manitoba Research Alliance and the City of Brandon. The 2016 Brandon Poverty Compass takes a comprehensive look at poverty in Brandon and the key indicators therein. Many thanks are due to those who have participated in discussion and conference throughout the completion of the report. Furthermore, the BNRC would like to thank the organizations and various individuals who eagerly responded to requests for information, referrals, and quotes.

ABOUT THE ARTWORK

Original artwork in this report comes from the community project, ‘A Place to Call Home’. Artists created submissions independently or during facilitated workshops with an art educator to express what ‘home’ means to them. Artists gave permission to have their work reprinted freely and chose whether to provide their name or be anonymous. Some works have been edited for this report with permission of the artist and where possible have been credited in the captions below each photograph.

The concept of ‘home’ inspires memories, tastes, smells, sounds and feelings that are highly personal and unique to every individual. Themes of love, security, warmth, laughter and heritage were most common within submissions.

For more on this project and artwork, please contact the BNRC or Chris Cooper, Art Educator at the Art Gallery of Southwestern Manitoba.
CONTENTS

Acknowledgement ..............................................................................................................2
Brandon, Manitoba ...........................................................................................................4
Purpose and Methodology ...............................................................................................5
Vulnerable Populations ....................................................................................................6
  Gender
  Age
  Persons with Disabilities
  Newcomers and Immigrants
Indigenous Poverty .........................................................................................................9
Key Poverty Indicators .....................................................................................................11
  Income
  Housing
  Employment
  Education
  Health
  Families and Community
Conclusion .......................................................................................................................29
References .......................................................................................................................31
With a municipal population of over 53,000, Brandon is Manitoba’s second largest city and is among the fastest growing cities in Manitoba. Between 2006 and 2011, Brandon’s population increased by 10.3%, surpassing the provincial average by more than 5%. Located in the southwest region of Manitoba, Brandon also serves as a significant trading area, providing services to over 180,000 people (Economic Development Brandon, 2016).

Increasingly Brandon is known for its prominent multiculturalism and religious diversity. In 2011, 12.1% of households claimed immigrant status, a 6.3% increase from 2006. In fact, the percent of total immigrants who arrived between 2006 and 2011 was 55.6% in Brandon, exceeding Canada’s 17.2%. Furthermore, more than 30 languages and 14 religions are practiced in Brandon (Statistics Canada, 2011).

The 5 most common birth countries of Brandon Immigrants:

- CHINA
- EL SALVADOR
- INDIA
- HONDURAS
- COLOMBIA
PURPOSE & METHODOLOGY

The Poverty Report attempts to provide a comprehensive image of what poverty is in Brandon. Given the existing work and research that is being done in the community, Statistics Canada, and many other organizations, there is no shortage of quality information on poverty and its indicators in Brandon. However, no one report has yet to cohesively amalgamate this information into one report to benefit local decision-makers and poverty-serving organizations.

Data has been amalgamated from Statistics Canada, Economic Development Brandon, and many other sources. Where Brandon specific information wasn’t available, interviews with local stakeholders and individuals with lived experience have been used to supplement provincial data. Overall, a collaborative approach was taken whereby the emphasis was placed on creating an ongoing dialogue with community members and organizations to provide the fullest picture of poverty.
VULNERABLE POPULATIONS

While poverty depends on individual variables, certain population groups face multiple barriers making them more likely to live in poverty. While not an exhaustive list, gender, age and ethnicity are some of the factors that can increase one’s vulnerability to poverty.

Gender

Women in Manitoba earn 38.5% less than men on average, regardless of age (Statistics Canada, 202-0407). Factors like income inequality, labour market obstacles, and being primary family caregivers may contribute to this statistic (Thunder Bay Economic Justice Committee, 2006).

For example, compared to men, women report more than double the amount of unpaid hours of child care (Statistics Canada, 2010). Furthermore, women are more often than men the lone parents in single-parent households.

“Women are economically disadvantaged and at higher risk of poverty compared to men. The wage gap in Canada continues to endure, and women are paid less for equal work to men’s, even when they have equal qualifications and work experience. They also tend to be overrepresented in sectors of the workforce that generally offer part-time employment, with few or no benefits, that often become precarious during economic downturns.

A lot of the labour that women do is undervalued and invisible, because it takes place in private. Their child rearing and care responsibilities for elderly family members are onerous, and lead them to experience more career interruptions than men, which in turn affect their employability in the world of work.”

Dr. Serena Petrella, Brandon University
Associate Professor and Chair, Sociology
**Age**

Children and seniors experience the highest rates of poverty – groups that represent a combined 42.9% of Brandon’s total population (Statistics Canada, 2011). Children who grow up in families struggling financially are themselves more likely to struggle than children brought up in wealthier families (Canadian Centre for Policy Alternatives, 2015).

In 2012, Manitoba had the highest child poverty rates of any province in Canada. One major concern with child poverty is its cyclical nature, which means that children who grow up in poor families are likely to face the same challenges in adulthood.

Likewise, seniors are another group vulnerable to poverty. In Brandon, 13.4% of the population is 65 years or older. Seniors may be more affected by poverty due to lower education levels, reduced income, and an increased prevalence of health issues (Government of Newfoundland and Labrador, 2005). This all may translate to fewer housing options when they are required to move from their homes, a lack of social inclusion, and an overall poorer quality of life.

**Persons with Disabilities**

People with disabilities experience higher rates of poverty. Disabilities can make securing adequate income problematic. Disabilities often prevent people from finding work and current government disability benefits only cover a portion of living expenses. A lack of supports as well as barriers to mobility contribute to this trend as well.
Newcomers and Immigrants

In Brandon, 13% are immigrants or refugees. Many recent immigrants face hurdles including: having a lack of Canadian work experience, having limited language skills, or having difficulties finding work that meets their qualifications (Canadian Centre for Policy Alternatives, 2015).

Often, newcomers end up in low-skill, entry-level positions which ultimately leaves them at a disadvantage. Although income levels do increase for Canadian immigrants over time, recent immigrants remain highly at risk for poverty.

“In my experience as a realtor and as a member of the Hispanic community, I have found several things to be true for newcomer families.

First, the family composition plays a big role on the house size that a family needs. With a need for larger housing units, larger families have high rental payment, leaving little savings.

Second, many newcomers came to Canada and start from zero, so it takes some time and a big effort to catch up. In addition, some newcomers continue to make payments to their home country to support family members who may be unable to work. Being unfamiliar with lines of credit, some families purchase new vehicles or other amenities that can result in debt and lower credit rates.

This can tie up newcomers for several years before being able to qualify for a mortgage and to begin a new life in Canada with stable housing.”

-Christian Chávez
Sales Representative, Royal LePage
INDIGENOUS POVERTY

Although the number of individuals identifying as Indigenous in Brandon in private households (5,035) are comparable to the 5,775 immigrants and refugees, Brandon’s Indigenous population is uniquely vulnerable to poverty. Whether it be housing, family violence, addiction, educational inequality, or incarceration rates, Indigenous peoples are consistently overrepresented in these categories.

What makes this group unique in their adversity with poverty is that they are affected disproportionately in almost all of the key indicators of poverty as outlined in this report. For example, 36.3% of the total Indigenous population of Brandon are 14 years old and younger compared to 16.3% of non-aboriginal population that fall into that same age category. This disparity in the youth population may contribute to the overwhelming poverty and the cyclical nature of poverty among Indigenous peoples, given that youth are more likely to be raised in poor households.

Population Younger than 14

0% 10% 20% 30% 40%

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Aboriginal</th>
<th>Non-Aboriginal</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>16.30%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>36%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

A Symbol of Home. Anonymous artist from the A Place to Call Home project
In addition, of those aged 14 and younger, roughly 60% are children of single parent households and a combined 7% belong to skip-generation families, are foster children, or live with other relatives. Only 18% of non-aboriginal youth in that same age category belong to single-parent households while less than 0% belong to all three of the discussed family living arrangements.

Hurdles faced by Indigenous peoples may be attributed to lower employment rates, a significant wage gap, and lower educational attainment (Edmonton Social Planning Council, 2015). The Truth and Reconciliation Commission also establish Residential schools as being a causal factor for many of these intergenerational issues for Indigenous peoples.

Due to the increased poverty rate, the Indigenous population is also subject to a lack of suitable, affordable housing, more child apprehensions, and health inequalities. No matter the cause, the root of this Canadian problem has yet to be reconciled and will remain cyclical until “…a new vision, based on a commitment to mutual respect, [is] developed (Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada, 2015, p. VI).”

“Indigenous peoples have been largely affected by poverty and other social inequalities for a large part in Canadian history. In understanding the levels of representation in statistics we need to ensure that knowledge of history is taken into factor and that we as a community and nation look to build on the opportunities to support and provide services to assist in the transition out of poverty for Indigenous peoples. To look ahead and project where we are going to land is almost impossible, however through reconciliation we will move forward together.”

Jason Gobeil
Aboriginal Community Coordinator
Brandon Urban Aboriginal Peoples Council
While there is no single definition of poverty, two common measures of poverty are the Low-Income Cut-Off and Poverty Depth and Duration. These and other methods are discussed in this report. Education, housing, physical and mental health, and employment are major factors which can be influenced by or have an influence on income and poverty in general.

**KEY POVERTY INDICATORS**

A working interpretation of poverty:

- **A lack of opportunity and a difficulty to meet basic needs due to inadequate financial resources.**
INCOME

Perhaps the most obvious indicator of poverty is income. This category also contains the low-income rate, the most common measurement of poverty. Therefore, it is a suitable area to begin an exploration of poverty indicators. The measures that were identified are:

**Low-Income Cut-Off Rate (LICO)**
The low-income cut-off rate “identifies income thresholds below which a family will likely devote a larger share of its income on the necessities of food, shelter and clothing than the average family” (Statistics Canada, 2011, p. 7). For example, a family of four in Brandon that has a combined gross income of less than $37,053 is considered to be below the low-income cut-off (Statistics Canada, 2011a).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Family Size</th>
<th>LICO ($)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1 person</td>
<td>19,941</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 people</td>
<td>24,824</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 people</td>
<td>30,517</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4 people</td>
<td>37,053</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5 people</td>
<td>42,025</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6 people</td>
<td>47,398</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7+ people</td>
<td>52,770</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Low-Income Depth**
This measure refers to how far those living in poverty fall below the LICO. In 2011, Manitobans living in poverty were, on average 33% below the low-income cut-off line. This is not a new trend for Manitoba, as people living in poverty have been below the poverty line by 25 to 35% over the past 20 years (Canadian Centre for Policy Alternatives, 2015).
Median Income

The median after-tax income for individuals in Brandon has been consistently higher than the national average since 2009. The median individual income in 2014 was $34,260. The median family income was $73,245 in 2011 (Economic Development Brandon, 2016b).

Average Weekly Earnings

In Manitoba, the 2015 average gross weekly earnings were $975.17. This number refers to earning before taxes and does not include self-employed income. For those not covered by a collective agreement and those who are non-unionized, average weekly earnings were $767.35.

Gini Coefficient

The Gini Coefficient is “a number between 0 and 1 that measures the relative degree of inequality in the distribution of income” (Statistics Canada, 206-0033, footnote 3). In 2014, Manitoba an Adjusted after-tax income Gini coefficient of .297. What is important to consider with this statistic is the trend over time. If this number increases over time, it would indicate a growing income gap between the lower and upper class, effectively shrinking the middle class. However, Manitoba’s income inequality appears stable.
Percent Share of After-Tax Income
This measure is sensitive to changes in income distribution and breaks it down into 5 categories of wealth. For instance, in Manitoba the poorest fifth of the total population collectively earns 5.4% of the combined income (Statistics Canada, 202-0703). For an in-depth look at income inequality and its implications, refer to the Social Planning Council of Winnipeg’s report on Income Inequality (Social Planning Council of Winnipeg, 2013).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Percent Share of After-Tax Income in Manitoba</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2007</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lowest fifth</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Second fifth</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Third fifth</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fourth fifth</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wealthiest fifth</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Market Basket Measure
This measure refers to the estimated combined cost of a year’s worth of food, clothing, transportation, shelter, and other expenses for a family with two children and two adults. For Brandon, this number is $33,928. Put into perspective, a family with two full-time earners at minimum wage can expect to make $36,277 annually after taxes. Families with less than this amount of income would not be able to afford a “modest, basic standard of living” (Statistics Canada, 2011d, p. 144) for their family, according to this measure.
EMPLOYMENT

While closely related to income, employment data reflects the local labour market rather than simply the financial state Brandon residents are in.

Participation Rate
Participation rate refers to the percentage of people either employed or actively seeking employment. In Brandon, 70.9% of people are participating in the work force (Statistics Canada, 2011a).

Employment Rate
In Brandon, 66.6% of people are currently employed. Both the Participation and Employment rates are significantly higher than the Provincial averages (Statistics Canada, 2011a).

Unemployment Rate
In Brandon, 6.0% are looking, but cannot find work. This number is slightly lower than the Provincial average of 6.2% (Statistics Canada, 2011a).
Minimum Wage
Set at the Provincial level, the lowest amount, per hour, that employees can be paid by their employers for work in Manitoba is $11.00 (Government of Manitoba, 2016).

![Minimum Wage Over Time Graph]

Living Wage
A Living Wage refers to the wage a two-parent; two-child family must make in order to fully support the household and to meet the basic needs of the individuals therein. In Brandon, this wage is $13.41 per hour in a full-time position, for each working adult (Canadian Centre for Policy Alternatives, 2013). For a single-parent, one-child family, the Living Wage is $10.79 per hour.

Median Wage
Below are the estimated wages and salaries of several occupations in Brandon. For a more exhaustive list of occupations please visit Economic Development Brandon (Economic Development Brandon, 2016c).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Occupation</th>
<th>Median Wages</th>
<th>Estimated Salary</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Managers in Health Care</td>
<td>$38.00</td>
<td>$79,040</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Secondary School Teachers</td>
<td>$36.38</td>
<td>$76,294</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Police Officers</td>
<td>$35.00</td>
<td>$72,800</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Oil and Gas Drilling and Related Labourers</td>
<td>$29.50</td>
<td>$61,360</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Financial Auditors and Accountants</td>
<td>$28.21</td>
<td>$58,677</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Licensed Practical Nurses</td>
<td>$28.00</td>
<td>$58,240</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Welders and Related Machine Operators</td>
<td>$20.00</td>
<td>$41,600</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Farmers and Farm Managers</td>
<td>$17.31</td>
<td>$36,005</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Food and Beverage Servers</td>
<td>$11.00</td>
<td>$22,880</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
HOUSING

Housing is a basic human need, however the state of the rental market may reduce the affordability of housing for low-income earners. As a result, indicators relating to rental housing, subsidized housing, and homelessness are important to track.

Rental Housing
In Brandon, 36.8% of total housing tenures are rentals. This number exceeds both the Provincial and National averages (Statistics Canada, 2011a).

Housing Affordability
Housing is generally considered affordable if a household is paying less than 30% of their total income on shelter costs. In Brandon, 19.7% of households are considered to be unaffordable. The Provincial rate is 19.4% (Statistics Canada, 2011a).

Vacancy Rate
The percentage of unoccupied units in Brandon was 1.5% for one-bedroom apartment rentals, 0.8% for two-bedroom rentals, and 1.1% for three-bedroom rentals (Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation, 2016).

Households in Core Housing Need
In Brandon, 6.9% of households are considered to be in core need of repairs. For those living in rental units, the core need is almost 3 times higher than those who own units (Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation, 2016). Renters in Brandon may lack the necessary funds to make these necessary repairs.
Average Rent
In Brandon, the average monthly costs of all rental units in 2013 was $785 (Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation, 2016).

Affordable Rent
According to Manitoba Housing, the following rental units are considered to be affordable (Government of Manitoba, 2016b). These prices are based on median market rents and are used to execute affordable rental programs.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Affordable Rental Units by Unit Size</th>
<th>Studio</th>
<th>1-Bed</th>
<th>2-Bed</th>
<th>3-Bed</th>
<th>4-Bed</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>With Utilities</td>
<td>$504</td>
<td>$695</td>
<td>$870</td>
<td>$1,097</td>
<td>$1,293</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Without Utilities</td>
<td>$476</td>
<td>$612</td>
<td>$788</td>
<td>$964</td>
<td>$1,118</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Subsidized Housing Units
Manitoba Housing provides support to 1,283 households in Brandon in a variety of ways, including social housing, third party operated housing, rent supplements and a Portable Housing Benefit that is administered by the Canadian Mental Health Association (CMHA).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Social Housing Units by Type of Assistance and Demographic</th>
<th>Family</th>
<th>Seniors</th>
<th>Number of Units</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Housing Program</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Manitoba Housing Direct-Managed</td>
<td>469</td>
<td>326</td>
<td>795</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Third Party Operated Housing</td>
<td>182</td>
<td>115</td>
<td>297</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rent Supplement</td>
<td>86</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>120</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Portable Housing Benefit (CMHA)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>70</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>737</td>
<td>476</td>
<td>1,283</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Homelessness
Many people are often unable to afford their rent and, in some cases, are left without shelter. The total number of homeless people in Brandon on April 13, 2016 was 146 (Brandon Neighbourhood Renewal Corporation, 2016).

Duration of Homelessness
Out of those who report being homeless in Brandon, 64.6% of respondents were homeless for at least 3 months in the past year (Brandon Neighbourhood Renewal Corporation, 2016).

Shelter and Transition Home Use
In 2014/15, 54 individuals accessed the safe and warm cold weather emergency shelter and 46 were returning users (Economic Development Brandon, 2015).
EDUCATION

Education level is often correlated to income level and significantly impacts one’s ability to acquire employment.

Highest Educational Attainment
In 2011, 56% of people in Brandon over the age of 25 had completed some form of postsecondary education, compared with Canada’s 59.6%. Below is the makeup of educational attainment in Brandon (Statistics Canada, 2011a). Although someone’s level of education doesn’t always dictate their potential income, as seen in the Employment section, many higher paying jobs require some level of post-secondary education.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Highest Educational Attainment</th>
<th>Brandon</th>
<th>Manitoba</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>No certificate, diploma or degree</td>
<td>17.7%</td>
<td>21.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>High school diploma</td>
<td>26.3%</td>
<td>24.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Postsecondary certificate, diploma or degree</td>
<td>56.0%</td>
<td>53.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>College diploma</td>
<td>20.3%</td>
<td>17.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>University certificate above bachelor</td>
<td>2.7%</td>
<td>2.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>University degree</td>
<td>19.1%</td>
<td>20.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Trades certificate</td>
<td>12.9%</td>
<td>10.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bachelor’s degree</td>
<td>12.8%</td>
<td>13.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Trades certificate or diploma</td>
<td>7.2%</td>
<td>5.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Registered Apprenticeship certificate</td>
<td>5.7%</td>
<td>4.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>University certificate below bachelor</td>
<td>3.8%</td>
<td>4.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Master’s degree</td>
<td>2.2%</td>
<td>3.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Earned doctorate</td>
<td>0.8%</td>
<td>0.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Degree in medicine, dentistry, optometry, or veterinary</td>
<td>0.5%</td>
<td>0.7%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

High School Graduation Rates
In 2015, 95.46% of potential graduates in the Brandon School Division successfully graduated (Brandon School Division, 2015). However, the likelihood of successfully graduating from high school in four years was 76.2%. This number is significantly different for Indigenous students with successful graduation rates being 83.5% and four-year diploma completion rates being 46.9% (Government of Manitoba, 2016c).
Adult Learning and Literacy

Adult literacy programs are designed to upgrade adults’ literacy skills to approximately a grade 10 level and adult learning centres are those that provide adults with high school courses up to grade 12. At a provincial level, the number of participants in adult learning programs and adult literacy centres in 2014-15 was 8,153 across 42 agencies. Of which, 1,328 graduated with a secondary (high school) diploma (Government of Manitoba, 2015). In Brandon specifically, 723 individuals attended Adult Learning and literacy programming (Adult Learning and Literacy Manitoba, 2016).

For further information on the Brandon-specific agencies providing Adult Learning services, please refer to the list of agencies below.

- Assiniboine Community College
- Brandon Friendship Centre
- Brandon Literacy Council
- Samaritan House Ministries, Inc.
HEALTH

While living in poverty can impact health, poor health can cause income loss and social deprivation. A wide variety of health measures have been included thanks to the wealth of information available through Prairie Mountain Health (Prairie Mountain Health, 2015).

Premature Mortality
The Premature Mortality Rate for the PMH region decreased between 2002-2006 and 2007-2011 from 3.25 to 3.07 deaths per 1,000 residents younger than 75 years old. Importantly, there exists a strong inverse relationship between the Premature Mortality Rate and income levels with poorer individuals being more likely to die prematurely than their wealthier counterparts.

Life Expectancy
Similar to Provincial rates, the average life expectancy for men and women in the PMH region in 2007-2011 were 77.4 and 82.3 years respectively. As expected and like Premature Mortality, Life Expectancy differs somewhat depending on where a person lives in Brandon.

Potential Years of Life Lost
Being more sensitive to deaths at younger ages, this measure refers to the difference between the age at death and the premature death cap (75 years). While this rate decreased between 2002-2006 and 2007-2011 in Manitoba, the PMH region saw an increase from 53.5 to 54.5 years.

Binge Drinking
Of all PMH residents, 27% report having five or more drinks in one occasion at least once a month. This is similar to the provincial rate of 24%.
**Substance Abuse**
The percentage of the population (aged 10 and older) that has been diagnosed with substance abuse between 2007 and 2012 was **5.73%**. This was an increase from the previous five-year rate of 4.97%.

**Tobacco Use**
On par with the Provincial average, **20%** of the total population aged 15 and over are smokers.

**Birth Weights**
The percentage of infants that are born small for their gestational age (less than 10th percentile in Canada) was **7%** in Brandon.

**Teen Birth Rate**
Brandon had a rate of **28.1** teenage births per 1,000 girls. This is on par with the Provincial rate of **30.7** (Manitoba Centre for Health Policy, 2012).
**Sociodemographic Information of Mothers**

The Manitoba Centre for Health Policy outlined several sociodemographic statistics on women giving birth in the PMH Zone between 2007 and 2009 (Manitoba Centre for Health Policy, 2012b). These statistics indicate the percentage of mothers who are potentially facing difficulties. For instance, 16.1% of all mothers in Brandon are on Income Assistance.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Age of Mother</th>
<th>Less than Grade 12 Education</th>
<th>Are Lone Parents</th>
<th>Socially Isolated</th>
<th>On Income Assistance</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>12-19</td>
<td>20-34</td>
<td>35+</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Brandon</td>
<td>7.0%</td>
<td>81.8%</td>
<td>11.2%</td>
<td>16.9%</td>
<td>11.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Manitoba</td>
<td>9.1%</td>
<td>77.7%</td>
<td>13.3%</td>
<td>18.9%</td>
<td>11.2%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Infant Mortality**

Being an important indicator of overall community health, the number of newborns that die within one year of birth per 1,000 in Brandon is 5 out of 1,000 births, or 0.5%.

**Ambulatory Visits**

In the PMH zone, 81% of residents met with a physician at least once in 2011/12. In this same year, the rate of ambulatory visits on average was 4.6 times per year on.

**Suicide Rate**

The average annual rate of suicide per 1,000 PMH residents was 0.17, the exact same rate as Manitoba. Unlike many of the health indicators, this statistic was relatively stable across the PMH zones.

**Mood and Anxiety Disorders**

The percent of PMH residents, ten years and older, with Mood and Anxiety Disorders was 24.7% and appears to be increasing in prevalence over time.
FAMILIES & COMMUNITY

This group includes a diverse array of indicators covering areas like childhood development and childcare, food security, sense of community, and crime.

Early Development Scores and School Readiness

According to the Early Development Index, Brandon children consistently achieve Early Development Index scores lower than the provincial average. For instance, Brandon children averaged .3 points (out of a possible 10) lower than the provincial average on Language and Thinking Skills. Furthermore, Brandon also has a much higher percentage of children who are considered ‘not ready’ to begin the first grade in each of the five areas of development (Prairie Mountain Health, 2015).

Availability of Child Care

In 2014, it was estimated that there was a licensed child care space in Manitoba for only 24.4% of preschool children and 10.9% of school age children (Government of Manitoba, 2016d). This indicates a potential lack of child care support for working parents.
Food Bank Use
In this past year (2015-16), around 20,428 meals or food hampers were accessed by Brandon residents from Brandon’s food banks. Evidently, there is a significant proportion of the population in need of food supports and who may lack food security for themselves and their families.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Organization</th>
<th>Food Hamps</th>
<th>Meals</th>
<th>Family Meals</th>
<th>Student Uses</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Samaritan House Ministries</td>
<td>17,688</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Father’s Pantry</td>
<td></td>
<td>2,468</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Salvation Army Emergency Food Program</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>329</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Brandon University Student’s Union Food Bank</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>325</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Soup Kitchen Use
In 2015, the Helping Hands Centre of Brandon served 40,085 meals, with 2,337 meals being served to children and youth (Helping Hands Centre of Brandon, 2016).

Sense of Community
Of those in the Prairie Mountain Health region, 74.2% felt like they belonged to their local community either somewhat strongly or very strongly (Statistics Canada, 2013). This percentage is significantly higher than the provincial average of 69%.
Crime Incidence
In Brandon, the total criminal code violations and federal statute offenses in 2015 were 5,333, increasing from the previous year (Brandon Police Service, 2015). Below are heat maps of criminal reports occurring between September 1st, 2015 and August 31st, 2016, courtesy of the Brandon Police Service.
Please note that the data used in the production of these maps are from the Brandon Police Service’s CAD system and are based on initial reports to police. As investigations progress, reports may be subject to change. Please note that the maps only represent selected call types and does not represent all calls for service. Any comparison of these maps with any other publication containing Brandon Police Service crime statistics is not recommended. This visualization of BPS data is provided strictly as a courtesy. No warranty, representation or guarantee is made or implied regarding the content, sequence, accuracy, or completeness of the data.
CONCLUSION

Putting it All Together

Despite the fact that some statistics included in this report portray Brandon as faring well with respect to poverty, it is, in reality, a prominent issue in Brandon. In 2011, roughly 31% of the population lived below the low-income cut-off line (Economic Development Brandon, 2016b) and 3,180 people were unemployed. In this past year, 20,428 meals or food hampers were used through Brandon’s food banks and 40,085 meals were served through the Helping Hands’ soup kitchen. Although not always blatantly obvious, poverty does exist in Brandon and there are many who are in need of basic human needs and resources.

Many of these individuals likely belong to one or more of the vulnerable populations outlined in this report. Immigrants and newcomers remain unable to consistently find appropriate work that fits their qualifications and skill sets, resulting in lower incomes for immigrant families. Moreover, the prevalence of poverty with indigenous people far exceeds that of any other population group. With a comparatively much younger population and more single-parent households, indigenous people in Manitoba experience a sky-high unemployment rate that nearly triples that of those who are not indigenous.

This disproportionate experience of poverty among certain population groups in Brandon is evident and inadmissible based on the existing statistics. Further, it is likely the case that these findings would be magnified if Brandon-specific poverty data was more exhaustive and more readily available. As made clear with health-specific data and criminal statistics, there exists a significant correlation between where one lives and their quality of life. While this is a complex issue, requiring further analysis, it highlights the geographically-concentrated nature of poverty in Brandon. If it is the case that someone’s health and experience of poverty differs because of their location within a city, then it stands to reason that Provincial does not accurately illustrate what is going on in Brandon. A profile of poverty in Brandon would be more complete if there existed further quality data specific to Brandon.
Limitations
When making interpretations from a poverty report that relies heavily on the amalgamation of information from various sources, there is a risk over-simplification. Like any report, caution and care should be taken when interpreting any of the analyses in this report so that the significance of each individual statistic does not get obscured. However, this issue presents possibilities for future research and exposes the need for more reliable Brandon-specific data.

The Next Steps
Finally, while not prescriptive, this report is intended to advance the conversation on poverty in Brandon. Examining and amalgamating data holistically is essential before making steps toward change, and organizations can use this data as a tool to develop their own solutions. Furthermore, this report will act as a reference guide for future discourse on poverty in Brandon. Namely, with the use of the information included in this report, an in-depth summary of the interaction between each of the key poverty indicators and vulnerable population groups will be made in a future BNRC project.
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