

An Overview of Youth Health in Montreal

UNDERSTAND, MOBILIZE, TAKE ACTION



Mental Health, Academic Success and Immigration

Highlights

Immigrant students face multiple challenges associated with the acculturation process. These challenges are closely linked to their migration experiences, family situation, and the social support needed to ensure their well-being and inclusion. (1,2) The following data, from the Québec Health Survey of High School Students (QHS^{SS}), compare mental health, academic success, and social environment by migration generation.

Immigration Status (3, 4)
First-generation immigrant students: Individuals born outside Canada whose parents were also born outside Canada.
Second-generation immigrant students: Individuals born in Canada, but with at least one parent born outside Canada.
Students of the third generation or more: Individuals born in Canada to parents who were also born in Canada.



Slightly more than two out of three students in Montréal high schools have at least one parent who was born outside Canada. 42% are second-generation immigrants and 26% are first-generation immigrants.



First-generation (17%) and second-generation (15%) youth are proportionally more likely to be at **high risk of dropping out of school**, compared with students of the third generation or more (9%).



Second-generation high school students are less likely to have good mental health (32%) compared to students of the third generation or more (40%).



First- and second-generation immigrant students report high levels of social support (from school, family, friends, and the community) less frequently and are less likely to have a strong sense of belonging at school than student of the third generation or more.

School and social environments play a significant protective role, helping to mitigate the observed disparities.⁵ Thus, concrete and tailored initiatives, implemented in various settings where young people spend their time, foster a welcoming and inclusive school environment, while strengthening collaboration between schools, families, and the community to pool resources and ensure greater consistency. Deeper exploration of the issue must include the perspectives of young people from recent immigrant backgrounds themselves, as well as those of their families, to ensure that we effectively address the priority issues and needs they identify. These courses of action, as part of a broader action plan, will help reduce inequalities related to migration experiences.

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4. Observatoire des tout-petits. : les différents statuts migratoires. Disponible sur : <https://tout-petits.org/publications/rapports/acces-soins-de-sante-migrants/statuts-migratoires/#:~:text=Le%20statut%20migratoire%20d'une%20personne%20migrante%2C%20c'est,ou%20que%20son%20permis%20de%20s%C3%A9jour%20expire>
5. Teodora VIGU. 2023. Université du Québec en Outaouais. Le soutien social chez les adolescents issus de l’immigration. Disponible sur : https://di.uqo.ca/id/eprint/1539/1/Vigu_Teodora_2023_essai_doctoral.pdf