

for the non-Aboriginal population. For example, according to the 2006 census, 34% of Aboriginal adults had not graduated from high school, compared with only 15% of their non-Aboriginal counterparts.⁴² In the 2011 census, these numbers improved slightly, with 29% of Aboriginal people not graduating from high school, compared with 12% in the non-Aboriginal population.⁴³

It is significant that the lowest levels of educational success are in those communities with the highest percentages of descendants of residential school Survivors: First Nations people living on reserves, and Inuit. Both groups have a high school completion rate of 41% or less.⁴⁴

The statistics for First Nations people living off reserves and for Métis are somewhat better. More than 60% of First Nations people living off reserves and 65% to 75% of Métis people have graduated from high school (although these results are still below the national average).⁴⁵

Lower educational attainment for the children of Survivors has severely limited their employment and earning potential, just as it did for their parents. Aboriginal people have lower median after-tax income, are more likely to experience unemployment, and are more likely to collect employment insurance and social assistance benefits.⁴⁶ This situation is true for all Aboriginal groups, with some variations. In 2009, the Métis unemployment rate for persons aged twenty-five to fifty-four was 9.4%, while the non-Aboriginal rate was 7.0%.⁴⁷ In 2006, the Inuit unemployment rate was 19%.⁴⁸ The true rates of unemployment for people living on reserves are difficult to ascertain because of limited data collection.⁴⁹

Aboriginal people also have incomes well below their non-Aboriginal counterparts. The median income for Aboriginal people in 2006 was 30% lower than the median income for non-Aboriginal workers (\$18,962 versus \$27,097, respectively).⁵⁰ The gap narrows when Aboriginal people obtain a university degree, which they do at a far lower rate.⁵¹ Not surprisingly, the child poverty rate for Aboriginal children is also very high—40%, compared with 17% for all children in Canada.⁵² The income gap is pervasive: non-Aboriginal Canadians earn more than Aboriginal workers no matter whether they work on reserves, off reserves, or in urban, rural, or remote locations.⁵³

The proportion of Aboriginal adults below the poverty line, regardless of age and gender, is much higher than that of non-Aboriginal adults, with differences ranging from 7.8% for adult men aged sixty-five or older, to 22.5% for adult women aged sixty-five or older.⁵⁴ The depth of poverty is also much greater, with Aboriginal people having an average income that falls further below the poverty line on average than that of non-Aboriginal adults, and their poverty is more likely to have persisted for a significant period of time.⁵⁵