

# The Daily

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**Tuesday, April 29, 2008**

## Featured product

### **Education Matters: Insights on education, learning and training in Canada**

April 2008

This issue of Statistics Canada's free online publication *Education Matters: Insights on Education, Learning and Training in Canada* contains two articles.

The article "Adult learning in Canada: Characteristics of learners" summarizes findings of a recent report that examined characteristics of adult learners in Canada, including links between participation in adult education and training and literacy skill levels, education, family background and age. One key finding is that people with the highest levels of literacy participate in adult learning at much higher rates than those at the lowest levels. Thus, those most in need of learning to enhance their skills to be able to compete in the labour market are least likely to take advantage of training opportunities.

The second article "Why are the majority of university students women?" summarizes results of a recent report that set out to explain the gender gap in university participation. Women continue to out number men in university, and the gap is widening. Key factors include differences in school marks at the age of 15; standardized test scores in reading at 15; study habits; and parental expectations. Data came from the Youth in Transition Survey, Cycle 3, which collected information from participants in 2003, when they were 19 years old.

The publication *Education Matters: Insights on Education, Learning and Training in Canada*, Vol. 5, no. 1 (81-004-XIE, free) is now available. From the *Publications* module of our website, choose *Free Internet publications*, then *Education, training and learning* and *Education Matters*.

For more information, contact Client Services (toll-free 1-800-307-3382; 613-951-7608; fax: 613-951-9040; [educationstats@statcan.ca](mailto:educationstats@statcan.ca)), Culture, Tourism and the Centre for Education Statistics.

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# Communiqué



Toronto, April 28, 2008

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

## Remarkable Results For Canadian Students In Reading

The Council of Ministers of Education, Canada (CMEC), released their first report today from the Pan-Canadian Assessment Program (PCAP) on the evaluation of 13-year-old students across Canada in Reading, Mathematics, and Science. Results gathered in this report indicate that most students across Canada are reading at and above the expected level of performance for their age group.

Canadians have long been interested in how well their education systems are meeting the needs of students and society. PCAP was created in 2003 by CMEC following the decision of the ministers of education to replace the School Achievement Indicators Program (SAIP) with a new evaluation more consistent with international ones such as the Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA). PCAP is also designed to complement existing assessments in each Canadian jurisdiction, providing nation-wide data on the achievement levels attained by students across the country.

"The results released today will provide ministers of education with a basis for examining their curricula, as well as their policies and practices for the learning environment of their students," said the Honourable Kelly Lamrock, Minister of Education for New Brunswick and current Chair of CMEC.

In spring 2007, the test was administered to approximately 30,000 students in all provinces and in Yukon. Approximately 15,000 students wrote in English and 5,000 in French for the reading segment, the primary domain evaluated, while 7,500 wrote the mathematics and science section in English and 2,500 students wrote them in French. The students' performance in reading is reported on a three-point scale, with level 1 being the lowest level of performance and level 3 the highest.

Some of the major findings:

1. Overall, 88 per cent of all students across Canada performed in reading at level 2 and above, with

### Quick Links

[The PCAP-13 2007 Public Report](#)

level 2 being the expected level of performance for the age group. Across all participating jurisdictions the percentages of students performing at level 2 and above range between 81 and 90 per cent.

2. The mean score in reading of students in Quebec is significantly higher than that of Canadian students overall. There is no significant difference between the mean score of students in Ontario from that of Canadian students overall.
3. Female students in Canada achieved a mean score in reading that was higher than that of male students. Furthermore, the proportion of female students performing at level 3 is higher than that of male students at this level.

"We are very pleased with the results as put forward by the first PCAP report. These data are consistent with the results of other larger-scale assessments, both in Canada and internationally," added Minister Lamrock. "However, as a minister, I am concerned about the gap in reading performance between boys and girls. It tells us that policy makers have to continue to look seriously at new ways of teaching reading strategies for boys."

CMEC also collected supporting information through the context questionnaires completed by students, teachers, and school principals. The information gathered about the context in which reading education takes place in Canada's education systems will be reported in a future release that may provide insight into the differences in performance by students across Canada.

CMEC is an intergovernmental body composed of the ministers responsible for elementary-secondary and advanced education from the provinces and territories. Through CMEC, ministers share information and undertake projects in areas of mutual interest and concern.

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### **Information**

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