



Living in Niagara – 2023 Report Learning and Education Sector

Accessible, inclusive, quality education and lifelong learning opportunities help people to grow, participate and prosper.

This Sector most closely aligns with UN SDG #2 – Zero Hunger; #3 – Good Health and Well-Being; #4 – Quality Education; #8 – Decent Work and Economic Growth

Happening Now

- The Niagara Children’s Planning Council shares learning about Infant Mental Health, and population level child development data for Niagara, gathered through the early years ASQ (Ages and Stages Questionnaire); and Early Development Instrument (EDI) kindergarten scores. In late 2023, the new Middle Development Instrument (MDI) self-report survey was administered for the first time to Niagara children in grades 4 and 7.
- The COVID pandemic accelerated government investment in internet access as critical infrastructure. By June, 2024, four SWIFT Broadband construction projects valued at \$21,218,445 will bring better connectivity to an additional 5,646 premises in areas of Niagara Falls, Port Colborne, Fort Erie, Lincoln, Niagara-on-the-Lake, Pelham, Wainfleet, West Lincoln and Grimsby.
- The focus on student mental health and wellbeing continues to rise. The provincial government is investing in school-based mental health supports; child and youth mental health is identified as important for life success; and post-secondary institutions are seeing ‘pandemic fatigue’ effects among students.
- Early Childhood Educators (ECEs) and Assistants in Niagara earn only slightly above living wage. A 2022 Workforce Collective report shows that an Early Learning and Child Care (ELCC) workforce strategy to strengthen access to quality childcare is essential for economic recovery, development and familial wellbeing. From now to the end of 2027, 9,146 children are on the waitlist of licensed childcare in Niagara. Both the demand and capacity exist to support at least 1,143 to 3,048 additional ECE jobs in Niagara.

What’s Emerging

- Initiatives to support equity, well-being and inclusion of all people are established in education institutions in Niagara. This prior work will inform the intent of the new Niagara Region Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion (EDI) Community of Practice (CoP), to address DEI issues in the community by sharing resources, learning about DEI topics, and incorporating DEI into Human Resource practices.
- Analyzed data from the 2023 MDI survey of grades 4 and 7 students in Niagara elementary schools will inform planning and decision-making to strengthen Niagara children’s ability to meet age-appropriate developmental expectations.



- Post-secondary institutions' planning is being affected by broader community factors, including economic impacts of the pandemic, a shortage of attainable housing, shifting labour market demands, increased numbers of mature students looking to upskill, and changes to government policies for international student visas.
- Food security for students is an increasing concern for educators at all levels in Niagara.
- Awareness is increasing that young families' access to quality childcare is essential for economic recovery and development in Niagara; and that strategies to attract and retain ELCC workers should focus on wage increases and expanded access to quality professional learning opportunities.

Suggested Community Action Steps

- Continue to strengthen mental health literacy for students of all ages, with a focus on mental health literacy skill-building; student engagement; technology capacity-building; and evidence-informed approaches.
- Continue to monitor Early Development Instrument (EDI) testing and Middle Development Instrument (MDI) survey results for Niagara.
- Pay attention to the proliferation of impacts of technology and automation on both current and future workers. Shifting labour market demands will require supports for workers to access upskill training.
- Support awareness-raising that Early Years learning is a necessary part of education; that investment in ELCC (Early Learning and Childcare) is important for the socio-economic wellbeing of Niagara; and that addressing an ELCC workforce strategy will help to attract and enable young families to work in the region.
- Focus on partnerships between school boards, post-secondary institutions, and industry groups. Do this to support raising students' and families' awareness about labour market demand, and the training opportunities available to help students gain insights into job opportunities.

Indicators

- **EQAO Scores**
- **Early Years Learning**
- **Levels of Educational Attainment**
- **Literacy and Essential Skills**
- **School Enrolment Trends and Presence of International Students**
- **Technology Use and its Influence on Education and Learning**
- **Student Mental Wellness**

Indicator: EQAO Scores

About EQAO

The Education, Quality, and Accountability Office (EQAO) is an arm's length provincial (Ontario) government agency that contributes to the quality and accountability of Ontario's publicly-funded education system for K-12. The agency provides results to each student who writes an assessment, to help support individual student learning. EQAO also provides schools and school boards with detailed reports about their student's achievement, as well as contextual, attitudinal and behavioural information from questionnaires, in an interactive online reporting tool. Data gathered is used to improve school programming and classroom instruction. EQAO also reports the results of the provincial assessments publicly.

In October, 2023, EQAO released the board and provincial results of primary (Grade 3) and junior (Grade 6) division assessments in reading, writing, and mathematics, as well as the Grade 9 assessment of mathematics and the Ontario Secondary School Literacy Test (OSSLT) written by Grade 10 students in 2022-2023.

Source: EQAO (Education, Quality, and Accountability Office), Ontario.
Retrieved from: <https://www.eqao.com/about-eqao/who-we-are/>

EQAO Profiles for the two largest School Boards in Niagara (October, 2023)

- District School Board of Niagara (DSBN) - 95 schools
<https://www.eqao.com/results/?orgType=B&mident=66150&yearnum=2023>
 - DSBN media release about EQAO, OSSLT results, October 12, 2023 is available at: <https://www.dsbni.org/news-release/2023/10/12/dsbn-students-elementary-eqao-osslt-results-exceed-provincial-averages>
- Niagara Catholic District School Board (NCDSB) - 60 schools
<https://www.eqao.com/results/?orgType=B&mident=67156&yearnum=2023>
 - NCDSB media release about EQAO, OSSLT results, October 12, 2023 is available at: https://cdnsm5-ss21.sharpschool.com/UserFiles/Servers/Server_438171/File/Media%20Release%20-%20Niagara%20Catholic%20Shared%20EQAO,%20OSSLT%20results%20-%20October%2012,%202023.pdf



Indicator: Early Years Learning

The Canada-Ontario Early Years and Child Care Agreement aims to provide more accessible child care options and lower fees. This includes reducing fees to an average of \$10 per day for children under the age of 6 in licensed child care by March, 2026.

The Canada-wide Early Learning and Child Care (CWELCC) system is designed to:

- give families access to more affordable and high-quality child care options
- help lower child care fees for parents or guardians of children under the age of 6
- increase child care spaces
- support the child care workforce
- support inclusive child care

Licensed child care providers can participate in the CWELCC system to help reduce fees. Licensed child care providers must tell parents and guardians whether the program is enrolled in the CWELCC system through their parent handbook.

Ontario's action plan focuses on 5 key pillars:

- lowering fees
- increasing access
- enhancing high-quality child care
- supporting inclusion
- enhancing data and reporting

Source: Government of Ontario

Retrieved from: <https://www.ontario.ca/page/canada-ontario-early-years-and-child-care-agreement>

Not Done Yet, a 2023 Canadian Centre for Policy Alternatives (CCPA) report, shows that one of the major stumbling blocks to \$10-a-day childcare is a shortage of child care spaces to meet demand. The Childcare Resource and Research Unit points to growing pains confronting affordable daycare: staffing shortages, large wait lists, and daycares that cannot cover their costs. The 2023 CCPA report includes seven recommendations:

1. Set clear targets and criteria for all aspects of expansion, including geographic access, but also set clear targets and criteria for inclusion, facility quality, program frameworks and educator qualifications.
2. Address the current, rate-limiting and critical shortage of early childhood educators through implementation of publicly funded wage grids that guarantee decent wages for all early childhood educators, including other benefits.
3. Develop publicly led, proactive, multi-faceted, multi-year plans in each jurisdiction, taking into account specific regional and local conditions and needs. Consider using multiple methods of expansion, with plans that are informed by local input and rigorous geographic supply and demand analysis—funded through a multi-year capital plan.



4. Drive much more expanded child care delivery through the creation of new, high-quality public services. Consider options for a public entity to serve as the lead body and as the local lead bodies for implementation.
5. Make public funds available for not-for-profit child care in new or expanded facilities, as well as old facilities that are under public ownership or that include clauses guaranteeing transfer of ownership/recoupment of public investment upon dissolution. Ensure these capital grants support high-quality facilities that are environmentally healthy, climate resilient and low-carbon.
6. Support the not-for-profit sector's ability to expand through planning grants and other resources (e.g. template facility designs).
7. Do not spend public funds on expansion of for-profit child care in terms of new buildings or funding for additional spaces. Public operational grants should be given to existing for-profit child care providers in order to lower parent fees and raise educators' wages. Governments must also ensure that these grants are associated with absolute caps on fees and fee increases, including accountability mechanisms to avoid retroactive wage cuts, public funds flowing into private real estate, and additional exclusionary fees charged to families.

Source: Canadian Centre for Policy Alternatives and Childcare Resource and Research Unit Retrieved from: <https://www.policyalternatives.ca/news-research/not-done-yet-2/> and <https://childcarecanada.org/publications/ecec-in-canada> and <https://www.cbc.ca/listen/cbc-podcasts/209-front-burner/episode/16039259-is-dollar10-daycare-in-trouble>

Ontario Early Years and Child Care Annual Report 2023 describes the early years and child care system, key data and measures for child care and indicators under Ontario's bilateral federal-provincial early learning and child care agreements with the federal government.

Source: Government of Ontario

Retrieved from: <https://www.ontario.ca/page/ontarios-early-years-and-child-care-annual-report-2023>

The November 2023 Ontario Child Care Workforce Strategy promises to deliver increased wages to Registered Early Childhood Educators (RECEs), and a multi-pronged approach to recruit and retain qualified educators. Starting in 2024, initiatives in the strategy include:

- Increasing the starting wage for RECEs employed by child care operators enrolled in the Canada-wide Early Learning and Child Care (CWELCC) system to \$23.86/hour in 2024 from the planned \$20/hour
- Extending the eligibility ceiling for a \$1/hour increase so more RECEs can benefit
- Supporting entry into the profession and career development
- Cutting red tape for employers and providing more flexibility in staffing their programs
- Launching a promotional campaign to bolster awareness and value of the child care profession

Source: Government of Ontario

Retrieved from: <https://news.ontario.ca/en/release/1003833/ontario-announces-comprehensive-strategy-to-boost-child-care-workforce-and-protect-children>

Niagara Region Children's Services provides information about:

- The five licensed child care centres operated by the Region, which are staffed by Registered Early Childhood Educators, and located in Niagara Falls; Fort Erie; Port Colborne; St. Catharines; and Welland.
- Independent operators contracted by the Region to provide child care services in their homes, for children between birth and 12 years of age.
- Financial assistance for eligible families to assist with child care costs
- Resources for child care service providers
- EarlyON Child and Family Centres (21 sites across Niagara)
- Placements for students requiring academic credit through on-the-job experience before entering the workforce in the child care service sector.

Source: Niagara Region

Retrieved from: <https://www.niagararegion.ca/living/childcare/default.aspx>

EarlyON Child and Family Centres provide free, high-quality drop-in programs for children from birth to six years of age, their parents and caregivers. Niagara Region lists a total of 21 EarlyON Centres that operate in Niagara:

Municipality	Number of EarlyON Centres	Municipality	Number of EarlyON Centres
Fort Erie	3	Port Colborne	1
Grimsby	1	St. Catharines	5
Lincoln	1	Thorold	1
Niagara Falls	3	Wainfleet	0
Niagara-on-the-Lake	2	Welland	2
Pelham	1	West Lincoln	1

Source: Niagara Region, EarlyON Child and Family Centres

Retrieved From: <https://www.niagararegion.ca/living/childcare/early-years/default.aspx>

Parent Direct Niagara is an online tool that aims to help parents find information and links to early learning and care programs, services and resources in Niagara. Operated by the Early Childhood Community Development Centre, the Parent Direct Niagara site provides an online directory that offers information about:

- Interactive Learning Programs
- Health, Wellness and Special Needs
- Child Care Information (directory of licensed child care centres and links to licensed home child care agencies)
- Schools (links to kindergarten programs offered in Niagara)
- Parenting (resources to build skills and confidence)
- Recreation and Leisure (early learning programs).

Source: Parent Direct Niagara

Retrieved from: <http://www.parentdirectniagara.ca/>



Niagara Region Public Health Parenting Support Programs

Niagara Region Public Health Parenting Support programs are presented on the Niagara Parents webpage. Information categories include: Clinics and Classes; Becoming a Parent/Pregnancy; Feeding your Baby; Babies/Toddlers 0-3; Kids/Children 4-12; Youth/Teens 13-18; Healthy Schools; Dental Health; and Community Resources.

Source: Niagara Region Public Health

Retrieved from: <https://www.niagararegion.ca/parents/>

Licensed Child Care Spaces and Investment in Child Care in Niagara

The following tables are drawn from the Municipal Benchmarking Network Canada 2022 Performance Report. The report includes measures of community impact, service level, efficiency and customer service. CWELCC = Canada-wide Early Learning and Child Care.

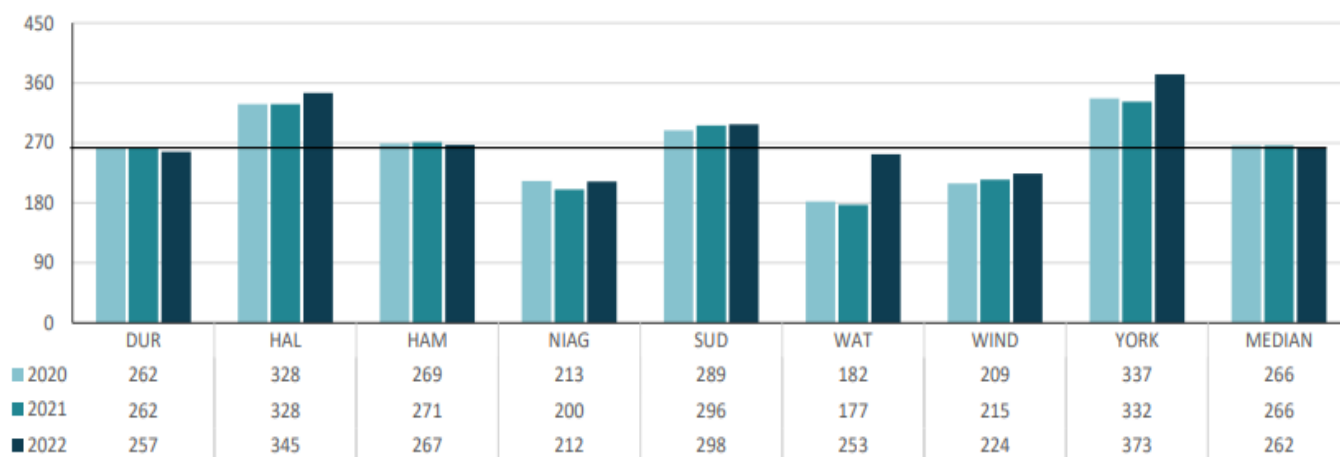
Regulated Child Care Spaces in Municipality per 1,000 Children (12 and under)

This measure reflects the capacity of licensed spaces to be available to access, per 1,000 infant to school-aged children, across centre and homebased spaces, for Durham Region, Halton Region, Hamilton, Niagara Region, Sudbury, Waterloo Region, Windsor, and York Region, in 2020, 2021 and 2022. Niagara statistics are below the Median for all 3 years.

Child Care

CHDC105 - Regulated Child Care Spaces in Municipality per 1,000 Children (12 and Under)

The measure reflects the capacity of licensed spaces to be available to access, per 1,000 infant to school-aged children, across centre and homebased spaces.



York: The implementation of CWELCC in 2022 likely led to an increase in regulated child care spaces.

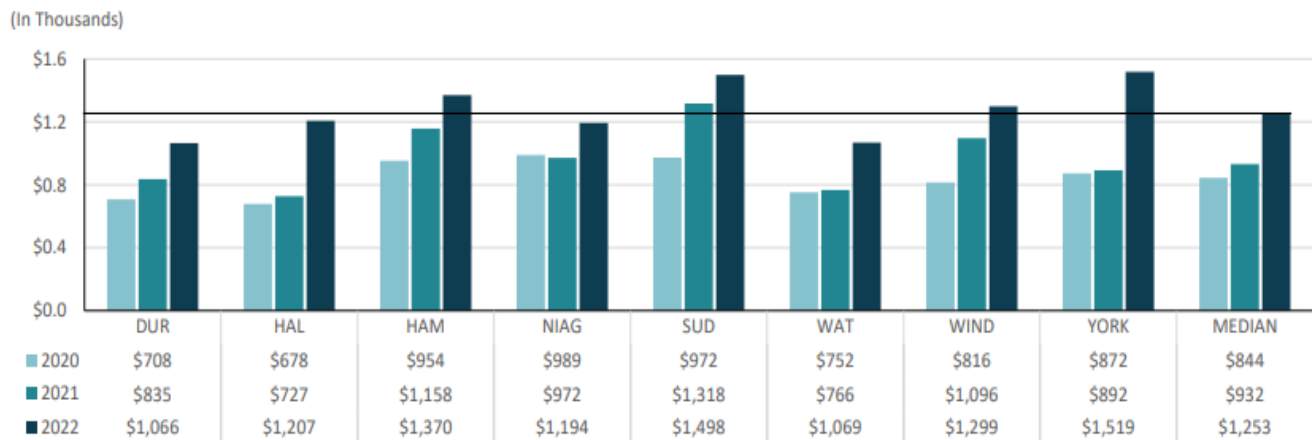
Total Cost per Child (12 and Under) in the Municipality

This measure reports the total cost to provide child care services for children 12 years and under and includes all funding sources. NOTE: The Ministry of Education reduced funding in 2020 due to pandemic closures. Funding was restored to pre-pandemic amounts in 2021, resulting in increases to total cost per child for all municipalities. Municipalities saw an increase in 2022 due to CWELCC funding.

Child Care

CHDC220T - Total Cost per Child (12 and Under) in the Municipality

This measure reports the total cost to provide child care services for children 12 years and under and includes all funding sources. NOTE: The Ministry of Education reduced funding in 2020 due to pandemic closures. Funding was restored to pre-pandemic amounts in 2021, resulting in increases to total cost per child for all municipalities. Municipalities saw an increase in 2022 due to CWELCC funding.



Source: 2022 MBNCanada Performance Measurement Report

Retrieved from: <https://niagaraknowledgeexchange.com/resources-publications/2022-mbncanada-performance-measurement-report/>

Niagara Children's Planning Council (NCP) members share learning about Infant Mental Health, as well as population level child development data for Niagara. The data is gathered through the early years ASQ (Ages and Stages Questionnaire); and Early Development Instrument (EDI) kindergarten scores. Niagara Region has purchased a license to administer the new Middle Development Instrument (MDI) self-report survey for seven years. The MDI survey was administered to Niagara children in grades 4 and 7 for the first time, in November-December, 2023. Background information about the MDI is provided by the Human Early Learning Partnership at the School of Population and Public Health, Faculty of Medicine, University of British Columbia, at: <https://www.wcdsb.ca/wp-content/uploads/sites/36/2024/09/MDI-Dashboard-2019-2022-2024-agg-St-Mark.pdf>

In 2022, the NCP examined current evidence about ACES (Adverse Childhood Experiences), in relation to risk factors for recovery from the COVID-19 pandemic. ACES are stressful or

traumatic events that occur in childhood (0 to 18), that have been found to increase the risk of engaging in health harming behaviours and developing chronic health problems. ACEs can be grouped into 3 categories – Abuse, Household dysfunction, and Neglect. Early evidence from local, provincial and national sources shows that many ACEs-related risk factors have increased while protective factors decreased throughout the COVID-19 pandemic.

Source: Niagara Region Public Health

Retrieved from: <https://niagaraknowledgeexchange.com/resources-publications/aces-informed-pandemic-recovery-fostering-resilience-in-niagara/>

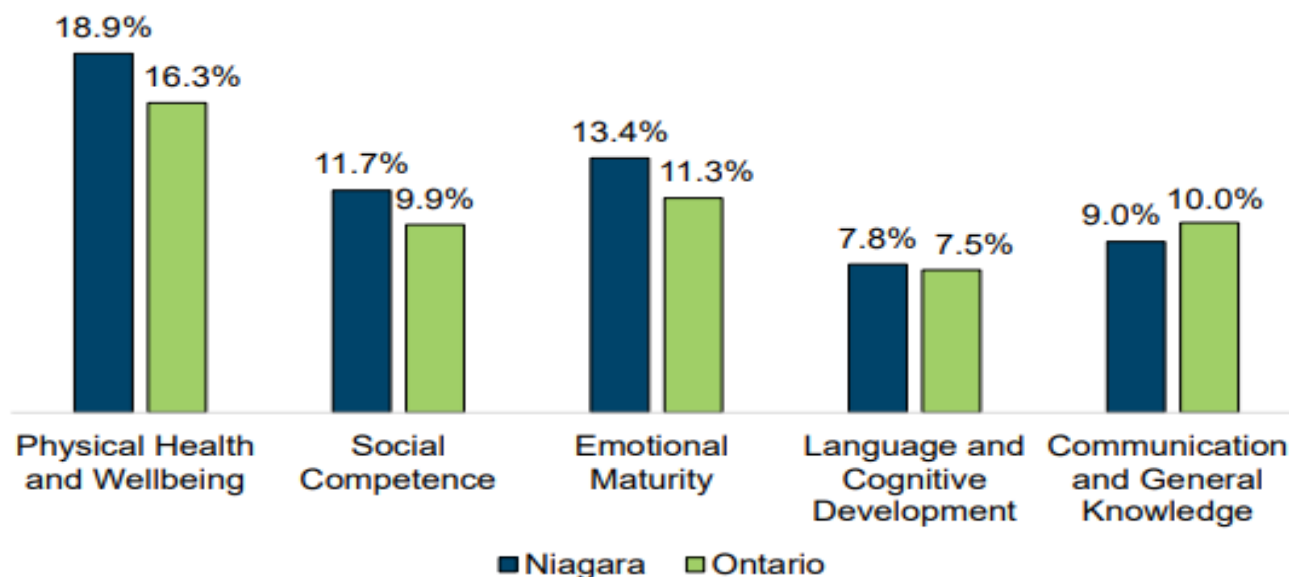
Child Health – Statistics in Niagara is a webpage provided by Niagara Region Public Health. It includes information about Developmental Health and Well-Being of Young Children; and Oral Health.

Source: Child Health - Statistics in Niagara. Niagara Region Public Health.

Retrieved From: <https://www.niagararegion.ca/health/statistics/Child-Health/>

Niagara Priority Profiles provide information about specific populations in Niagara, to show how where they live, grow, work and play affects their health. The [Age Groups Profile](#) provides information about Developmental Health and Wellbeing of Young Children, including the Early Development Instrument (EDI) in Niagara, and ACEs (Adverse Childhood Experiences).

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



Data Source: Early Development Instrument, Niagara Region, 2018

Source: Niagara Region Public Health

Retrieved from: <https://www.niagararegion.ca/health/equity/pdf/priority-profile-age.pdf>



Presence of School Nutrition Programs in Niagara

Niagara Nutrition Partners (NNP) is a Niagara-wide non-profit program established in 1998. NNP offers support and coordination for student nutrition programs in both elementary and secondary schools in addition to community-based programs. NNP works together with site-based volunteers to meet the needs of student nutrition programs in each of the twelve municipalities in Niagara.

There are currently 201 programs at 171 sites funded in part by NNP. Funding for NNP programs is provided by the Ontario Ministry of Children, Community and Social Services (MCCSS), and administered regionally by Haldimand-Norfolk R.E.A.C.H.

Source: Niagara Nutrition Partners

Retrieved from: <https://www.niagaranutritionpartners.ca/about-us>

Food4Kids supports a total of 31 schools in Niagara with healthy food packages. The packages are delivered every Friday, to be discreetly placed in the backpack of kids up to 14 years of age, who have limited access to food in their homes.

Throughout July and August, Food4Kids assists students with the delivery of a food package and/or the provision of a grocery store gift card. All referrals for the program are received directly from schools during the school year.

Source: Food4Kids Niagara

Retrieved from: <https://www.food4kidsniagara.ca/>

Community Crew provides healthy lunches to children in need, aged 4 to 13, throughout the school year. Currently, Community Crew provides over 4,500 healthy lunches each week to children in 33 different schools throughout the Niagara region

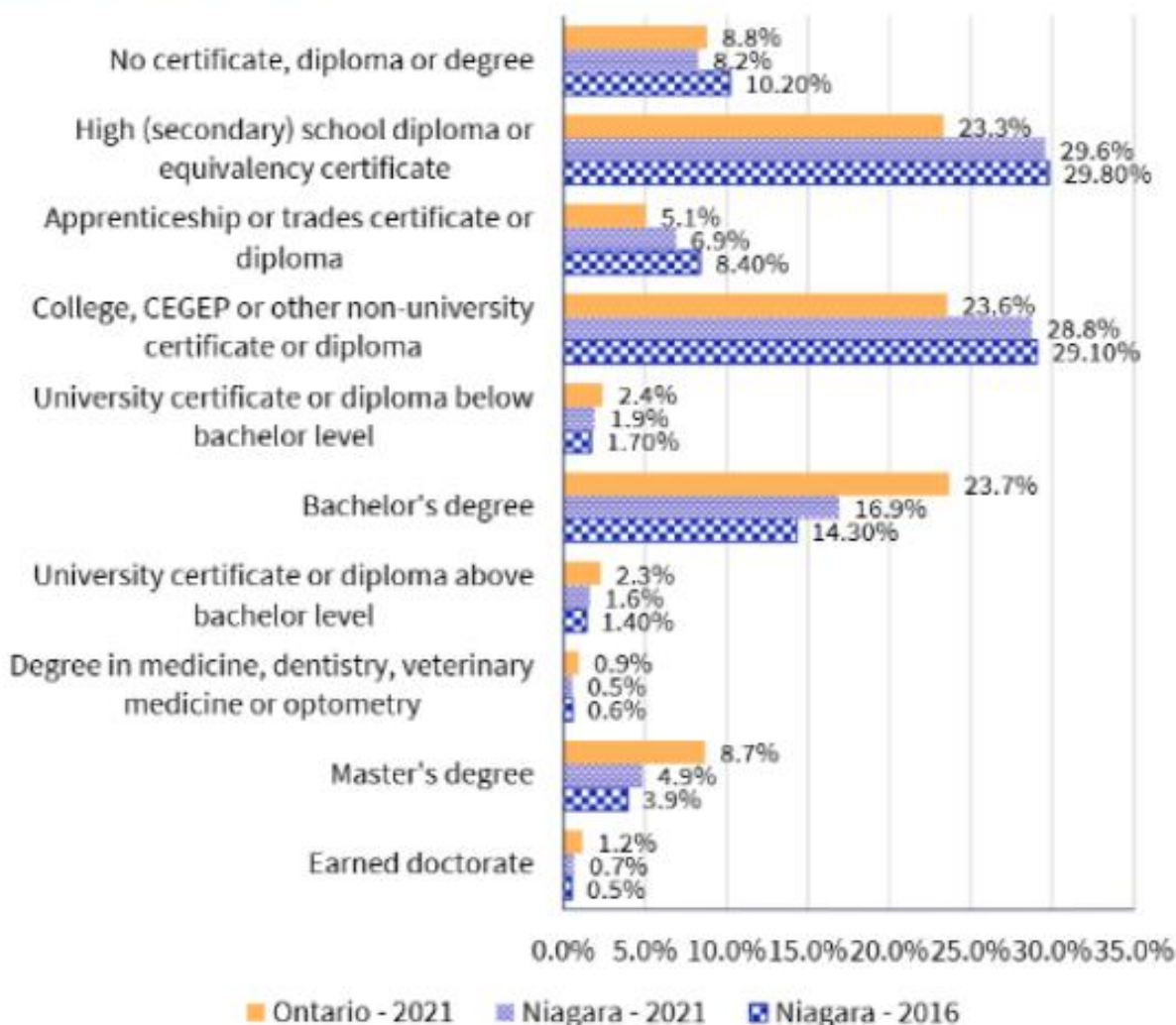
Source: Community Crew

Retrieved from: <https://www.communitycrew.ca/>

Indicator: Levels of Educational Attainment

Workforce Collective provides the tables on this page and the next. According to the 2021 census, 62.2% of Niagara’s core-aged labour force (i.e. individuals aged 25-64) held some form of post-secondary education – 28.8% reported having a college diploma.

Figure 1-7: Highest level of educational attainment, Niagara and Ontario, Individuals age 25-64, 2021 Census, 2016 Census¹⁵



¹⁵ Source: Statistics Canada. 2022. Census Profile. 2021 Census. Statistics Canada Catalogue no. 98-316-X2021001. Ottawa. Released November 30, 2022. Statistics Canada. 2017. Census Profile. 2016 Census. Statistics Canada Catalogue no. 98-316-X2016001. Ottawa. Released November 29 2017.

Retrieved from: <https://workforcecollective.ca/3d-flip-book/2022-23-labour-market-report-english/>

Workforce Collective provides education levels for the Niagara regional population in the 2023 Municipal Snapshot that is a supplement to their Annual Labour Market Report.

In both 2016 and 2021, more than half the population in Niagara aged 15 years and over had a post-secondary certificate, diploma, or degree.

Table 3: Highest Level Of Education, 2016 & 2021 Census, Niagara

Highest Certificate, Diploma or Degree	2016	2021	% Change 2016-2021
No certificate, diploma or degree	18.2%	15.4%	-2.8%
High (secondary) school diploma or equivalency certificate	31.2%	31.9%	0.7%
Postsecondary certificate, diploma or degree	50.5%	52.7%	2.2%

Source: Workforce Collective

Retrieved from: <https://workforcecollective.ca/wp-content/uploads/2024/01/Niagara-Region.pdf>

Indicator: Literacy and Essential Skills

Adult Literacy Organizations

Literacy Link Niagara (LLN) supports local adult education (literacy and basic skills) programming. LLN programs offer many ways to learn, upgrade skills and achieve greater wellbeing. Most, if not all, programs are free and accessible to any adult in Niagara with a goal to further their education, improve their employment, or gain independence.

LLN provides the following facts:

- 48% of Canadian adults fall into the lowest two reading levels
- On average, adults with literacy challenges earn only 2/3 of the income of other adults
- Children of parents who have not graduated from high school are twice as likely to live in poverty as those whose parents graduated
- Almost 50% of Canadian adults cannot work well with words and numbers
- The unemployment rate for people at the lowest literacy level is 26%, compared with 4% for those at the highest literacy levels
- Approximately 1 in 7 adults (or approximately 20,000 adults aged 20+) in Niagara have not achieved their Ontario Secondary School diploma.

Source: Literacy Link Niagara

Retrieved from: <https://www.literacylinkniagara.ca/>

The 211 Ontario database includes 18 records for organizations that provide Literacy and Basic Skills services in the Niagara region. A record for Literacy Link Niagara is also included.

Source: 211 Ontario

Retrieved From: <https://211ontario.ca/search/>

Indicator: School Enrolment Trends and Presence of International Students

Elementary and Secondary Schools in Niagara

The District School Board of Niagara (DSBN) operates 78 elementary schools and 17 secondary schools in the 12 municipalities of the Niagara region, serving 41,700 students from JK to Grade 12 in the 2023-24 school year. This includes 28,691 Elementary and 13,009 Secondary students.

The DSBN 2023-2028 Strategic Plan focuses on excellence, with five strategic priorities:

- Learning - Learning and Growth
- Belonging – Equity, Inclusion, & Human Rights
- Thriving – Mental Health and Well-Being
- Walking Together – First Nation, Inuit and Métis Education and Voice
- Spaces – Learning Environments

Source: District School Board of Niagara

Retrieved from: https://www.dsbni.org/docs/default-source/publications/e-version-dsbni_budget-2023-24.pdf and <https://redefining-excellence.dsbni.org/>

The Niagara Catholic District School Board (NCDSB) operates 48 Catholic elementary schools and 8 Catholic secondary schools, serving more than 21,000 students. Estimated enrolment for the 2023-2024 school year was 14,426 elementary students and 6,2623 secondary students – a total of 20,689. The Continuing Education average daily enrolment was 248.

Source: Niagara Catholic District School Board

Retrieved from: <https://niagaracatholic.ca/about-us/> and https://cdnsm5-ss21.sharpschool.com/UserFiles/Servers/Server_438171/File/Directors-Report-2023.pdf and https://cdnsm5-ss21.sharpschool.com/UserFiles/Servers/Server_438171/File/2023-2024%20Annual%20Budget.pdf

Conseil scolaire Viamonde is a public French language school board operating 4 elementary schools and 1 secondary school in the Niagara region. The elementary schools are located in Welland (2), Niagara Falls, and St. Catharines. The secondary school includes grades 7 to 12 and is located in Welland.

Source: Conseil scolaire Viamonde

Retrieved from: <https://csviamonde.ca/english/>

Conseil scolaire catholique MonAvenir is a French language Catholic school board which operates 7 elementary schools and 1 secondary school in Niagara. Elementary schools are located in Welland; St. Catharines (2); Niagara Falls (2); and Port Colborne. The secondary school is located in Welland.

Source: Conseil scolaire catholique MonAvenir

Retrieved from: <https://www.cscmonavenir.ca/>

Post-Secondary Institutions in Niagara

Brock University enrollment statistics from Fall 2019 to Fall 2023 are summarized below. An International Student Summary is provided on the following page.

Brock University Student Summary

Table 1: Headcount of Undergraduate students by Level of Study at Brock University from Fall 2019 to Fall 2023. Additional Qualification (AQ) education students and students seeking no credential are not included

Full-time/Part-time by Level		Headcount				
		2019	2020	2021	2022	2023
Year I	Total	6,871	6,026	6,002	6,076	6,266
	Full-Time	6,453	5,524	5,489	5,711	5,912
	Part-Time	418	502	513	365	354
Year II	Total	4,191	4,633	4,148	4,008	4,137
	Full-Time	3,844	4,261	3,715	3,676	3,823
	Part-Time	347	372	433	332	314
Year III	Total	3,606	3,756	4,240	3,741	3,660
	Full-Time	3,136	3,293	3,774	3,321	3,233
	Part-Time	470	463	466	420	427
Year IV	Total	2,581	2,842	2,870	3,176	2,816
	Full-Time	1,998	2,170	2,166	2,482	2,113
	Part-Time	583	672	704	694	703
Total	Total	17,249	17,257	17,260	17,001	16,879
	Full-Time	15,431	15,248	15,144	15,190	15,081
	Part-Time	1,818	2,009	2,116	1,811	1,798

Table 2: Headcount of Graduate students by level of study at Brock University from Fall 2019 to Fall 2023

Full-time/Part-time by Level		Headcount				
		2019	2020	2021	2022	2023
Masters	Total	1,740	1,674	1,554	1,495	1,509
	Full-Time	1,417	1,382	1,338	1,295	1,324
	Part-Time	323	292	216	200	185
PhD	Total	204	215	222	229	247
	Full-Time	180	193	195	196	206
	Part-Time	24	22	27	33	41
Total	Total	1,944	1,889	1,776	1,724	1,756
	Full-Time	1,597	1,575	1,533	1,491	1,530
	Part-Time	347	314	243	233	226

Table 3: Headcount of all students at by Gender and Level of Study Brock University from Fall 2019 to Fall 2023

Gender by Level		Headcount				
		2019	2020	2021	2022	2023
Undergraduate	Total	17,737	17,683	17,592	17,330	17,288
	Female	9,720	9,797	9,661	9,639	9,577
	Male	7,732	7,562	7,604	7,377	7,374
	Not Reported	285	324	327	314	337
Graduate	Total	1,944	1,889	1,776	1,724	1,756
	Female	1,248	1,193	1,078	1,054	1,108
	Male	627	628	626	606	572
	Not Reported	69	68	72	64	76
Total	Total	19,681	19,572	19,368	19,054	19,044
	Female	10,968	10,990	10,739	10,693	10,685
	Male	8,359	8,190	8,230	7,983	7,946
	Not Reported	354	392	399	378	413



Brock University International Student Summary

Table 1: Headcount of International Undergraduate students by Level of Study at Brock University from Fall 2019 to Fall 2023. Additional Qualification (AQ) education students and students seeking no credential are not included.

Full-time/Part-time by Level		Headcount				
		2019	2020	2021	2022	2023
Year I	Total	812	765	680	531	544
	Full-Time	675	628	481	437	463
	Part-Time	137	137	199	94	81
Year II	Total	423	514	527	485	438
	Full-Time	364	439	419	401	375
	Part-Time	59	75	108	84	63
Year III	Total	278	327	416	421	380
	Full-Time	235	284	348	354	322
	Part-Time	43	43	68	67	58
Year IV	Total	177	211	247	283	268
	Full-Time	136	143	165	196	177
	Part-Time	41	68	82	87	91
Total	Total	1,690	1,817	1,870	1,720	1,630
	Full-Time	1,410	1,494	1,413	1,388	1,337
	Part-Time	280	323	457	332	293

Table 2: Headcount of International Graduate students by level of study at Brock University from Fall 2019 to Fall 2023.

Full-time/Part-time by Level		Headcount				
		2019	2020	2021	2022	2023
Masters	Total	723	610	588	601	568
	Full-Time	720	610	588	601	567
	Part-Time	3	0	0	0	1
PhD	Total	41	36	48	44	50
	Full-Time	41	35	47	42	48
	Part-Time	0	1	1	2	2
Total	Total	764	646	636	645	618
	Full-Time	761	645	635	643	615
	Part-Time	3	1	1	2	3

Table 3: Headcount of all International students at by gender and level of study at Brock University from Fall 2019 to Fall 2023.

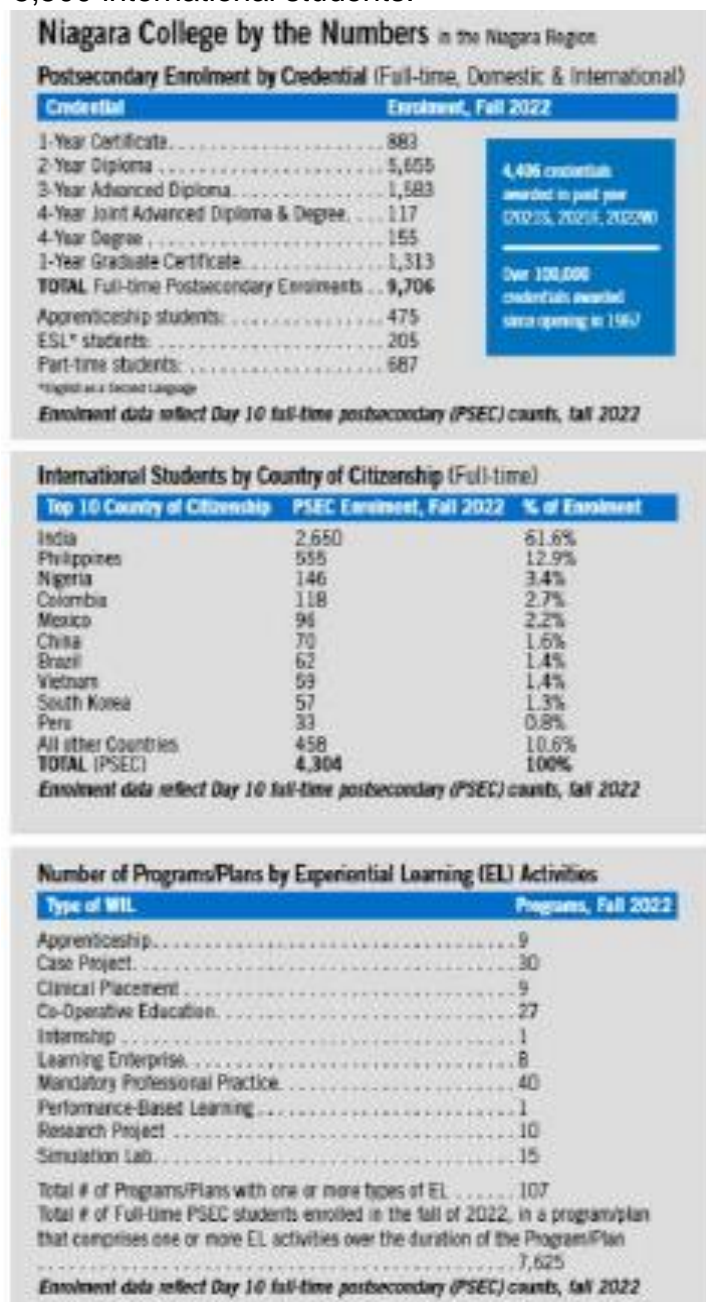
Gender by Level		Headcount				
		2019	2020	2021	2022	2023
Undergraduate	Total	1,820	1,837	1,893	1,797	1,699
	Female	876	793	834	795	750
	Male	921	1,018	1,035	971	922
	Not Reported	23	26	24	31	27
Graduate	Total	764	646	636	645	618
	Female	437	352	314	325	327
	Male	292	265	298	301	259
	Not Reported	35	29	24	19	32
Total	Total	2,584	2,483	2,529	2,442	2,317
	Female	1,313	1,145	1,148	1,120	1,077
	Male	1,213	1,283	1,333	1,272	1,181
	Not Reported	58	55	48	50	59

Source: Brock University Headcount Report 2023-2024

Retrieved From: <https://brocku.ca/institutional-analysis/wp-content/uploads/sites/90/Headcount-Report-2023-2024-1.pdf>



Niagara College had a total of 9,706 full-time post-secondary enrolments for the 2022-23 school year. In the fall of 2023, the college expected to welcome about 11,000 new and returning full-time students at its Niagara-based campuses, including almost 5,500 new students and just over 5,500 international students.



Source: Niagara College at a Glance, December, 2022

Retrieved from:

<https://issuu.com/niagaracollege/docs/nc-at-a-glance-2023> and

<https://www.niagaracollege.ca/blog/2023/08/31/niagara-college-to-welcome-11000-students-this-fall-with-a-lineup-of-events/>

The Niagara College 2022-2027 Strategic Plan focuses on six interconnected areas:

- Academic Excellence
- Wholistic student experience
- Alumni and Partner Engagement
- Social Inclusion and Environmental Sustainability
- Organizational Excellence
- Global Reach

Source: Niagara College

Retrieved from: <https://www.niagaracollege.ca/strategicplan/>

The University of Niagara Falls Canada will be ready to welcome new students in 2024, following Government of Ontario approval. The new university will offer distinctive undergraduate and graduate programs to meet the needs of today's employers, including emerging technology, data analytics, business and digital media.

Source: Global University Systems Canada

Retrieved from: <https://guscanada.com/news/university-of-niagara-falls-canada-to-welcome-new-students-in-2024/>

International Students in Canada

The Government of Canada has announced measures to stabilize the number of international students in Canada in 2024, stating that “more students have been arriving in Canada without the proper supports to succeed”, and “rapid increases in the number of international students arriving in Canada puts pressure on housing, health care and other services”.

The 2024 national cap for international student numbers is expected to result in approximately 360,000 approved study permits, a decrease of 35% from 2023. These temporary measures will be in place for two years, and the number of new study permit applications that will be accepted in 2025 will be re-assessed at the end of 2024.

Source: Government of Canada

Retrieved from: <https://www.canada.ca/en/immigration-refugees-citizenship/news/2024/01/canada-to-stabilize-growth-and-decrease-number-of-new-international-student-permits-issued-to-approximately-360000-for-2024.html>



Indicator: Technology Use and Its Influence on Education and Learning

Canadian Internet Use Survey, 2022 showed that Internet use among Canadians aged 15 years and older reached 95%, up from 92% in 2020. The largest increase was among Canadians aged 75 years and older, up from 62% in 2020 to 72% in 2022. The proportion of individuals who had access to the Internet at home remained stable, at 94% in 2022 and 2020. The proportion of Canadians who reported having a download speed of 50 megabits per second (Mbps) increased to 87% in 2022 compared with 72% in 2020. In 2022, a total of 84% of Canadians had access to the internet through a mobile data plan for personal use. About 2% reported having a mobile data plan but no home Internet connection.

Source: Statistics Canada

Retrieved from: <https://www150.statcan.gc.ca/n1/daily-quotidien/230720/dq230720b-eng.htm>

SWIFT (South Western Integrated Fibre Technology) is a project aiming to provide access to fibre-optic high-speed Internet for 3.5 million Ontarions living in rural areas. Niagara Region is a partner in SWIFT. The COVID-19 pandemic accelerated government investment in internet access as critical infrastructure. By June, 2024, four SWIFT Broadband construction projects valued at \$21,218,445 will bring better connectivity to an additional 5,646 households and businesses in areas of Niagara Falls, Port Colborne, Fort Erie, Lincoln, Niagara-on-the-Lake, Pelham, Wainfleet, West Lincoln and Grimsby.

Source: SWIFT (South Western Integrated Fibre Technology)

Retrieved from: <https://swiftruralbroadband.ca/projects/approved-projects/> and <https://swiftruralbroadband.ca/swift-broadband-projects-rolling-out-across-niagara-region/>

Ontario High-Speed Internet Projects & Availability is a map showing provincially-funded projects helping to ensure access to reliable internet service across Ontario by the end of 2025. This includes the Government of Ontario's portion of investment in the SWIFT project. It also includes investing in improved broadband at public libraries, to provide greater community access to education and vital services, create more economic opportunity for residents, and support lifelong learning, online skills training and career development.

Source: Government of Ontario

Retrieved from: <https://news.ontario.ca/en/release/60234/supporting-lifelong-learning-through-expanded-library-broadband> and <https://www.ontario.ca/page/ontario-connects-making-high-speed-internet-accessible-in-every-community>

Niagara has 12 Public Library systems, with a total of 27 branch locations. The Federation of Ontario Public Libraries states, "Public libraries offer the residents and communities they serve with access to digital resources and learning tools, subscription-based databases, and government services. They also provide reliable internet access to individuals of all ages who cannot otherwise access or afford it." The vital role played by public libraries aligns with the Suggested Community Action Step in the [Living in Niagara-2023 Economic Prosperity Sector](#),

“Continue to prioritize equitable access to technology, the internet, and opportunities to acquire digital skills, for all people in Niagara”.

Source: Government of Ontario

Retrieved from: <https://news.ontario.ca/en/release/1004158/ontario-helping-public-libraries-provide-public-internet-access>

In 2022, there were 2,921,672 electronic visits to Niagara’s public libraries. This table is included in the [Living in Niagara-2023 report Arts, Culture and Heritage Sector Technical Document](#).

Selected use statistics for Public Library Systems in Niagara, 2022				
Public Library System in Niagara	Total Annual Circulation	Annual Program Attendance	No. of in-person Visits to Library	No. of Electronic Visits to Library Website
Fort Erie	211,462	5,875	41,800	61,620
Grimsby	232,607	6,797	97,700	114,504
Lincoln/Pelham	442,167	26,878	75,950	145,184
Niagara Falls	468,331	24,565	217,750	295,100
Niagara on-the- Lake	81,539	4,390	30,000	65,468
Port Colborne	90,166	5,052	36,750	20,904
St. Catharines	1,062,252	17,454	217,000	1,898,364
Thorold	79,056	28,718	45,200	90,792
Wainfleet	55,361	3,166	19,650	35,984
Welland	1,169,642	25,743	144,350	174,356
West Lincoln	88,633	5,250	32,750	19,396
Niagara-wide Total	3,891,306	153,888	741,900	2,921,672

Source: Ontario Ministry of Heritage, Sport, Tourism and Culture Industries, Ontario Public Library Statistics; and Government of Ontario, Ontario Data Catalogue

Retrieved from: <https://data.ontario.ca/en/dataset/ontario-public-library-statistics> and <http://www.mtc.gov.on.ca/en/libraries/statistics.shtml>

Geospatial Niagara (GN) is a not-for-profit organization whose goal is to promote geo-literacy and community participation through geography. GN provides geographic education, geospatial technology support and skilled resources to educators, students and the public.

Source: Geospatial Niagara

Retrieved from: <https://211ontario.ca/service/65802465/geospatial-niagara-geospatial-niagara/>



Indicator: Student Mental Wellness

The Royal Society of Canada (RSC) calls for a national strategy emphasizing that children’s mental health is central to life success, and to deliver the strategy in the context in which children are most easily accessible – schools. The RSC calls for high-quality guidelines for Canadian health practitioners, to prioritize child and youth mental well-being in clinical practice and policy. The report urges Canadian medical professionals to incorporate a focus on social and emotional development as foundational to child well-being in routine wellness checks, and to establish policies that place mental health at the centre of health.

Source: Royal Society of Canada

Retrieved from: <https://rsc-src.ca/en/voices/canada-is-failing-when-it-comes-to-mental-well-being-children> and <https://www.facetsjournal.com/doi/full/10.1139/facets-2021-0078>

A 2022 Mental Health Commission of Canada report describes campus mental health and the ongoing impact of COVID-19. Ninety per cent of student affairs leaders in a nationally representative survey of 69 post-secondary institutions across Canada said students were experiencing “pandemic fatigue”, including anxiety, social isolation, financial challenges, and increased academic load. Post-secondary campus needs to support students include:

- mental health literacy skill-building
- student engagement
- technology capacity-building
- evidence-informed approaches

Source: Mental Health Commission of Canada

Retrieved from: <https://mentalhealthcommission.ca/wp-content/uploads/2022/04/The-Ongoing-Impact-of-COVID-19.pdf>

Ontario’s 2022-2023 Learning Recovery Action Plan supported student resiliency and mental well-being by investing in school-based mental health supports. Mental health components of the plan included:

- Mandatory professional development on mental health for educators
- Working with the Ministry of Health to consult with stakeholders, including parents and students, to leverage the best available evidence on emerging student mental health needs and the potential of a graduation requirement on resilience and mental well-being
- Continuing to support student resilience and well-being with the following goals:
 - mentally healthy classrooms and learning environments
 - effective and responsive school mental health and addictions supports
 - connections to the broader comprehensive system of mental health care.

Source: Government of Ontario

Retrieved from: <https://news.ontario.ca/en/release/1001924/ontario-expanding-access-to-student-mental-health-supports>

School Mental Health Ontario (SMHO) is a provincial implementation support team that helps school districts enhance student mental health through the use of evidence-informed strategies and services. SMHO works alongside the Ministry of Education, English and French school districts and school authorities, and a number of provincial education and health organizations to develop a systematic and comprehensive approach to school mental health.

SMHO provides:

- leadership and guidance about best practices in school mental health
- implementation coaching
- tailored, co-created resources
- mental health literacy for educators and school/system leaders
- training for school mental health professionals
- mental health awareness for parents/families
- a platform for student voice and leadership in school mental health.

Through these services, SMHO aims to enhance the quality and consistency of mental health promotion, prevention and early intervention programming in Ontario schools.

Source: School Mental Health Ontario

Retrieved from: <https://smho-smsso.ca/>

The District School Board of Niagara (DSBN) 2022-2025 Mental Health & Well-Being Strategy envisions a mental health climate at all DSBN schools to create an environment where:

- School staff works together with parents, mental health partners and other schools to become stronger together by sharing responsibilities and resources
- Staff serve as mental health and well-being partners in the classroom and work with families and community agencies to mobilize support and access to service
- Students understand and respect mental health and well-being and feel comfortable advocating for their own needs
- Family members are empowered to support the mental health and well-being of their children
- The voices of students, staff, parents and community partners contribute to an on-going mental health conservation that builds understanding

Source: District School Board of Niagara

Retrieved from: <https://www.dsbni.org/programs-services/well-being/home>

The Niagara Catholic District School Board (NCDSB) 2023 Directors' report describes the work of the Niagara Catholic Mental Health Team's focus on the importance of implementing a multi-tiered system of support for all students. Activities highlighted include:

- Training all grade 7 and 8 teachers in mental health literacy and content related to mental illness, how to seek support, substance use, managing stress, and self-care



- Further developing capacity of education staff in mental health, emphasizing mentally healthy classrooms, and creating trauma-informed classrooms and schools
- Promoting both Mental Health Awareness Week, which aligns with Catholic Education Week in Ontario, which had a 2023 theme, 'We are Many, We are One'.
- Resources created by the Child and Youth Worker team, focused on healthy relationships, mental health, wellness, empathy, and coping in classrooms.

In addition, school Social Workers continued to respond to the clinical needs of students, by providing therapy and counselling through a referral-based model.

Source: Niagara Catholic District School Board

Retrieved From: https://cdnsm5-ss21.sharpschool.com/UserFiles/Servers/Server_438171/File/Directors-Report-2023.pdf and https://www.niagaracatholic.ca/community/mental_health

Pathstone Mental Health provides intake and access to child and youth mental health services in the Niagara region. The Pathstone website presents provides Mental Health Resources, including a 4-part series with Dr. Susan Hopkins Supporting Educators; Back to School Prep Kit; and 5 Positives for Going Back to School.

Source: Pathstone Mental Health

Retrieved From: <https://pathstonementalhealth.ca/resources/>

The Centre for Innovation in Campus Mental Health (CICMH) helps Ontario's post-secondary institutions enhance their capacity to support student mental health and well-being.

CICMH involves Colleges Ontario, the Council of Ontario Universities, the Ontario Undergraduate Student Alliance, the College Student Alliance and Canadian Mental Health Association, Ontario Division. Both Brock University and Niagara College are affiliates.

CICMH provides Campus Mental Health Training, including Campus Peer Support Training; More Feet on the Ground (Mental Health Literacy on Campus); and the Mental Health Works on Campus facilitated workshop series for staff.

Source: Centre for Innovation in Campus Mental Health

Retrieved from: <https://campusmentalhealth.ca/> and <https://campusmentalhealth.ca/training/>

Niagara College Health, Wellness and Accessibility Services helps students who are struggling to connect with counselling services and other community resources to help with: being successful at school; relationships with friends and family; and stress, anxiety, sadness, loneliness and more.

Source: Niagara College

Retrieved from: <https://www.niagaracollege.ca/hwas/resources/community/>



Brock University Student Wellness and Accessibility Centre offers Crisis Resources for students who are in mental health distress. This includes contacts for different types of distress, community mental health supports, and medical care that is available on campus.

Source: Brock University Student Wellness and Accessibility Centre

Retrieved from: <https://brocku.ca/health-wellness-accessibility/crisis-resources/>