



Risk and protective factors influencing educational success and suicidality for First Nations youth-in-care in Ontario, Canada

Barbara Greenberg^a, Meagan Miller^a,
Erik Michael^a, & Robert Flynn^{a,b}

^aCentre for Research on Educational and
Community Services, University of Ottawa
(Canada)

^bSchool of Psychology, University of Ottawa
(Canada)

bgreenbe@uottawa.ca



uOttawa



Ontario Association of
Children's Aid Societies
The voice of child welfare in Ontario

Outline




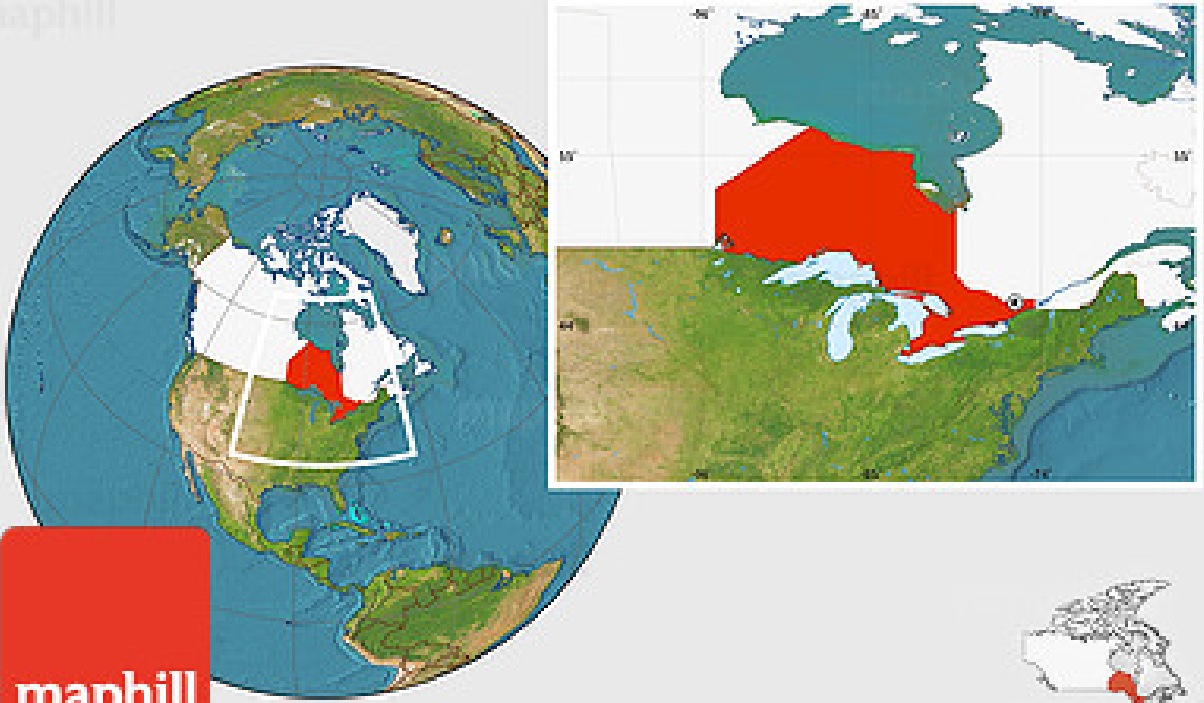
- Contextual Background
- Ontario Looking After Children Project
- Sample & Measures
- Results
- Conclusion
- Q & A




Ontario



Ontario 
Canada

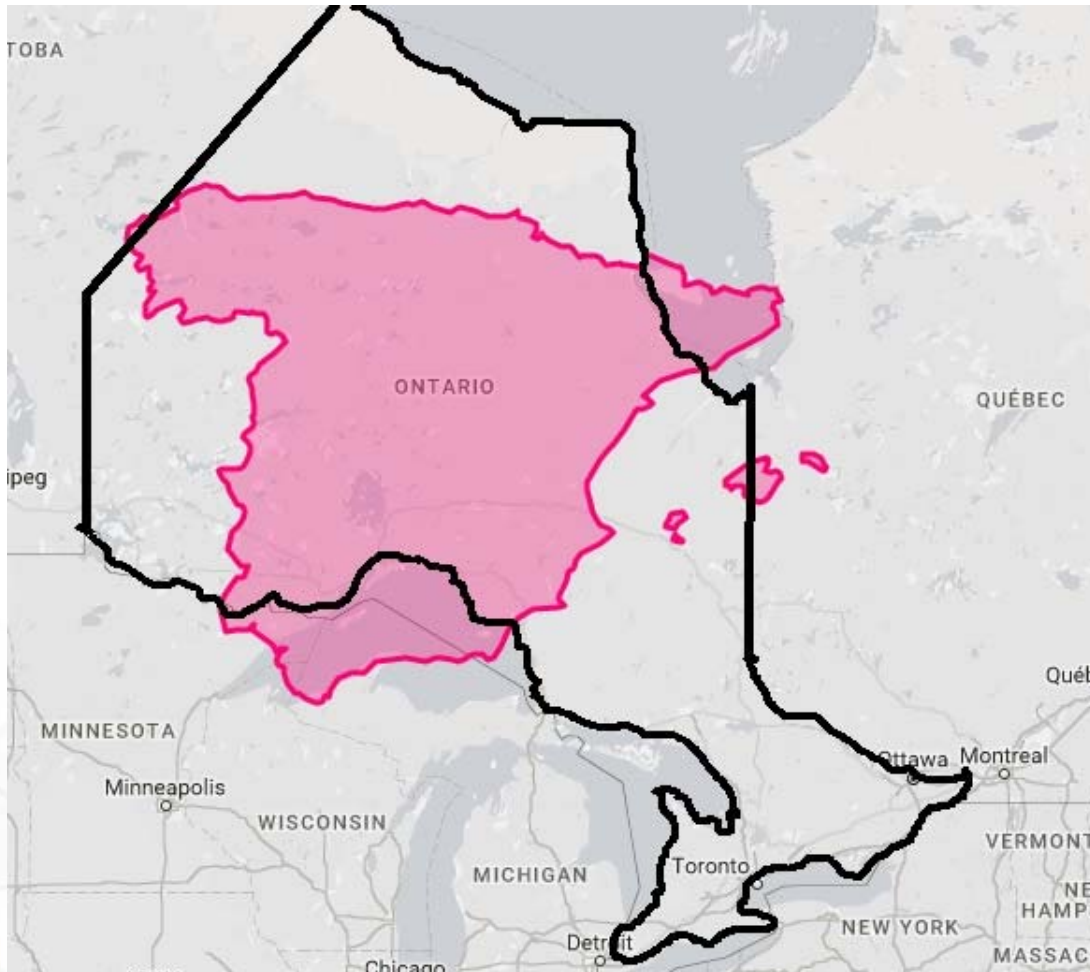


The map block features a globe on the left with a white box highlighting Ontario's location. To the right is a detailed map of Ontario and the Great Lakes region, with Ontario shaded in red. A small inset map of Canada is in the bottom right corner of the map area.

 © 2011 Maphill



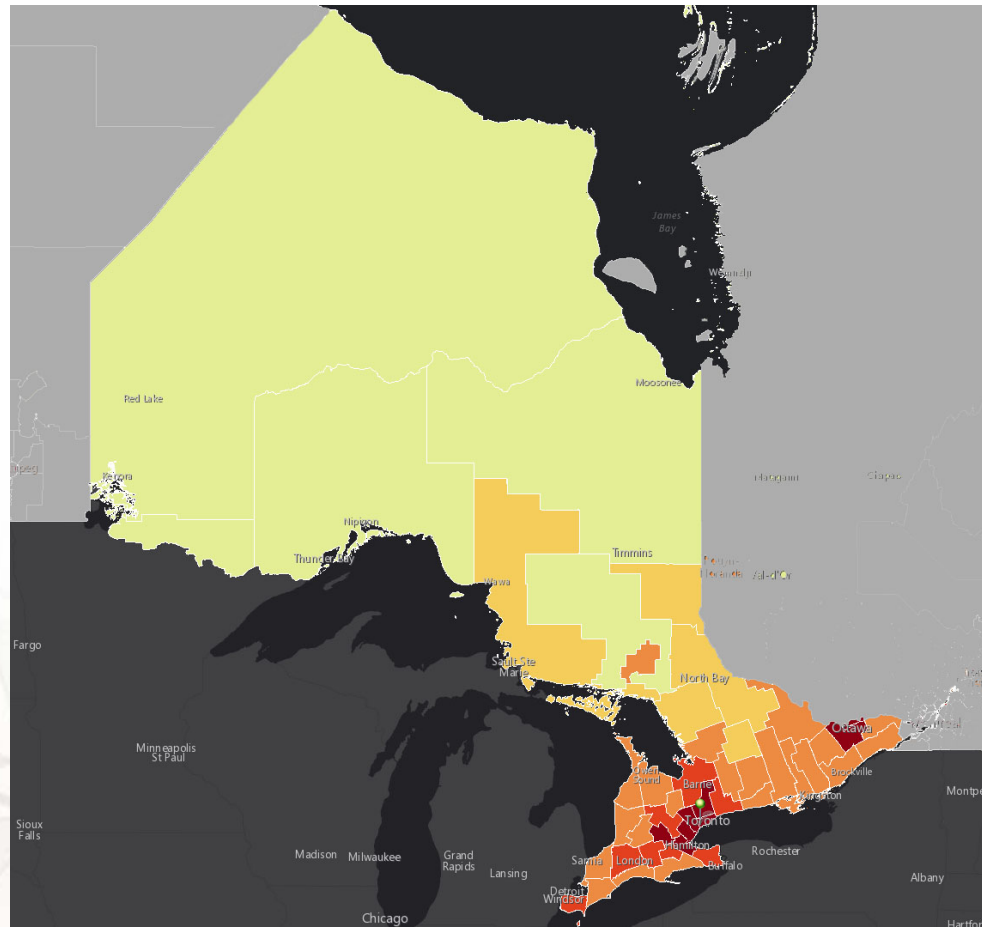
Ontario



AREA	
Spain	505,990 km ²
United Kingdom	244,820 km ²
Portugal	91,568 km ²
Denmark	44,493 km ²
Belgium	30,510 km ²
Malta	316 km ²
	+
	44 km ²
Ontario	917,741 km²



Ontario



Indigenous Peoples in Canada: A (Very) Brief Summary



- Colonialism
 - Changing relationships
- Assimilation
 - Residential schools
- Ongoing effects
 - Intergenerational trauma
 - Overrepresentation of indigenous (First Nations, Métis, and Inuit) children in care



Literature Review



- Education gap
- Culturally-relevant education
- Cherubini, Hodson, Manley-Casimir, & Muir, 2010; Gallagher-Mackay, Kiddler, & Methot, 2013, Ryan & Whitman, 2013
- Cultural autonomy as a protective factor re: suicidality/self-harm
- Chandler & Lalonde, 1998; Kirmayer et al., 2007



Ontario Looking After Children (OnLAC)



- Uses Second Canadian Adaptation of Assessment and Action Record (AAR-C2)
 - Seven developmental dimensions:
 1. Health
 2. Education
 3. Identity
 4. Family & Social Relationships
 5. Social Presentation
 6. Emotional & Behavioural Development
 7. Self-Care (& Transitions to Adulthood)
 - + Developmental Assets
- Mandated in Ontario to assess service needs and developmental outcomes of young people in care
- Sixteenth year of data collection (2001-present)



Purpose of the current exploratory study



1. To develop a plausible model for educational outcomes to describe risk and protective factors for First Nations youth in out-of-home care in Ontario
2. To develop a plausible model of suicidality/self-harm to describe risk and protective factors for First Nations youth in out-of-home care in Ontario



Sample

- Cross-sectional sample OnLAC Years 10-14
- $N = 1,877$ First Nations youth
- Age 12-17 years
- 50.3% male, 49.7% female
- Placement settings
 - Foster home: 61%
 - Group home: 19%
 - Kinship care: 7%
 - Independent living: 6%
 - Customary care: 2%
 - Other placement setting: 5%



EDUCATION Dependent variable



Educational Success ($\alpha = .80$)

- Multi-informant measure of positive educational outcomes developed by Tessier & Flynn (2015)
 - Child welfare worker
 - Educational performance matches ability
 - Acquisition of skills
 - Caregiver
 - Educational level compared to age peers
 - Performance in reading and other language arts, mathematics, and overall
 - Youth
 - Rating of school performance



EDUCATION Independent variables (from the AAR-C2-2010)



- Age
- Gender
- Family-based care vs. group care
- Soft drug use (youth-reported)
- Neglect
- Total Difficulties (Goodman's SDQ; caregiver-reported)
- Learning-related difficulties (caregiver-reported)
- Stress Symptoms (youth-reported)
- Cultural Assets (youth-reported)
- Developmental Assets (Search Institute; caregiver-reported)
- Positive Life Experiences (youth-reported)



EDUCATION Results

(Multiple Regression)

- Statistically significant model

$$F(11, 531) = 215.13, p < .001$$



Predictors	Step 1		Step 2		Step 3	
	B	Standardized Beta	B	Standardized Beta	B	Standardized Beta
Gender (1 = Female; 0 = Male)	1.34	.07	1.76	.09	1.22	.06
Age (in years)	-.69^a	-.10	.16	.02	.08	.01
Neglect (1 = Yes; 0 = No)			.13	.01	-.51	-.03
Learning-related difficulties (1 = Yes; 0 = No)			-2.62^b	-.13	-3.40^c	-.16
Total Difficulties			-.33^c	-.24	-.12^a	-.09
Soft drug use			-1.03^c	-.27	-.47^b	-.12
Stress symptoms			.27	.02	.43	.04
Cultural assets			-1.70	-.04	-3.96^b	-.10
Developmental Assets					.37^c	.30
Positive life experiences					.25^c	.25
Care (1 = Family-based; 0 = Group)					-.99	-.05
\bar{R}^2		.01^a		.18^c		.33^c

Notes: ^a $p < .05$ (2-tailed); ^b $p < .01$ (2-tailed); ^c $p < .001$ (2-tailed)

SUICIDALITY/SELF-HARM Dependent variable



- Constructed dichotomous variable based on youth-reported experiences of suicidality/self-harm in past 12 months
 - ‘Yes’ to one or more of the following:
 - Attempt to harm oneself
 - Seriously contemplated suicide
 - Suicide attempt



SUICIDALITY/SELF-HARM Independent variables (from the AAR-C2-2010)



- Age
- Gender
- Family-based care vs. group care
- Soft drug use (youth-reported)
- Stress Symptoms (youth-reported)
- Years involved with the child welfare system
- Positive Mental Health (Keyes; youth-reported)
- Cultural assets (youth-reported)
- Educational Success (Tessier & Flynn; youth-reported)
- General Self-Esteem (youth-reported)
- Hope (youth-reported)



SUICIDALITY/SELF-HARM Results

(Logistic Regression)

	Model 1		Model 2		Model 3	
Predictors	B	Odds Ratio	B	Odds Ratio	B	Odds Ratio
Gender (1 = Female; 0 = Male)	.99^c	2.71	.80^c	2.22	.81^c	2.24
Age (in years)	-.05	.95	-.22^b	.80	-.22^b	.80
Soft drug use			.16^c	1.17	.12^a	1.12
Stress symptoms			.56^c	1.75	.46^c	1.58
Years involved in child welfare			-.04^a	.96	-.04	.96
Positive Mental Health					-.02^a	.98
Cultural assets					.25	1.28
Educational success					.01	1.01
Self-Esteem					-.92	.40
Hope					.04	1.04
Care (1 = Family-based; 0 = Group)					-.53^a	.59
Nagelkerke R Square	.08		.19		.23	
	$\chi^2(2) = 31.0, p < .001$		$\chi^2(5) = 81.0, p < .001$		$\chi^2(11) = 100.3, p < .001$	
<i>Notes: ^a p < .05 (2-tailed); ^b p < .01 (2-tailed); ^c p < .001 (2-tailed)</i>						

Summary of Results



EDUCATION

- Protective factors
 - More Developmental Assets
 - More Positive Life Experiences
- Risk factors
 - Learning-related difficulties
 - Greater Total Difficulties
 - Soft drug use
 - Greater Cultural Assets

SUICIDALITY/SELF-HARM

- Protective factors
 - Being male
 - Being older
 - Greater Positive Mental Health
 - Being in family-based care
- Risk factors
 - Soft drug use
 - More Stress Symptoms



Conclusion



- Models are a starting-point for influencing outcomes for education and suicidality/self-harm for First Nations youth-in-care
- Further testing/validation of models is necessary
- Limitations of the current studies' sample



Conclusion



- Promoting protective factors might help to mitigate risk factors
- Education – culturally relevant education
- Suicidality/self-harm – family-based care



Acknowledgements



The collaboration and financial support of the Ontario Ministry of Children and Youth Services and the Ontario Association of Children's Aid Societies are gratefully acknowledged.

Thanks also to the numerous young people in care, caregivers, lead hands, practitioners, supervisors, quality-assurance staff, executive personnel, and OnLAC research assistants who have contributed much to the OnLAC project since the beginning.



Contact



Dr. Barbara Greenberg bgreenbe@uottawa.ca
Ontario Looking After Children Research Assistant

Meagan Miller mmiller@uottawa.ca
Ontario Looking After Children Research Associate

Centre for Research on Educational and Community Services
<http://www.socialsciences.uottawa.ca/crecs/eng/>
University of Ottawa, Ottawa, Canada





Questions or comments?

Thank you!



uOttawa