

Niagara Priority Profiles



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To improve health and health equity, it is important to understand specific groups in the planning of programs and services. The information in these profiles will help you understand how the different conditions and systems in which people are born, grow, work, and live impact their health. They provide some comparisons of different groups and over time. As populations change, programs can adapt to meet changing needs.

These profiles were created for Niagara Region Public Health and Emergency Services, but can be used by anyone. You can use these profiles in planning and making decisions in any sector, department, or organization.

Intersectionality is the idea that people have many layers of their identity. Each person has a unique identity. That identity leads to different ways that the systems they live in benefit or harm them. Due to this, some individuals experience more health concerns than others. When you read these profiles, think about these different experiences. When planning projects, think about how you can include people with different voices and perspectives. To learn more about intersectionality, visit: [NCCDH Intersectionality and Health Equity](#)¹.

For further information, please visit:

[Government of Canada Health Inequalities Data Tool](#)²

[Public Health Ontario Health Equity Data Tool](#)³

Please note the date ranges used within these profiles vary based on the data available, and are included in the references. These Profiles were created in 2020 and updated in 2023. The intent is to update with each census cycle. For more information or if you have any concerns, please contact healthequity@niagararegion.ca.

¹ <https://nccdh.ca/resources/entry/public-health-speaks-intersectionality-and-health-equity>

² <https://health-infobase.canada.ca/health-inequalities/data-tool/index>

³ <https://www.publichealthontario.ca/en/data-and-analysis/health-equity>

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Niagara Priority Profiles: Age
Version 2

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For more information, please contact:

Medical Division

Niagara Region Public Health and Emergency Services

1815 Sir Isaac Brock Way P.O. Box 1052

Thorold ON L2V 0A2

905-688-8248, 1-888-505-6074

www.niagararegion.ca/health

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Note:

If referencing a hardcopy of this Niagara Priority Profile, please confirm that it is the most up to date version by visiting: <https://www.niagararegion.ca/health/equity/priority-profiles.aspx>

The version number can be found at the top of this page on each profile.

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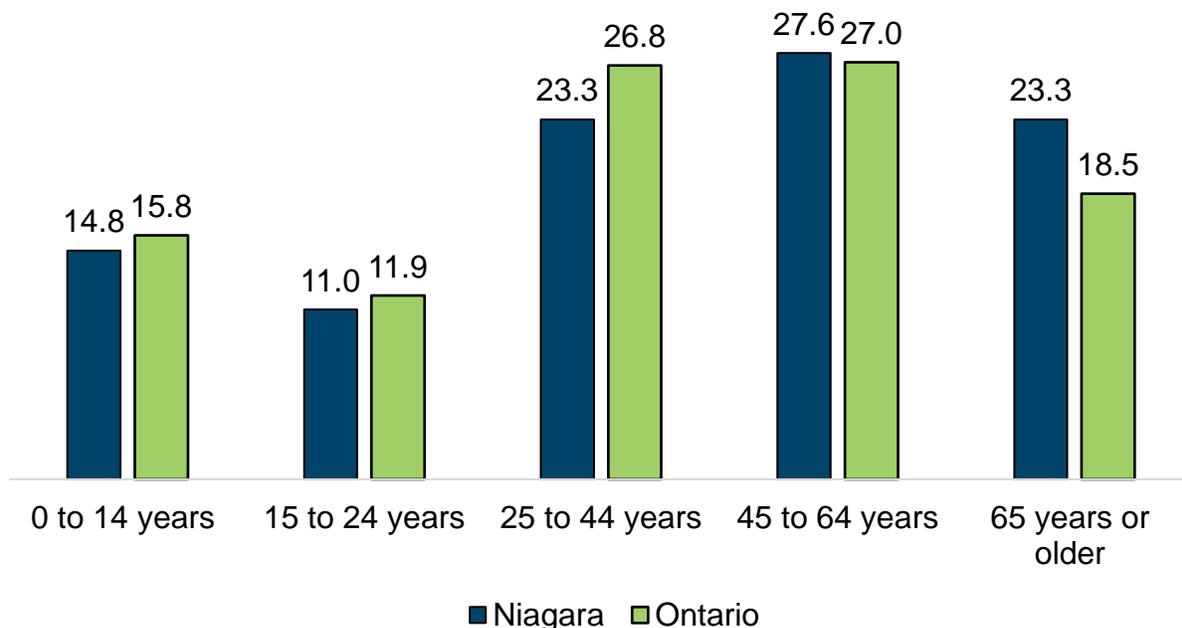


Age Groups: Demographic Information

Population and Age and Predicted Growth

- The median age in Niagara is 46.0 years, compared to Ontario's median age of 41.6 years (2021) (Statistics Canada, Census Profiles)
- Compared to Ontario, Niagara has fewer individuals who are 25 to 44 years, but more individuals who are 65 years or older (Figure 1)

Figure 1: Proportion of the population in Niagara in each age group compared to Ontario (2021)



Data Source: Statistics Canada, Census Profiles (2021)

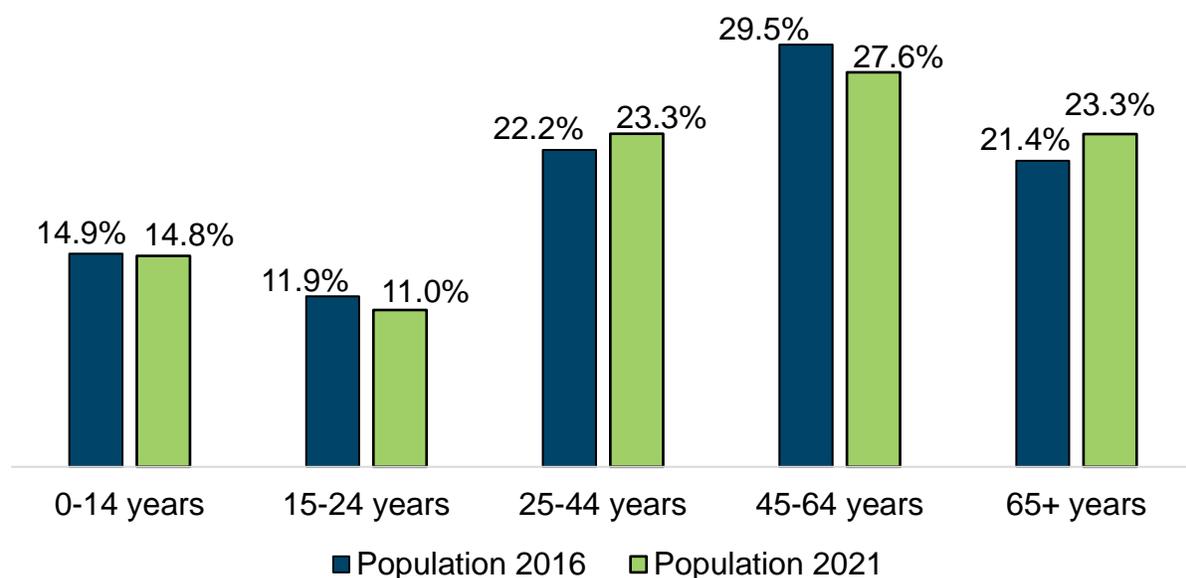
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Population Growth Rate in Niagara

- In Niagara, the population increased by 6.7% from 2016 to 2021 (447,888 people to 477,940 people) (2021) (Statistics Canada, Census Profiles)
 - The population of people 65 years and older had the largest increase at 18.2% (Figure 2)
 - The population 15-24 years had the largest decrease at 3.4% (Figure 2)

Figure 2: Population growth in Niagara by age categories from 2016-2021 (2021)



Data Source: Statistics Canada, Census Profiles (2021)

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Population Trends

- From 2006 to 2021, the population of Niagara that is 65 and older has continued to increase compared to the population that is 0 to 14 years old (Statistics Canada Census Profiles) (2006, 2011, 2016, 2021)
 - In 2006, the population aged 65+ in Niagara was 3.1% larger than the population aged 0-14 years (2006)
 - In 2011, this gap increased to 21.4% (2011)
 - In 2016, this gap increased to 43.6% (2016)
 - In 2021, this gap increased to 57.7% (2021)
- The population of people 65+ in Ontario is projected to nearly double in size from 2.4 million (16.7%) in 2017 to 4.6 million (24.8%) by 2041 (1)

Developmental Health and Wellbeing of Young Children

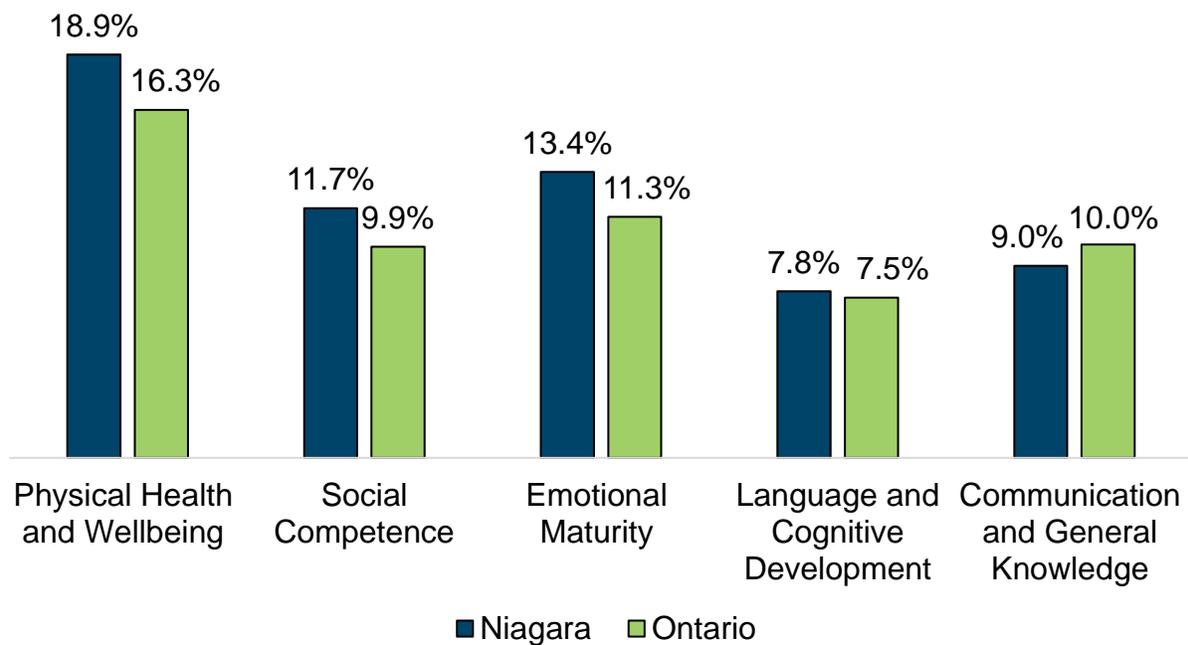
- The [Early Development Instrument \(EDI\)](#)⁴ is a tool that measures the developmental health and wellbeing of kindergarten children in five domains of development (Figure 3):
 - Physical Health and Wellbeing, Social Competence, Emotional Maturity, Language and Cognitive Development, Communication and General Knowledge
- Kindergarten children in Niagara are most vulnerable in physical health and emotional maturity (Figure 3)
- Compared to Ontario, kindergarten children in Niagara have significantly higher vulnerability in three domains: physical health and wellbeing, social competence, and emotional maturity (Figure 3)

⁴ <https://edi.offordcentre.com/about/what-is-the-edi/>

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Figure 3: Percent of kindergarten children vulnerable on five domains of the EDI (2018)



Data Source: Early Development Instrument, Niagara Region, 2018

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Age Groups: Social Outcomes

The experiences that take place during early childhood influence how a child grows into a healthy adult, how well they do in school, and the opportunity for good health. Throughout the life course, experiences of social determinants of health⁵, and health outcomes change.

In Canada, as you age:



- Perception of neighbourhood safety decreases
 - Prevalence is 78.3% in the 35 to 44 years age group, compared to 56.5% in the 80 years and over age group
- The number of people living alone increases
 - Prevalence is 22.6% in the 65 to 69 years age group, compared to 45.6% in the 80 years and over age group
- The number of people with below median after-tax income increases
 - Prevalence is 44.7% in the 35 to 44 years age group, compared to 68.5% in the 80 years and over age group

⁵ These are the non-medical factors that influence health outcomes. They are the conditions in which people are born, grow, work, live, and age, and the wider set of forces and systems shaping the conditions of daily life (6).

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In Canada, as you age:

- Food insecurity rate decreases
 - Prevalence is 9.7% in the 35 to 49 years age group, compared to 2.1% in the 80 years and over age group
- Sense of community belonging increases
 - Prevalence is 67.1% in the 35 to 49 years age group, compared to 75.3% in the 80 years and over age group
- Workplace stress decreases
 - Prevalence is 31.7% in the 35 to 49 years age group, compared to 16.4% in the 65 to 79 years age group

Data Source: Pan-Canadian Health Inequalities Data Tool (2)

Additional Age and Health Concerns

Older Adults

- According to the Government of Ontario's Action Plan for Seniors, Niagara's aging population and older median age raise concerns regarding (3,4):
 - Supporting seniors aging in place
 - Availability of long-term care
 - Supports for caregivers
 - Reduction in working-age population, which requires strategies to attract and retain youth and young people

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Developmental Health and Wellbeing of Young Children

- Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs) are potentially traumatic or stressful events occurring in the first 18 years of life, including physical abuse, neglect, and household dysfunction (5)
- Household dysfunction can include divorce, living with someone who has mental illness, or loss of a family member during their childhood (5).
- Exposure to ACEs during childhood can result in toxic stress that negatively affects brain architecture, compromises immune response, and increases poor health outcomes across the lifespan (5)

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References

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