

# Our Health Counts Thunder Bay

An inclusive community-driven health survey for Indigenous peoples of Thunder Bay

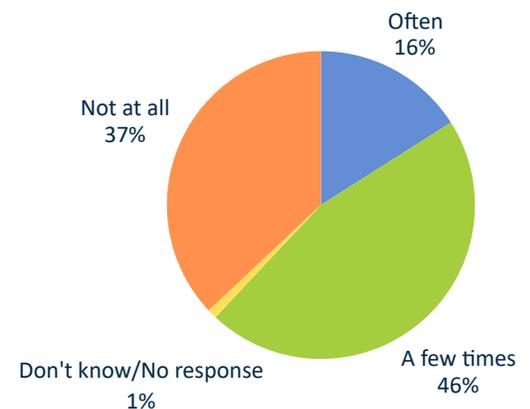
## Child Nutrition & Food Security

Traditional and country food consumption has been severely impacted by colonial policies such as forced relocation, the restriction of traditional hunting and food production practices, and settler control of food provisions allowed in Indigenous communities.<sup>1,2</sup> Access to, and consumption of, culturally preferable, affordable, nutritious foods are important pathways to increasing food security and to improving health among Indigenous children.<sup>3</sup> While government programs and local food initiatives increase food access for Indigenous children living in urban and related homelands,<sup>4,5</sup> they are not adequately addressing the origin of food injustice, which stems from colonial policies that claim ownership over the land and its resources.

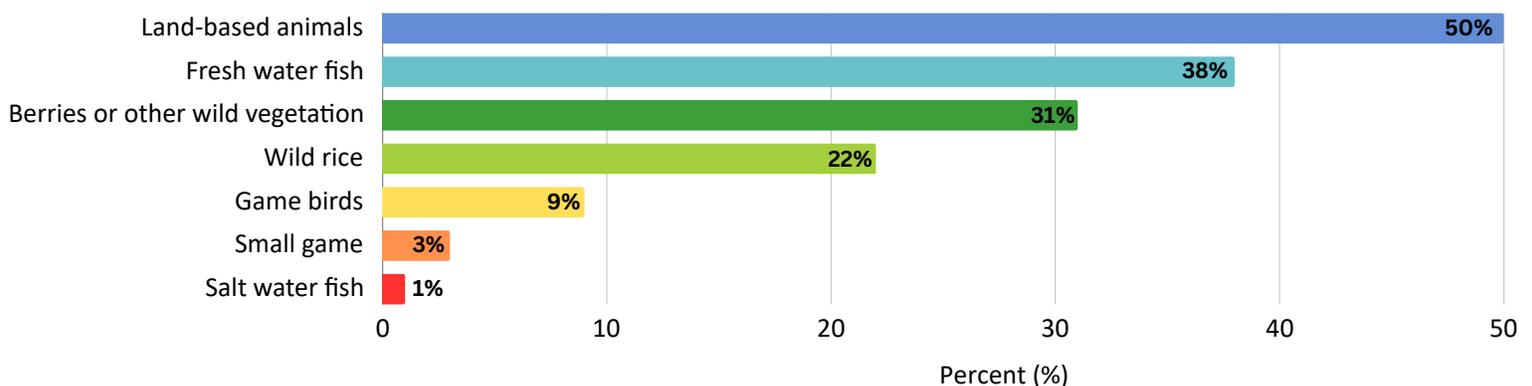
### Consumption of Traditional Foods

**62%** of Indigenous children in Thunder Bay had eaten traditionally hunted/gathered/grown and/or country foods **often** or a **few times** in the past 12 months.

Land-based animals (50%), fresh water fish (38%) and berries or other wild vegetation (31%) were the most commonly reported traditional/country foods eaten by Indigenous children in Thunder Bay



The most common traditional foods consumed by Indigenous children in Thunder Bay include:

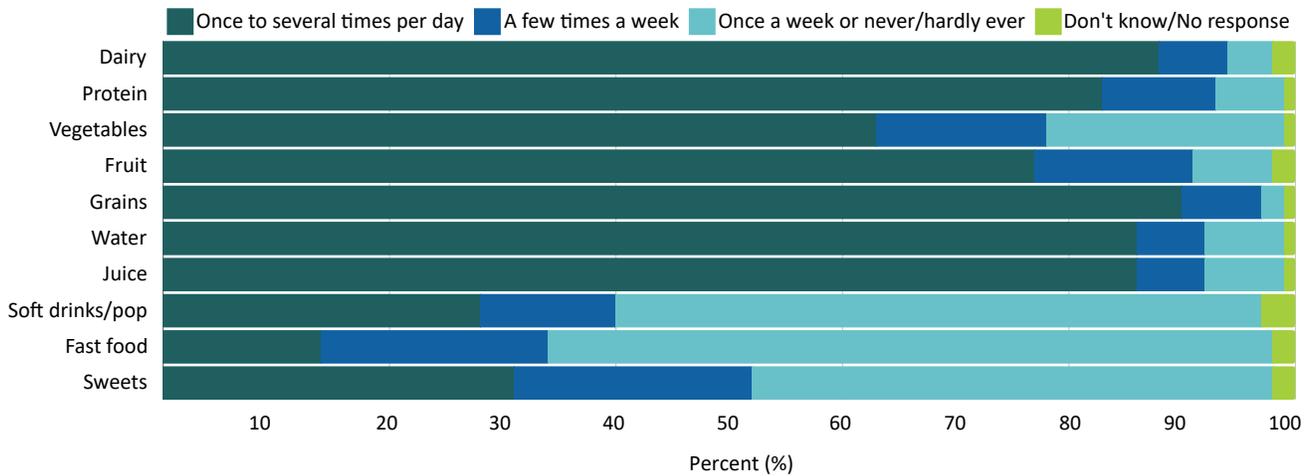


### Nutritional Intake

Due to economic inequities among Indigenous households in urban and related homelands, there is a reliance on nutrient-poor store-bought foods to meet dietary requirements. As a result, nutritional intake and food insecurity are of significant concern for Indigenous children living in Thunder Bay.

Despite these barriers, most Indigenous children in Thunder Bay (age 1-14) drink water (92%) and eat protein (93%), fruit (91%), vegetables (78%), and grains (97%) once to several times a day.

Many children have fast food (34%), soft drinks/pop (40%), and sweets (52%) a few times a week or more.



### Policy Implications

We call on the City of Thunder Bay, provincial, and federal governments to work in partnership with Indigenous peoples living in urban and related homelands and urban-based Indigenous organizations to:

1. Address barriers for Indigenous peoples in accessing existing healthy nutrition and food security programming.
2. Develop and fund Indigenous-directed food banks and programming that provides equitable access to nutritious foods and land-based foods.
3. Acknowledge the history and ongoing legacy of colonialism in existing food systems and prioritize the development and implementation of programs and services to improve access to food that is affordable, culturally preferable, nutritious, and safe.
4. Work with First Nations, Métis, and Inuit peoples to support food sovereignty, which includes upholding the sacred responsibility to nurture healthy, interdependent relationships with the land, plants and animals that provide people with food.<sup>6</sup>
5. Create and promote systems and programs in Thunder Bay that support traditional Indigenous food gathering practices, programs, and community gardens.<sup>6</sup>
6. Engage in policy reform to mitigate the negative consequences of climate change on food security. This includes reevaluating policies regarding forestry, fisheries, environmental conservation, health, agriculture, and rural and community development.

**MMIWG Report Call for Justice 4.1:** We call upon all governments to uphold the social and economic rights of Indigenous women, girls, and 2SLGBTQIA people by ensuring that Indigenous Peoples have services and infrastructure that meet their social and economic needs. All governments must immediately ensure that Indigenous Peoples have access to safe housing, clean drinking water, and adequate food.<sup>7</sup>

**MMIWG Report Call for Justice 4.5:** we call upon all governments to establish a guaranteed annual livable income for all Canadians, including Indigenous Peoples, to meet all their social and economic needs. This income must take into account diverse needs, realities, and geographic locations.<sup>7</sup>

<b>Definitions</b>	Indigenous children: persons 1 to 14 years self-identified as Indigenous (First Nations, Metis, and/or Inuit) by their parent or guardian, and living or using services in the City of Thunder Bay	Population-based estimates created using respondent-driven sampling
<b>Sources</b>	1. Food Banks Canada (2023); 2. Ray et al., (2019); 3. Banerji et al. (2023); 4. Thunder Bay + Area Community Food System Report Card (2023); 5. Food Secure Canada (2019); 6. The Cost of Eating Well in the District of Thunder Bay (2023); 7. MMIWG (2019)	
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<b>Citation</b>	Iannace, J., Snyder, M., Avery, L., McConkey, S., Brar, R., Rotondi, M., & Smylie, J. (2024). Our Health Counts Thunder Bay: Child Nutrition & Food Security [Fact sheet].	



# Our Health Counts Thunder Bay

## Child Nutrition & Food Security Reference

Our Health Counts Thunder Bay is an inclusive community-based health survey for Indigenous peoples of Thunder Bay and is part of the largest Indigenous population health study in Canada.

Adult participants were selected using respondent-driven sampling, a statistical method which uses social networks in the community to recruit Indigenous people living in the city.

Child surveys were completed by OHC Thunder Bay adult survey participants who were parents/custodial relatives/guardians of children 14 years of age or younger. Children resided with them and were under their care.

Survey Question	RDS Prevalence Estimate (95% Confidence Interval)
<b>On average, over the past week how often did your child eat or drink the following food:</b>	
<b>Dairy</b>	
Once to several times per day	87.5% (82.5, 91.5)
A few times a week	5.9% (2.9, 9.4)
Once a week or never/hardly	4.4% (1.9, 7.4)
Don't know	0.4% (0.0, 1.5)
No response	1.4%
<b>Protein</b>	
Once to several times per day	82.5% (77.6, 87.5)
A few times a week	9.9% (5.9, 14.4)
Once a week or never/hardly	5.9% (2.9, 9.4)
No response	1.4%
<b>Vegetables</b>	
Once to several times per day	62.6% (55.7, 69.1)
A few times a week	14.9% (10.4, 20.3)
Once a week or never/hardly	20.8% (15.4, 26.8)
No response	1.4%
<b>Fruits</b>	
Once to several times per day	77.1% (71.1, 82.5)
A few times a week	13.9% (9.4, 18.9)
Once a week or never/hardly	7.4% (3.9, 11.4)
No response	1.4%
<b>Grains</b>	
Once to several times per day	89.5% (85.0, 93.0)
A few times a week	6.9% (3.9, 10.9)
Once a week or never/hardly	1.9% (0.4, 3.9)
No response	1.4%
<b>Water</b>	
Once to several times per day	85.5% (80.0, 90.5)
A few times a week	5.9% (2.9, 9.4)
Once a week or never/hardly	6.9% (3.4, 10.9)
No response	1.4%



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## Child Nutrition & Food Security Reference

Survey Question	RDS Prevalence Estimate (95% Confidence Interval)
<b>Juice</b>	
Once to several times per day	85.5% (80.5, 90.5)
A few times a week	5.9% (2.9, 9.4)
Once a week or never/hardly	6.9% (3.4, 10.4)
No response	1.4%
<b>Soft Drinks/Pop</b>	
Once to several times per day	28.3% (22.3, 34.8)
A few times a week	11.9% (7.9, 16.4)
Once a week or never/hardly	57.2% (50.2, 64.1)
Don't know	57.2% (50.2, 64.1)
No response	1.4%
<b>Fast Food</b>	
Once to several times per day	13.4% (8.9, 18.4)
A few times a week	20.3% (14.9, 25.8)
Once a week or never/hardly	64.1% (57.7, 70.6)
Don't know	0.49% (0.0, 1.49)
No response	1.4%
<b>Sweets</b>	
Once to several times per day	31.3% (25.3, 38.3)
A few times a week	20.8% (15.4, 26.3)
Once a week or never/hardly	46.2% (39.3, 53.2)
No response	1.4%
<b>In the past 12 months, how often has your child eaten traditionally hunted/gathered/ grown and/or country foods?</b>	
Often	15.9% (10.9, 21.3)
A few times	45.7% (38.3, 52.7)
Not at all	37.3% (31.3, 44.2)
No response	0.9%
<b>Which traditional/country foods has your child eaten?</b>	
Land-based animals	50.2% (44.0, 55.9)
Fresh water fish	38.3% (32.1, 44.9)
Game birds	10.1% (6.6, 14.0)
Small Game	4.4% (2.2, 7.0)
Berries or wild vegetation	30.8% (25.1, 36.5)
Wild rice	16.7% (12.3, 22.0)
Salt water fish	0.4% (0.0, 1.3)



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