



Growing up in Toronto: Challenge 2: THE OPPORTUNITY GAP

Children in Toronto do not have equitable opportunities to participate in programs outside of school.

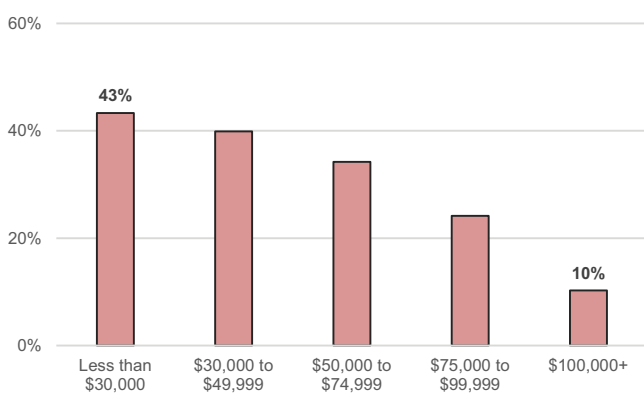


RESEARCH SUPPORT: Participating in early learning or care programs and activities outside of school can increase children’s holistic development and protect against risk factors that improve outcomes well into adolescence and young adulthood¹.

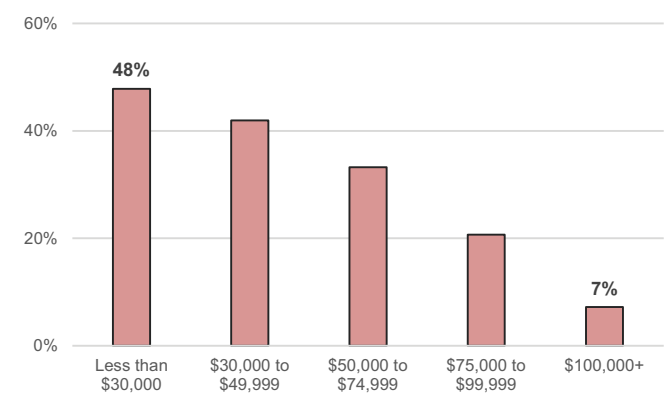
Many children in Toronto do not participate regularly in programs outside of school. Prior to entering school, 31% of children did not participate in early learning or care programs. Further, 56% of students do not participate in arts programming and 42% do not participate in sports.

Participation in these programs varies greatly based on **income**, telling us that a lack of socioeconomic resources may contribute to this gap.

Percent of students not participating in an early learning or care program by family income, TDSB (Grades K to 6), 2012*



Percent of students not participating in arts or sports by family income, TDSB (Grades K to 6), 2012*



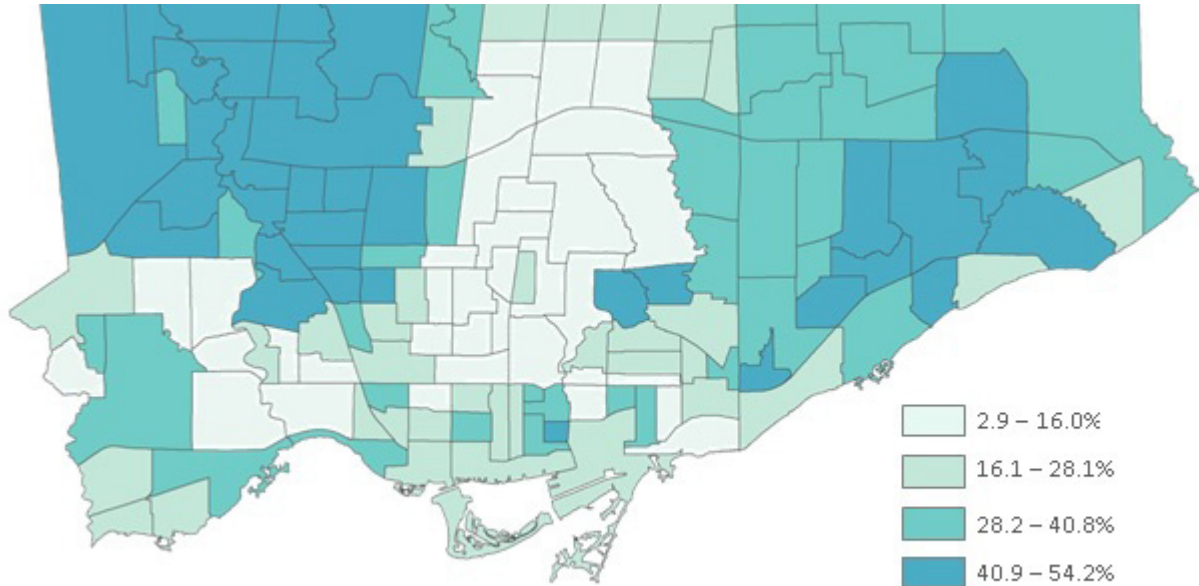
Participation in these programs also varies based on **race**, indicating that some families may not be familiar or feel welcome at these programs.

TDSB Parent Census (Kindergarten – Grade 6) Indicators by Race												
Percent of students who:	Aboriginal	Black	East Asian	Latin American	Middle Eastern	Mixed-Race	South Asian	Southeast Asian	White	Faring most favourably	Faring least favourably	By how much*
Don't participate in an early learning or care program	31.3%	30.0%	31.3%	40.7%	45.3%	22.3%	45.1%	55.3%	16.3%	White	Southeast Asian	3.4
Don't participate in sports or arts	18.6%	23.3%	12.8%	19.9%	22.2%	10.2%	21.8%	25.7%	5.5%	White	Southeast Asian	4.7

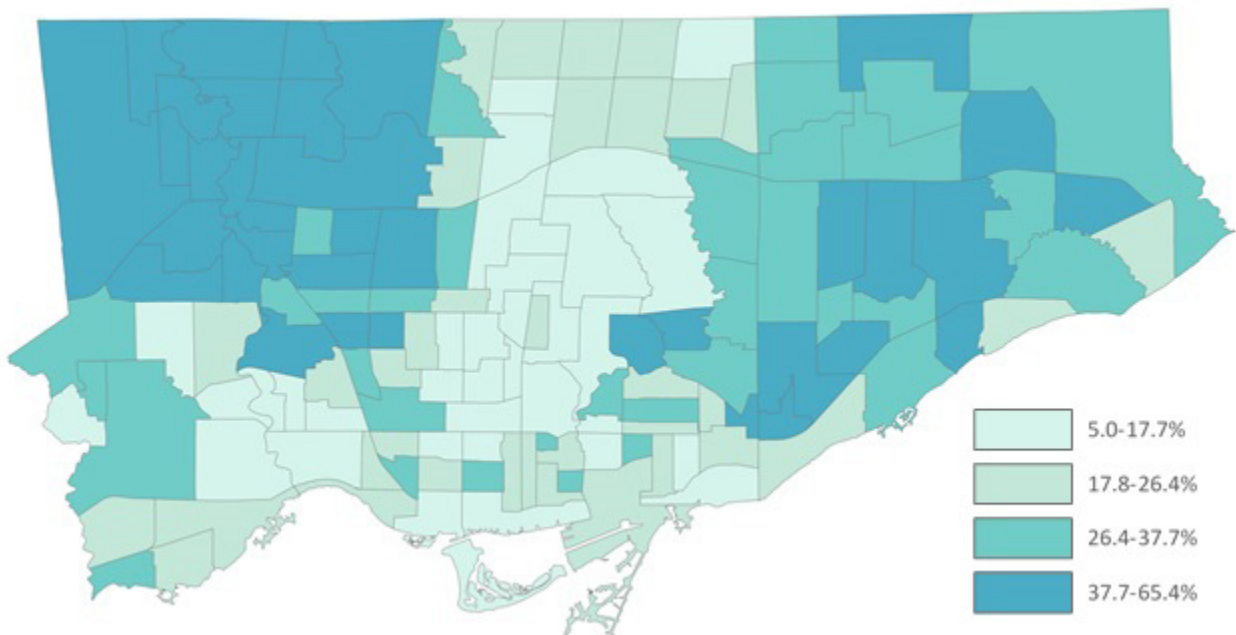
* Information about all data sources can be found online at www.toronto.ca/raisingthevillage under “Highlights”

We also see **geographic** variations in participation, indicating that where a child lives in Toronto may influence their opportunity to participate.

Percent of students who do not regularly participate in arts or sports by neighbourhood, TDSB (Grades K to 6), 2012*



Percent of students who did not participate in an early learning or care program, TDSB (Grades K to 6), 2012*



**CALL
TO
ACTION**

What can parents and communities do to close the opportunity gap?

What can policy and system planners do to close the opportunity gap?



Share your thoughts:
[@TOChildOutcomes](#)
or [#ChildFriendlyTO](#)

1. Center on the Developing Child at Harvard University (2007). The Science of Early Childhood Development: Closing the gap between what we know and what we do.
2. Darling, Nancy (2005). Participation in extracurricular activities and adolescent adjustment. *J Youth Adolesc.* Vol. 34, no. 5: 493-505.