

First Nations Labour and Employment Development Survey (FNLED)

2022 Report



About the Report

Contents of this publication require the permission of the Dene Nation to be reproduced.

For further information or to obtain additional copies, please contact:

Dene Nation
Box 2338, 5120-49th Street
Yellowknife, NT
X1A 2P7

Phone: 867-873-4081

Fax: 867-920-2254

Photos are courtesy of Arlyn Charlie, Tessa Macintosh, Tyra Moses, Nicky Richards, Louis M. Mercredi, Eighty One Images, Kelly Skinner, and Dene Nation Archives.






For citation, use the following format:

Dene Nation (2021). First Nations Labour and Employment and Development Survey, 2019-20 Northwest Territories. Yellowknife, Northwest Territories: Dene Nation. 92 pages.

This report was written and prepared by Dr. Kelly Skinner and her team in collaboration with the Dene Nation.



Dene Laws



Dq Nàowoòdeè

(Tìhçq)

Asir gots'q sir wet'à
döne ts'ats'edi.

Elets'ats'edi.

Aats'qö leghonits'eètq.

Qhdaa nats'eet'ì eyixè asii
hazqö gomqö wenats'eet'ì.







Dzëë eghàlats'idè ha hót'e
toò ts'ete ha hot'e.

Dq nats'eet'ì döne
k'èts'a ats'edi-le.

T'eekaa eyits'q dqzia ts'ìlì
sii, lenats'eet'ì.

Asir k'èhots'eezqö sir wet'à döne
hoghàgits'eehtq.

Aats'qö gonàà hò?q nidè nezìq.



Dene Laws

Share what you have

Help each other

Love each other as much as possible

Be respectful of elders
and everything around you

Sleep at night and work during the day

Be polite and don't argue with anyone

Young girls and boys should
behave respectfully

Pass on the teachings

Be as happy as possible at all times

Table of Contents

Welcome	1
About the FNIGC	2
About the FNLED report	3
Executive Summary	4
Introduction	5
Methodology	6
Chapters:	
1. Demographics	7
2. Language and Culture	21
3. Education and Training	40
4. Skills and Work Readiness	50
5. Labour Market Indicators	58
6. Workplace Wellbeing and Culture	81
Conclusion	90
References	91



Welcome



As your newly elected Chief, I am honoured to present the First Nations Labour and Employment Development (FNLED) report which presents for the first time, valuable information gathered from last year's employment survey conducted with our people throughout the NWT. A similar survey was carried out in 10 provinces across Canada as well as in the Yukon Territory focusing on age groups 15 to 64.

The data collected from this survey will play a significant role in improving our daily lives. The information that we have collected will provide our leaders a clearer

picture of where the gaps to sustainable employment are in NWT communities and assist them in the development of programs and policies aimed to empower the Dene people and raise each other up so we can equally succeed.

Mahsi Cho to the 13 Dene communities who participated in this survey and to the 80 Knowledge Gatherers who spent countless hours collecting the information contained in this report.

Mahsi Cho,

Gerald Antoine

Dene National Chief

AFN Regional Chief for the Northwest Territories



The First Nations Information Governance Centre (FNIGC)

The First Nations Information Governance Centre (FNIGC) is an incorporated, non-profit organization committed to producing quality research and information that will contribute to improving the health and well-being of First Nations across the country.

At the First Nations Information Governance Centre, we envision that every First Nation will achieve data sovereignty in alignment with their distinct worldview.

Mandated by the Assembly of First Nations' Chiefs in Assembly (Resolution #48, December 2009), the mission of the First Nations Information Governance Centre is to strengthen First Nations' data sovereignty and the development of governance and information management systems at the community level. We adhere to free, prior and informed consent, respect nation-to-nation relationships, and recognize the distinct customs of nations, to achieve transformative change.



Photo courtesy of Dene Nation Archives.



About the FNLED Survey

The First Nations Labour and Employment and Development (FNLED) survey is a new national survey being carried out by the First Nations Information Governance Centre and its Regional Partners (representing 10 provinces and two territories) across Canada.

Launched in 2019, the survey collects information about employment, labour, jobs, and skills in First Nations communities across Canada. The information collected from the survey will be used to help First Nations communities, organizations, and all levels of government develop programs and policies that aim to improve the well-being of First Nations people living on reserve and in Northern communities.

The First Nations Labour and Employment and Development survey represents an important extension of work done by the First Nations Information Governance Centre and its regional partners and is being designed to build on the foundational work of the First Nations Regional Health Survey (FNRHS, or RHS) and more specifically, the First Nations Regional Early Childhood, Education, and Employment Survey (FNREES, or REEES).

The First Nations Labour and Employment and Development survey emphasized the collection of labour market information (employment, labour, jobs and skills) and therefore focused on First Nations youth (ages 15 to 17 years) and adults (ages 18 to 64 years old), rather than children. The survey includes questions specific to demographics, employment, traditional activities, education, training, skills, workplace well-being, knowledge of First Nations languages, and housing.

As a result of COVID-19, the First Nations Information Governance Centre will not have a complete national data set and will be unable to produce a national report. Instead, they will develop a First Nations Labour and Employment and Development key indicators report with the 5 regions (Nova Scotia, Quebec, Ontario, Yukon, Northwest Territories) who achieved a regional data set. This report incorporates a uniform set of key indicators with a regionally-driven narrative.

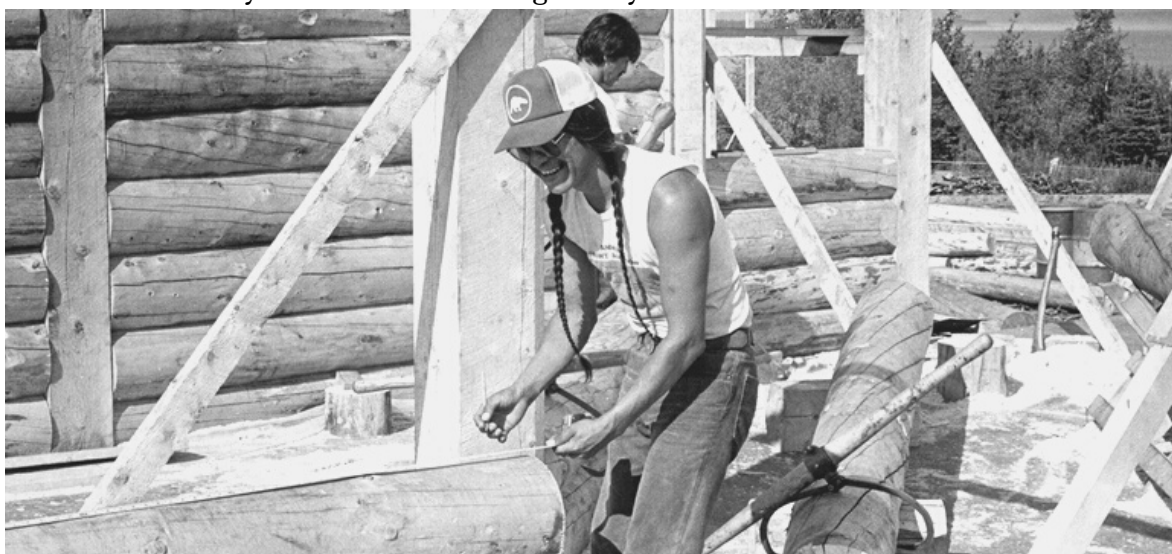


Photo courtesy of Dene Nation Archives.



Executive Summary

This report presents findings from the First Nations Labour and Employment and Development survey administered in the Northwest Territories in 2019-2020 and provides a snapshot of various labour and employment indicators. The purpose of this report was to describe labour market information about demographics, employment, jobs, education, and skills among Dene.

Overall, there was a fairly equal distribution of males and females and more than half of Dene were single. Half of Dene lived in remote communities outside the capital city of Yellowknife. The majority of Dene individuals and households are low-income and only a small portion of people received income from traditional activities. Income was generally higher for those with at least a high school education. Most Dene have completed at least some of high school and indicate that education was helpful for obtaining employment. While the majority of Dene were employed, almost a quarter were unemployed and looking for work. Most commonly identified barriers for obtaining work included job shortages, not knowing where to look for jobs, and not having enough education or training.

Almost all Dene reported having at least a little knowledge about cultural teachings, practices, and their rights. Participating in traditional practices was common among Dene. Many youth and young adults were not fluent in a First Nations language and this was most commonly due to a lack of learning opportunities available (no classes or teachers). Though speaking a First Nations language was not a common practice, the majority of Dene indicated that this skill did help them in their job. Fundamental skills (reading, writing, oral communication, math, and computer skills) required for employment were customary among Dene. Although most Dene indicated that they were at least somewhat confident and able to manage their own money, financial insecurity was experienced by some.

Almost all Dene were satisfied with their job. Of those who did not experience job satisfaction, concerns with the work environment and pay were most common. Harassment, discrimination, and racism were indicated as problems within the workplace, with more women having reported these experiences.

This report provides a thorough illustration of labour market and workplace experiences in the Northwest Territories. The information presented in this report may be used to inform programs, policies, and initiatives to further current employment situations and improve financial security and workplace wellbeing among Dene.



Introduction

FNLED Report 2022

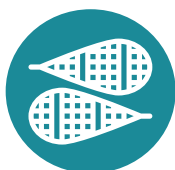
This report highlights findings from the 2019 First Nations Labour and Employment and Development survey with the Dene from the Northwest Territories. The purpose of the report is to broadly describe the current demographics, culture, education and skills, employment and labour market, and well-being of the Dene population. Relationships between social, economic, cultural, and health determinants will be outlined.



The demographics section outlines Indigenous regions and Treaties of the Northwest Territories, and the current sociodemographics, household composition, and community characteristics of Dene.



Current knowledge and practices surrounding First Nations language and culture is described in the language and culture section.



The education and training section characterizes formal education and training obtained by Dene as well as the training needed for future employment.



The basic skills and work readiness section examines the foundational skills and qualifications among Dene.



Characteristics of the Dene labour market, such as indicators of employment and financial security are highlighted in this section.



The wellbeing and workplace culture section highlights the job satisfaction, workplace wellbeing, and workplace environment of Dene.

Methodology



First Nations Labour and Employment and Development (FNLED) Survey

The First Nations Labour and Employment and Development survey contained a set of questions focusing on labour market information about employment, education, training, skills, and job readiness of First Nations living on-reserve and in northern communities across Canada. Several broad questions framed the analyses in this report:

- What is the demographic and socio-economic profile of respondents of the survey?
- What is the current knowledge and practice of First Nations language and culture?
- What is the labor force participation? What are some barriers to working? What are the levels of income, employment, education, and training?
- What is the level of work readiness?
- What are the levels of workplace well-being and job satisfaction?



Survey Development and Data Collection

For the development of the survey, input and feedback were gathered and incorporated from regional advisory committees, regional coordinators, regional data analysts and key stakeholders.

First Nations community members received training to work as Knowledge Gatherers to administer the survey in their communities and surrounding area. Participants responded to the survey on their own using an iPad. Data were collected between 2019-2020 among Dene aged 15-64 years.



Sampling Strategy

Due to the impact of COVID-19, a nationally-representative sampling methodology was not achieved and data were available from the 5 regions of the Northwest Territories (Akwaitcho, Dehcho, Gwich'in, Sahtu, Tlicho). Across these regions, a final total of 1,346 surveys were collected and data were weighted to represent the the Northwest Territories. Note that not all survey respondents answered all questions.



Analyses

Data were analyzed to give a picture of labour market information for Dene. Descriptive data analyses were conducted using the Complex Samples package in SPSS v25 statistical software. Percentages in this report were rounded to whole numbers (and as such may not always add to 100%) .





1

Demographics

Demographics

This section outlines Indigenous regions and Treaties of the the Northwest Territories, and the current sociodemographics, household composition, and community characteristics of Dene.



Demographic and community factors describe a population and these indicators are important for understanding the current profile of Dene in the Northwest Territories. While there is no official definition of how poverty is defined in the the Northwest Territories, indicators such as access to adequate housing, goods and services, health and well-being, community factors, and income can be used to examine aspects of poverty within this community [1].



Sociodemographics

This section characterizes the Dene population by age, gender, and martial status.



Household composition

Household composition is described in this section by examining the number of adults and children living in a house and household crowding.



Income

Personal and household income is described in this section with details about income that was earned from traditional activities.



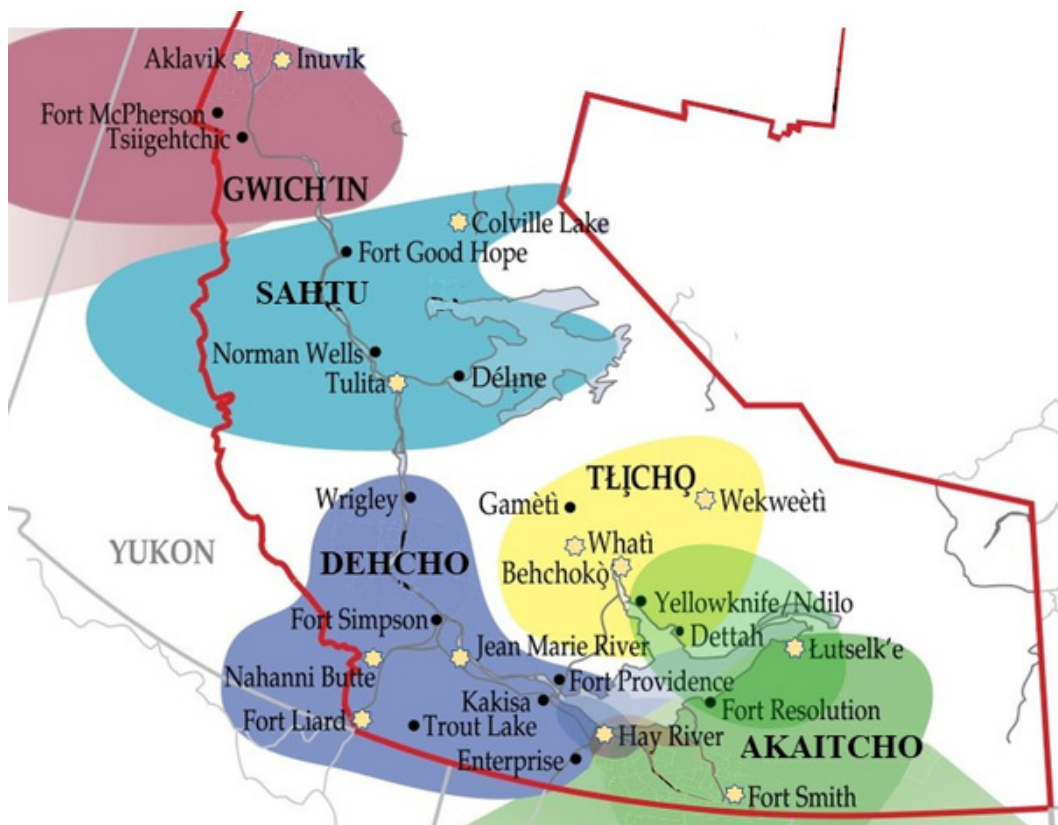
Community Factors

This section quantifies community remoteness and population size among Dene in the Northwest Territories.



Participating Communities

This report contains findings from data collected with 13 participating communities from 5 regions in the Northwest Territories (Akaitcho, Dehcho, Gwich'in, Sahtu, and Tlicho). Participating communities are indicated with a yellow star on the map.



Adapted by Dr. Kelly Skinner from the [Official Languages of the Northwest Territories](#) map.

“We must develop plans to start our own economy at the community level. The present colonial pattern of development attempts to integrate us into a wage economy, as employees of companies over which we have no control. We want to strengthen our traditional land-based economy and at the same time create viable enterprises in the communities under the collective control of Indian people. That way our young people will have the chance to remain in the community rather than always having to move away, and even risk losing their identity, to find employment.”

“The Dene Declaration” General Assembly Indian Brotherhood of NWT (ie: Dene Nation) Fort Simpson, July 19th, 1975.



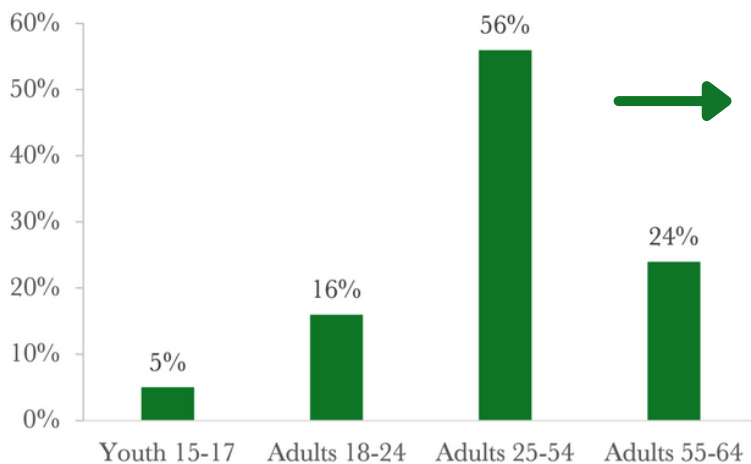
Findings - Sociodemographics



CHARACTERISTICS

52% of Dene who participated in this survey identified as **men**

48% of Dene who participated in this survey identified as **women**



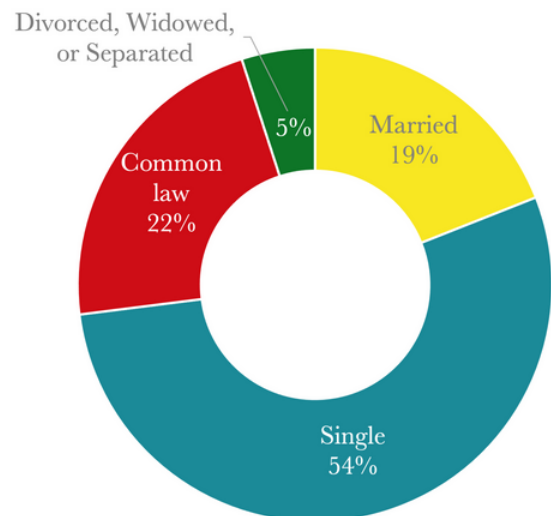
The majority of Dene who participated in this survey were **adults aged 25-54 years**

MARRIAGE STATUS

The majority of Dene who participated in this survey were **single**, followed by **common law partners**



Photo courtesy of Dene Nation Archives.

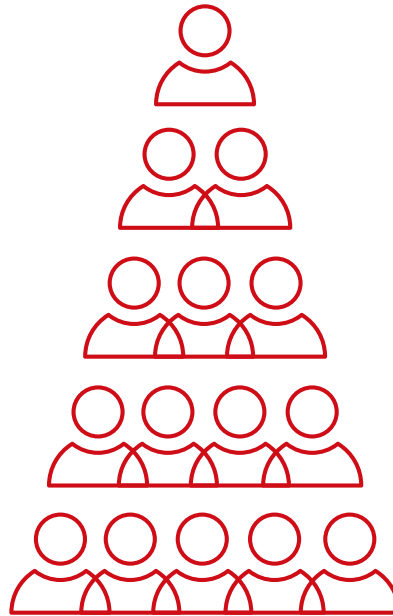
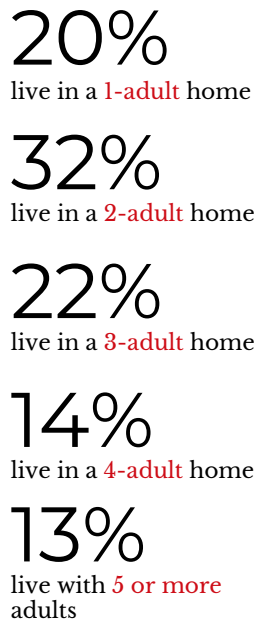


Findings - Household Composition

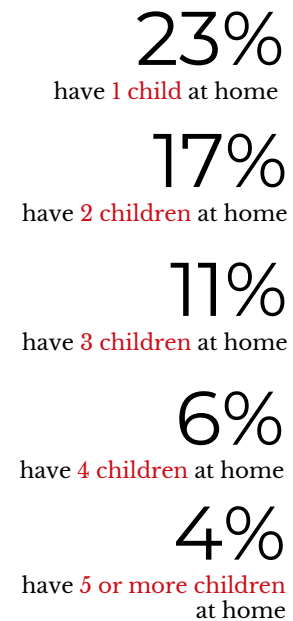


PEOPLE IN THE HOUSEHOLD

How many **ADULTS** currently live in your household the majority of the time?



How many **CHILDREN** currently live in your household the majority of the time?



8% live alone with at least one child

40% have no children at home

Photo courtesy of Dene Nation Archives.

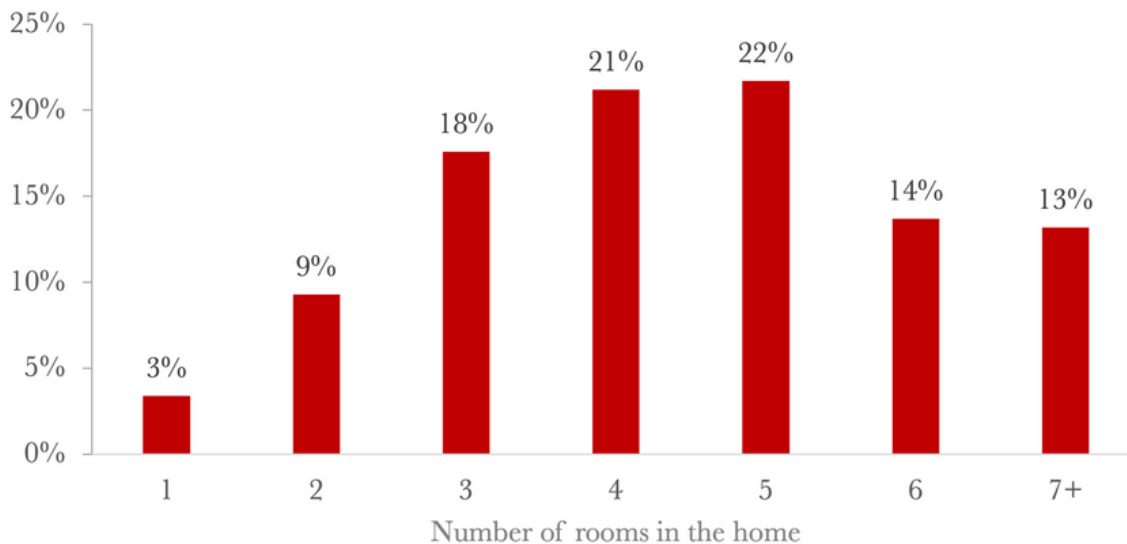


Findings - Household Composition



ROOMS IN THE HOUSEHOLD

How many rooms are there in your home?



Most Dene live in a home with **3 - 5 rooms**. This includes bedrooms, kitchen, living rooms, and furnished basements.

HOUSEHOLD CROWDING



Photo courtesy of Adriana Stewart.

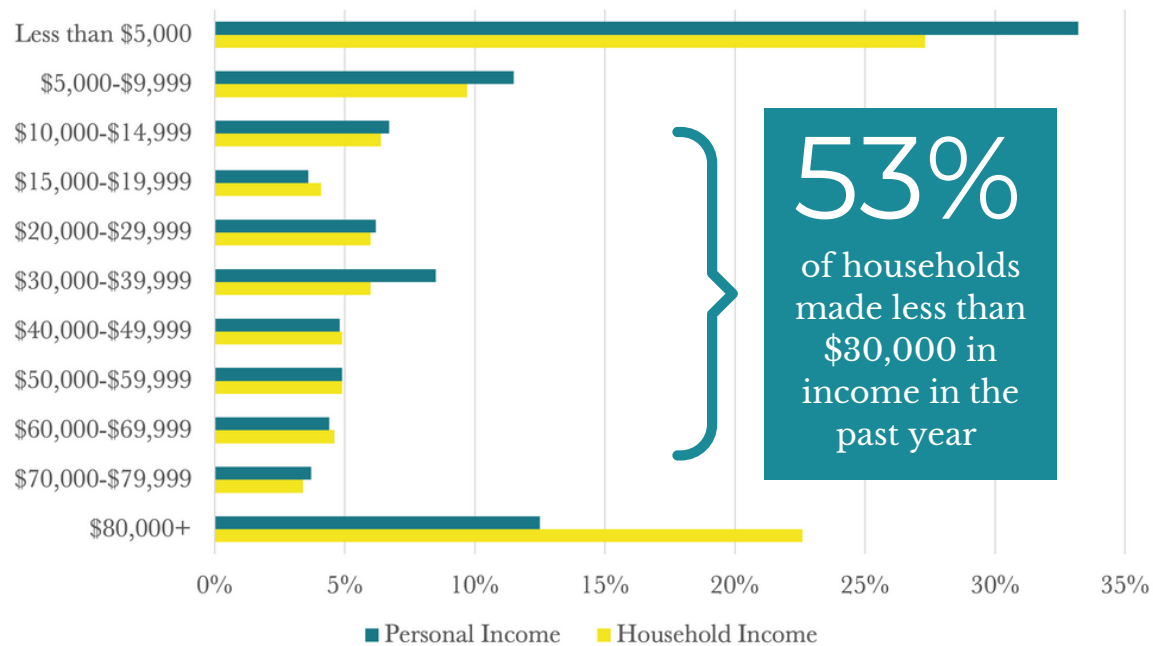
Note: A crowded household is defined as having more than one adult per room in a house (including bedrooms, kitchen, living rooms, and furnished basements).





INCOME DISTRIBUTION

What is your personal and household income?



Note: Household income includes the personal income from all individuals living in the house.



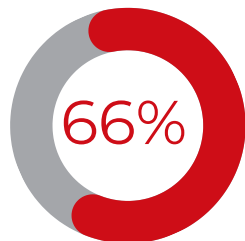
Photo by Kelly Skinner.



Findings - Income



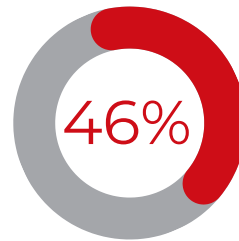
Income less than \$5,000 – by DEMOGRAPHIC



of Dene who made <\$5,000 in personal income were **single**



of Dene who made <\$5,000 in personal income were **<18 years old**

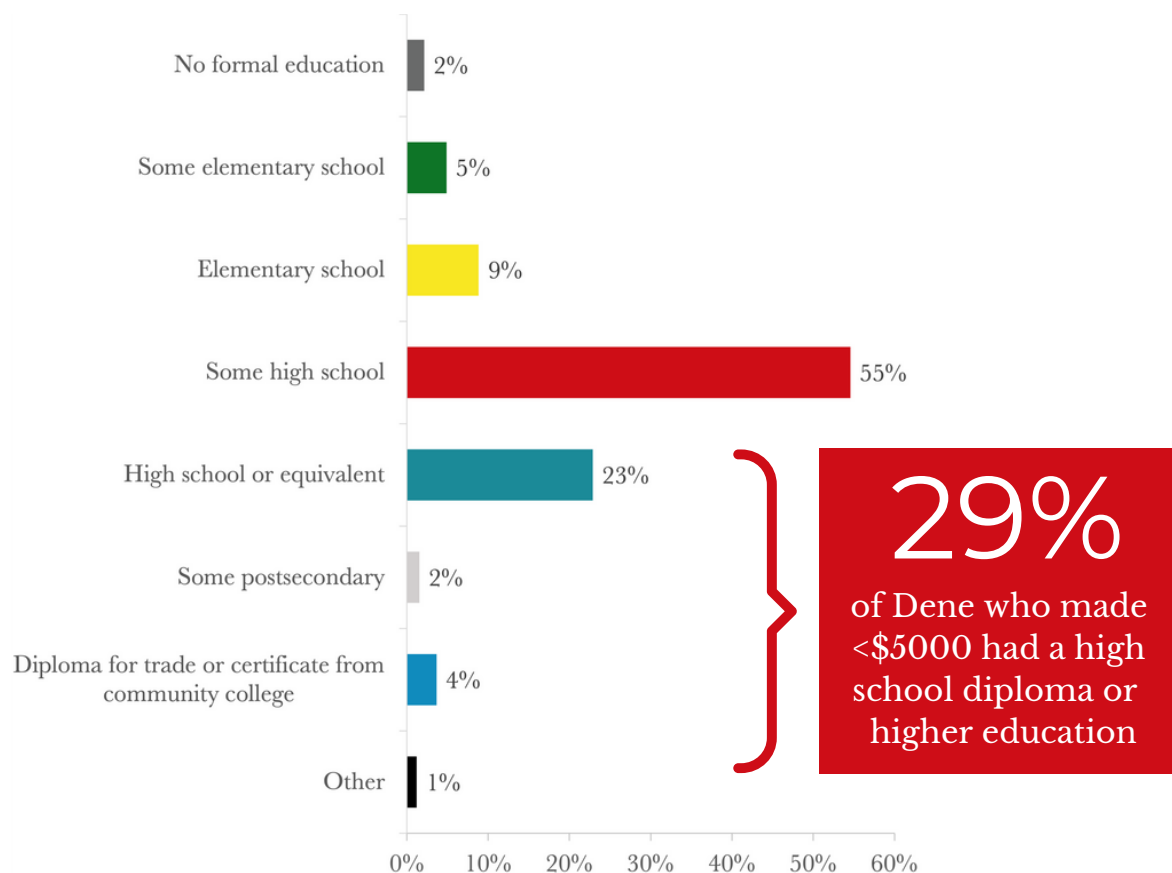


of Dene who made <\$5,000 in personal income were **women**



of **Dene women** who made <\$5,000 in personal income were **<18 years old**

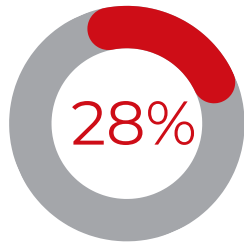
Income less than \$5,000 – by EDUCATION



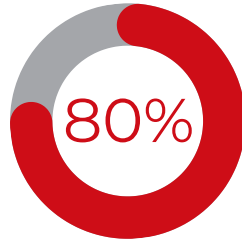
Findings - Income



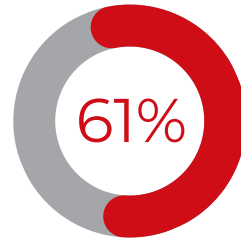
Income more than \$80,000 – by DEMOGRAPHIC



of Dene who made
>\$80,000
in personal income
were **single**



of Dene who made
>\$80,000
in personal income
were **25-54 years old**

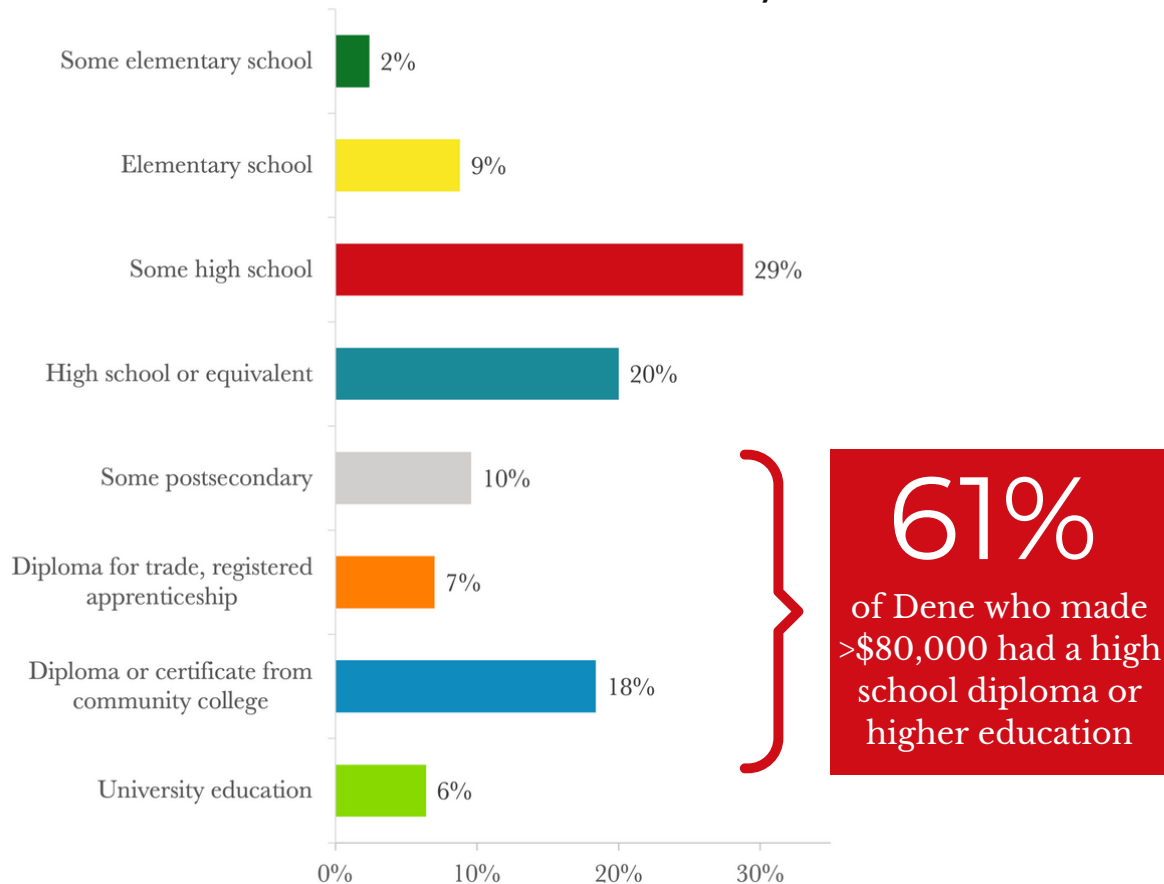


of Dene who made
>\$80,000
in personal income
were **women**



of **Dene women** who
made >\$80,000 in
personal income
were **25-54 years old**

Income more than \$80,000 – by EDUCATION

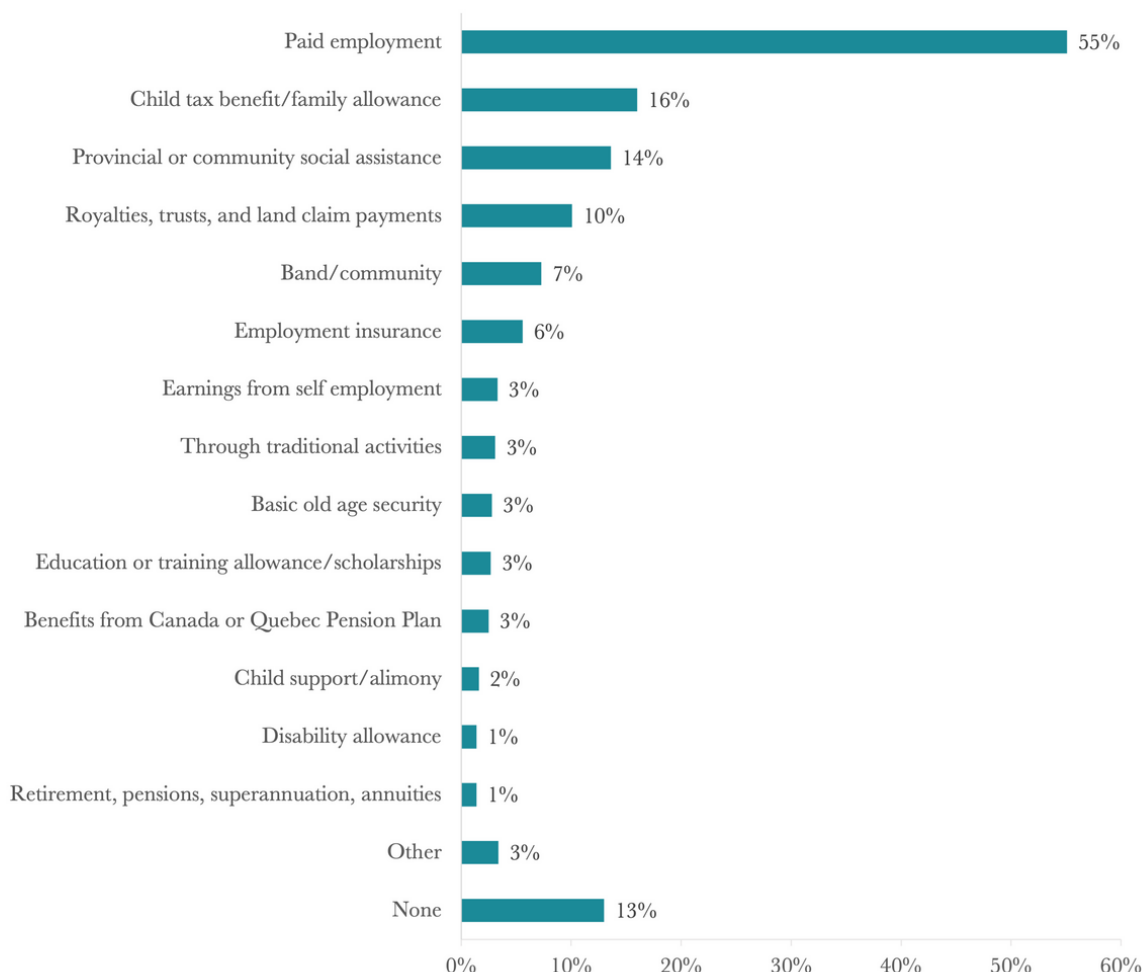


Findings - Income



INCOME IN PAST 12 MONTHS

Did you personally receive income from any of the following sources in the past 12 months?



What this graph shows:

- Just over half (55%) of Dene received income from paid employment in the past 12 months
- 16% of Dene received income from child tax benefits or family allowance
- 14% of Dene received income from provincial or community social assistance
- 10% of Dene received income from royalties, trusts, and land claim payments
- 13% of Dene received no income from any sources in the past 12 months





INCOME FROM TRADITIONAL ACTIVITIES

Only
3%

of participants said they personally received income from **traditional activities** such as fishing, guiding, hunting, trapping, harvesting, or arts and crafts



*When looking at household income, 4% said their household received income from traditional activities in the past 12 months. Photo by Nicky Richards.

SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITIES

The Government of Northwest Territories collaborated with territorial and Indigenous governments, and the business and non-profit sectors to develop a framework to eliminate poverty in the Northwest Territories [2]. In the most recent update to this strategy, ensuring the sustainability of the Northwest Territories communities was included as 1 of the 5 overarching goals. Communities need help to access local sources of fresh food and ensure future generations have the skills to feed their families. Sustainable communities will help to reduce barriers to employment and strengthening the traditional economy. This goal aims to help people find paid employment while also strengthening existing skills and assets that are rooted in local culture and traditions.





RETIREMENT INCOME



Photo by Arlyn Charlie Photography.

Only 42%

of Dene **adults 55-64** were financially preparing, or had financially prepared for retirement

58%

of Dene thought that their household retirement income **would not be enough** to maintain their standard of living during retirement



Findings - Community Factors



COMMUNITY REMOTENESS



21%

lived in an **Urban**
community



29%

lived in a **Rural**
community



50%

lived in a **Remote or
Special Access**
community

COMMUNITY SIZE

33%

lived in an **Small**
community

50%

lived in a **Medium**
community

17%

lived in an **Extra
Large** community



Photo by Louis M. Mercredi.

Note:

- Urban communities are any population centre with a population of at least 1,000 and a density of >400 people. All communities outside population centres are rural communities.
- Remote communities are more than 350 km from the nearest service centre with year-round road access, and special access communities have no year-round road access to a service centre
- Small communities are defined as 75-299 people, medium as 300-999 people, and extra-large as 2000+ people. No participants lived in a large community (1000-2000 people).



Summary - Demographics

Main highlights from this section:

This section provides insight into the current demographic profile of Dene in the Northwest Territories, which can be important indicators for health and wellbeing, poverty, community participation, and economic growth. Household composition. Overall, there was a fairly equal distribution of men and women and more than half of Dene were single. Half of Dene lived in remote communities. The majority of Dene individuals and households are low-income and only a small portion of people received income from traditional activities.

- 1 The majority of Dene who participated in the survey were adults 25-54 years of age.
- 2 The majority of Dene individuals made less than \$40,000 a year, and households made less than \$60,000.
- 3 Less than half of Dene adults 55-64 years old were financially preparing or had prepared for retirement.
- 4 Half of Dene lived in a remote or special access community.



Photo by Kelly Skinner.

A person with dark hair, wearing a vibrant red knitted sweater and blue jeans, is shown in profile, leaning over the side of a boat. They are focused on working with a large, light-colored animal skin, likely a seal, which is spread out on a green surface. The background features a body of water with white-capped waves under a clear blue sky. The overall scene conveys a sense of traditional craftsmanship or hunting activity.

2

Langaug and Culture

Photo by Arlyn Charlie Photography

Language and Culture

This section aims to understand the current knowledge and practices surrounding First Nations language and culture.

Traditional practices and language serve as an important connection to culture, identity, and spirituality. However, First Nations languages and cultural practices are at risk of disappearing as a result of assimilatory policies in Canada.



First Nations Language

This section characterizes First Nations language proficiency among Dene and demonstrates the perceived value of understanding, speaking, reading, and writing of a language, and the barriers to learning or improving knowledge of First Nations languages.



Mother Tongue

First Nations languages that are most commonly used in daily life is described in this section.



Traditional Knowledge and Culture

This section captures information from Dene about their knowledge and understanding of the history of First Nations people and their inherent rights (e.g. territory rights, treaty rights, etc.).



Findings - First Nations Language



FIRST NATIONS LANGUAGE PROFICIENCY



77% of Dene have knowledge of a First Nations language



Among that 77%, there was an approximately equal distribution of men and women



A greater proportion of older Dene had knowledge of a First Nations language compared to youth

72%

of Dene **youth** aged 15-17 had knowledge of a First Nations language

86%

of Dene aged 55-64 had knowledge of a First Nations language



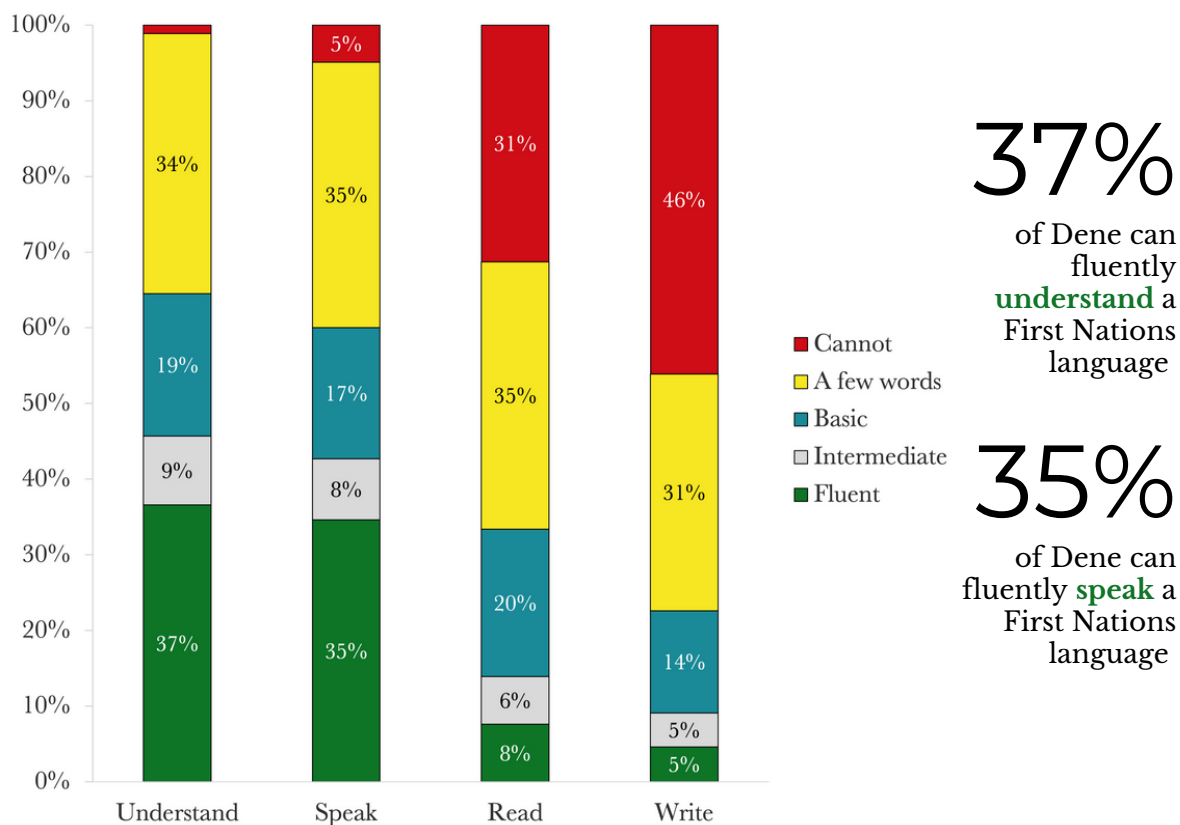
When my grandfather told us a story he would say, “I am telling you this not only for these days but for the future. Take my words and don’t throw them away. Put them in your pocket and keep them always”.
– Elizabeth Yakeleya

Photo by Arlyn Charlie Photography



FIRST NATIONS LANGUAGE PROFICIENCY

How well can you understand, speak, read, and write the First Nations language that you know the best?



What this graph shows:

Most Dene are able to understand and speak a first nations language, but only a small number are able to read and write the language.

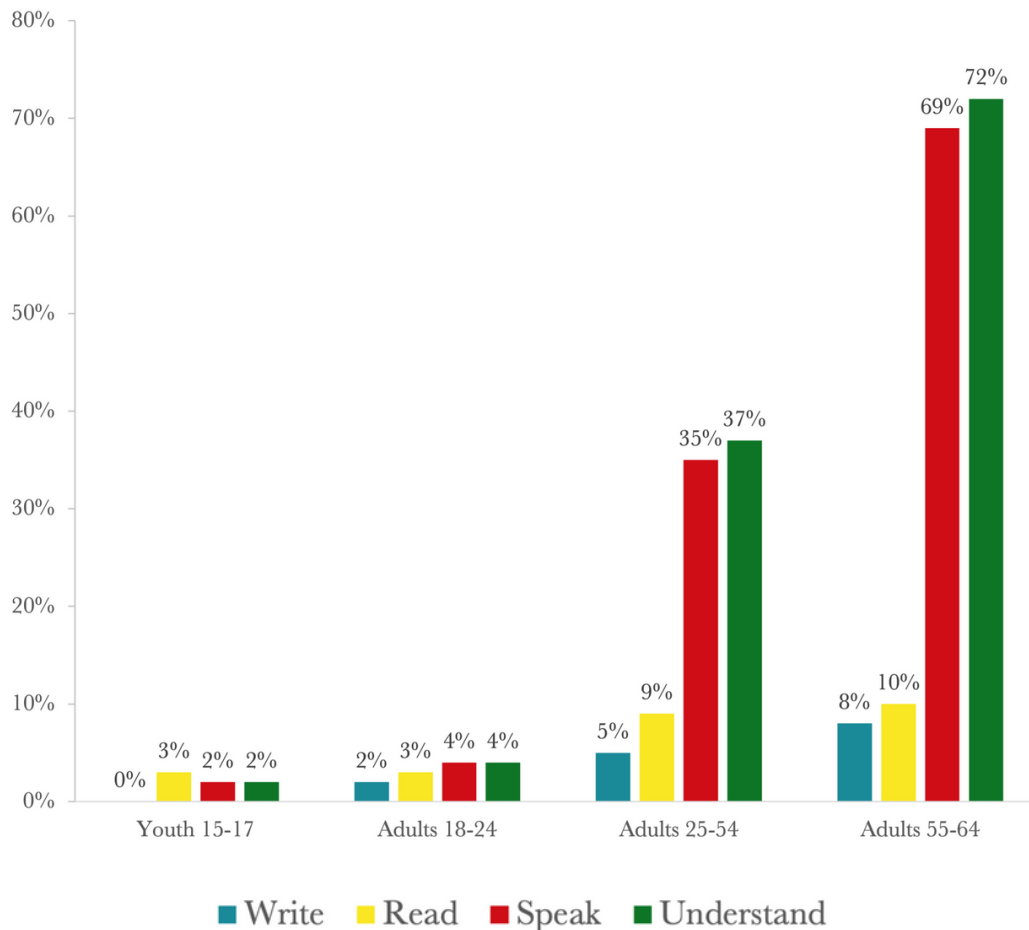
- The majority (65%) of Dene have at least a basic (**37% fluent**; **9% intermediate**; **19% basic**) understanding of a First Nations language.
- A similar number of Dene (60%) are able to speak at least a basic amount of the language.
- However, only a quarter (24%) of Dene are able to write more than a few words (**5% fluent**; **5% intermediate**; **14% basic**) in a First Nations language.

This shows the importance of needing to protect First Nations languages.



FIRST NATIONS LANGUAGE FLUENCY

Dene who said they can understand, speak, read, and write a First Nations language fluently.

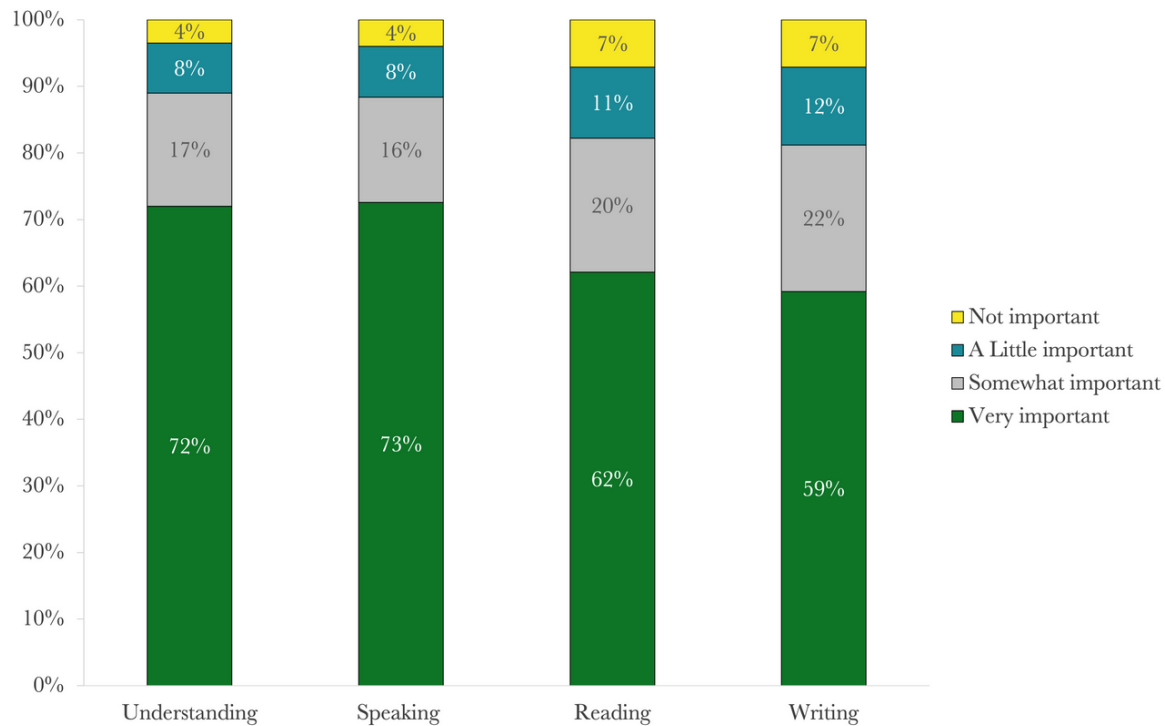


What this graph shows:

- With increasing age, fluency in First Nations languages also increased
- Among Dene youth (aged 15-17), 0% were fluent in writing, 3% were fluent in reading, and 2% were fluent in speaking and understanding a First Nations language.
- Dene adults (aged 55-64) showed the highest fluent in First Nations languages, where 8% were fluent in writing, 10% fluent in reading, 69% were fluent in speaking, and 72% were fluent in understanding

FIRST NATIONS LANGUAGE PERCEPTIONS

How important is understanding, speaking, reading, and writing First Nations languages to you?



44th Dene Nation National Assembly in Fort Smith. Photo courtesy of Dene Nation Archives.

FIRST NATIONS LANGUAGE PERCEPTIONS BY AGE

How important is understanding, speaking, reading, and writing First Nations languages to you?

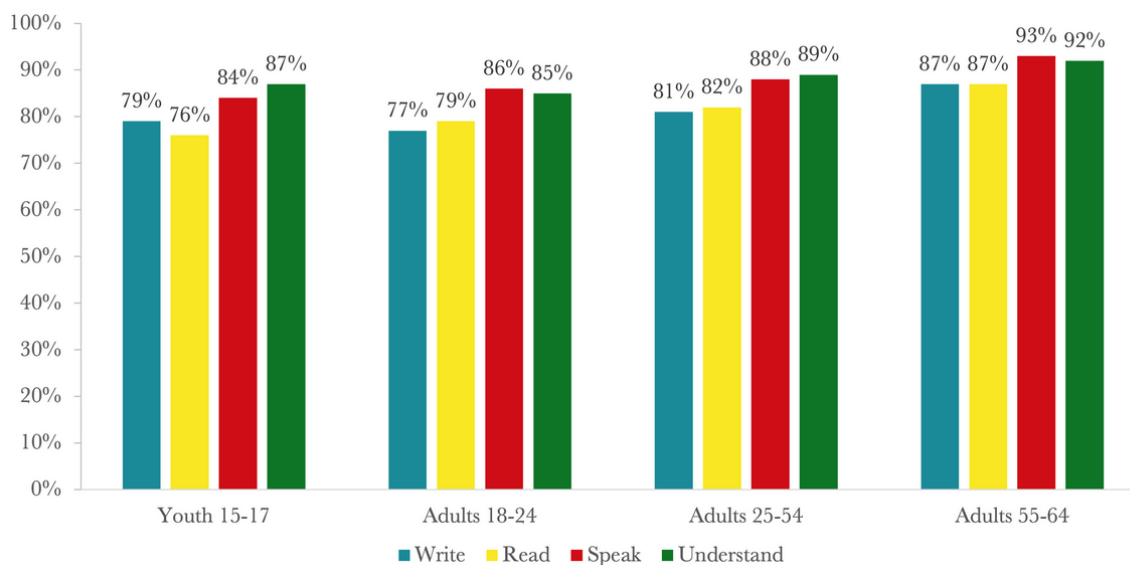


Photo by Kelly Skinner.

PROTECTING FIRST NATIONS LANGUAGES

These results suggest that First Nations languages are a valued part of Dene culture. Unfortunately, there has been a decline in those who are able to speak First Nations languages, and about 75% of Canada's First Nations languages are endangered [3]. As such, there is a need to protect the traditional languages of Dene considering the deeply rooted connection First Nations languages have to culture.



BARRIERS TO LEARNING

What is standing in the way of you learning or improving your knowledge of a First Nations language?

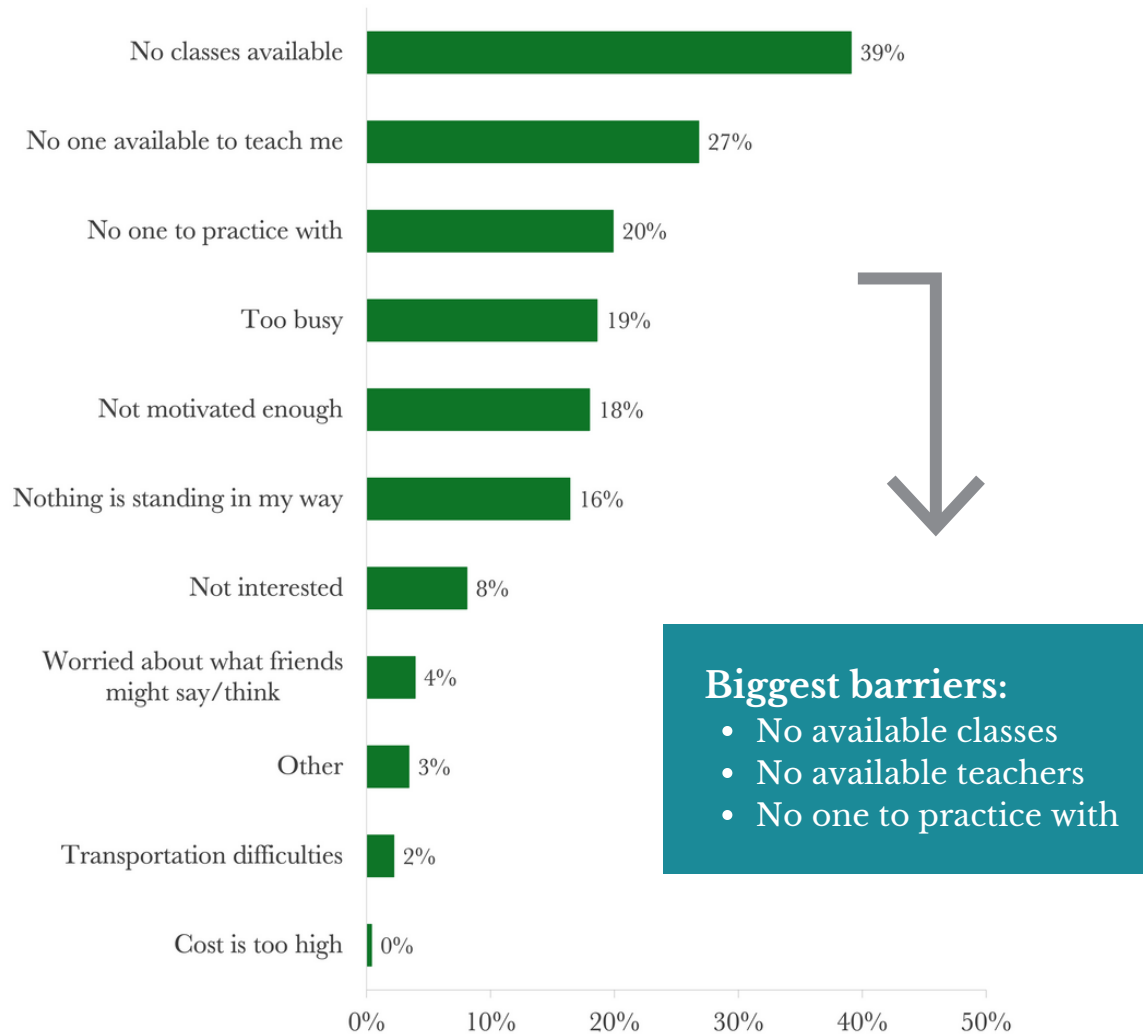


Photo courtesy of Dene Nation Archives.



BARRIERS TO LEARNING



Among those living in a remote or special access community...



43%

reported '**no classes available**' as a barrier to learning a First Nations language



31%

reported '**no one available to teach me**' as a barrier to learning a First Nations language



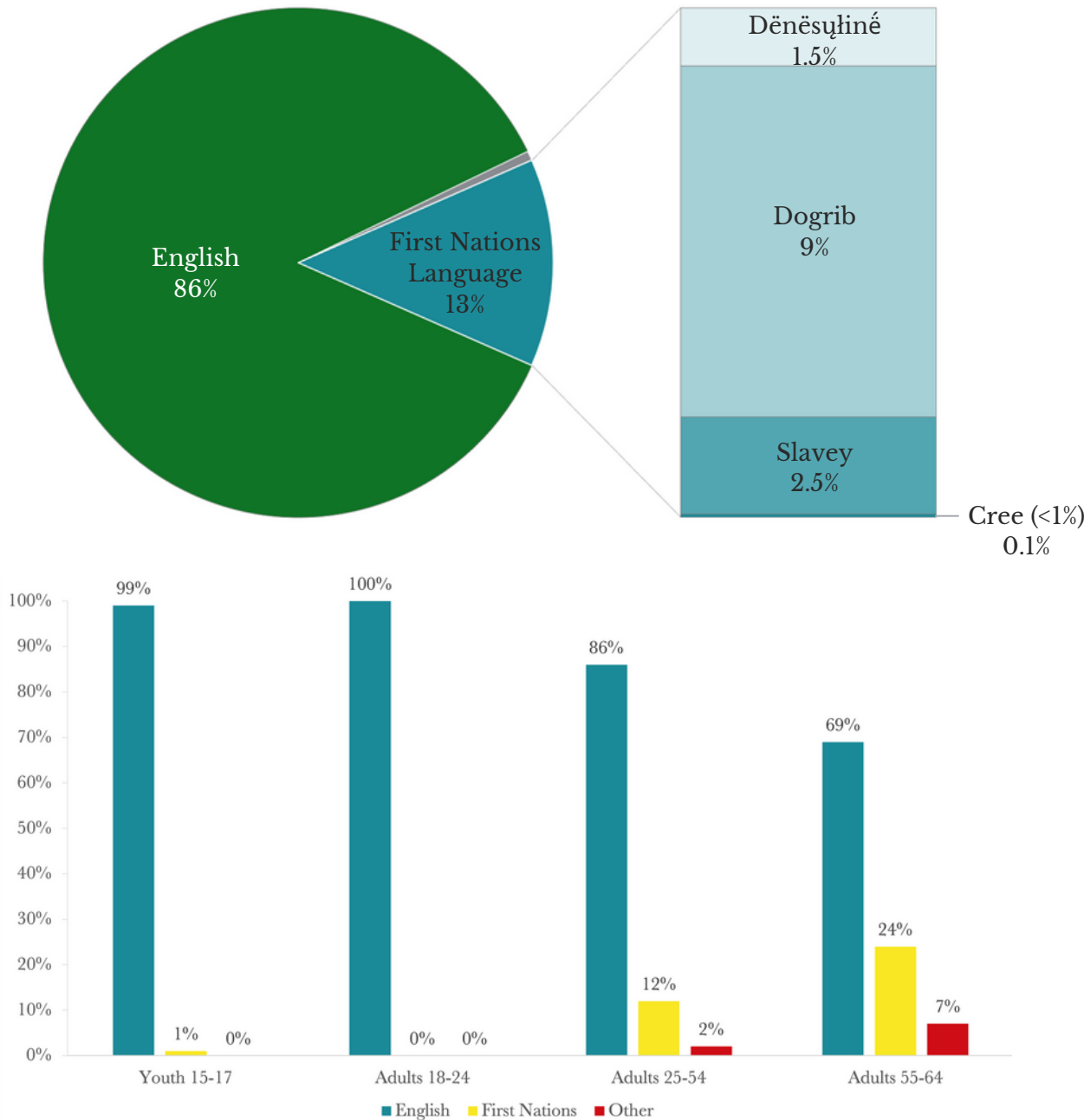
24%

reported '**no one to practice with**' as a barrier to learning a First Nations language



LANGUAGES OF DAILY LIFE

What language do you use most often in daily life?



Few youth or young adults reported using a First Nations language most often in their daily life. English was the predominant language used daily.

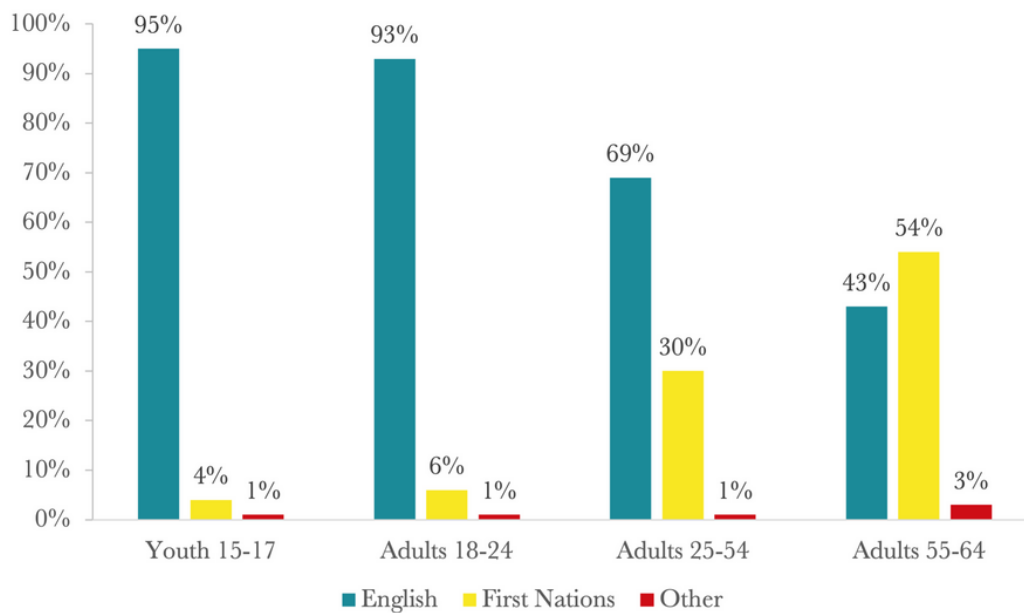
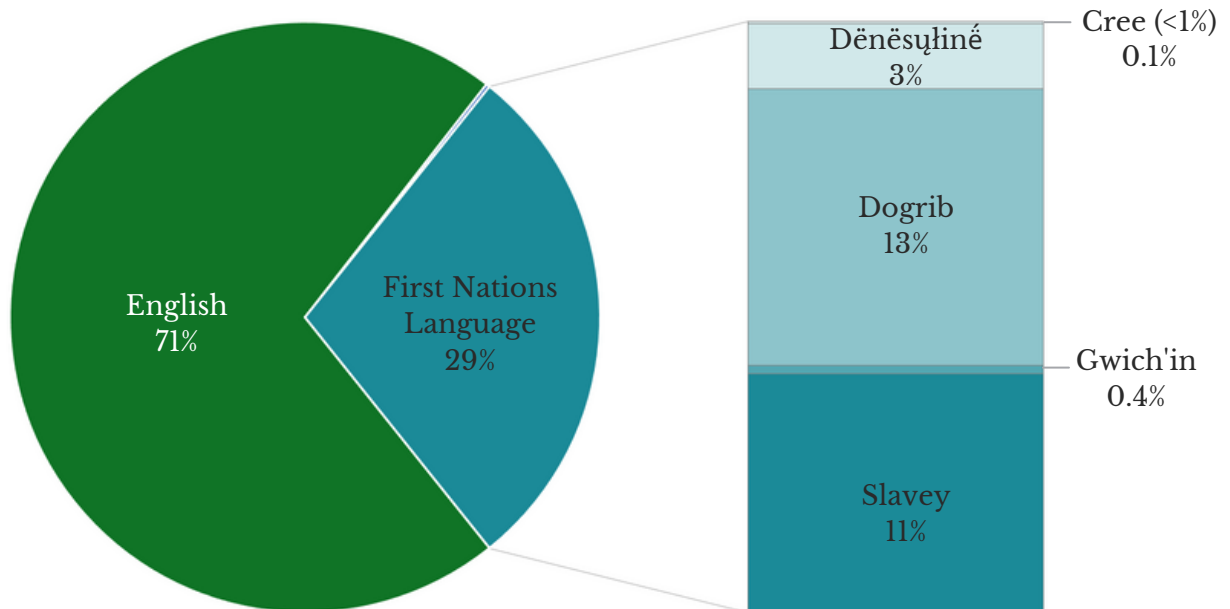


Findings - Mother Tongue



LANGUAGES OF CHILDHOOD

What language did you first learn at home in childhood?



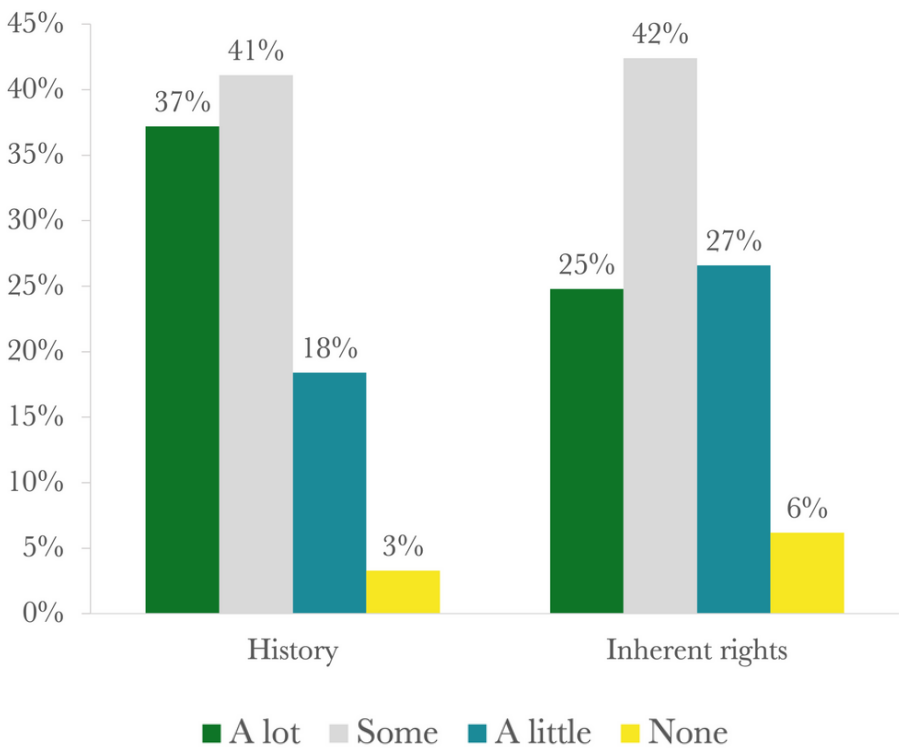
Many older Dene had first learned a First Nations language in childhood, but this was not common in younger generations.





KNOWLEDGE OF YOUR PEOPLE

How much do you know about the history and the inherent rights of your people?



97%

of participants said they knew at least a little about the traditional teachings and cultural practices of their people

94%

of participants said they knew at least a little about the inherent rights of their people



Photo courtesy of Dene Nation Archives.





EXPOSURE TO TRADITIONS

How much exposure have you had to traditional teachings and cultural practices?

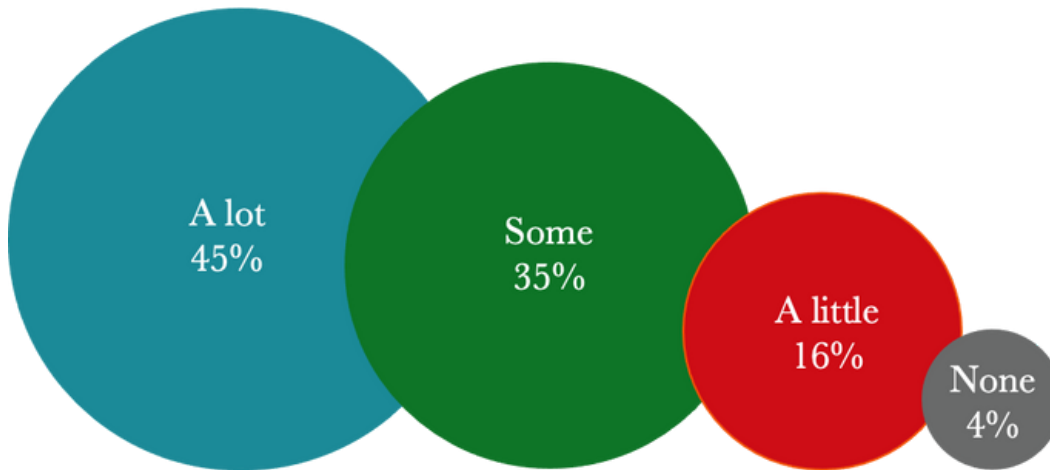


Photo by Nicky Richards.



Passing on Dene Culture

"It does not take one day or one trip on a trapline to learn everything about it, but the knowledge is accumulated down through the years. "
-John Tetso, Trapping is My Life, 1970



"I sure learned the bush life. That's what I know. It's pretty hard to beat me in the bush. I know that life. My father and my stepmother, they both taught me how to make a living for myself. They travelled the land often and worked. They survived on the land, so they taught me the skills on the land. They taught me how to hunt, trap, how to cook for myself, how to butcher my kill, how to make dry meat and preparation of meat. My stepmother also taught me how to sew...They always said wherever you go in life, if you kill a moose or caribou, make sure you give some to the Elders and make sure you give to those in need. That was one of the most important teachings that they gave me because today, I don't work. I'm too old to work or do anything for myself but yet somebody always brings me fresh meat, something good, traditional food to eat for my family to enjoy. They bring me dry fish, meat, and fish".

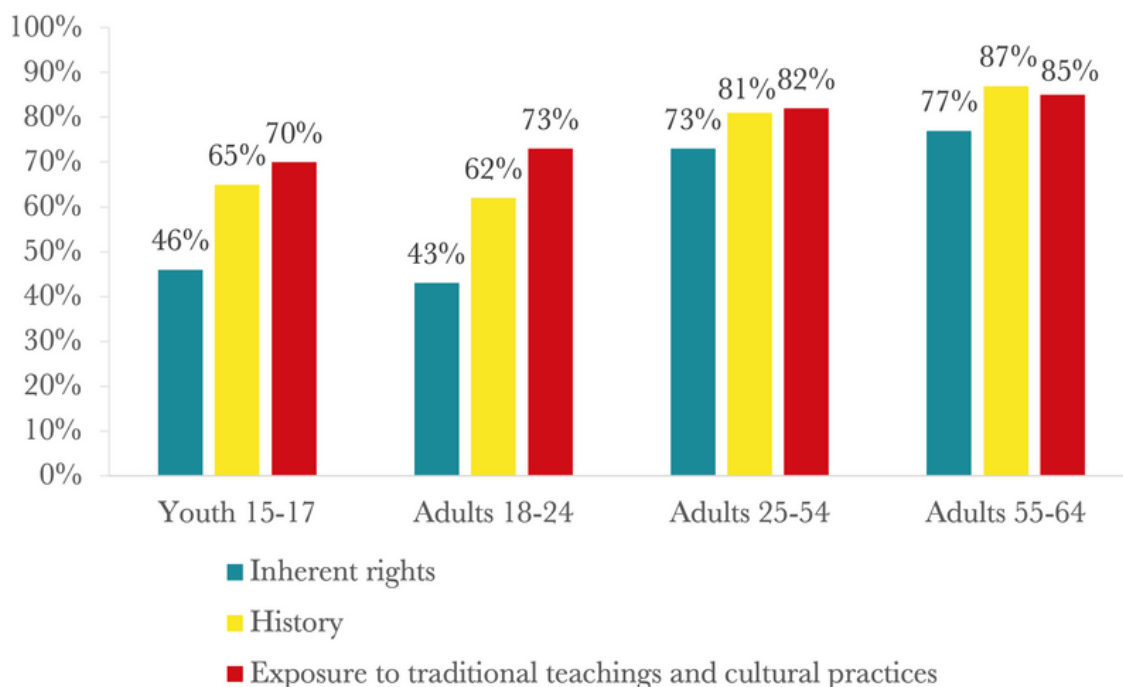
- Peter Kay

Photo by Nicky Richards.





KNOWLEDGE & TRADITIONS BY AGE



This graph shows the percentage of Dene that indicated what they knew about each of the three categories. Older Dene had greater knowledge of inherent rights and history of their people, and were exposed to more traditional teachings and cultural practices than younger Dene.



Photo courtesy of Dene Nation Archives.

“Our parents and Elders taught us well. They never ceased to teach us something every day, as we were growing up... They always said, “We don’t tell you this for now, but for your future, so you will be self-sufficient. You will hunt and then you can do anything you want to survive. Even if we are gone, you are still going to work hard for yourself. This is what we want for you”.

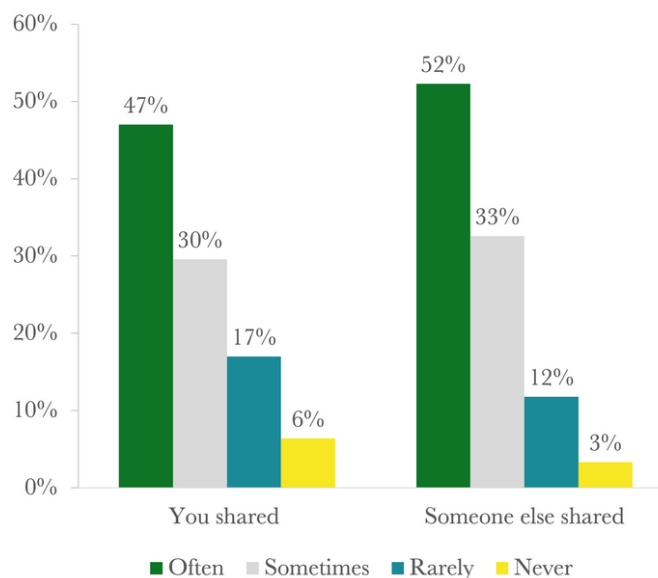
– Joan (Husky) Ross Nazon





FOOD SHARING

In the past 12 months, how often did you, or someone else, share traditional food or products with you or your household?



"We never took or asked for anything from other people. We used to give and share what we had. That's how they did things. People just shared. This was the way we were taught."

– Sarah Ann (Firth) Gardlund

What this graph shows:

- 97% of Dene had food or traditional food products shared with them
- 94% of Dene had shared food or traditional food products



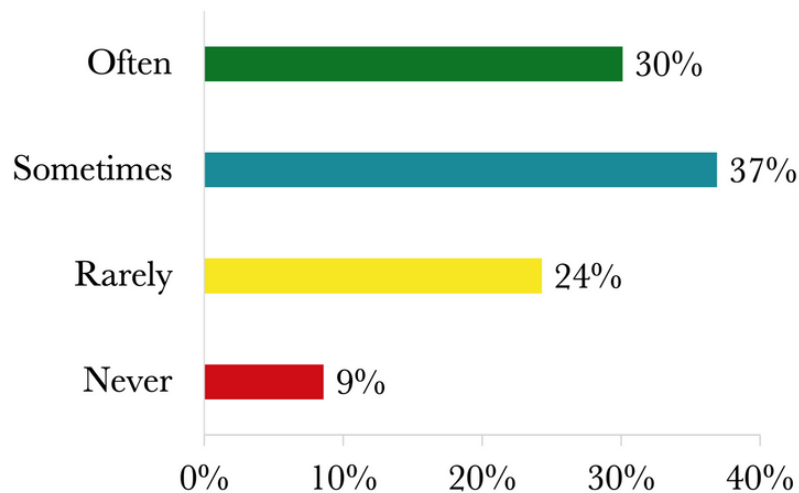
Photo by Nicky Richards.





COMMUNITY CULTURAL EVENTS

In the past 12 months, how often did you participate in your local community's cultural events?



67%

of Dene participated in their local community's cultural events sometimes or often.



Drummers playing their song at the Memorial Walk in Yellowknife hosted by Dene Nation. Photo by Tessa Macintosh Photography 2021.



Passing on Dene Culture



My Dene Hero is **my mom, Mary Jane**, because she is passing on our Dene culture to me. I was born with Fraser syndrome, and this means that I have no eyes. My mom **makes sure that I know my Dene culture** and she has taught me how to make dry meat, pluck ducks and make soup.

To make dry meat, I help my mom to cut the meat into thin layers and we hang it on a pole inside the house to dry over the wood stove. It takes about two days and you know it is done when it doesn't feel soft anymore. Then it is ready for eating. I like when my mom and I sit together plucking ducks. It's fun taking all the feathers off. She sings them and then we clean them and cut them up in to pieces to boil. I think **making soup together** is the most fun. We sometimes use soup mix for the broth and we either use rice or macaroni. I like it too when we add oats because it tastes really good.



We also talk a lot. We talk about all sorts of things but mostly **she shares stories with me** about her times as a child. She was born in 1969. When she was young, she did a lot of travelling in the bush on a dog sled in the Colville Lake area. They stayed in tents and hunted or fished in the fall and spring. She was a second oldest and helped with the hunting, making nets and collecting wood. When she was ten, she flew to Fort Good Hope to go to school. Sometimes she tells me stories about me when I was younger. My mom and dad would take me out with them for wood. I remember playing in the snow while my family did the work. I guess I was working too – entertaining them!! She told me that I was afraid of my Elmo toy and how I did not like loud noises. I liked to sit in a big pot and spin myself around on the kitchen floor. I remember my mom telling me that it was hard for her when I was born as it was hard dealing with my condition at first. My mom soon worked through that and has done so much for me like passing on my culture down to me. This is why she is my hero.

Gully-Blanco, Kendra. "Importance of Our Dene Culture." *Dene Heroes of the Sahtu*, by Mary-Anne Neal, vol. 2, Dene Hero Publications, 2018, pp. 75–76.

Photo by Arlyn Charlie Photography.



Summary - Language and Culture

Main highlights from this section:

The Languages and Culture section provides insight into the proficiency and value of language, knowledge of rights, and traditional First Nation practices, which are important components of reclaiming culture and well-being. Multiple barriers to learning a First Nations language were identified, and most Dene reported speaking English. Almost all Dene reported having at least a little knowledge about and exposure to cultural teachings, practices, and their rights. Participating in traditional practices, such as community events and food sharing, was common.

- 1 The majority of Dene have knowledge of a First Nations language.
- 2 Almost all Dene believed in the importance of understanding First Nations languages.
- 3 Almost all Dene said they had at least some exposure to traditional teachings and cultural practices.
- 4 Almost all Dene said they had shared food or traditional products or had someone else share food with them.



Photo courtesy of Eighty One Images.



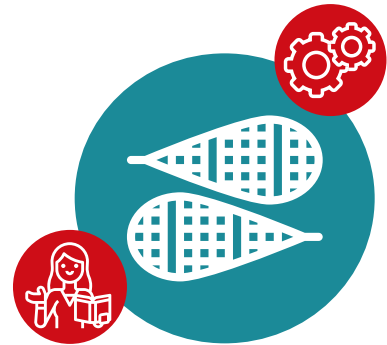
3

Education and
Training

Photo by Nicky Richards.

Education and Training

This section characterizes education and training among Dene.



Education and training are often related to employment and can result in higher rates of employment and income. Unfortunately, education is not equally accessible to everyone; providing equitable access to education can lead to better career trajectories and a stronger community overall.



Education

This section characterizes formal First Nations education proficiency among Dene and demonstrates the perceived value of understanding, speaking, reading, and writing of a language, and the barriers to learning or improving knowledge of First Nations languages.



Training

This section captures information from Dene about enrolment in current training as well as future courses that may advance skills for employment.

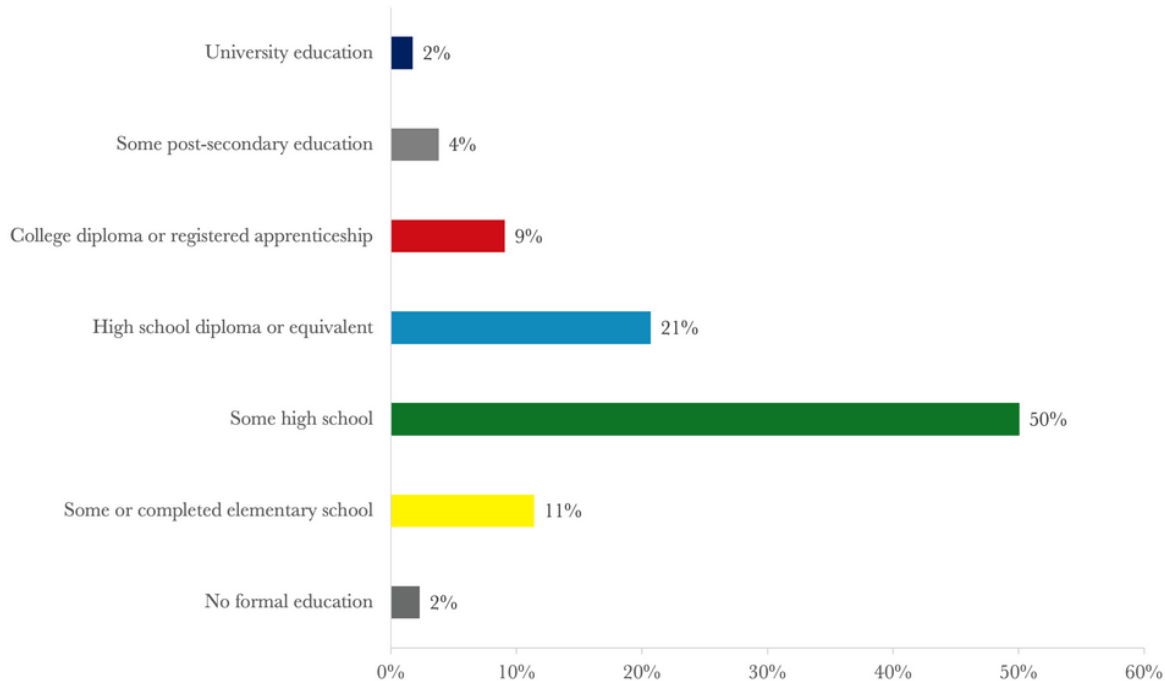


Findings - Education



FORMAL EDUCATION

What is the highest level of formal education that you completed?



What this graph shows:

The majority of Dene (86%) have completed at least some high school

- 21% of Dene received their high school diploma or equivalent
- 9% of Dene completed a College diploma or a registered apprenticeship
- 2% of Dene went on to complete University education



83%

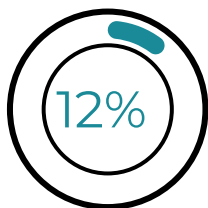
of Dene believed their schooling helped them gain employment



Findings - Education

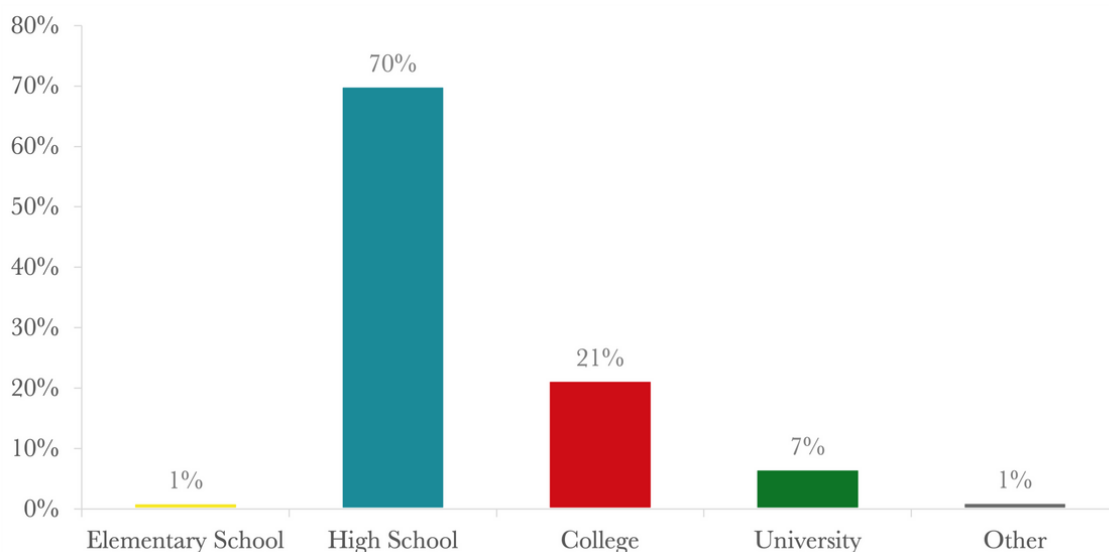


FORMAL EDUCATION



of Dene reported that they are currently attending school.

Types of school:



What this graph shows:

- Of those that are currently in school, majority (70%) attend a high school.
- Those in elementary school were aged 15-17 years.
- 7% of Dene participating in this study were less than 18 years of age which may explain the low rates of current school attendance.

21% of Dene **youth 15-17** were not in school

23% of Dene **adults 18-24** were in school

5% of Dene **adults 25-64** were in school



Findings - Education



POST-SECONDARY EDUCATION

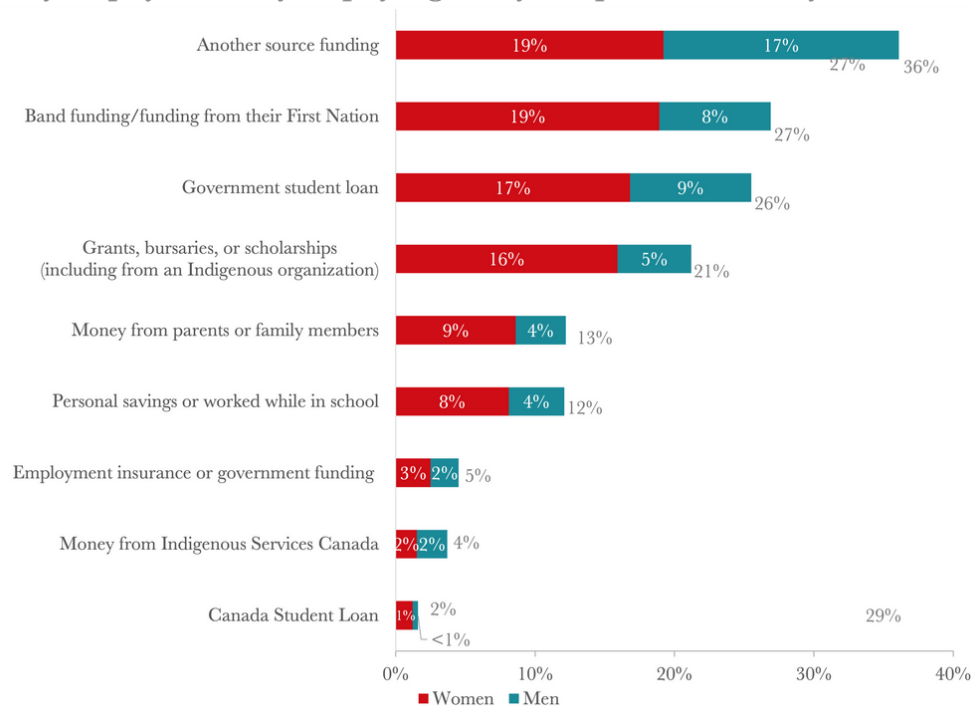


Photo courtesy of Eighty One Images.

69%
of Dene in
College were
women

71%
of Dene in
University
were women

How did you pay, or are you paying, for your post-secondary education?



What this graph shows:

- The most common ways of paying for post-secondary education were band funding/funding from the First Nation, a government student loan, and money from grants, bursaries, or scholarships
- The most common way of paying for post-secondary education (29%) was reflected in the answer to the survey question “none of the above”



Strong like two people

“Strong like two people” is the Tłıchǫ inspirational call for moving forward with the strengths from two cultures, Tłıchǫ and English, in order to excel in the modern world with the education of both. These powerful words were expressed by Elizabeth Mackenzie (1917-2009) of Behchoko in the fall of 1990 when elders met in Behchoko to discuss the mission statement for the Tłıchǫ schools.



ROSA MANTLA

Active in the Tłıchǫ language and cultural revitalization efforts, Rosa Mantla of Behchoko, is a role model of “strong like two people.” Though retired in December 2020, recently Rosa travelled in the Tłıchǫ region interpreting the Covid-19 vaccine for elders and Tłıchǫ people. Perhaps one of the highlights of Rosa’s career is being with her daughter, Lianne Mantla-Look, who is a trained nurse and a fluent Tłıchǫ speaker. They are part of the decolonizing efforts in bringing healthcare understanding to Indigenous people. Rosa thrives on promoting Tłıchǫ culture and language. Born in a traditional home of fourteen children, Rosa grew up speaking the Tłıchǫ language and practicing Tłıchǫ culture. Rosa is known as a starter and a finisher of what she begins as taught to her through her upbringing and her own traditional rites of passage as a young girl living in isolation for a time. As a young child, Rosa attended residential school and was taught in the all-Western based education in Fort Smith that later influenced her decision to incorporate more Dene knowledge in the education system. When she returned home, on the advice of her parents, Rosa stayed at home helping and staying connected with the Tłıchǫ people and the land. In a traditionally arranged marriage to Henri (also known as Harry) Pierre Mantla, Rosa often went on the land learning more traditional skills and language. Together they raised six children.

Photo courtesy of Dene Nation Archives.



Strong like two people

Without completing Grade twelve, Rosa was able to complete the necessary courses, traditional, and on-the-job training. In 1974 Rosa joined Chief Jimmy Bruneau school and became a **classroom assistant**. Rosa followed her dream and **became a teacher** at Chief Jimmy Bruneau School until 1990. When Elizabeth Mackenzie Elementary School (EMES) opened in 1991, Rosa also served for several years as a **vice principal and a principal**. Throughout her career, she was inspired by Elder Elizabeth Mackenzie and her “strong like two” visionary words. Rosa has participated in and initiated many **empowering cultural and pilot projects**, where elders assist students in the Tłıchǫ schools to receive traditional knowledge and **mental health and well being support**. Rosa also contributed to the important work of **revitalizing of the birchbark canoe** with a group of elders in Behchoko. With the support of her husband, family, and elders, Rosa pursued and obtained her **Master degree in Indigenous language Revitalization** in 2018 through the University of Victoria. Her thesis focused on the need for the Tłıchǫ language with the practice of the traditional rites of passage for young girls learning traditional activities on the land. Rosa has also worked as Language and Culture Consultant with Tłıchǫ Community Services Agency (TCSA).



Photo taken from Google Images.

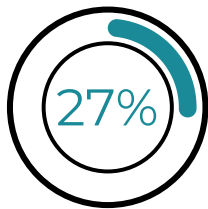
Throughout the years, Rosa has received many awards and recognitions for her commitment and passion of revitalizing Tłıchǫ language and culture.

In 2018 Rosa was inducted in the **the Northwest Territories Hall of Fame** for her contributions to territorial education. As a community-oriented woman, Rosa continues pursuing her interests and participating with various community events and projects.



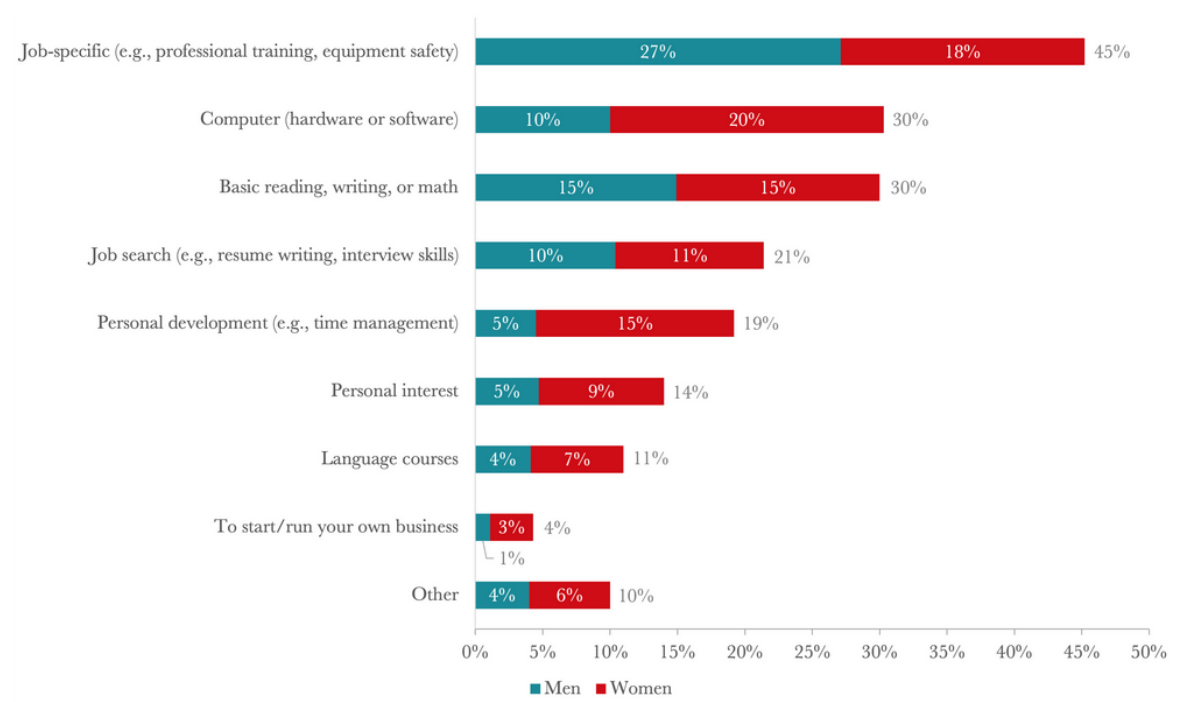


CURRENT LEARNING



of Dene participated in **courses, workshops, seminars, or training** related to a current or future job

What type of courses, workshops, seminars or training did you take?



40%
were aware of training benefits/supports through Employment Insurance



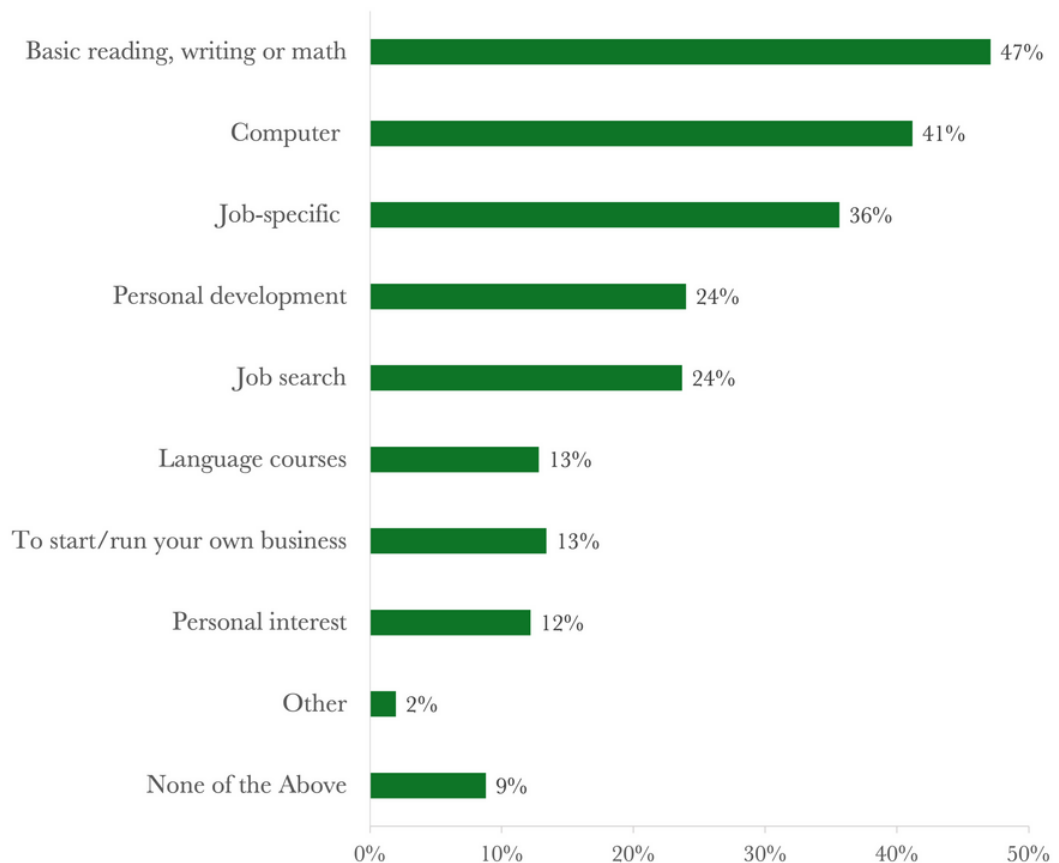
Photo courtesy of Dene Nation Archives.





FUTURE LEARNING

What types of courses, workshops, seminars or training would best help you to develop your job skills?



What this graph shows:

- The most common training Dene thought would help them best develop their skills were basic reading, writing or math, computer-related, and job-specific training
- About one quarter (24%) of Dene thought they would benefit from job search training, as well as personal development training
- There was considerable interest (13%) in training related to starting or running your own business



Summary - Education and Training

Main highlights from this section:

Education is an important determinant of health and is a critical component for addressing the deeply rooted social and economic challenges faced by many. This section demonstrates the education level and training of Dene. This section also discusses the importance of including Dene knowledge and teachings of Tłıchǫ languages in the territorial education system from the perspective of Rosa Mantla (page 45).

- 1 Majority of Dene have completed at least some high school or higher education.
- 2 The majority are currently in high school.
- 3 Most Dene access the internet from their homes, but 14% of people do not have access to the internet at all.
- 4 Half of Dene have received job-specific courses or training.
- 5 Half of Dene feel that basic reading, writing, or math courses or training would best help them develop their job skills.

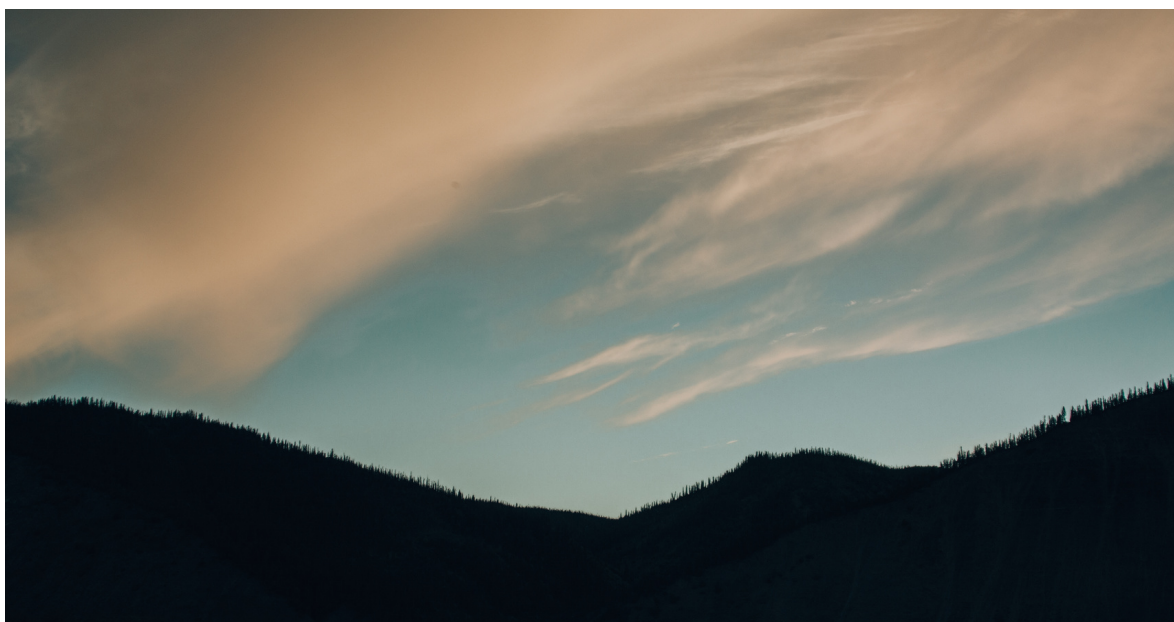


Photo by Arlyn Charlie Photography.



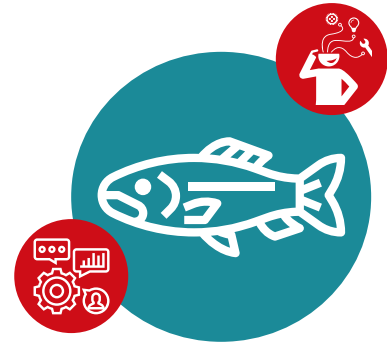
4

Skills and Work Readiness

Photo by Arlyn Charlie Photography.

Skills and Work Readiness

In this section, foundational skills and qualifications among Dene are described.



Possessing employable skills is critical for obtaining a meaningful career. Additionally, financial literacy enables people to manage money appropriately and budget according to their lifestyle.



Workplace Literacy

This section characterizes workplace literacy of Dene based on main skills required for work: reading, writing, communication, mathematics, and computer skills. Additionally, career considerations and objectives are presented.



Other Skills

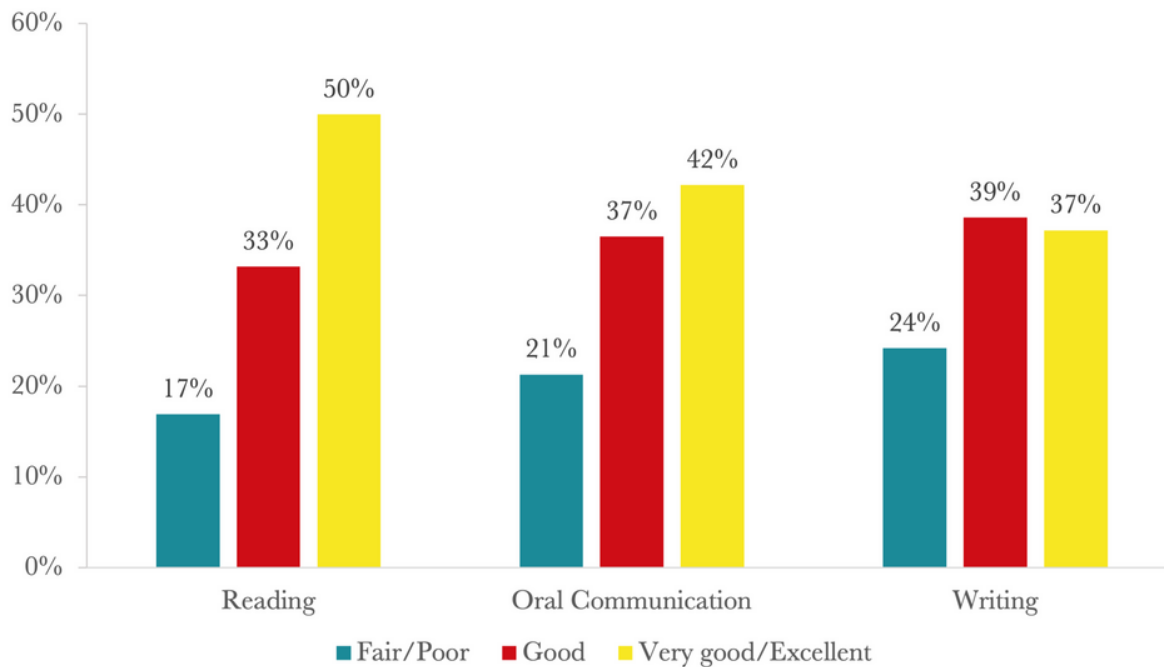
Other skills of Dene that are described in this section include being licensed to drive a vehicle as well as financial literacy and skills for budgeting, paying bills, and saving money.

Findings - Workplace Literacy



COMMUNICATION SKILLS

How would you rate your reading, oral communication, and writing skills in English?



83%

of Dene report their
reading skills
as good or higher

79%

of Dene report their
oral communication skills
as good or higher

76%

of Dene report their
writing skills
as good or higher



Photo courtesy of Dene Nation Archives.

What this graph shows:

- Most Dene rated their skills as good or higher.
- One quarter of Dene rated their skills as fair/poor.
 - This may explain the request for basic reading, writing, and math skills training indicated in a previous survey question in Chapter 3.

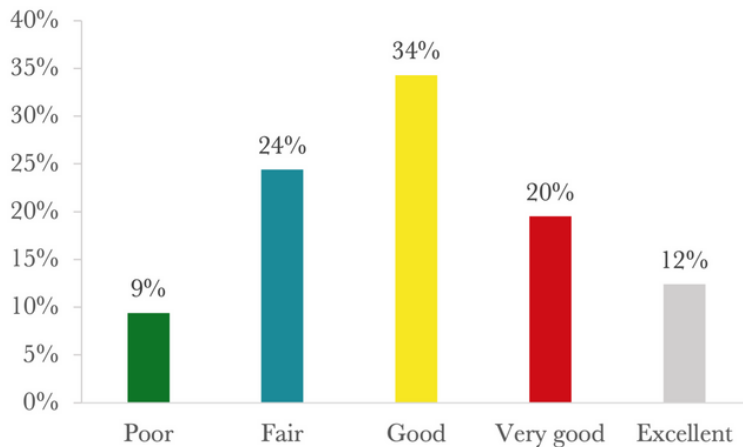


Findings - Workplace Literacy



TECHNICAL SKILLS

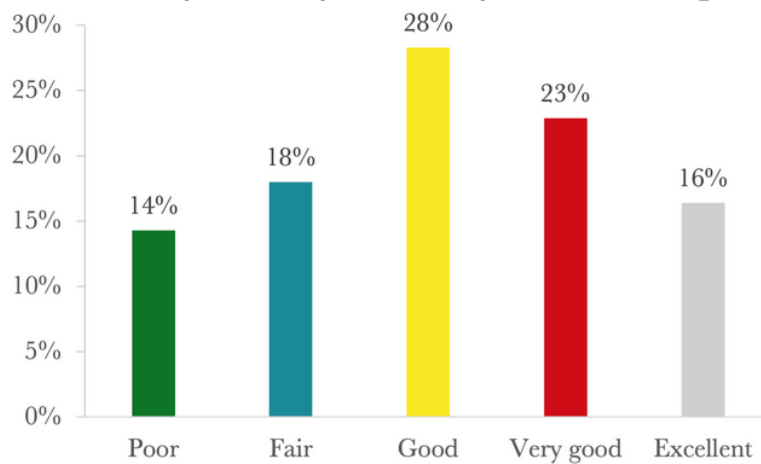
How would you rate your mathematical abilities?



66%

of Dene rate their **math** abilities as 'good' or higher

How would you rate your ability to use a computer?



67%

of Dene rate their **computer** abilities as 'good' or higher

52% of Dene have a valid driver's licence

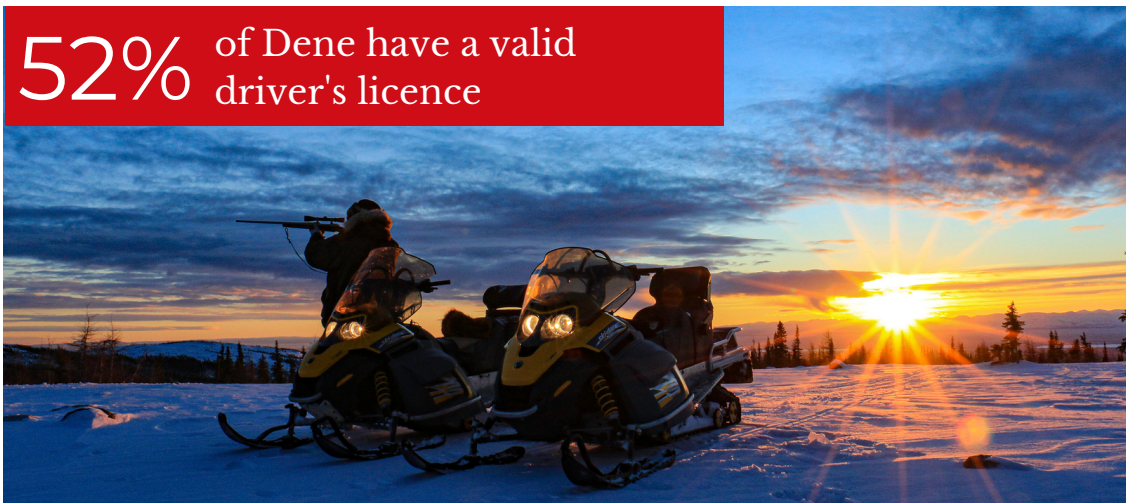


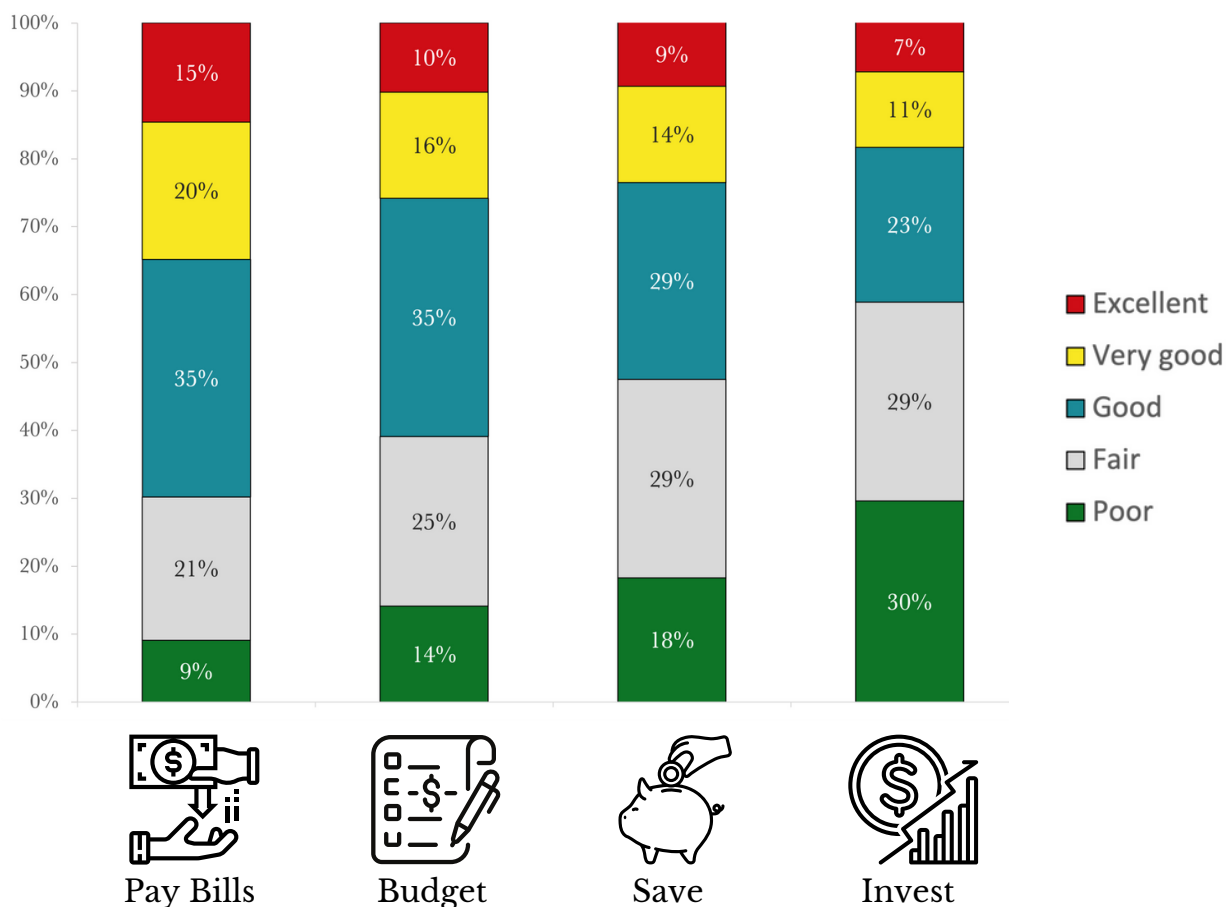
Photo courtesy of Nicky Richards.





FINANCIAL LITERACY

How would you rate your skills to budget, pay bills, save money, and invest money?



What this graph shows:

- Most Dene (70%) indicated their skills related to bill paying were very good to excellent.
- Budgeting and saving were less established skills compared to paying bills, where 61% rated their budgeting skills as good or better than good, and 52% rated their saving skills as good or better than good.
- Investment was the lowest rated skill, where only 41% of Dene rated their skills as good or better than good.



Findings - Other Skills



FUTURE CAREER PLANS

When thinking about your future, what statement best describes you?



22%

Had **not yet thought about** a future career or type of work they wanted to do



21%

Had thought about their future but had **not yet found a career** they were interested in



12%

Had thought about their future and **decided on a career** that they were interested in



16%

Had a career they were **interested in**



11%

Had a job, but **not the career they wanted**



7%

Were preparing to **retire**



13%

Said this question was not applicable to them

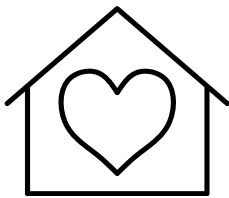




Photo courtesy of Eighty One Images.

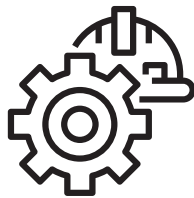
INTERNET ACCESS

Where do you access the internet?



61%

at home



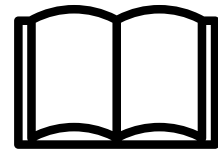
27%

at work



12%

at a community
centre



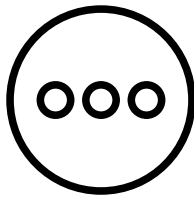
9%

at school



10%

at the
library



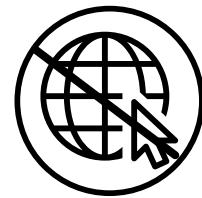
10%

at other
places



7%

through their
cell phone



14%

do not
have access

Summary - Skills and Work Readiness

Main highlights from this section:

It is important to build skills that allow people to be employable and independent. These results suggest that a majority of Dene possess the fundamental skills (reading, writing, oral communication, math, and computer skills) required for employment. This section also discusses financial literacy, demonstrating most Dene are somewhat confident and able to manage their own money.

- 1 The majority of Dene report at least good reading, writing, oral communication in English, math and computer skills.
- 2 Most Dene report at least good reading, writing, oral communication skills in English.
- 3 A large proportion of Dene is at least fairly confident with paying bills, budgeting, saving, and investing money.
- 4 A considerable proportion of Dene (14%) do not have access to the internet.

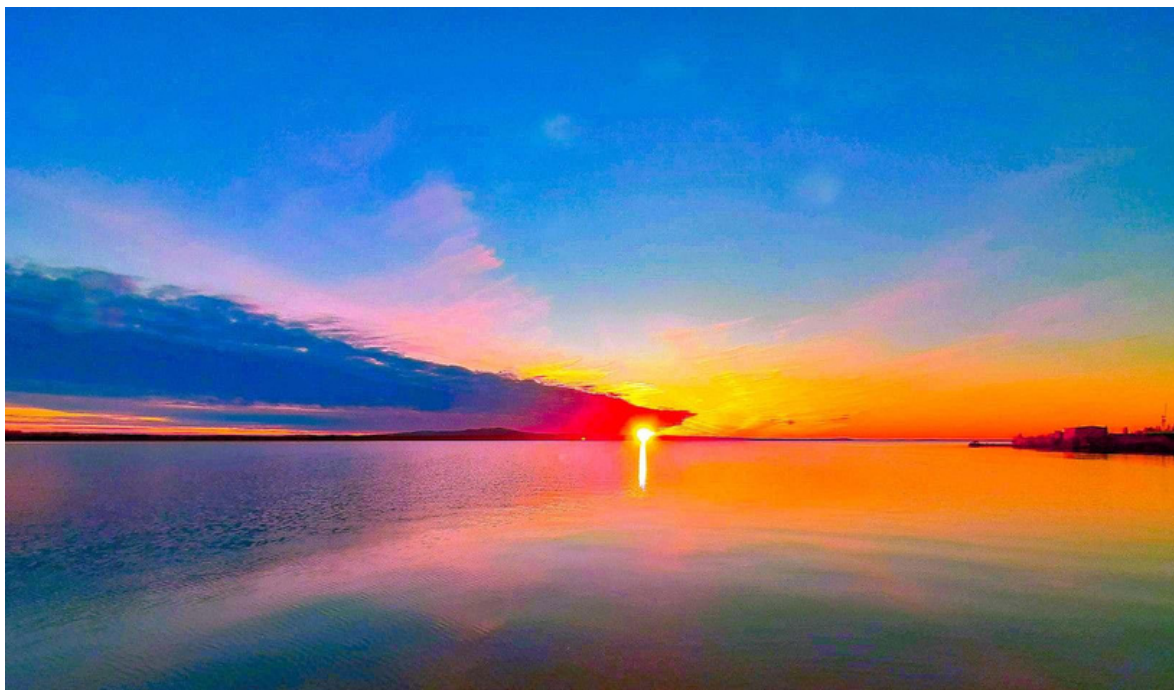



Photo courtesy of Adriana Stewart.





5

Labour Market Indicators

Photo by Arlyn Charlie Photography.

Labour Market Indicators



Characteristics of the Dene labour market, such as indicators of employment and financial security are highlighted in this section.

A detailed understanding of the labour market within a community can assist with identifying jobs and skills *available* within a community and potential gaps in where jobs and skills are *needed*. The labour market provides insight into how people earn their income and the sustainability of current employment among Dene.



Employment

Employment status and type is described in this section. Common industries and occupations are examined among Dene as well as entrepreneurship.



Looking for Work

This section characterizes the methods Dene use to findings work, in addition to the challenges and systemic barriers to finding work.



Mobility

Mobility was assessed to explore where Dene are currently working (within or outside of their community) and their willingness to relocate to improve job opportunities.

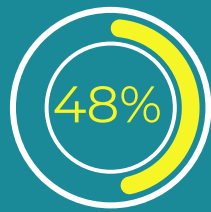


Financial Security

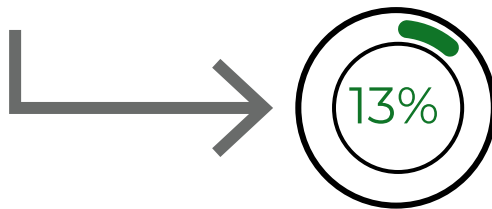
The financial security of Dene is described in this section. Ability to afford basic necessities such as shelter, food, clothing, and medical care is assessed.



Findings - Employment



of Dene are **currently working**

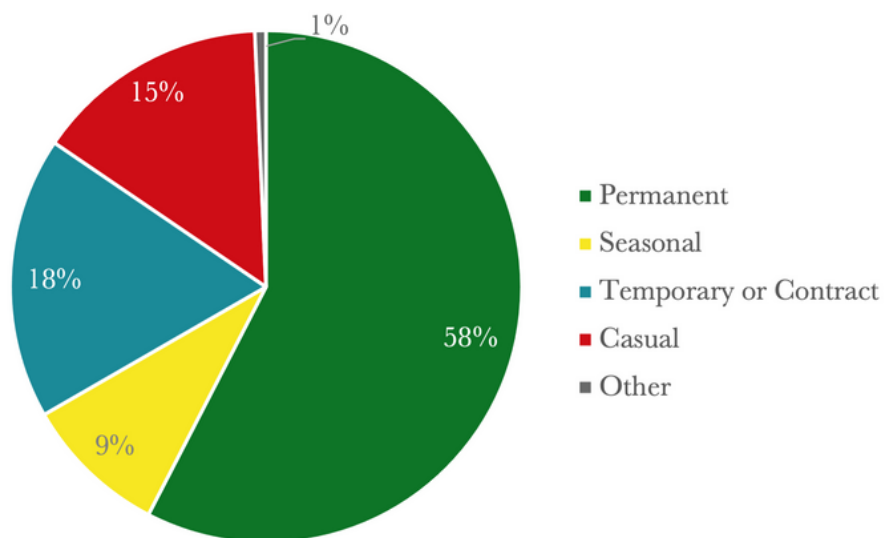


of those **currently working**
have more than one paid job



Among those currently working, there was an approximately **even split** between women and men.

EMPLOYMENT TYPE



58%

of Dene have a permanent job

33%

of Dene work casual hours or hold a temporary position

'Other' jobs included: summer student positions (0.1%), part time jobs (<0.1%), odd jobs (<0.1%), jobs in the woods (0.1%), and labour jobs (0.1%).



Findings - Employment

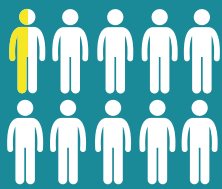


WORKING HOURS

On average, men work **41 paid hours** per week

On average, women work **37 paid hours** per week

SELF EMPLOYMENT



5.4% of Dene are self-employed

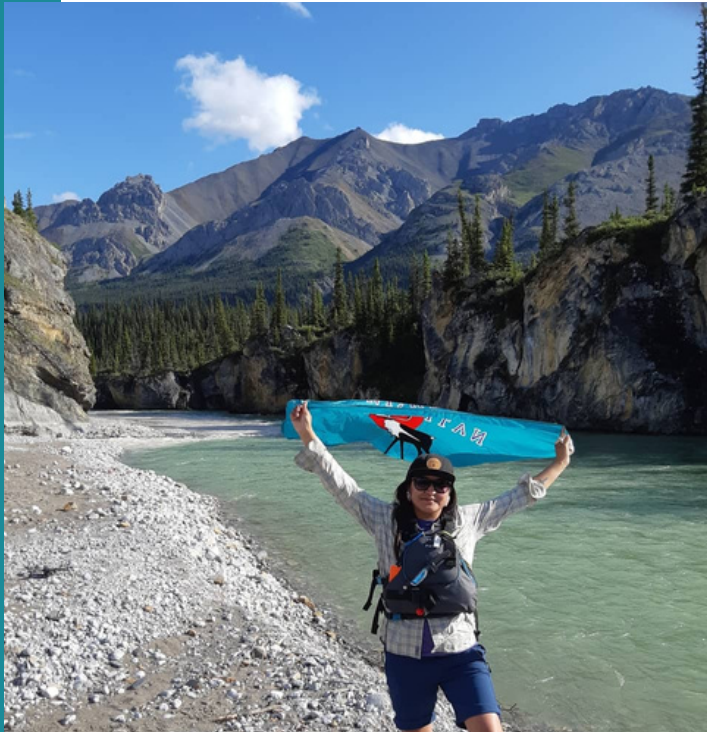


A boat tour from Shehtah Adventures, an Indigenous Tourism company in the Dehcho region. Photo by Tyra Moses.



Celebrating Indigenous Entrepreneurs

“My name is **Bobbi Rose Koe** and I’m Teetl’it Gwich’in, meaning people of the head waters – the Peel Watershed. I am from Fort McPherson, Northwest Territories. My grandparents are Rosemary and Abraham Koe and Dorothy and Robert Alexie Sr.



We need more
Indigenous guides to be
guiding on our rivers

- Bobbi Rose Koe

Photo courtesy of Bobby
Rose Koe

I am an Indigenous guide,
owner and operator of Dinjii
Zhuh Adventures.

I started a business because
we need more people in our
traditional homelands. We
need more Indigenous
guides to be guiding on our
rivers. And for **it’s important
to share our land through an
Indigenous perspective.**

There are no Indigenous
companies guiding in the
Peel Watershed, no one is
sharing our stories, no one is
sharing our history, and no
one is sharing why the Peel
Watershed is important to
us, and that should change.

Dinjii Zhuh Adventures
plans to help support and
train youth across the North
to become leaders in their
own ways by exploring and
training out on the land”.



Findings - Employment



INDUSTRIES

What kind of business, industry, or service do you work in?



13%

public
administration



10%

trade,
transportation, or
utilities



9%

construction



8%

mining, quarrying,
or oil and gas
extraction



8%

educational
services



8%

healthcare or
social services



5%

finance or
insurance



3%

agriculture, forestry,
fishing, hunting, or
tobacco



Photo courtesy of Dene Nation Archives.

Other industries include:

- Arts, culture, entertainment, and recreation
- Accommodation and food services
- Real estate, rental, leasing
- Information and communications technology, media, and computers
- Professional, scientific, and technical services
- Waste management and remediation services



Findings - Employment



OCCUPATIONS

What kind of work or occupation do you do?



20%

Trades and transportation equipment operators



15%

Education, law and social, community and government services



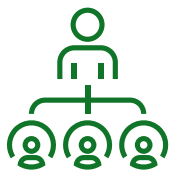
16%

Business, finance, or administration



10%

Sales and services



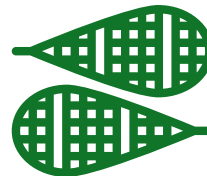
6%

Management



6%

Healthcare



6%

Art, culture, recreation, or sport



5%

Natural resources, agriculture, and related production

Other industries include:

- Manufacturing and utilities
- Summer students



Photo courtesy of Dene Nation Archives.



Celebrating Indigenous Entrepreneurs

Tyra Moses suzhe. Liidlíi Kue gotseh Pehdzeh Ki gotseh Denendeh ah ahte. Semo Lorayne Menicoche. Seta Floyd Moses.

My name is **Tyra Moses**. I am from Fort Simpson and Wrigley, Northwest Territories. My mother is Lorayne Menicoche. My father is Floyd Moses.

I am the **CEO and Founder of Dene Media**. Dene Media is committed to Indigenous representation in Media and Education. We focus on empowering Dene Nations Peoples and Indigenous Nations Peoples through photography, film and research.

In September 2020 during the pandemic, I launched the Dene Media website and company because I wanted to build a company that reflects Dene values and paradigms **to empower the Dene Peoples like my daughter who deserves a strong cultural foundation**.



Photo taken from Google Images

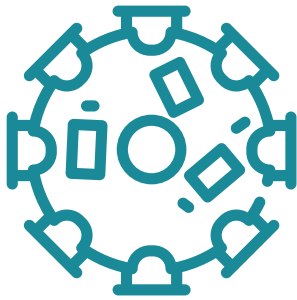
I am also a university student at the University of Lethbridge focusing on Indigenous governance. My prior education is that I graduated high school in Liidlíi Kue, went on to complete the Mineral Processing Operator Program at Aurora College with the Mine Training Society and shortly after I started working at Diavik Diamond Mines as an Plant Operator, then a Metallurgical Laboratory Technician and eventually gained my apprenticeship and complete my Red Seal Electrician certification. I have over 10 years of mining experience while also being trained as an Occupation Health and Safety Committee member, as an X3050 diamond workers union shop steward and the union secretary, and with experience as a mine rescue member.

Then I decided that I want to go back to university because I wanted to empower myself and others while working to help the Dene Nations Peoples and Indigenous Nations Peoples. What I learnt from this career experience is that hard work works and that our Dene ancestors never complained they just worked hard for their family. I am a mother also raising my 4 year old daughter and I want to raise her to be a strong Dene woman who chases after what she wants and I hope that people read about my story and feel empowered to chase their dreams.





WORK WITHIN FIRST NATIONS

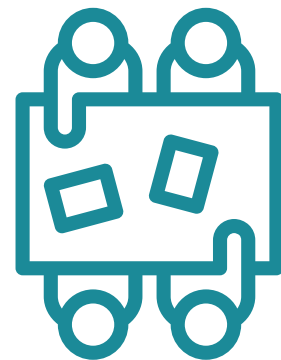


48%

of employed Dene work
for a First Nations
Organization

46%

of employed Dene work
for a First Nations
Government



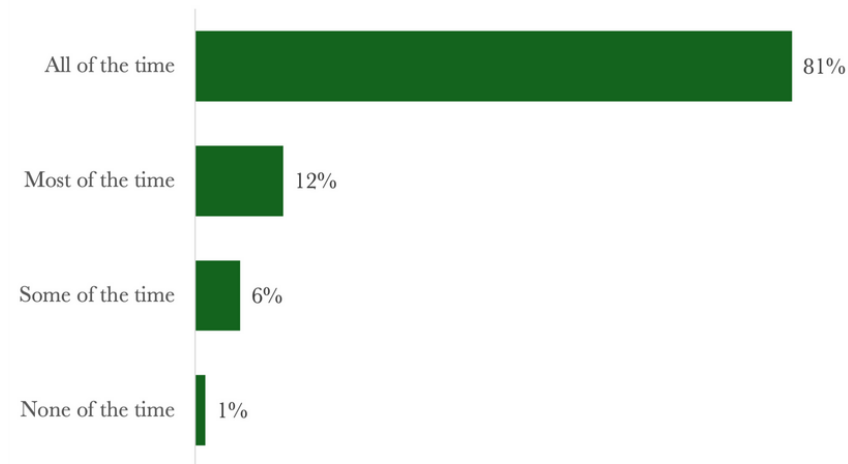
Jean Marie River Annual Leadership Meeting in Dehcho. Photo courtesy of Dene Nation Archives.





Job Access

How often do you have a reliable way of getting to work?



11 minutes

was the average time Dene took to get to work



Roads in Tulita ('where the rivers or water meet' in Slavey), located in the Sahtu region. Photo by Kelly Skinner.



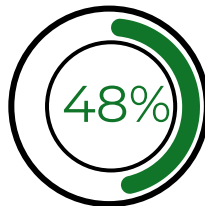
Findings - Employment



of Dene are not **currently working**



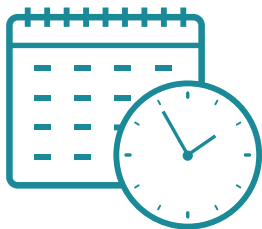
of those not working **have at some point worked** for pay



of those not working are **looking for work**

UNEMPLOYMENT

The **unemployment rate** (those not employed but were looking for work) among Dene was **24%**



On average, those looking for work had been looking for

12 weeks



32% of Dene who were looking for work said they were aware of training benefits/supports through **Employment Insurance**

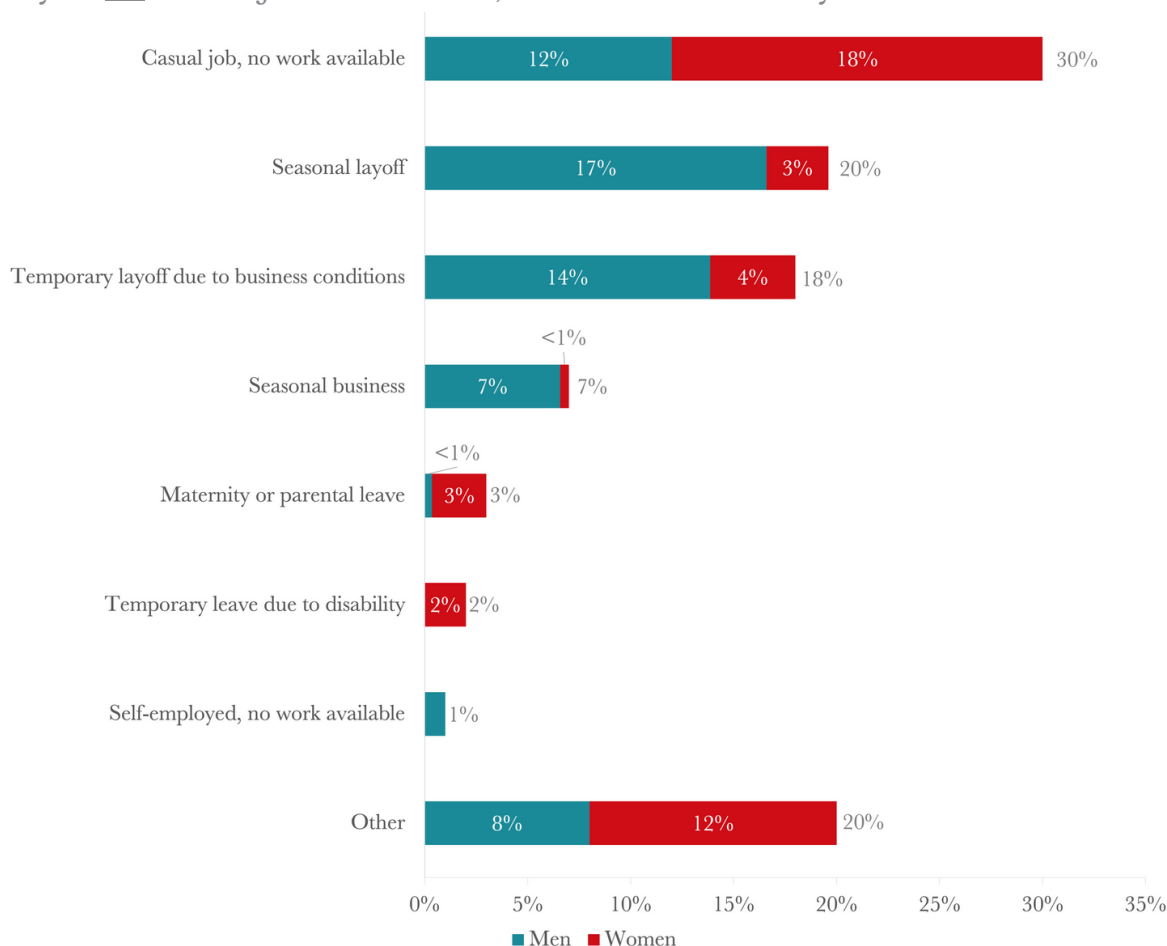


Findings - Employment



10% of Dene that were not working **had a job to return to.**

If you do have a job to return to, what best describes your situation?



What this graph shows:

- Most Dene (30%) who did have a job to return to said they were not currently working because there was no current work available for their casual job
- 20% of Dene who did have a job to return to said they were currently seasonally laid off from their jobs
- 18% of Dene who did have a job to return to said they were temporarily laid off due to business conditions
- Many Dene (20%) who did have a job to return to thought none of the survey options described their current situation

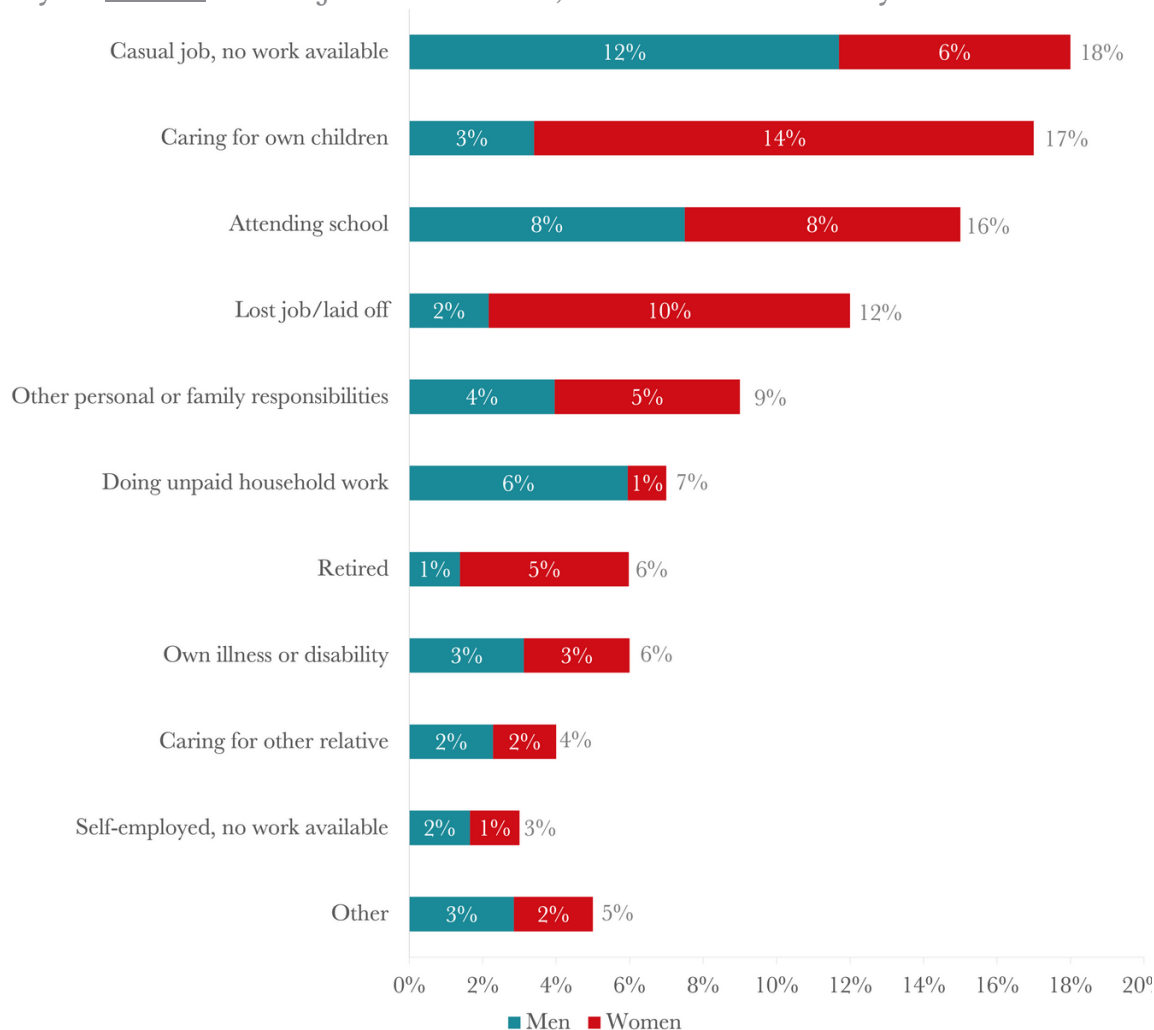


Findings - Employment



However, the majority (90%) of Dene that were not working **did not have a job to return to.**

If you **do not** have a job to return to, what best describes your situation?



What this graph shows:

- Most Dene (18%) who did not have a job to return to were casual workers who said there was not currently any work available
- Caring for children was also a common situation (17%) for Dene who were not working and did not have a job to return to
 - The majority of Dene who reported this situation were women
- 12% of Dene reported job loss with no job to return to, most of whom were women





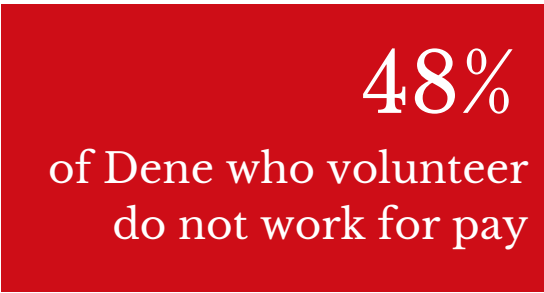
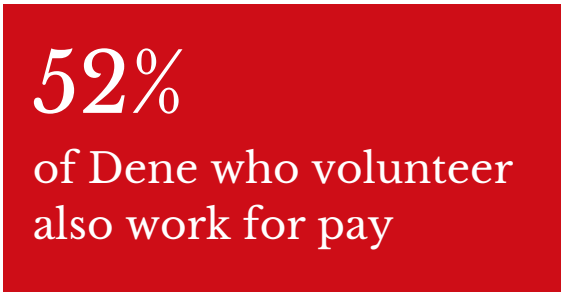
VOLUNTEERING

Do you volunteer or help without pay in the community?



Photo courtesy of Dene Nation Archives.

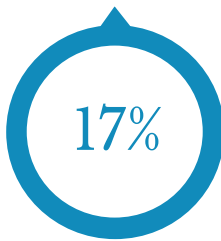
59% of Dene volunteer or help without pay in the community



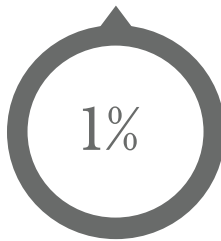
of Dene
often
volunteer or help
without pay



of Dene
sometimes
volunteer or help
without pay



of Dene
rarely
volunteer or help
without pay



of Dene
never
volunteer or help
without pay



Findings - Looking for work



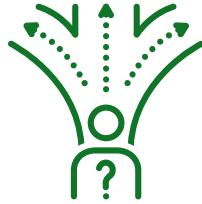
DIFFICULTY FINDING WORK

Dene reported many barriers to finding work. The 3 most common barriers reported were:



37%

reported there being
a **shortage of jobs**



23%

reported **not**
knowing where to
look for jobs



21%

reported **not** having
enough education or
training for available
jobs

Other common barriers to finding work were:



18%

Not having the **work experience** required
for available jobs



13%

Not having a **driver's license**, or the
appropriate level of driver's license



12%

Have skills, but do not have the necessary
diploma/ certificate



10%

Not **knowing the job** they wanted



7%

Not sure how to **create a strong resume**
or cover letter



Findings - Looking for work



DIFFICULTY FINDING WORK

Other **systemic** barriers to finding work included:

- No childcare **(80% were women)**
- Addiction/Substance use **(75% were men)**
- No means of transportation **(61% were men)**
- Criminal record **(88% were men)**
- Mental health issues **(54% were men)**
- Language barrier **(58% were men)**
- Discrimination/prejudice/racism **(74% were men)**
- No appropriate clothes for an interview **(63% were men)**



Photo by Arlyn Charlie Photography.

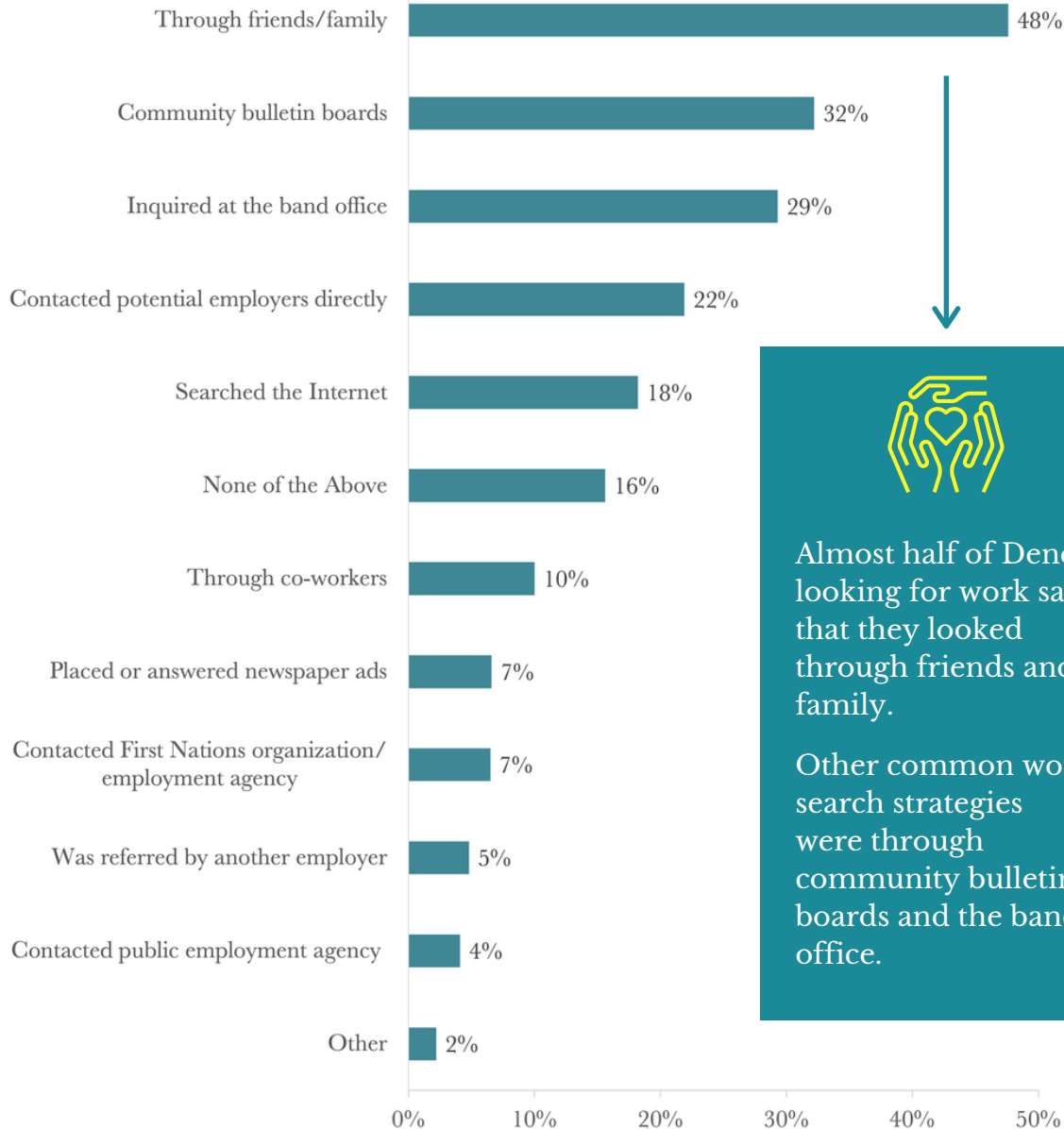


Findings - Looking for work



METHOD OF FINDING WORK

How did you go about looking for work?



Almost half of Dene looking for work said that they looked through friends and family.

Other common work search strategies were through community bulletin boards and the band office.

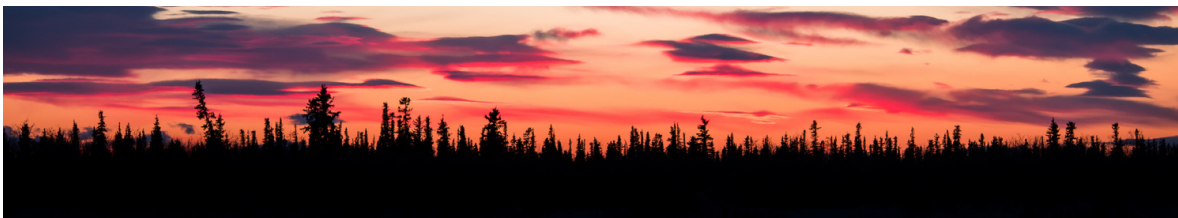


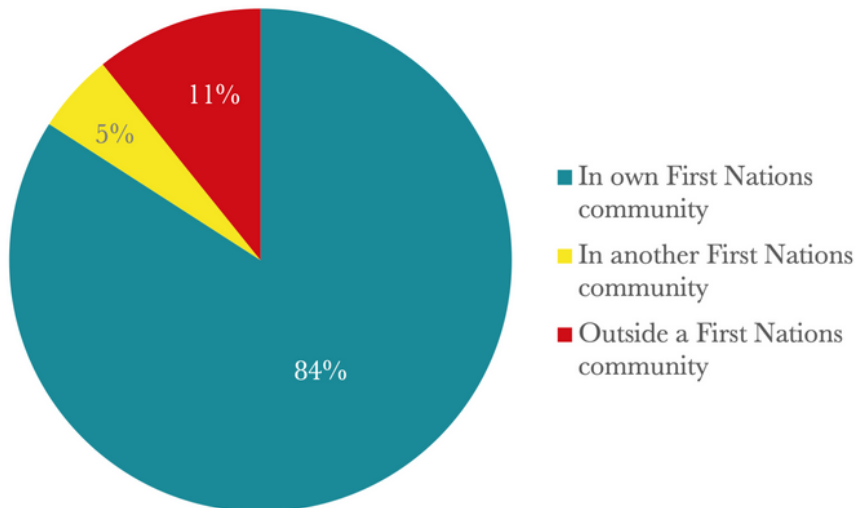
Photo courtesy of Eighty One Images.





WORK LOCATION

Where is your job located?



84%

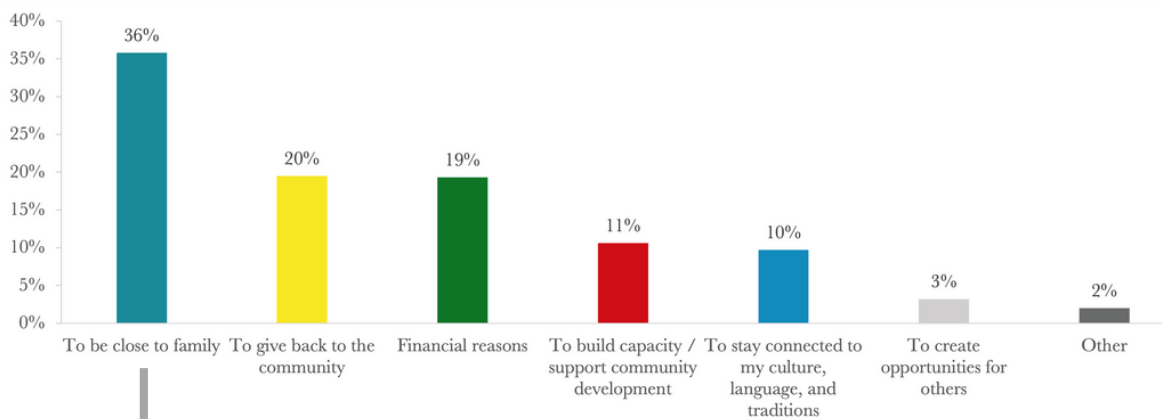
of Dene work in their own First Nations community

11%

of Dene work outside of their First Nations community

WORKING IN FIRST NATIONS COMMUNITIES

What is the main reason that you choose to work **within** a First Nations community?



The most common reason for working within a First Nations community was to be close to family





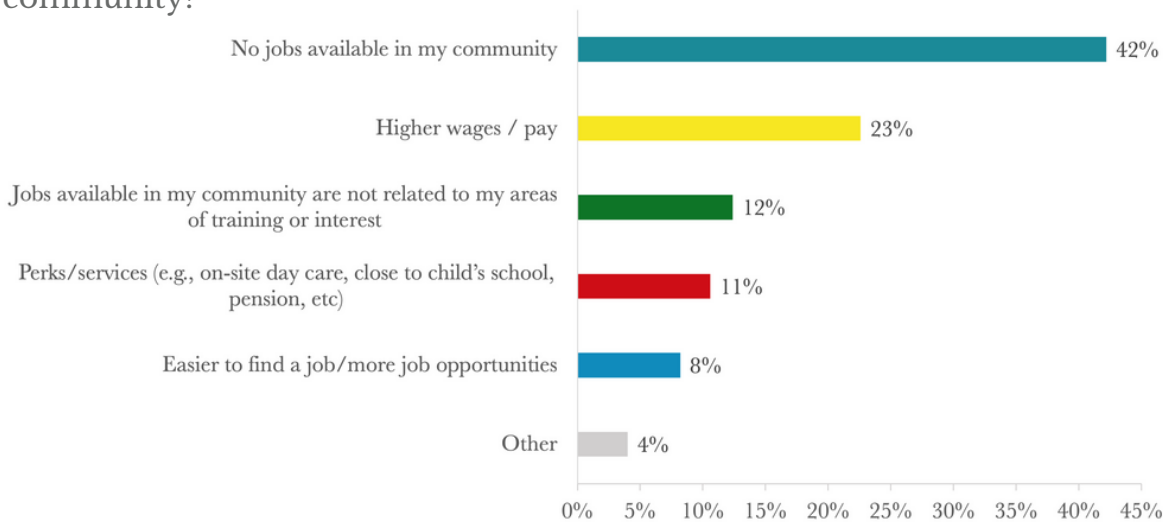
WORKING OUTSIDE FIRST NATIONS COMMUNITIES



31%

of Dene moved to live outside their community for work

What is the main reason that you work **outside** of a First Nations community?



Do you agree that there are enough jobs in your community to employ community members?



73% of Dene thought that their community did not have enough enough jobs to employ community members

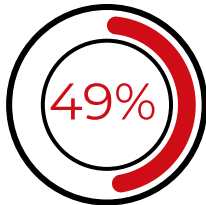


Findings - Mobility



MOVING

To pursue a job, or to improve your job or career opportunities...



of Dene would move **to another community**



of Dene would move **to another First Nations community**



of Dene would move and **permanently live outside a First Nations community**

What are the reasons you would not move?



43%

would miss their family and friends



17%

are happy with their job situation



8%

have other family responsibilities



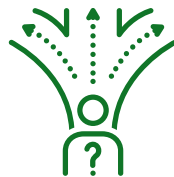
5%

say the cost of living is too high elsewhere



5%

need care for their own child



5%

had uncertainty or are afraid of change



5%

were still in school



3%

there is no guarantee of finding work elsewhere

Other reasons Dene reported for not moving are: cultural, linguistic, or social reasons (2%), moving too expensive (1%), to maintain access to healthcare (1%), and education / professional recognition (<1%).





FINANCIAL STRUGGLES

In the past 12 months, did you struggle to pay for...



Shelter?

- 3% more than once a month
- 3% monthly
- 12% a few times a year

Utilities?

- 4% more than once a month
- 4% monthly
- 19% a few times a year



Food?

- 5% more than once a month
- 5% monthly
- 16% a few times a year

Clothing?

- 4% more than once a month
- 3% monthly
- 13% a few times a year



Transportation?

- 5% more than once a month
- 4% monthly
- 15% a few times a year

Childcare?

- 3% more than once a month
- 2% monthly
- 5% a few times a year



Medical/Dental Care?

- 1% more than once a month
- 2% monthly
- 7% a few times a year





Photo courtesy of Eighty One Images.

Utilities and **food** were the most common source of financial struggles

- **27%** of Dene said they struggled to afford utilities at least a few times per year
- **26%** of Dene said they struggled to afford food at least a few times per year

This could be a result of the higher cost of living (food, utilities, transportation) in the Northwest Territories.



Summary - Labour Market Indicators

Main highlights from this section:

These results suggest that while the majority of Dene was employed, a fairly significant portion was unemployed and were looking for work. A number of systemic barriers to finding work were reported. Financial insecurity may be intensified by the high cost of food and living in general.

- 1 While nearly half of Dene received income from paid employment, roughly one quarter were not employed and were looking for work.
- 2 More than half of Dene volunteer or help without pay in the community.
- 3 Most common barriers for finding work were job shortages, not knowing where to look, and not enough education/ training.
- 4 The majority of Dene work in their own First Nations community.
- 5 Some Dene experienced financial insecurity, however, majority only struggled to pay for basic necessities a few times a year.



Photo by Kelly Skinner.



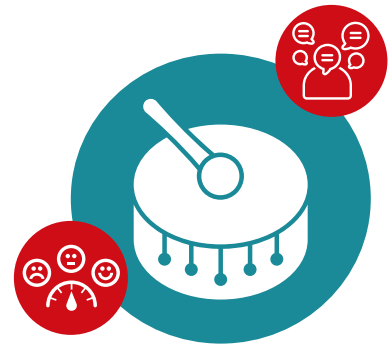
A woman with short grey hair, wearing glasses, a bright orange beanie, and a vibrant green zip-up jacket, is walking through a field of tall, dry, golden-brown grass or reeds. She is smiling and looking towards the camera. In her left hand, she holds a small blue and silver water bottle. The background is filled with tall, dark green evergreen trees under a clear sky. The overall scene is peaceful and suggests an outdoor activity in autumn.

6

Wellbeing and Workplace Culture

Photo by Nicky Richards.

Wellbeing and Workplace Culture



This section highlights job satisfaction, workplace wellbeing, and workplace culture of Dene. Here, data from the sub-sample of Dene who are currently working are presented.

The workplace is a priority setting for the promotion of health and wellbeing [4]. Employers have a legal responsibility to provide employees with a workplace that is safe and healthy for their employees. A healthy workplace can contribute to improvements in the work culture and climate (psychosocial, organizational, economic, physical), and increased growth among employees.



Wellbeing & Job Satisfaction

Wellbeing and overall job satisfaction is described in this section. Reasons for job dissatisfaction are also explored.

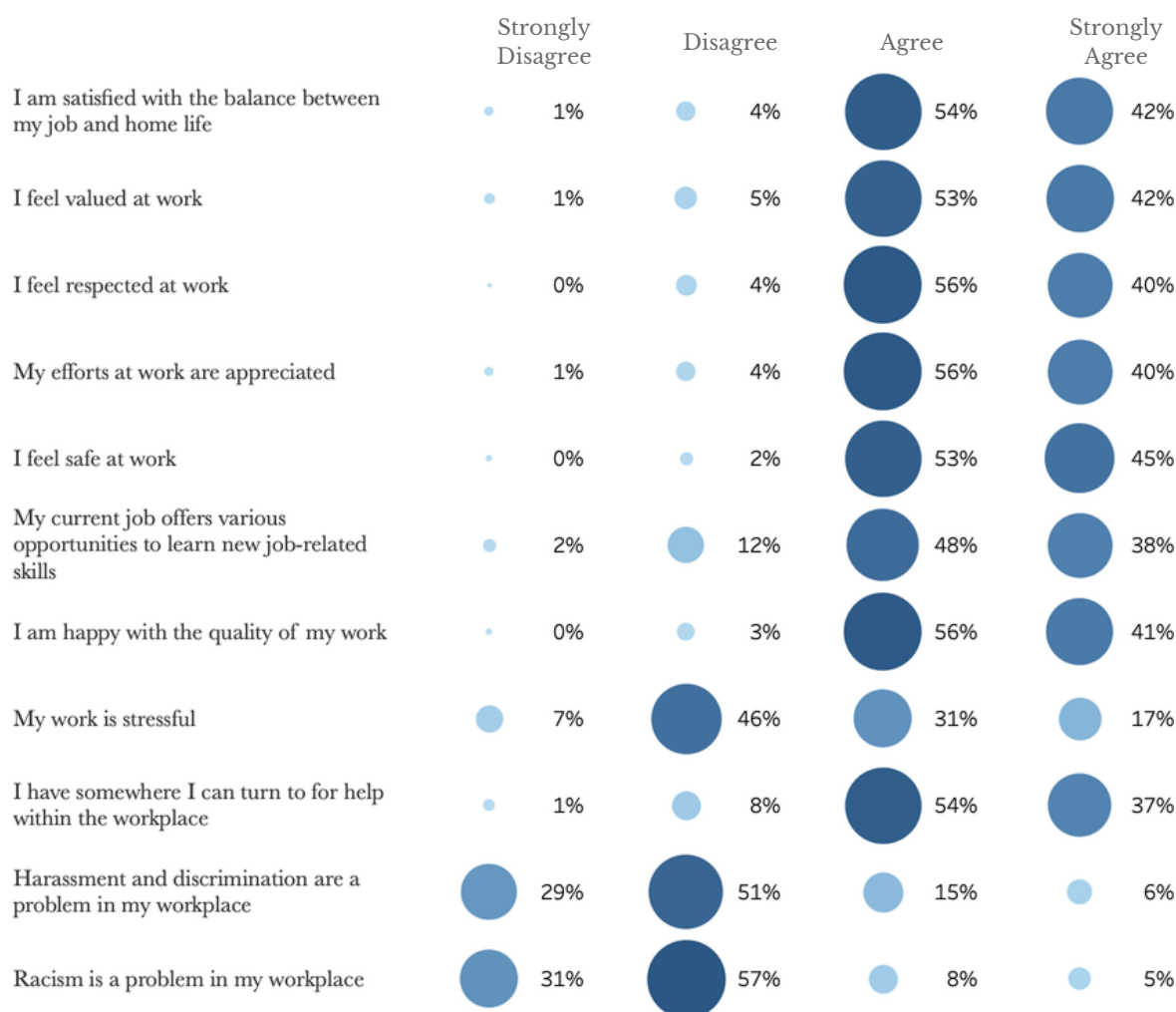


Workplace Culture

This section characterizes the languages most often spoken at work as well as the work environment including conflict, harassment, and discrimination experienced at the work place.



JOB SATISFACTION



What this graph shows:

The size and colour of the circles are a visual representation of the percentage of people answering the survey question. Larger and darker coloured circles indicate more people, whereas smaller and lighter coloured circles indicate less people

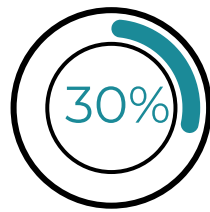
- Most (96%) Dene were satisfied with their work-life balance
- Most Dene feel valued (95%), respected (96%), appreciated (96%), and safe (98%) at work, and most (91%) felt they had supports in their workplace they could go for help
- Majority (53%) of Dene did not think their work was stressful

Some Dene indicated that harassment and discrimination (21%) and racism (13%) were problems in their workplace. More information on these topics is presented on page 88-89.





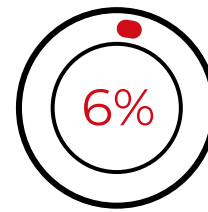
JOB SATISFACTION



very satisfied



satisfied



dissatisfied or
very dissatisfied

Reasons for being dissatisfied:

- work environment (49%)
- didn't like their supervisors and/or co-workers (35%)
- pay (23%)
- no chance for advancement (14%)
- job doesn't match their skills (10%)
- location (3%)
- lack of job security (6%)



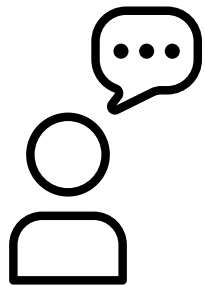
Photo by Adriana Stewart.



Findings - Workplace Culture



WORKPLACE LANGUAGES

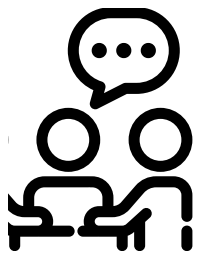


What language do you speak at work the majority of the time?

89% English

5% First Nations language

6% Both



What language do your coworkers speak at work the majority of the time?

93% English

6% First Nations language



Photo courtesy of Dene Nation Archives.



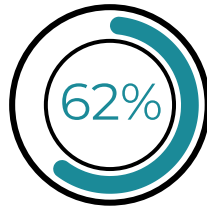
Findings - Workplace Culture



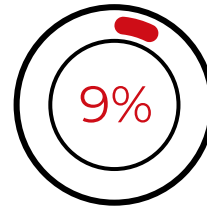
WORKPLACE CONFLICT



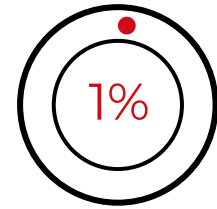
are **very satisfied** with how their workplace handles conflict



are **satisfied** with how their workplace handles conflict



are **dissatisfied** with how their workplace handles conflict



are **very dissatisfied** with how their workplace handles conflict

Among those dissatisfied with how their workplace handles conflict, 67% were women

WORKPLACE SUPPORT

95%

said that their workplace supported **First Nations culture**

88%

said that their workplace allowed them to **take time off for cultural practices** such as ceremonies or cultural events



Photo by Tessa Macintosh Photography 2021.





HARASSMENT AND DISCRIMINATION

21% said **harassment and discrimination** were problems in their workplace (52% were women)

11% **personally experienced** it in their current workplace (63% were women)

14% were **dissatisfied** with how their current workplace handles it (55% were women)

Harassment and discrimination in the workplace

Workplace harassment and discrimination occurs in many ways including, inappropriate physical contact, discriminating remarks, violence and threats, intimidation, or unprofessional response. Generally, women are more likely to experience or observe gender-based discrimination in the workplace, and this trend was consistent in the answers to this survey from Dene women.



Photo by Kelly Skinner.

Findings - Workplace Culture



RACISM

13% said **racism** was a problem in their workplace (55% were women)

6% **personally experienced** racism their current workplace (61% were women)

12% were **dissatisfied** with how their current workplace handles racism (50% were women)

Racism in the workplace

is a type of discrimination that is specifically directed towards someone's race or ethnicity. Racism in the workplace can take many different forms.



Photo courtesy of Dene Nation Archive.



Summary - Workplace Wellbeing and Culture

Main highlights from this section:

Safe and healthy physical and psychosocial work environments are key elements to fostering wellbeing, job satisfaction, and productivity among staff, as well as improving or maintaining the quality of work. These results suggest that the majority of Dene reported high job satisfaction overall. However, those who were unhappy with their jobs reported dissatisfaction with the work environment as the most common reason. Harassment, discrimination, and racism were indicated as problems within the workplace, and it is possible that these factors are a result of those experiencing job dissatisfaction.

- 1 A small proportion of Dene were dissatisfied with their job.
- 2 English was the most common language used at work and with co-workers, however more than half of Dene said that speaking a First Nations language helped them in their job.
- 3 More than one fifth of Dene said harassment and discrimination were problems in their workplace.
- 4 Women more often reported harassment, discrimination, and racism as problems in their workplace.



Photo by Arlyn Charlie Photography.

Conclusion

Most Dene have completed at least some high school and reported that education was helpful for obtaining a job. While the majority of Dene were employed, almost a quarter were unemployed and looking for work.



Almost all Dene reported having at least a little knowledge about cultural teachings, practices, and their rights. Participating in traditional practices was common among Dene.

The majority of Dene individuals and households are low-income and only a small portion of people received income from traditional activities.



Almost all Dene were satisfied with their job. Of those who did not experience job satisfaction, concerns with the work environment and pay were most common.

This report summarizes the labour market and workplace experiences among Dene in the Northwest Territories. In addition to all of the indicators included in the report, connection to the community was identified as an important factor among Dene consistently across the chapters examined in this report.

Photos courtesy of Dene Nation Archives.



References

1. Government of Northwest Territories (2018). Poverty Indicators Northwest Territories. [cited 2021 Aug 13]. Available from:
<https://www.statsnwt.ca/Poverty%20Indicators/index.html>
2. Government of Northwest Territories (2019). Working Together II: An action plan to reduce poverty in Northwest Territories 2019-2022.
<https://www.hss.gov.nt.ca/sites/hss/files/resources/working-together-ii-action-plan-reduce-poverty.pdf>
3. The Arctic Institute (n.d.). Controversies Around Endangered Indigenous Languages in the Canadian Arctic (Part I).
<https://www.thearcticinstitute.org/controversies-endangered-indigenous-languages-canadian-arctic-part-i/>
4. Andersen LL, Proper KI, Punnett L, Wynne R, Persson R, Wiezer N. Workplace health promotion and wellbeing. Scientific World Journal. 2015:606875
<https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/26380362/>





FNIGC | CGIPN
First Nations Information Governance Centre
Le Centre de gouvernance de l'information des Premières Nations

