Exclusion Tracker

A plain language summary of the Interim National Findings Report

Child Care/Out-of-School Care and K-12 Education

FAMILY SUPPORT Institute of BC
families supporting families

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What is the Exclusion Tracker?

Many children and youth with disabilities in Canada have experienced being left out of the classroom. Yet, most students and their families feel very alone, not realizing how common it is.

In 2018, parent and caregiver advocates in British Columbia, Canada created an online tool called the Exclusion Tracker as a collective way to prove how often students are left out of the classroom. In 2025, we expanded the Tracker to the rest of Canada. Anyone can add their experience to the Tracker by completing a survey form. These experiences relate to child education, not adult education (such as university).

Exclusion refers to any way a student with support needs is left out of the learning environment at school.

What is this report about?

The Canada-wide version of the Exclusion Tracker has collected **515 responses** from September 2, 2025 to January 21, 2026. Though the National Exclusion Tracker is still in the middle of its first school year, there are already patterns in the responses. This report tells you about those patterns.

What are the early national patterns?

#1 Exclusion seems to be more of an ongoing situation than a single incident.

#2 Students are more often left out circumstantially rather than by intentional or targeted enforcement.

General trends in child care and out-of-school care show:

- Almost two thirds of families (**61.7%**) were unable to access child care altogether. Many were also on a waitlist for disability-related funding.
- The remainder of families (**38.3%**) reported facing exclusion or expulsion from an existing child care program, with no option to return.

The most common forms of exclusion in K-12 are informal practices that limit the student's ability to participate in school. The top three circumstances are:

- Being sent home early
- Having shortened school hours
- Exclusion from specific school activities

#3 Exclusion experiences seem to be similar across school systems throughout Canada.

Education systems in each province and territory in Canada have slight differences. In spite of these differences, the data shows students seem to be excluded in similar ways.

This suggests that patterns of exclusion are not specific to things happening locally; they are foundational to the way Canada is built and governed.

- So far, responses have been received from families in all provinces and territories except Nunavut and Northwest Territories (and we encourage families from these territories to respond!)
- The most responses were submitted by families from British Columbia, Saskatchewan, and Nova Scotia.

#4 But some groups of people seem to face exclusion more than others.

So far, the data is telling us that students are more vulnerable to experiencing exclusion when their families face greater societal marginalization.

To help us understand who is affected by school exclusion, we ask demographic questions that families can choose whether they want to answer. Sometimes, some of this information feels private or personal to answer.

Demographics refers to ways we can describe groups of people within a larger population, such as by disability, race, income, and household structure.

We use a framework called the **Grandmother Perspective** to understand the demographic information people share. This means we ask for private information out of care, not control. We never want to shame, guilt or blame anyone for facing unfair treatment. When we know who is being treated unfairly, then we know where to put pressure on the systems of authority to change things for the better.

DISABILITY:

- For majority of families (**79.2%**), the child or youth has more than one disability.
- For half of all families (**51%**), the parent or caregiver also has disabilities.

HOUSEHOLD STRUCTURE AND INCOME:

- About one-fifth of families reported being a low-income household (below $40k).
- Almost one-quarter of families are single parent households.

RACE:

- Majority of families identified their child as white **(73.65%**), followed by Indigenous (19.6%), then Black (**4.73%**).
- Responses also reflected some Southeast Asian, South Asian, East Asian, West and Central Asian, Latin American, and other specified identities.

Notably, among those who reported being single parent households earning low incomes under $20K a year, Indigenous and Black children were in much higher proportion compared to white children. This shows that families who face multiple forms of marginalization face the worst unfair treatment by the Canadian system.

#5 The most severe impacts of school exclusion are on mental health and economic stability.

Exclusion affects more than just the child – the entire family gets affected too.

Families and caregivers experience increased stress and anxiety, and their work is usually negatively affected.

Children and youth also experience increased stress and anxiety, a reduced sense of belonging, and most significantly, a loss of learning opportunities.

How can I get involved?

The National Exclusion Tracker is still collecting submissions for the 2025/26 school year. Children, youth, caregivers and families from all provinces and territories are encouraged to contribute to data collection by taking the survey and sharing your experiences.

You can report your experience of exclusion at exclusiontracker.com

From all of us at the Family Support Institute of BC, thank you so much to all families for your openness and willingness to share your experiences with us.

We are especially grateful to:

- BCEdAccess, who created the original Exclusion Tracker in 2018 for use in BC
- Inclusive Education Canada and its provincial and territorial affiliates, who partner with us in advocating for inclusive education across Canada

For questions about this report or the National Exclusion Tracker, please contact:

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As a provincial organization FSI acknowledges that our work spans across all of the traditional, ancestral, and unceded Indigenous territories in BC. Therefore, we respectfully honour all First Nations, Inuit and Métis people, as well as their ancestors, who have lived here and cared for these lands. It is with gratitude that we can live, learn and do our work in the province now known as British Columbia.