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About living in liyiyiu Aschii

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Results from a 2003 Survey

Cree Board of Health and Social Services of James Bay
Institut national de santé publique du Québec

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This report is a summary of a longer paper entitled *Demographic and social characteristics of the population living in the James Bay Cree Territory*.

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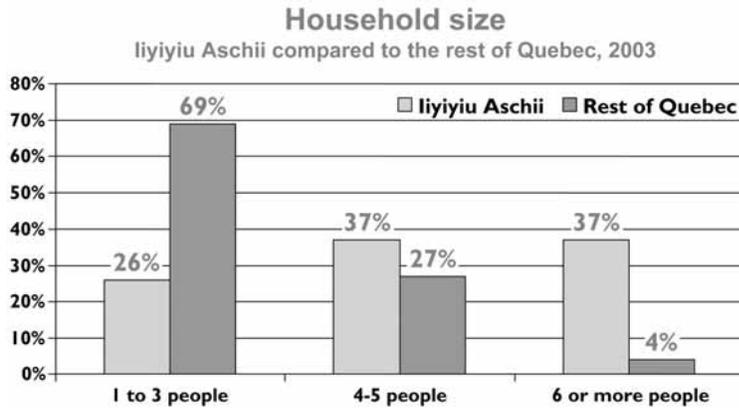
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Living arrangements in Iiyiyu Aschii

Over 90% of the people in Iiyiyu Aschii are Cree. Since most families have lots of children, there are many young people in the region. This tells us that the region needs services for children and families—like prenatal care, schools, and sports centres.

more people. In the rest of Quebec, only 4% of all households are that big. Large households can mean that many people share the work of caring for children and elders. But they may also be crowded, and make it easy to pass around coughs and other illnesses.



Households in the region are large. Most homes (74%) have at least four people in them, and more than a third contain six or

is because families prefer it that way, or because there are so few seniors' homes in the region.

Households in Iiyiyu Aschii tend to be built around a couple and their children, often with other family members added. Almost no one lives alone: only 6% of people live in a home that does not include other members of their family. Older people live with their families. We don't know if this

Language

Almost all Iiyiyiuch (97%) can speak Cree, and most (89%) speak it in their homes. This holds true among people of all ages— younger adults are just as likely to speak Cree at home as older people.

Most Iiyiyiuch also speak other languages. All told, 88% of Iiyiyiuch can carry on a conversation in English, and 26% (mostly younger people) can speak French. Younger adults (20-29 years) are more likely than older people to be able to speak a second language.

Employment

Most adults in Iiyiyu Aschii have work. In 2002-2003, 41% of adults had a job all year, and another 35% worked for part of the year. As a result, wages were the main source of income in most households. More people had jobs in the inland communities, because there were more short-term jobs inland.

As you would expect, the more education people have, the more likely they are to have a year-round job. Having any education after high school doubles your chances of having a year-round job. Going to university triples them.



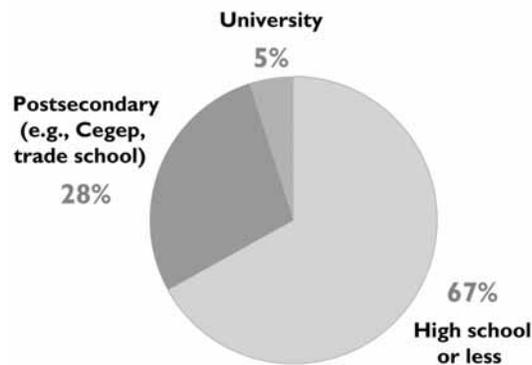
Education

Education levels are much higher than they were in 1991. A student today is five times more likely to go on after high school than before. Some of the biggest changes are in people age 25-44, rather than in teenagers. This suggests that many people take time out to work or have children, then go back to school when they are older. Schools in the region may want to adapt to this by offering things like night classes and child care.

Education levels are a lot lower in rural Quebec than in cities (where people have easy access to schools and colleges). So even though people in liyiyiu Aschii are better educated than before, the region still lags behind the province as a whole.

All told, 5% of liyiyiuch have been to university, while 28% have other kinds of training (like CEGEP or a trade school). All the rest (67%) have a high school degree or less. Unless this changes, jobs that demand a university degree—like nurses, doctors, and teachers—will continue to be filled by people from outside the region.

Education levels in liyiyiu Aschii
People age 15 and over in 2003



Spiritual beliefs and belonging

People's mental health is better when they feel that they are part of a group, and know that they have family and friends they can count on. Having a religion or spiritual beliefs also seems to be good for mental health. These things are widespread in liyiyiu Aschii, and are probably helping people to live in balance. For example:

- ◆ Far more people in liyiyiu Aschii than in the rest of Quebec feel that they belong in their community: 82% compared to just 56%.

- ◆ Two thirds of liyiyiuch say that spiritual values play an important part in their lives. Women and older people are most likely to say this.
- ◆ Most adults (89%) also say that they have a religion. Over half of all adults describe themselves as Anglican, while a quarter say they are Pentecostal. (The survey did not ask how many people had traditional beliefs).



