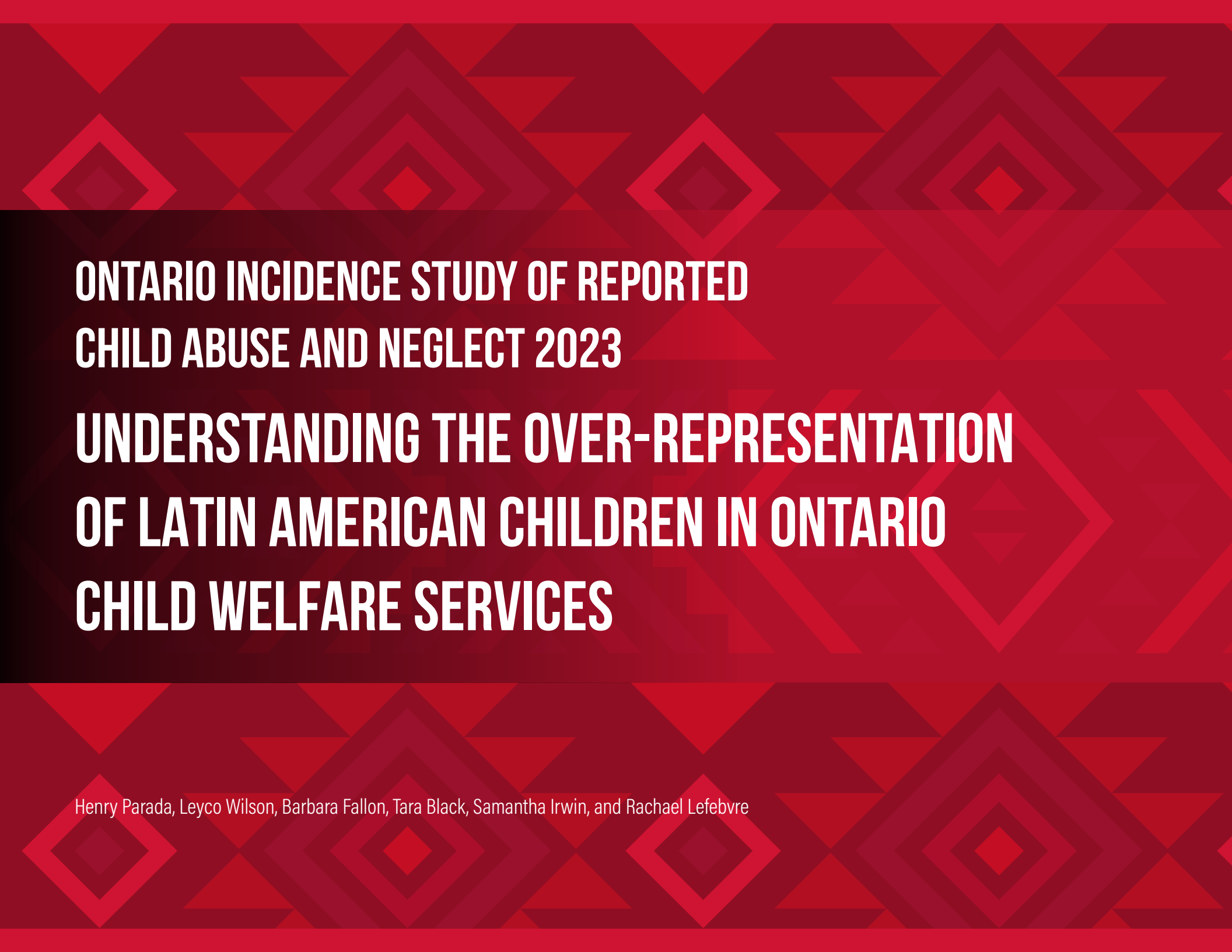


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ONTARIO INCIDENCE STUDY OF REPORTED CHILD ABUSE AND NEGLECT 2023

UNDERSTANDING THE OVER-REPRESENTATION OF LATIN AMERICAN CHILDREN IN ONTARIO CHILD WELFARE SERVICES

Henry Parada, Leyco Wilson, Barbara Fallon, Tara Black, Samantha Irwin, and Rachael Lefebvre

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This report describes maltreatment-related investigations conducted in Ontario in 2023 that involved Latin American children and compares these investigations to those involving white children. The analyses presented data from the Ontario Incidence Study of Reported Child Abuse and Neglect 2023 (OIS-2023), the seventh provincial study of maltreatment-related investigations conducted in the province. The report was prepared by the OIS-2023 Research Team at the request of Rights for Children and Youth Partnership (RCYP). RCYP is a multi-country, interdisciplinary research collaboration funded under the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council Insight Program. It brings together researchers, universities, governmental and non-governmental partners across Canada, the Caribbean, and Central America to generate evidence on the social, political, economic, and institutional factors that support or hinder the protection of children's and youth's rights,

particularly in contexts of violence, migration, education and child protection systems. The work is guided by international children's rights standards, including the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child, and aims to produce comparative knowledge to inform policy, practice, and training to strengthen children's rights in the Americas and diaspora populations in Canada.

Disproportionality and Disparity

Disproportionate means not in proportion. Disproportionality indices compare the proportion of children who experienced a child welfare outcome (e.g., investigation or placement in

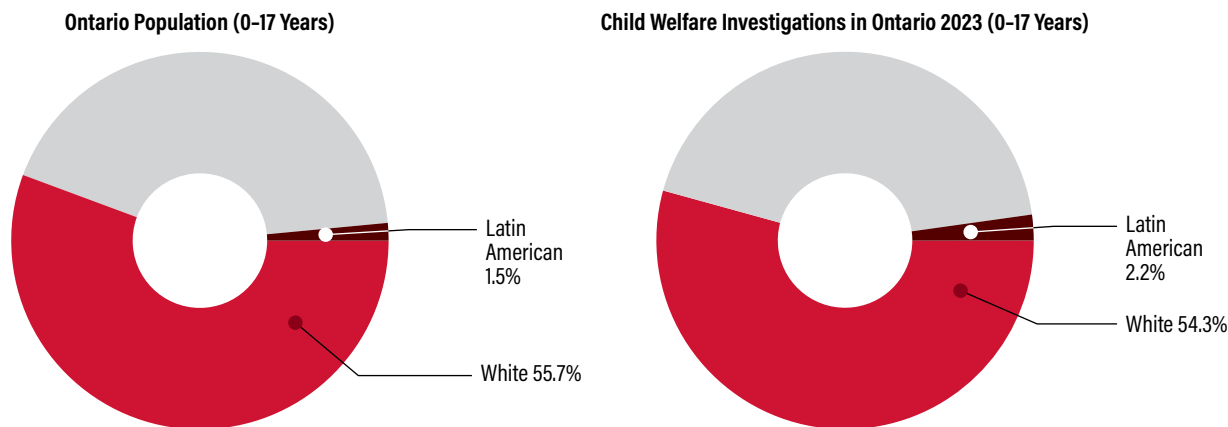
care) that are in a specific ethno-racial group to the proportion of children in a broader population (e.g., the general child population) in that ethno-racial group.

Disproportionality indices do not compare ethno-racial groups to one another. [Figure 1](#) describes the disproportional representation of Latin American children under 18 years old involved in a child welfare investigation compared to the proportion of Latin American children in the total child population in Ontario. Latin American children represent 1.5 percent of the child population but represent 2.2 percent of the child welfare service population.

Disparity refers to a lack of equality or similarity between groups. In the context of child welfare, "disparity" typically describes differences in outcomes or experiences between two ethno-racial groups, such as the rate at which Latin American and white children experience specific child welfare interventions. Disparity indices measure how much more or less likely one group is to experience a particular outcome compared to another group. [Figure 2](#) describes the disparate representation of Latin American children under 18 years old compared to white children in the Ontario child welfare system in 2023. Overall, compared to white children, Latin American children were 1.48 times as likely to be investigated (see [Table 3-1](#)). These investigations were then 1.97 times as likely to involve substantiated maltreatment (see [Table 4-2](#)), 1.97 times as likely to be transferred to ongoing services (see [Table 3-3](#)), and 1.15 times as likely to involve a placement in out-of-home care (see [Table 3-5](#)).

As shown in [Figure 3](#) (and [Table 3-2](#)), compared to investigations involving white children under 18 years old, investigations involving Latin American children were more likely to be referred by police or health/community services. Investigations involving Latin American children were less likely to be referred by family or friends.

FIGURE 1: Disproportional Representation of Latin American Children in the Child Welfare Population Compared to the Overall Child Population in Ontario in 2023

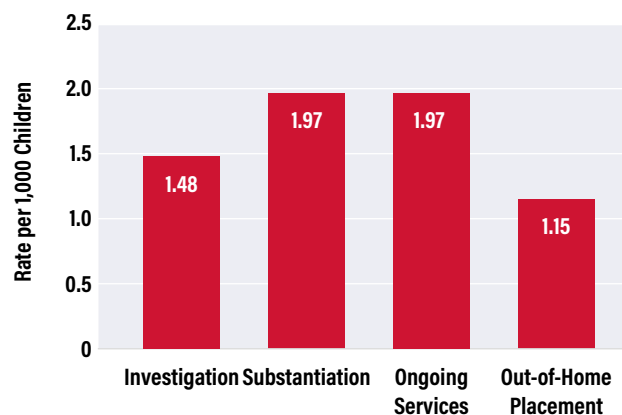


Ontario Incidence Study of Reported Child Abuse and Neglect 2023

Based on a sample of 142 child maltreatment-related investigations involving Latin American children and 3,427 child maltreatment-related investigations involving white children with information about the nature of the investigation

Census Ontario 0-17 Latin American 42,155, white 1,516,885; Total Children = 2,727,480

FIGURE 2: Rates of Investigations Involving Latin American Children Compared to White Children in Ontario in 2023



Ontario Incidence Study of Reported Child Abuse and Neglect 2023

Based on a sample of 142 child maltreatment-related investigations involving Latin American children and 3,427 child maltreatment-related investigations involving white children with information about the nature of the investigation

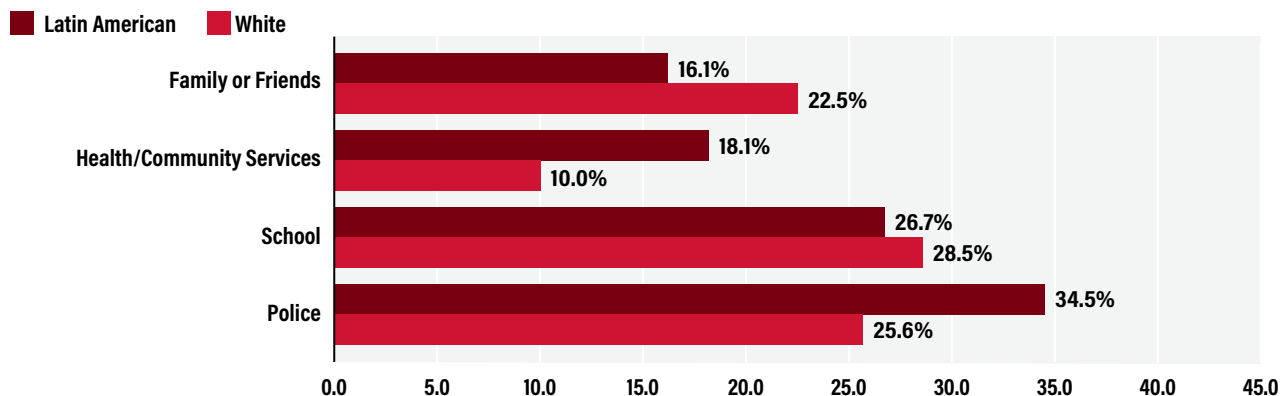
Census Ontario 0-17 Latin American 42,155, white 1,516,885; Total Children = 2,727,480

Compared to investigations involving white children, investigations involving Latin American children under 18 years old were more likely to be focused on a concern of physical abuse or exposure to intimate partner violence (see [Figure 4](#)).

Investigating workers were less likely to note at least one child functioning concern and similar proportions for at least one primary caregiver risk factor in investigations involving Latin American children compared to white children under 18 years old (see [Figure 5](#), [Table 5-1](#) and [Table 5-2](#)).

Investigations involving Latin American children under 18 years old were less likely to involve families whose workers indicated they had at least one housing issue and slightly more likely to involve families who had a full-time source of income compared to investigations involving white children (see [Figure 6](#) and [Table 6-1](#)).

FIGURE 3: Referral Source in Child Maltreatment-Related Investigations Involving Latin American and White Children in Ontario in 2023



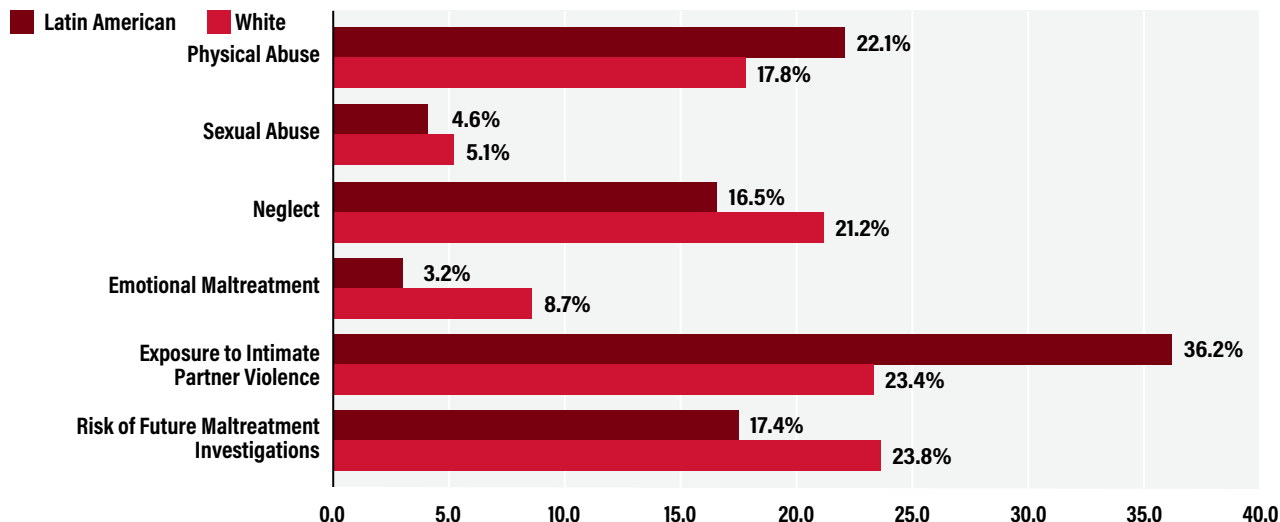
Ontario Incidence Study of Reported Child Abuse and Neglect 2023

Columns do not add up to 100% because an investigation could have had more than one referral source. Detailed referral source data do not add up to sub-category totals as the sub-category totals account for one referral from the category.

Based on a sample of 142 child maltreatment-related investigations involving Latin American children and 3,427 child maltreatment-related investigations involving white children with information about the nature of the investigation

Census Ontario 0-17 Latin American 42,155, white 1,516,885; Total Children = 2,727,480

FIGURE 4: Nature of Child Maltreatment-Related Investigations Involving Latin American and White Children in Ontario in 2023



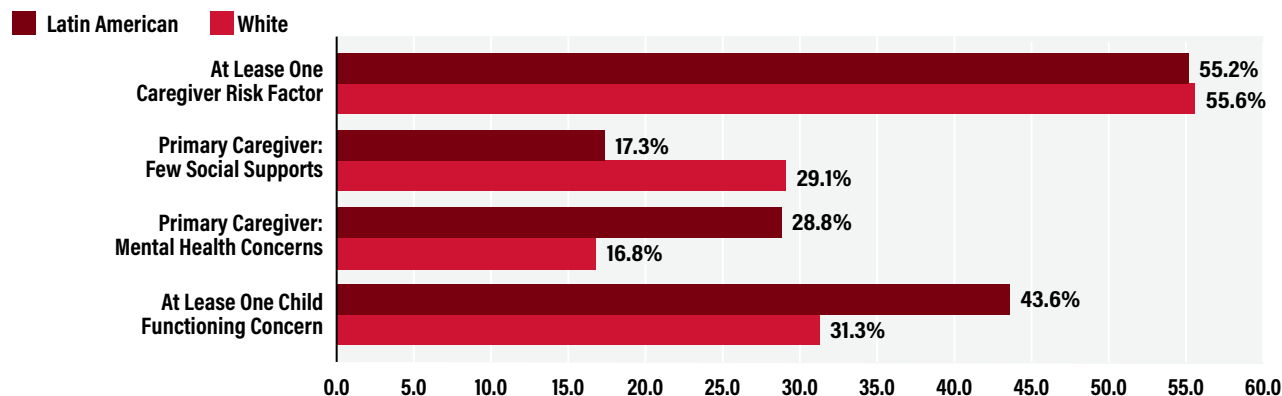
Ontario Incidence Study of Reported Child Abuse and Neglect 2023

Percentages are column percentages. Columns do not add up to 100% due to rounding.

Based on a sample of 142 child maltreatment-related investigations involving Latin American children and 3,427 child maltreatment-related investigations involving white children with information about the nature of the investigation

Census Ontario 0-17 Latin American 42,155, white 1,516,885; Total Children = 2,727,480

FIGURE 5: Child Functioning Concerns and Primary Caregiver Risk Factors in Child Maltreatment–Related Investigations Involving Latin American and White Children in Ontario in 2023



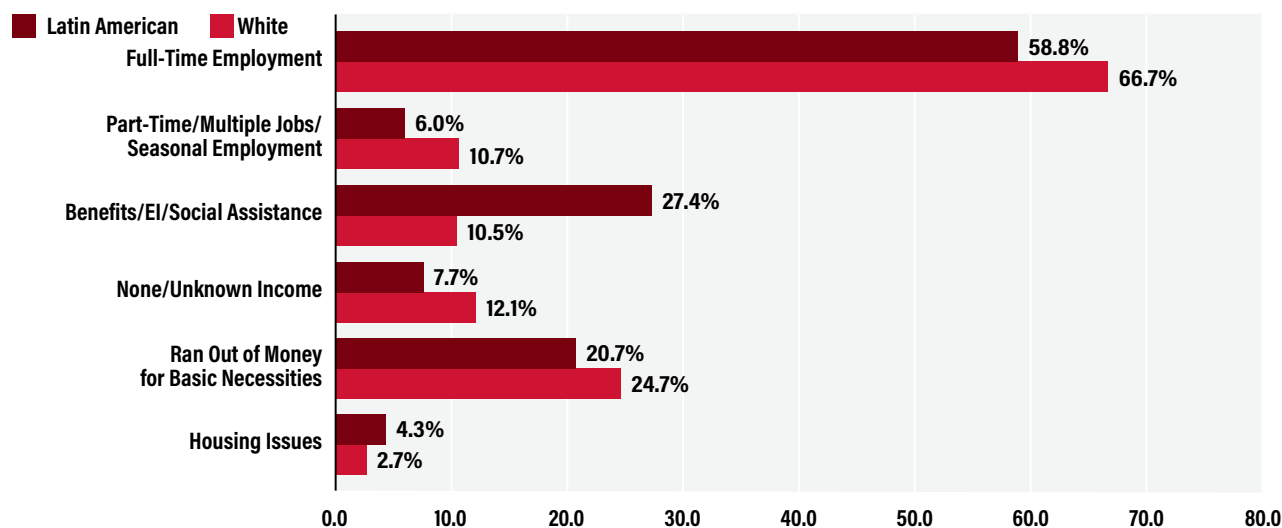
Ontario Incidence Study of Reported Child Abuse and Neglect 2023

Percentages are column percentages. Columns do not add up to 100% because an investigation could have had more than one referral source. Detailed referral source data do not add up to sub-category totals as the sub-category totals account for one referral from the category.

Based on a sample of 142 child maltreatment–related investigations involving Latin American children and 3,427 child maltreatment–related investigations involving white children with information about the nature of the investigation

Census Ontario 0–17 Latin American 42,155, white 1,516,885; Total Children = 2,727,480

FIGURE 6: Socioeconomic Circumstances in Child Maltreatment–Related Investigations Involving Latin American and White Children in Ontario in 2023



Ontario Incidence Study of Reported Child Abuse and Neglect 2023

Percentages are column percentages. Columns do not add up to 100% due to rounding.

Based on a sample of 142 child maltreatment–related investigations involving Latin American children and 3,427 child maltreatment–related investigations involving white children with information about the nature of the investigation

Census Ontario 0–17 Latin American 42,155, white 1,516,885; Total Children = 2,727,480

SECTION 1: INTRODUCTION AND METHODOLOGY

This report was prepared by the Ontario Incidence Study of Reported Child Abuse and Neglect 2023 (OIS-2023) Research Team at the request of Rights for Children and Youth Partnership (RCYP). This report describes child maltreatment-related investigations conducted in Ontario in 2023 involving Latin American children and compares these investigations to investigations involving white children under 18 years old across child, family, and household characteristics, as well as characteristics of the investigations themselves.

The OIS-2023 is the seventh provincial study to examine the incidence of reported and investigated child maltreatment-related concerns in Ontario. The OIS-2023 captures information on investigation outcomes, forms, and severity of maltreatment, and the characteristics of children and families investigated by child welfare authorities in Ontario. A multi-stage sampling design was used to first select a representative sample of child welfare agencies from organizations in Ontario. Investigations opened between October 1 and December 31, 2023 were then sampled for inclusion in the study. The OIS-2023 definition of maltreatment-related investigations includes situations in which there were concerns that a child may have already been abused or neglected (maltreatment investigations) as well as situations in which there was no specific concern about past maltreatment but where the risk of future maltreatment was being assessed (risk investigations).

Workers were asked to indicate the ethno-racial category that best described the investigated children and their caregivers. The ethno-racial categories used in the OIS-2023 were those used by Statistics Canada in the 2021 Census. Using the 2021 Census categories allows for a calculation of the incidence rate of investigations per 1,000 children in Ontario. These incidence rates are derived by taking the estimated number of cases, dividing by the child population for a given ethno-racial category in Ontario, and multiplying by 1,000.

The estimates presented in this chapter are derived from child maltreatment-related investigations from a representative sample of child welfare agencies in 2023. The sampling design and weighting procedures specific to the study should be considered before inferences are drawn from these estimates. The estimates do not include (1) incidents that were not reported to child welfare agencies, (2) reported cases that were screened out by child welfare agencies before being fully investigated, (3) new reports on cases already open by child welfare services, and (4) cases that were investigated only by the police.

This report defines investigations involving Latin American children as those where the worker indicated that the investigated child's ethno-racial category was Latin American. In order to produce incidence rates, estimates for investigations involving Latin American children were divided by the Latin American child population in Ontario and multiplied by 1,000. The same procedure was implemented to generate estimated rates of investigation for white children. The reported weighted estimates are based on unweighted samples of investigations involving Latin American ($n = 142$) and white children ($n = 3,427$) under 18 years old in the OIS-2023. The estimated number of investigations involving Latin American children based on this sample may not reflect differences in specific jurisdictions within Ontario and are instead aggregated for the entire province. This may result in obscuring more substantial differences in regions where populations of Latin American families and investigations involving Latin American children are more concentrated.

SECTION 2: FRAMING THE CONTEXT OF LATIN AMERICAN CHILDREN'S INVOLVEMENT IN THE CHILD WELFARE SYSTEM

Latin Americans in Canada

Officially, the Canadian census has included a question on 'visible minorities' since 1996. The results are used primarily by governments, businesses, community groups, healthcare providers, researchers, and others promoting employment equity (Jedwab, 2019). Information about the Latin American population raises further concerns, given that respondents often identify as a visible minority and a non-visible minority. While Latin American Canadians are not a fixed racialized group and many are able to move in and out of racialization; class, culture, and second language education often act as differentiators (Hepburn, 2022). It is essential to note the diversity of experiences when examining this ethnic group as a single community.

According to the 2021 Canadian census, there are 580,235 individuals who identified as Latin American in Canada (Statistics Canada, 2025a). An examination of the 2021 statistics found that when factoring in place of birth, mother tongue and ethnic origin, the number of Latin Americans rose to 726, 820 (Statistics Canada, 2026). These different numbers likely stem from the classification of Latin Americans by the census, which does not consider mixed identities or racial diversity within the Latin American category; for example, individuals who identify as white and Latin American are coded as white and excluded from the Latin American population (Hou et al., 2023; Jedwab, 2019). The 2021 Canadian census also found that Spanish is now the fourth most common mother tongue language other than English or French (Statistics Canada, 2022).

Immigration

Between 2001 and 2021, the Latin American community has had a growth rate of 146% in Canada (Hou et al., 2023). Latin Americans in Canada now represent approximately 6% of the racialized population, rendering them the sixth largest racialized group in Canada (Hou et al., 2023). The growth rate for the population is due in large part to immigration; nearly half (47%) of Latin Americans are or have been landed immigrants (Statistics Canada, 2023). The three largest countries of origin remain Mexico, Colombia, and El Salvador (Hepburn, 2022).

Increasingly, it is important to note the existence of Latin Americans in Canada as permanently temporary authorized migration workers. The Temporary Foreign Worker Program (TFWP) is a stream that enables employers to access flexible and inexpensive labour that domestic workers often avoid while restricting migrant workers' access to membership, rights, and protections (Basok et al., 2022). According to the 2021 census, non-permanent residents have a missed rate of 45% (Mehta & Berard-Chagnon, 2025). The missed rate of temporary workers is of particular importance when considering the presence of Latin Americans in Canada as migrant workers; in 2018, nearly 50,000 temporary foreign workers were employed in agriculture of which 50.5 percent came from Mexico and 20 percent from Guatemala (Basok et al., 2022).

Although Latin America as a regional concept is used to homogenize diverse Latin American identities, it is vital to recognize that experiences vary by issues of race, region, religion, and migratory history. These experiences impact how Latin American youth and families adapt and engage with institutions due to systemic barriers faced, along with the lack of

support to learn how to effectively navigate Canadian institutions (Ansion & Merali, 2018; Parada et al., 2021; Parada et al., 2023a; Parada et al., 2023b; Parada et al., 2025; Wilkinson, 2018).

Discrimination

The institutional conceptualization of what constitutes family, including Latin American families, is reflected in discourses that impact actual practices; for instance, the use of what Smith (1993, 1999) calls the "standard North American family" not to simply describe families, but to function as "ideological code," a standardization of what a family is (Smith, 1993, p.51). Whiteness, middle class and immigration status are also well documented in how these "codes" are implicit in how child welfare systems produce over-representation of Indigenous, Black and Latin American families (Adjei & Minka, 2018; Edwards et al., 2023; King et al., 2017; King et al., 2024; Parada et al., 2023b).

Discrimination experienced by Latin American families remains a significant issue in the settlement process and its relationship with the child welfare system, considering that 64% of Latin Americans were born outside Canada (Statistics Canada, 2026). The immigration path (economic, temporary, refugee) and the diversity of Latin American families (Afro-Latin American, Indigenous, mestizos and white) influence the stresses of migrating, as they may experience racialization, linguistic discrimination, and anti-immigrant sentiments (Ansion & Merali, 2018).

This community remains highly invisible, experiencing the invisibility paradox or institutional invisibility in which Latin American communities are highly visible as subjects of control within institutional systems (child welfare, judicial, health

and educational systems), yet they remain invisible in the development of policies, anti racism initiatives and research. For example, they are over-represented in child welfare, yet their experiences are not acknowledged as requiring specific practices or interventions (Brown et al., 2009; Ferguson, 2017; Humphris & Sigona, 2019; King et al., 2024; Meloni et al., 2017; Tuyisenge & Goldenberg, 2021; Wellesley Institute, 2022).

Income Inequality

The Government of Canada reported that, according to the 2021 census, 43% of recent immigrants (defined as those admitted in 2005 or after) reported finding it difficult to meet their financial needs over the past 12 months (Statistics Canada, 2024). This is largely due to language barriers, discrimination, lack of credential recognition, lack of Canadian work experience, and difficulty building social ties in Canada (Government of Canada, 2018).

According to the Statistics Canada (2022), Latin Americans of working-age population (25–64 years) saw a particular increase since 2001 with a growth rate of 178% (Hou et al., 2023). Despite their seeming ability to work, Latin Americans have reported struggling to prosper financially. Earnings vary among visible minority groups; on average, Latin Americans earn less than the Canadian total mean income (Hepburn, 2022). For example, in 2023 the average income for a Latin American in Canada was \$38,700, far below the Canadian average of \$74,200 (Hepburn, 2022; Statistics Canada, 2025b; Statistics Canada, 2025c). Latin American women's employment rate tends to be lower than that of non-Latin groups, especially for women aged 25–54 years, which was 70.5% compared with 78.8% for non-racialized and non-Indigenous (Statistics Canada, 2026).

In addition to low-income experiences by recently immigrated Latin Americans, a study indicated that Latin Americans in Ontario continue to experience difficulties accessing equal pay. In Ontario, for every dollar earned by a non-racialized individual, first-generation Latin Americans earned 68 cents, and second- and third- or more generations earned 62 cents (Block & Galabuzi, 2018). The findings indicate that low-income rates persist even if Latin Americans were born and raised in Canada.

Education

Evidence on the educational factors affecting Latin American children and families has continued to evolve over the past several years. Despite the level of formal education in this community, Latin American families still face serious systemic barriers and labour market disparities (Statistics Canada, 2026). The education level of recent immigrants is much higher than that of the previous cohort of Latin Americans, largely because they are primarily economic immigrants with a high level of skills, knowledge, and experience (60.7%), according to the most recent report (Statistics Canada, 2026). Many face overqualification in certain areas of the labour market and the challenge of having their credentials recognized.

Latin American children are evaluated through a deficit lens within an educational system that, at times, may be unresponsive to their needs (institutional invisibility) and may misinterpret cultural and linguistic differences as academic deficits and parental inadequacy (Bonikowska et al., 2024; Parada et al., 2021; Parada et al., 2023a). There are systemic educational issues that affect the success of Latin American children including: academic assumptions that treat accents, language, ethnicity, and immigration status as problems to be solved; the labelling of children as at risk and experiencing behavioural challenges; arbitrary placement in English as a Second Language programs; parents' challenges in understanding the education system and its processes, given the highly technical language; and the devaluation of parents' knowledge of their children's needs and skills, rendering this human capital irrelevant (Facey et al., 2026; James, 2021; Parada et al., 2021; Parada, 2023a; Rampersaud et al., 2024; Swardh et al., 2025).

Child Welfare System

The Ontario Human Rights Commission's decision to request the child welfare system collect and release disaggregated data has brought to light the over-representation of Latin American children that remained invisible until recently (Fallon et al., 2005; Fallon et al., 2008; Fallon et al., 2015; Fallon et al., 2020; Fallon et al., 2025).

Research in the area remains limited; research published by King et al. (2024) is the first and only examination of Latin American involvement with child welfare in a Canadian context to date. Findings from their study determined that while Latin American children are over-represented in investigations (twice as likely as white children), the most significant differences were observed in rates of substantiation and placement in out-of-home care (King et al., 2024). The study found that Latin American children experience similar disparities to both First Nations and Black children, though less is known about the experiences of Latin American families in the Canadian context (King et al., 2024; Parada et al., 2020).

The Canadian settler state has historically used the child welfare system to oppress and force the assimilation of Indigenous children and is therefore rooted in a colonial legacy still operating to marginalize racialized communities (Escobar Olivo et al., 2025). For instance, the duty to report, which requires all professionals working with children to report any suspicion of harm or at risk of harm can be problematic in the context of over surveillance and scrutiny of racialized caregivers who do not ascribe to white parenting standards (Adjei & Minka, 2018; Escobar Olivo et al., 2025). "A system cannot fail those whom it was never meant to protect in theory; it cannot fail me, but fails me every day, even if it has policies and procedures in place to protect me" a feeling many experience when dealing with the child welfare system (Akuoko-Barfi et al., 2026, p. 8). Most families who do not meet the requirements of the standard North American family and who navigate a system that was not created to respond to their needs, face systems (e.g., child welfare system, education, judicial, etc.) in which whiteness remains invisible; this continues to impact how families are assessed and measured in Canada (Akuoko-Barfi et al., 2026; Bonnie et al., 2022; Escobar Olivo et al., 2025; King et al., 2024; Smith, 1999).

There are many other socio-economic factors that Latin Americans face, such as educational and housing challenges, precarious employment, lack of support, and health issues, which may also contribute to increased contact with the child protection system; challenges presented by poverty might lead to instances associated with maltreatment (King et al., 2017; King et al., 2024; Paperny, 2021). These issues may also blur the fine line between poverty and neglect, as they face challenges and notions of risk.

SECTION 3: SERVICE DISPOSITIONS

This chapter provides a description of investigations involving Latin American and white children in terms of the characteristics of the children, their caregivers, and their homes. The estimates presented in this chapter are weighted Ontario estimates derived from child maltreatment-related investigations conducted in 2023 in a sample of Ontario child welfare agencies.

The sampling design and weighting procedures specific to the study should be considered before inferences are drawn from these estimates. The estimates do not include (1) incidents that were not reported to child welfare agencies, (2) reported cases that were screened out by child welfare agencies before being fully investigated, (3) new reports on cases already open by child welfare agencies, and (4) cases that were investigated only by the police. Please see Fallon et al. (2025) for a full description of the inclusion and exclusion criteria.

An estimated 125,879 child maltreatment-related investigations were conducted in Ontario in 2023 (a rate of 46.15 investigations per 1,000 children) for children and youth under 18 years of age. 2.2 percent of child maltreatment-related investigations conducted in Ontario in 2023 involved Latin American children (an estimated 2,814 investigations, representing a rate of 66.75 investigations per 1,000 Latin American children). In comparison, 54.3 percent of all investigations involved white children (an estimated 68,322 investigations, representing

a rate of 45.04 investigations per 1,000 white children). Latin American children were 1.48 times more likely as white children to be investigated in Ontario in 2023.

Referral Source

[Table 3-2](#) describes sources of referrals for investigations involving Latin American and white children. Each independent contact with the child welfare agency regarding a child (or children) was counted as a separate referral. The person who contacted the child welfare agency was identified as the referral source. For example, if a child disclosed an incident of abuse to a teacher at school, who made a report to child welfare services, the school was counted as a referral source. If both the teacher and the child's parent called the child welfare agency, both would be counted as referral sources.

Non-Professional Referral Sources

Parent: This includes parents involved as a caregiver to the reported child, as well as non-custodial parents.

Child: A self-referral by any child listed on the Intake Information Section of the OIS-2023 Maltreatment Assessment.

Relative: Any relative of the child in question. Workers were asked to code "other" for situations in which a child was living with a foster parent and a relative of the foster parent reported maltreatment.

Neighbour/Friend: This category includes any neighbour or friend of the children or their family.

Professional Referral Sources

Community, Health, or Social Services: This includes referrals from social assistance workers; crisis service/shelter workers; community recreation centre staff; community health physicians, nurses, or mental health professionals; or any community agency staff.

Hospital (Any Personnel): This includes referrals that originate from a hospital that are made by a doctor, nurse, or social worker rather than a family physician or nurse working in a family doctor's office in the community.

School: Any school personnel (teacher, principal, teacher's aide, school social worker, etc.).

Other Child Welfare Service: Includes referrals from mandated child welfare service providers from other jurisdictions or provinces.

Day Care Centre: Refers to a child care or day care provider.

Police: Any member of a Police Force, including municipal, provincial/ territorial, or RCMP.

Anonymous: A caller who is not identified.

TABLE 3-1: Child Maltreatment-Related Investigations Involving Latin American and White Children in Ontario in 2023

Child Ethnicity	Number of Investigations	Child Population	Rate per 1,000 Children	% Of Total Investigations
Latin American	2,814	42,155	66.75	2.2%
White	68,322	1,516,885	45.04	54.3%
Total (all investigations/races)	125,879	272,480	46.15	100.0%

Ontario Incidence Study of Reported Child Abuse and Neglect 2023
Based on a sample of 142 child maltreatment-related investigations involving Latin American children and 3,427 child maltreatment-related investigations involving white children with information about the nature of the investigation

TABLE 3-2: Referral Source in Child Maltreatment–Related Investigations Involving Latin American and White Children in Ontario in 2023

Referral Source	Latin American Children			White Children		
	#	%	Rate per 1,000 Children	#	%	Rate per 1,000 Children
Non-Professional	452	16.1%	10.72	15,372	22.5%	10.13
Professional	2375	86%	56.34	49,929	73.0%	32.92
Community, Health or Social Services	510	18.1%	12.10	6,854	10.0%	4.52
Hospital (any personnel)	—	—	—	3,277	4.8%	2.16
School	752	26.7%	17.84	19,502	28.5%	12.86
Other Child Welfare Service	—	—	—	1,805	2.6%	1.19
Day Care Centre	—	—	—	806	1.2%	0.53
Police	970	34.5%	23.01	17,498	25.6%	11.54
Other/Anonymous	—	—	—	4,324	6.3%	2.85
Total Investigations	2,814	100.0%	66.75	68,322	100.0%	45.04

Ontario Incidence Study of Reported Child Abuse and Neglect 2023

Percentages are column percentages. Columns do not add up to 100% because an investigation could have had more than one referral source. Detailed referral source data do not add up to sub-category totals as the sub-category totals account for one referral from the category.

Based on a sample of 142 child maltreatment–related investigations involving Latin American children and 3,427 child maltreatment–related investigations involving white children with information about the nature of the investigation

Census Ontario 0–17 Latin American 42,155, white 1,516,885; Total Children = 2,727,480

Other Referral Sources: Any referral source that does not fall into one of the pre-existing categories (e.g., legal or dental service provider).

In 2023, 16.1% of investigations involving Latin American children (452 investigations, 10.72 per 1,000 children) were referred by non-professional sources, compared with 22.5% of investigations involving white children (15,372 investigations, 10.13 per 1,000 children). A large majority of investigations were referred by professional sources: 86.0% of investigations involving Latin American children (2,375 investigations, 56.34 per 1,000 children) and 73.0% of investigations involving white children (49,929 investigations, 32.92 per 1,000 children).

Investigating workers were asked whether the case would remain open for further child welfare services after the initial investigation. As seen in [Table 3-3](#), the proportion of cases that were transferred to ongoing services were higher in investigations involving Latin American children and investigations involving white children. In Ontario in 2023, 21.5% of investigations involving Latin American children were transferred to ongoing services; 16.2% of investigations involving white children were transferred to ongoing services.

Child Welfare Court

Workers were asked to indicate any applications made to child welfare court during the investigation period. Applications to child welfare court can be made for a number of reasons, including orders of supervision with the child remaining in the home, as well as out-of-home placement orders ranging from temporary to permanent. Although applications to court can be made during the investigation period, where possible, non-court ordered services should be offered before an application is made to court.

Because the OIS can only track applications made during the investigation period, the OIS court application rate does not account for applications made at later points of service.

TABLE 3-3: Provision of Ongoing Services Following Child Maltreatment–Related Investigations Involving Latin American and White Children in Ontario in 2023

Provision of Ongoing Services	Latin American Children			White Children		
	#	%	Rate per 1,000 Children	#	%	Rate per 1,000 Children
Case to Stay Open for Ongoing Services	604	21.5%	14.33	11,036	16.2%	7.28
Case to be Closed	2,210	78.5%	52.43	57,286	83.8%	37.77
Total Investigations	2,814	100.0%	66.75	68,322	100.0%	45.04

Ontario Incidence Study of Reported Child Abuse and Neglect 2023

Percentages are column percentages. Columns may not add up to 100% due to rounding.

Based on a sample of 142 child maltreatment–related investigations involving Latin American children and 3,427 child maltreatment–related investigations involving white children with information about the nature of the investigation

Census Ontario 0–17 Latin American 42,155, white 1,516,885; Total Children = 2,727,480

TABLE 3-4: Applications to Child Welfare Court in Child Maltreatment–Related Investigations Involving Latin American and White Children in Ontario in 2023

Child Welfare Court Application Status	Latin American Children			White Children		
	#	%	Rate per 1,000 Children	#	%	Rate per 1,000 Children
No Application to Court	2,747	97.6%	65.16	67,506	98.8%	44.50
Application Made	—	—	—	816	1.2%	0.54
Total Investigations	2,814	100.0%	66.75	68,322	100.0%	45.04

Ontario Incidence Study of Reported Child Abuse and Neglect 2023

Percentages are column percentages. Columns may not add up to 100% due to rounding.

Based on a sample of 142 child maltreatment–related investigations involving Latin American children and 3,427 child maltreatment–related investigations involving white children with information about the nature of the investigation

Census Ontario 0–17 Latin American 42,155, white 1,516,885; Total Children = 2,727,480

“—” Estimate was <100 investigations.

Investigating workers were asked about three possible statuses for court involvement during the initial investigation:

- » **No application:** Court involvement was not considered.
- » **Application considered:** The child welfare worker was considering whether or not to submit an application to child welfare court.
- » **Application made:** An application to child welfare court was submitted.

Table 3-4 collapses “no application” and “application considered” into a single category (no application to court). In 2.4 percent of investigations involving Latin American children and 97.6 percent of investigations involving white children the worker indicated they did not make a child welfare court application.

TABLE 3-5: Out-of-Home Placements in Child Maltreatment–Related Investigations Involving Latin American and White Children in Ontario in 2023

Placement Status	Latin American Children			White Children		
	#	%	Rate per 1,000 Children	#	%	Rate per 1,000 Children
Child Remained at Home	2,747	97.6%	65.16	66,199	96.9%	43.64
Child with Relative (Not a Formal Child Welfare Placement)	—	—	—	1,417	2.1%	0.93
Foster Care (Includes Foster and Kinship Care)	—	—	—	479	0.7%	0.32
Group Home/Residential Secure Treatment	—	—	—	141	0.3%	0.11
Total Investigations	2,814	100.0%	66.75	68,322	100.0%	45.04

Ontario Incidence Study of Reported Child Abuse and Neglect 2023

Percentages are column percentages. Columns may not add up to 100% due to rounding.

Based on a sample of 142 child maltreatment–related investigations involving Latin American children and 3,427 child maltreatment–related investigations involving white children with information about the nature of the investigation

Census Ontario 0–17 Latin American 42,155, white 1,516,885; Total Children = 2,727,480

“—” Estimate was <100 investigations.

Out-of-Home Placement

The OIS tracks placements in out-of-home care that occur at any time during the investigation. Investigating workers are asked to specify the type of placement. In cases where there may have been more than one placement, workers are asked to indicate the setting where the child had spent the most time. The following placement classifications were used:

No placement required: No placement is required following the investigation.

Placement considered: An out-of-home placement is still being considered, but the child remained at home at this point of the investigation.

Kinship out of care: An informal placement has been arranged within the family support network; the child welfare authority does not have temporary custody.

Kinship in care: A formal placement has been arranged within the family support network; the child welfare authority has temporary or full custody and is paying for the placement.

Foster care (non-kinship): Includes any family-based care, including foster homes, specialized treatment foster homes, and assessment homes.

Group home: Out-of-home placement required in a structured group living setting.

Residential/Secure treatment: Placement required in a therapeutic residential treatment centre to address the needs of the child.

For the purposes of [Table 3-5](#), the placement categories were combined into four broader categories: child remained at home (no placement required and placement considered), child with relative (informal kinship out of care), foster care (kinship in care and non-family foster care), and group home/residential (group home and residential/secure treatment).

In 97.6 percent of investigations involving Latin American children (an estimated 2,747 investigations or 65.16 investigations per 1,000 children) and 96.9 percent of investigations involving white children (an estimated 66,199 investigations or 43.64 investigations per 1,000 children), the child remained at home.

SECTION 4: INVESTIGATION REASON

The nature of investigations involving Latin American and white children is described below. The OIS-2023 tracks two types of investigations: those conducted because of a concern about a maltreatment incident that may have occurred and those conducted to assess whether there is a significant risk of future maltreatment where there is no alleged or suspected maltreatment. Where there is a concern about maltreatment incidents, the OIS-2023 identifies five major sub-types: physical abuse, sexual abuse, neglect, emotional maltreatment, and exposure to intimate partner violence. Of the 2,814 estimated investigations involving Latin American children conducted in Ontario in 2023, 82.6 percent were maltreatment investigations which focused on a concern of abuse or neglect (an estimated 2,325 child maltreatment investigations or 55.15 investigations

per 1,000 children), and 17.4 percent of investigations involved concerns about risk of future maltreatment (an estimated 489 investigations or 11.65 investigations per 1,000 children; see [Figure 4](#)). Seventy-six (76.2) percent of investigations involving white children (an estimated 52,074 investigations or 34.33 investigations per 1,000 children) were focused on concerns of abuse or neglect, and 23.8 percent of investigations involving white children were focused on assessing the risk of future maltreatment (an estimated 16,248 investigations, or 10.71 investigations per 1,000 children).

Among maltreatment investigations involving Latin American children, the most common primary concern was exposure to intimate partner violence (36.2 percent of investigations, an

estimated 1,019 investigations, or 24.17 investigations per 1,000 children), followed by physical abuse as the primary concern in 22.1 percent of investigations (an estimated 622 investigations or 14.76 investigations per 1,000 children), and neglect in 16.5 percent of investigations (an estimated 466 investigations or 11.05 investigations per 1,000 children). In comparison, white children were most likely to be investigated for exposure to intimate partner violence (23.4 percent of investigations) followed by neglect (21.2 percent of investigations), physical abuse (17.8 percent) and emotional maltreatment (8.7 percent).

Substantiation Decisions

[Table 4-2](#) describes types of investigations and substantiation decisions resulting from maltreatment-related investigations involving Latin American and white children under 18 years old conducted across Ontario in 2023.

The outcomes of maltreatment investigations are classified in terms of three levels of substantiation:

- » **Substantiated:** The balance of evidence indicates that abuse or neglect has occurred.
- » **Suspected:** Insufficient evidence to substantiate abuse or neglect, but maltreatment cannot be ruled out.
- » **Unfounded:** The balance of evidence indicates that abuse or neglect has not occurred (unfounded does not mean that a referral was inappropriate or malicious; it simply indicates that the investigating worker determined that the child had not been maltreated).

The outcomes of risk-only investigations are classified in terms of three categories:

TABLE 4-1: Primary Maltreatment Type in Child Maltreatment–Related Investigations Involving Latin American and White Children in Ontario in 2023

Nature of Investigation	Latin American Children			White Children		
	#	%	Rate per 1,000 Children	#	%	Rate per 1,000 Children
Physical Abuse	622	22.1%	14.76	12,171	17.8%	8.02
Sexual Abuse	129	4.6%	3.06	3,510	5.1%	2.31
Neglect	466	16.5%	11.05	14,469	21.2%	9.54
Emotional Maltreatment	—	—	—	5,924	8.7%	3.91
Exposure to Intimate Partner Violence	1,019	36.2%	24.17	16,000	23.4%	10.55
Subtotal: All Maltreatment Investigations	2,325	82.6%	55.15	52,074	76.2%	34.33
Total Investigations	2,814	100.0%	66.75	68,322	100.0%	45.04

Ontario Incidence Study of Reported Child Abuse and Neglect 2023
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Based on a sample of 142 child maltreatment-related investigations involving Latin American children and 3,427 child maltreatment-related investigations involving white children with information about the nature of the investigation
Census Ontario 0–17 Latin American 42,155, white 1,516,885; Total Children = 2,727,480

- » Significant risk of future maltreatment
- » No significant risk of future maltreatment
- » Unknown risk of future maltreatment

Forty-two percent of maltreatment investigations involving Latin American children were substantiated compared to 31.7 percent of investigations involving white children. Just over a third of investigations (35.8 percent) involving Latin American children and 42.5 percent of investigations involving white children were unfounded.

In 28.4 percent of risk-only investigations involving Latin American children and 23.8 percent of investigations involving white children, the investigating worker concluded there was a significant risk of future maltreatment. In 68.9 percent of risk-only investigations involving Latin American children and 71.1 percent of investigations involving white children, no significant risk of future maltreatment was indicated.

Characteristics of Substantiated Maltreatment Investigations

Characteristics of substantiated maltreatment investigations involving Latin American and white children under 18 years old are described in [Table 4-3](#) including police involvement, emotional harm, and physical harm.

Police Involvement

Workers were asked to indicate the level of police involvement for each maltreatment code listed. As shown in [Table 4-3](#), in 59.7 percent of substantiated investigations involving Latin American children and 69.1 percent of substantiated investigations involving white children there was no police involvement. In 24.9 percent of substantiated investigations involving Latin American children and 16.0 percent of substantiated investigations involving white children there

was a police investigation, and in 15.4 percent of substantiated investigations involving Latin American children and 14.9 percent of substantiated investigations involving white children there were charges laid.

Emotional and Physical Harm

Information on emotional harm was collected using a series of questions asking the investigating child welfare workers to describe emotional harm that had occurred because of the maltreatment incident(s). If the maltreatment was substantiated or suspected, workers were asked to indicate whether the child was showing signs of mental or emotional harm (e.g., nightmares, bed-wetting, or social withdrawal following the maltreatment incident[s]). To rate the severity of mental or emotional harm, workers indicated whether therapeutic treatment was required to manage the symptoms of mental or emotional harm.

[Table 4-3](#) shows that emotional harm was noted in 26.3 percent of substantiated maltreatment investigations involving Latin American children and 38.3 percent of substantiated maltreatment investigations involving white children. The investigating worker indicated that emotional harm was severe enough to require therapeutic treatment in 15.7 percent of substantiated investigations involving Latin American children where emotional harm to the child was noted. In 30.6 percent of substantiated investigations involving white children, emotional harm was severe enough to require therapeutic treatment.

The OIS-2023 tracked physical harm identified by the investigating worker. Workers noted whether physical harm was present during the investigation; this is reported in [Table 4-3](#). No physical harm was identified in 99.2 percent of substantiated maltreatment investigations involving Latin American children, and 94.4 percent of those involving white children.

TABLE 4-2: Substantiation Decisions in Child Maltreatment–Related Investigations Involving Latin American and White Children in Ontario in 2023

Substantiated Decision	Latin American Children			White Children		
	#	%	Rate per 1,000 Children	#	%	Rate per 1,000 Children
Unfounded Maltreatment	1,009	35.8%	23.94	29,049	42.5%	19.15
Suspected Maltreatment	133	4.7%	3.16	1,386	2.0%	0.91
Substantiated Maltreatment	1,182	42.0%	28.04	21,638	31.7%	14.26
No Risk of Future Maltreatment	1,938	68.9%	45.97	48,595	71.1%	32.04
Risk of Future Maltreatment	798	28.4%	18.93	16,256	23.8%	10.72
Total Investigations	2,814	100.0%	66.75	68,322	100.0%	45.04

Ontario Incidence Study of Reported Child Abuse and Neglect 2023

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Based on a sample of 142 child maltreatment-related investigations involving Latin American children and 3,427 child maltreatment-related investigations involving white children with information about the nature of the investigation

-- Estimate was <100 investigations.

Census Ontario 0-17 Latin American 42,155, white 1,516,885; Total Children = 2,727,480

TABLE 4-3: Characteristics of Substantiated Maltreatment Investigations Involving Latin American and White Children in Ontario in 2023

	Latin American Children			White Children		
Characteristics	#	%	Rate per 1,000 Children	#	%	Rate per 1,000 Children
Police Involvement						
Investigation	579	24.9%	13.74	8,350	16.0%	5.50
Charges Laid	357	15.4%	8.47	7,735	14.9%	5.10
None	1387	59.7%	32.90	35,963	69.1%	23.71
Unknown	—	—	—	26	0.0%	0.02
Emotional Harm						
Emotional Harm Documented	346	26.30%	8.21	8,814	38.30%	5.81
Emotional Harm, No Therapeutic Treatment	139	10.6%	3.30	1,762	7.7%	1.16
Emotional Harm, Therapeutic Treatment Required	206	15.7%	4.89	7,052	30.6%	4.65
No Emotional Harm Documented	969	73.7%	22.99	14,210	61.7%	9.37
Physical Harm						
Physical Harm Documented	—	—	—	2,893	5.6%	1.91
No Physical Harm Documented	2,305	99.2%	54.68	49,154	94.4%	32.40

Ontario Incidence Study of Reported Child Abuse and Neglect 2023
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 "—" Estimate was <100 investigations.

SECTION 5: CHILD AND CAREGIVER FUNCTIONING

Child Characteristics

Child characteristics including age and functioning were documented by investigating workers.

Child functioning was documented on the basis of a checklist of challenges that child welfare workers were likely to be aware of as a result of their investigations. The child functioning checklist was developed in consultation with child welfare workers and researchers to reflect the types of concerns that may be identified during an investigation. The checklist is not a validated measurement instrument for which population norms have been established.

The checklist only documents problems that are known to investigating child welfare workers and, therefore, may undercount the occurrence of some child functioning problems.

Investigating workers were asked to indicate problems that had been confirmed by a diagnosis, directly observed by the investigating worker or another worker, and/or disclosed by the parent or child, as well as issues that they suspected were concerns but could not fully verify at the time of the investigation. The six-month period before the investigation was used as a reference point where applicable. Child functioning classifications that reflect physical, emotional, cognitive, and behavioural issues were documented with a checklist that included the following categories:

- » **Positive toxicology at birth:** When a toxicology screen for a newborn tests positive for the presence of drugs or alcohol.
- » **Fetal alcohol spectrum disorder (FASD):** Birth defects, ranging from mild intellectual and behavioural difficulties to more profound problems in these areas related to in-utero exposure to alcohol abuse by the biological mother.
- » **Failure to meet developmental milestones:** Children who are not meeting their developmental milestones because of a non-organic reason.
- » **Intellectual/Developmental disability:** Characterized by delayed intellectual development, it is typically diagnosed when a child does not reach his or her developmental milestones at expected times. It includes speech and language, fine/gross motor skills, and/or personal and social skills (e.g., Down Syndrome, Autism Spectrum Disorder).
- » **Attachment issues:** The child does not have physical and emotional closeness to a mother or preferred caregiver. The child finds it difficult to seek comfort, support, nurturance, or protection from the caregiver; the child's distress is not ameliorated or is made worse by the caregiver's presence.
- » **Attention deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD):** A persistent pattern of inattention and/or hyperactivity/impulsivity that occurs more frequently and more severely than is typically seen in children at comparable stages of development. Symptoms are frequent and severe enough to have a negative impact on the child's life at home, at school, or in the community.
- » **Aggression/Conduct issues:** Aggressive behaviour directed at other children or adults (e.g., hitting, kicking, biting, fighting, bullying) or violence to property at home, at school, or in the community.
- » **Physical disability:** Physical disability is the existence of a long-lasting condition that substantially limits one or more basic physical activities such as walking, climbing stairs, reaching, lifting, or carrying. This includes sensory disability conditions such as blindness, deafness, or a severe vision or hearing impairment that noticeably affects activities of daily living.
- » **Academic/Learning difficulties:** Difficulties in school including those resulting from learning difficulties, special education needs, behaviour problems, social difficulties, and emotional or mental health concerns.
- » **Depression/Anxiety/Withdrawal:** Feelings of depression or anxiety that persist for most of the day, every day for two weeks or longer, and interfere with the child's ability to manage at home and at school.
- » **Self-harming behaviour:** Includes high-risk or life-threatening behaviour and physical mutilation or cutting.
- » **Suicidal thoughts:** The child has expressed thoughts of suicide, ranging from fleeting thoughts to a detailed plan.
- » **Suicide Attempts:** The child has attempted to commit suicide.
- » **Inappropriate sexual behaviour:** Child displays inappropriate sexual behaviour, including age-inappropriate play with toys, self, or others; displaying explicit sexual acts; age-inappropriate sexually explicit drawings and/or descriptions; sophisticated or unusual sexual knowledge; or prostitution or seductive behaviour.
- » **Running (multiple incidents):** The child has run away from home (or other residence) on multiple occasions for at least one overnight period.
- » **Alcohol abuse:** Problematic consumption of alcohol (consider age, frequency, and severity).
- » **Drug/solvent abuse:** Includes prescription drugs, illegal drugs, and solvents.
- » **Youth Criminal Justice Act involvement:** Charges, incarceration, or alternative measures with the youth justice system.
- » **Other:** Any other conditions related to child functioning.

Table 5-1 presents child characteristics including child age and the types of problems associated with physical, emotional, and/or cognitive health, or with behaviour-specific concerns for Latin American and white children under 18 years old in maltreatment-related investigations in Ontario in 2023. Among Latin American children, maltreatment-related investigations most commonly involved those aged 4–7 years (25.1%; 79.75 per 1,000), followed by children 8–11 years (23.4%; 66.00 per 1,000) and 12–15 years (23.2%; 62.25 per 1,000). Similarly, among white children, the highest proportions of investigations involved children 4–7 years (26.7%; 55.50 per 1,000), 8–11 years (26.1%; 51.02 per 1,000), and 12–15 years (23.2%; 43.70 per 1,000).

In 31.3 percent of child maltreatment-related investigations involving Latin American children (an estimated 20.92 investigations per 1,000 Latin American children) and in 43.6 percent of investigations involving white children (an estimated 19.65 investigations per 1,000 white children), at least one child functioning issue was indicated by the investigating worker.

Externalizing issues were the most frequently reported child functioning concern in investigations involving Latin American children (14.5 percent). The second most frequently noted child functioning concern in investigations involving Latin American children was academic difficulties (13.1 percent). In general, workers noted concerns less frequently for investigations involving Latin American children than in those involving white children.

Caregiver Risk Factors

Concerns related to documented caregiver risk factors were reported by investigating workers using a checklist of nine items that were asked about primary caregivers. Where applicable, the reference point for identifying concerns about caregiver risk factors was the previous six months. The checklist is not a validated measurement instrument. The checklist only documents problems that are known to investigating child welfare workers.

TABLE 5-1: Child Functioning Concerns in Child Maltreatment–Related Investigations Involving Latin American and White Children in Ontario in 2023

Child Characteristics	Latin American Children			White Children		
	#	%	Rate per 1,000 Children	#	%	Rate per 1,000 Children
Child Age						
Under 1 Year	177	6.3%	105.04	2,624	3.8%	38.10
1–3 Years	424	15.1%	76.81	9,242	13.5%	41.20
4–7 Years	705	25.1%	79.75	18,224	26.7%	55.50
8–11 Years	658	23.4%	66.00	17,862	26.1%	51.02
12–15 Years	653	23.2%	62.25	15,878	23.2%	43.70
16–17 Years	196	7.0%	34.69	4,493	6.6%	24.70
Child Functioning Concerns						
Intellectual/Developmental/Physical Disability	273	9.7%	6.48	9,791	14.3%	6.45
Attachment Issues	122	4.3%	2.89	3,391	5.0%	2.24
Academic Difficulties	368	13.1%	8.73	13,593	19.9%	8.96
Internalizing Issues	343	12.2%	8.14	12,011	17.6%	7.92
Externalizing Issues	408	14.5%	9.68	15,312	22.4%	10.09
Substance Abuse	—	—	—	2,562	3.7%	1.69
At Least One Functioning Concern	882	31.3%	20.92	29,811	43.6%	19.65
Total Investigations	2,814	100.0%	66.75	68,322	100.0%	45.04

Total Investigations
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The checklist included:

- » **Alcohol abuse:** Caregiver abuses alcohol.
- » **Drug/Solvent abuse:** Abuse of prescription drugs, illegal drugs, or solvents.
- » **Cognitive impairment:** Caregiver has a cognitive impairment.
- » **Mental health issues:** Any mental health diagnosis or problem.
- » **Physical health issues:** Chronic illness, frequent hospitalizations, or physical disability.

- » **Few social supports:** Social isolation or lack of social supports.
- » **Victim of intimate partner violence:** During the past six months the caregiver was a victim of intimate partner violence including physical, sexual, or verbal assault.
- » **Perpetrator of intimate partner violence:** During the past six months the caregiver was a perpetrator of intimate partner violence including physical, sexual, or verbal assault.
- » **History of foster care or group home:** Caregiver was in foster care and/or group home care during his or her childhood.

Table 5-2 presents primary caregiver characteristics that were noted by investigating workers.

65.4 percent of child maltreatment–related investigations involving Latin American children involved households in which English or French was not the primary language (an estimated 1,781 investigations, representing a rate of 42.25 investigations per 1,000 Latin American children). Only three percent of investigations involving white children involved households in which English or French was not the primary language. In 36.6 percent of investigations involving Latin American children, the worker noted that the primary caregiver had moved to Canada in the last five years (an estimated rate of 23.65 investigations per 1,000 Latin American children). A lower proportion of investigations involving white children involved primary caregivers that had moved to Canada in the last 5 years (0.8 percent, an estimated rate of 0.37 investigations per 1,000 white children).

At least one primary caregiver risk factor was identified in 55.6 percent of maltreatment–related investigations involving Latin American children (an estimated 1,515 child investigations), and at least one primary caregiver risk factor

TABLE 5-2: Primary Caregiver Risk Factors in Child Maltreatment–Related Investigations Involving Latin American and White Children in Ontario in 2023

Characteristics	Latin American Children			White Children		
	#	%	Rate per 1,000 Children	#	%	Rate per 1,000 Children
Primary Caregiver Characteristics						
Moved to Canada in the Last 5 Years	997	36.6%	23.65	563	0.8%	0.37
Primary Language is Not English or French	1,781	65.4%	42.25	1,975	3.0%	1.30
Alcohol Abuse	—	—	—	5,187	7.8%	3.42
Drug/Solvent Abuse	—	—	—	5,503	8.3%	3.63
Cognitive Impairment	—	—	—	3,110	4.7%	2.05
Mental Health Concerns	458	16.8%	10.86	19,102	28.8%	12.59
Physical Health Issues	198	7.3%	4.70	4,379	6.6%	2.89
Few Social Supports	792	29.1%	18.79	11,498	17.3%	7.58
Victim of Intimate Partner Violence	1,015	37.3%	24.08	16,193	24.4%	10.68
Perpetrator of Intimate Partner Violence	281	10.3%	6.67	4,054	6.1%	2.67
History of Foster Care/Group Home	—	—	—	2,907	4.4%	1.92
At Least One Caregiver Risk Factor	1,515	55.6%	35.94	36,582	55.2%	24.12
Total Cases with Primary Caregivers	2,723	100.0%	64.59	66,311	100.0%	43.72

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was identified in 55.2 percent of investigations involving white children (an estimated 36,582 child investigations). The most frequently noted primary caregiver risk factors in investigations involving Latin American children were being a victim of intimate partner violence (37.3 percent), having few social supports (29.1 percent), and mental health issues (16.8 percent). These proportions were similar for investigations

involving white children, except for primary caregiver mental health issues, which was noted in 28.8 percent of investigations involving white children.

SECTION 6: HOUSEHOLD CHARACTERISTICS

Investigating workers were requested to choose the income source that best described the primary source of the household income. Income source was categorized by the investigating worker using nine possible classifications:

- » **Full-time employment:** Family income is derived from at least one permanent, full-time position.
- » **Part-time employment (fewer than 30 hours/week):** Family income is derived primarily from at least one part-time position.
- » **Multiple jobs:** Caregiver(s) has more than one part-time or temporary position.
- » **Seasonal employment:** Caregiver(s) works either full- or part-time positions for temporary periods of the year.
- » **Employment Insurance (EI):** Caregiver(s) is temporarily unemployed and is receiving employment insurance benefits.
- » **Social assistance:** Caregiver(s) is currently receiving social assistance benefits.
- » **Other benefit:** Refers to other forms of benefits or pensions (e.g., family benefits, long-term disability insurance or child support payments).
- » **None:** Household has no source of legal income.
- » **Unknown:** Household source of income was not known.

Table 6-1 shows the household income source in investigations involving Latin American and white children in 2023. Household income sources are collapsed into full-time employment, part-time employment (which includes seasonal and multiple jobs), benefits/employment insurance/social assistance, and no/unknown income. Investigations involving Latin American

children were slightly more likely to involve households whose primary income source was from full-time work. In 66.7 percent of investigations involving Latin American children the household's source of income was from full-time work, while in 58.8 percent of investigations involving white children the household's source of income was from full-time work.

Workers were asked whether the household struggled to pay for any of the following in the six months prior to the investigation: food, housing, utilities, telephone/cell phone, or transportation. Table 6-1 shows that 24.7 percent of investigations involving

Latin American children and 20.7 percent of investigations involving white children involved a household that struggled to pay for at least one of these basic necessities.

Workers were also asked whether the family had experienced any housing issues including overcrowding, unsafe conditions, or moving two or more times in the last year. Table 6-1 shows that investigations involving Latin American children were less likely than those involving white children to involve any unsafe housing.

TABLE 6-1: Household Characteristics in Child Maltreatment–Related Investigations Involving Latin American and White Children in Ontario in 2023

Characteristics	Latin American Children			White Children		
	#	%	Rate per 1,000 Children	#	%	Rate per 1,000 Children
Household Income Source						
Full-Time Employment	1,816	66.7%	43.08	38,990	58.8%	25.70
Part-Time/Multiple Jobs/Seasonal Employment	292	10.7%	6.93	4,011	6.0%	2.64
Benefits/EI/Social Assistance	285	10.5%	6.76	18,186	27.4%	11.99
None/Unknown Income	330	12.1%	7.83	5,124	7.7%	3.38
Ran out of Money for Basic Necessities	679	24.7%	16.11	13,778	20.7%	9.08
Unsafe Housing	—	—	—	2,840	4.3%	1.87
Total Investigations	2,814	100.0%	66.75	68,322	100.0%	45.04

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Percentages are column percentages. Columns do not add up to 100% due to rounding.
Based on a sample of 142 child maltreatment–related investigations involving Latin American children and 3,427 child maltreatment–related investigations involving white children with information about the nature of the investigation
Census Ontario 0-17 Latin American 42,155, white 1,516,885; Total Children = 2,727,480
"—" Estimate was <100 investigations.

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