

Edmontonfacts

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Care for Your Community: Edmonton Social Health Index

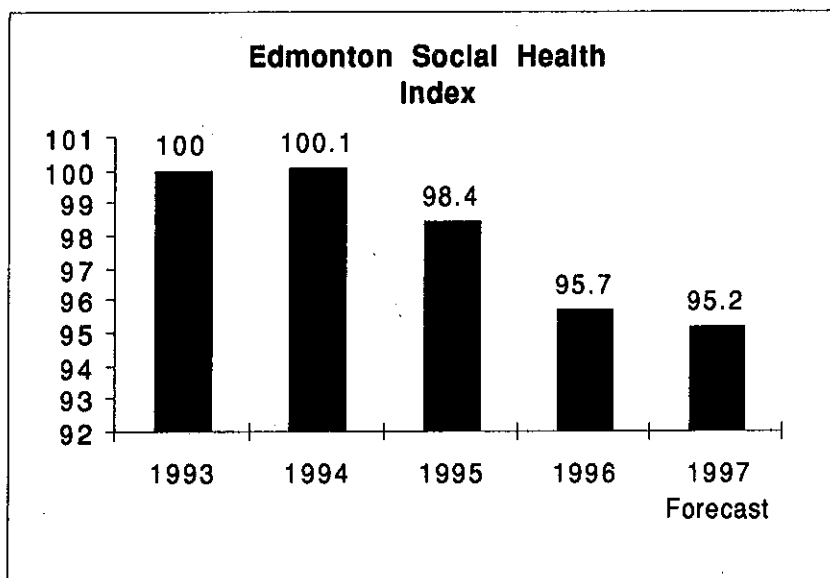
The health of our community

Care for Your Community: the Edmonton Social Health Index includes 15 indicators that measure Edmonton's social health. Each indicator measures one aspect of our social health, while the composite index measures the overall social health of the Edmonton community.

The composite index shows Edmonton's social health declining 4.8 per cent between 1993 and 1997. The index rose slightly in 1994 then fell continuously, declining 4.3 per cent from 1993 to 1996. For 1997, the Edmonton Social Planning Council used actual data (when available) and historical trends to create a 1997 forecast. The 1997 forecast is an index of 95.2, a 4.8 per cent decline from 1993.

Edmonton Social Health Index

The index and the indicators set 1993 as the benchmark year. The raw data are then normalized and aggregated into an index. When data is not available, we extrapolate for those years. The composite index gives equal weight to each indicator.



Between 1993 and 1996, nine indicators were improving, and six declining. However, the magnitude of the declining indicators outweighed the value of those showing improvement.

The 15 Social Health Indicators

The 15 key indicators measure personal health, safety and financial well-being and the number of individuals and families in crisis.

The indicators are:

Life expectancy	Incidence of STDs	
Premature deaths	Child Welfare caseloads	Personal bankruptcy rate
Low birth-weight babies	Food Bank use	Property crime rate
Teen birth rate	Percentage of economic families living below LICO	Violent crime rate
Suicide rate	Single parent households	Reports of domestic violence
Crisis support calls		

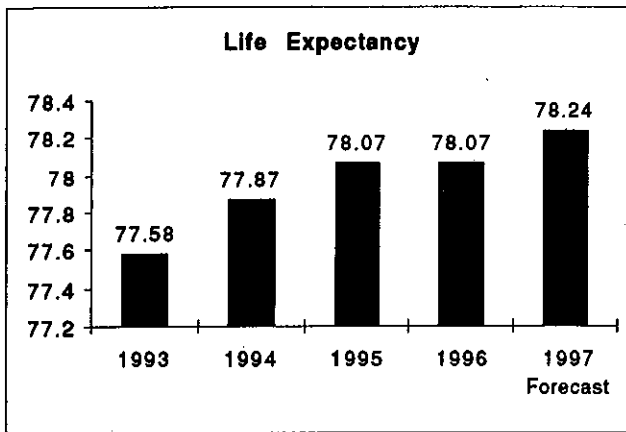
From 1993 to 1996, we saw improvements in:

- The percentage of economic families living below LICO
- Property crime rate
- Violent crime rate
- Teen birth rate
- Single parent households—*Although the number of single parent households is still lower than in 1993, the numbers have been rising and falling with no clear trend.*
- Suicide rate
- Reports of domestic violence
- STD rate
- Life expectancy

However, we saw deterioration in:

- Personal bankruptcies—*In 1997, more than six out of every 1,000 Edmontonians are forecasted to declare bankruptcy.*
- Food Bank use—*In 1997, Edmonton's Food Bank served 192,067 Edmontonians, an average of 526 per day.*
- Crisis support calls—*In 1997, the Distress Line received 6,423 suicide-related calls.*
- Child Welfare caseloads—*In 1997, the government had direct responsibility for the well-being of 4,095 Edmonton children.*
- Low birth-weight babies—*The 1997 forecast shows 6.5 per cent of Edmonton babies born weighing less than 5 1/2 pounds.*
- Premature deaths—*In 1996, 2,124 Edmontonians died before the age of 75. The 1997 forecast is 2,173 Edmontonians.*

1. Life expectancy

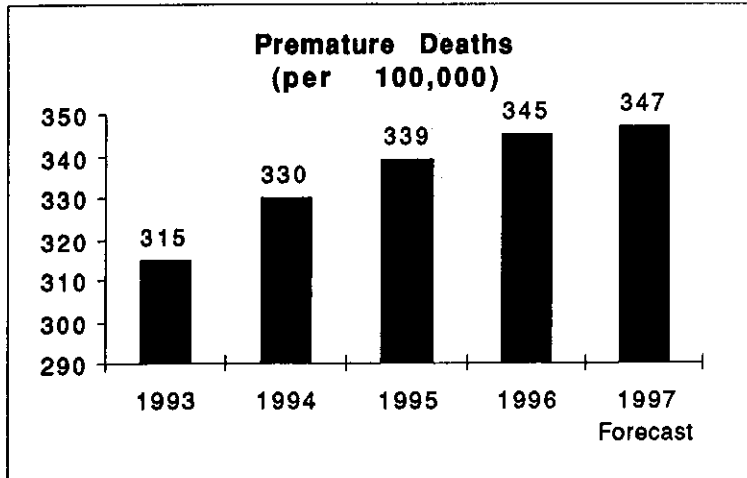


Average life expectancy continues to improve for Edmonton men and women. Edmontonians and Albertans have one of the highest life expectancies in the world, ranked fifth in the world for males and sixth in the world for females.

Life expectancy combines male and female life expectancies into a single composite measure. To construct a blended life expectancy, we use a weighting of the ratio of men and women in Edmonton in 1992 and 1994. Capital Health Authority statistics provide actual data for 1992 and 1994. The other data points (except 1997) are estimates based on Alberta Vital Statistics actual averages for all Albertans. See Measuring Up 1997.

Reference: Capital Health, Population Health and Research 1996. Prepared by P. Lightfoot, J. Edwards, N. Fraser-Lee and C. Drixler. Health Status in the Capital Health Region, page 17. Capital Health, Regional Public Health. How Healthy Are We? Health Status in the Capital Region, December 1997, page 62. Government of Alberta. 1998. Measuring Up: Fourth Annual Report on the Performance of the Government of Alberta, 1997-98 Results.

2. Premature deaths



The number of premature deaths is rising. Premature deaths are those that occur before the age of 75. Congenital anomalies, injuries and adverse effects, suicides, heart disease, cancer and stroke may all lead to premature death.

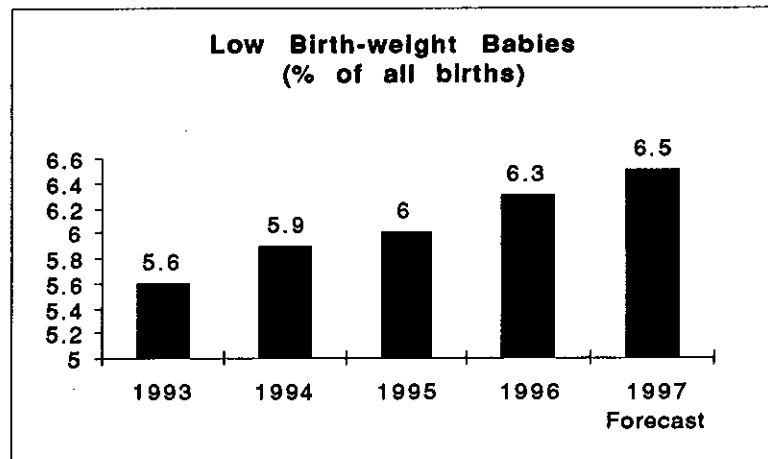
From Capital Health Region statistics. Only 1994 and 1996 data are available. We extrapolate 1993 and 1995 data and provide a forecast for 1997.

Reference: Population Health and Research 1996, page 28. How Healthy Are We?, page 72.

Edmonton continues to see an increase in the number of babies born weighing less than 2,500 grams (5 1/2 pounds). The 1997 forecast shows 6.5 per cent of Edmonton babies born weighing less than 5 1/2 pounds. An increase in low birth-weight babies is often linked to poverty and poor health. Low birth-weight can lead to infant mortality, neurological defects, birth defects and slow development of children and with premature death in men.

The 1993 and 1994 figures are for the City of Edmonton, specifically, while the 1995 and 1996 figures are for the Capital Health Region.

3. Low birth-weight babies



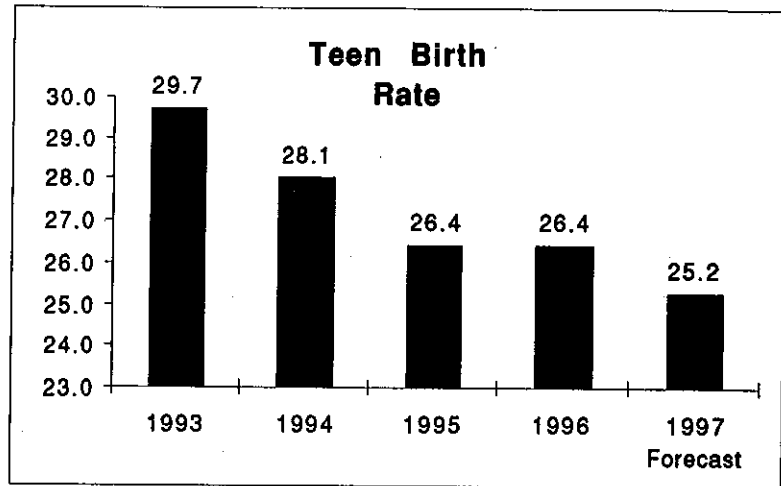
Reference: How Healthy Are We?, page 108.

4. Teen birth rate

Since 1993, the teen birth rate has continued to decline. The forecast for 1997 is a similar downward trend. Teens who give birth often become trapped in a cycle of poverty and become dependent on public programs—a long-term cost to society.

The teen birth rate is the rate per 1,000 females aged 15 to 19 years. The Capital Health Authority combines 1995 and 1996 statistics. We extrapolate for 1994.

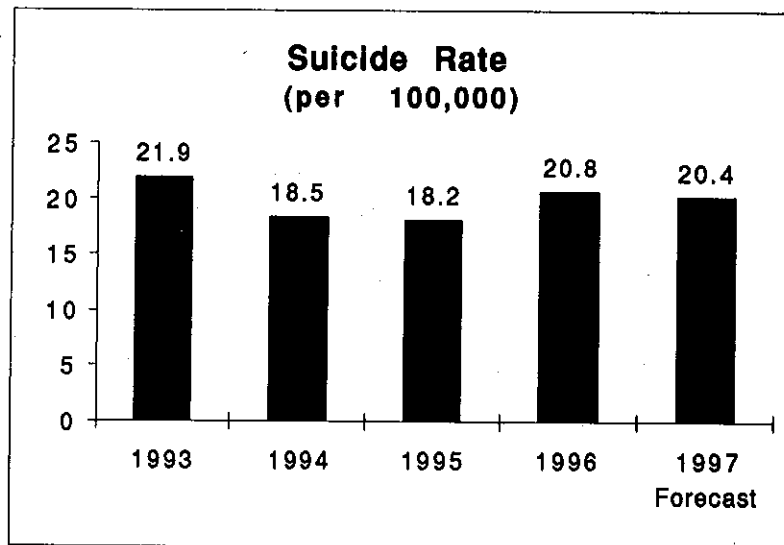
Reference: From Capital Health, Regional Public Health. How Healthy Are We? Health Status in the Capital Health Region, December 1997, page 53. Capital Health, Regional Public Health. How Healthy Are We? Health Status in the Capital Health Region, December 1997, page 116.



5. Suicide rate

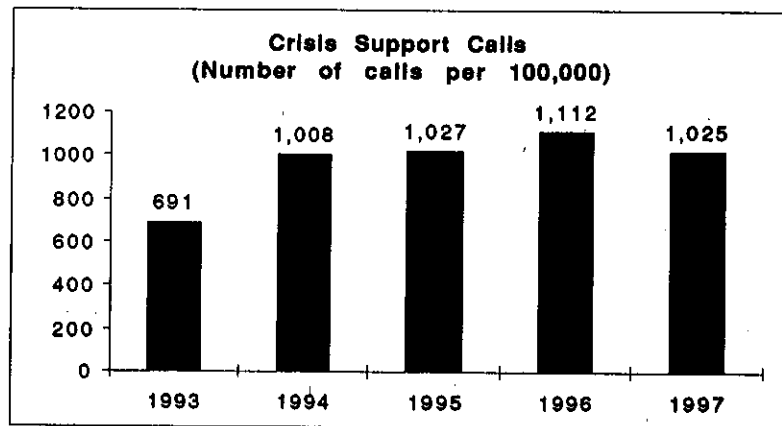
While declining since 1993, the suicide rate rose sharply in 1996. The results show no definitive trend. Suicide may be the final expression of poor mental health or of psychiatric illness. Socioeconomic factors influence the suicide rate.

Reference: Office of the Chief Medical Examiner. Suicide Rates 1993-1996 (Personal Contact).



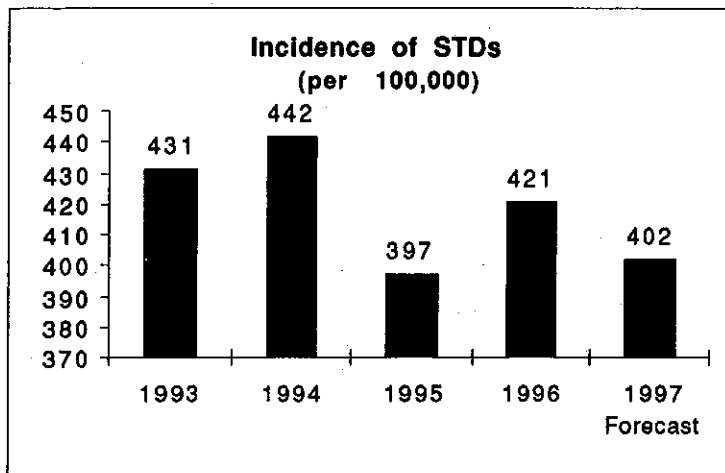
6. Crisis support calls

The number of suicide-related calls to the Distress Line increased from 1993 to 1996 with a small decrease in 1997. The number of calls reflects the number of individuals suffering from acute anxiety and despair. Callers seek outside help when they have no support or choose not to accept support from family and friends.



Reference: The Support Network, Annual Statistics for the Distress Line (Personal Contact).

7. Incidence of STDs

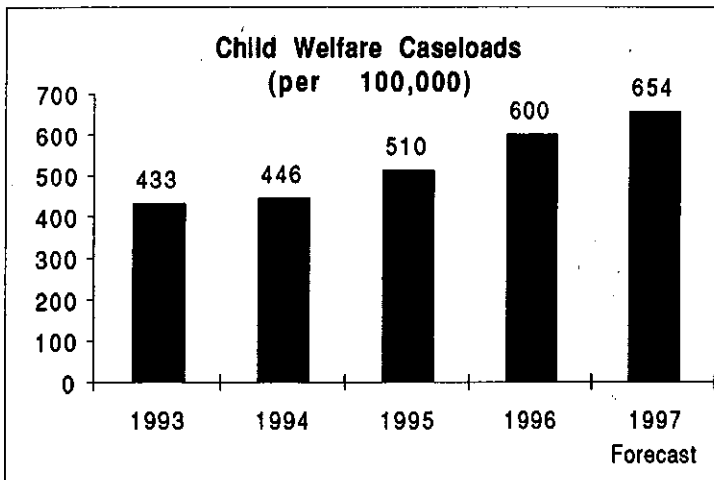


The incidence of STDs (sexually transmitted diseases) fluctuates, although we have seen a general decline. STDs include NGU/MPG, chlamydia, gonorrhoea and syphilis and is one indicator of personal health.

Rate was calculated using City of Edmonton population figures. The 1993 figures are extrapolated from subsequent years.

The 1994 data is from Information to Support the Health Authority Business Plans and Annual Reports, November 1997. The 1995 to 1997 data is from STD Service, Disease Control and Prevention (Personal Contact).

8. Child Welfare Caseloads



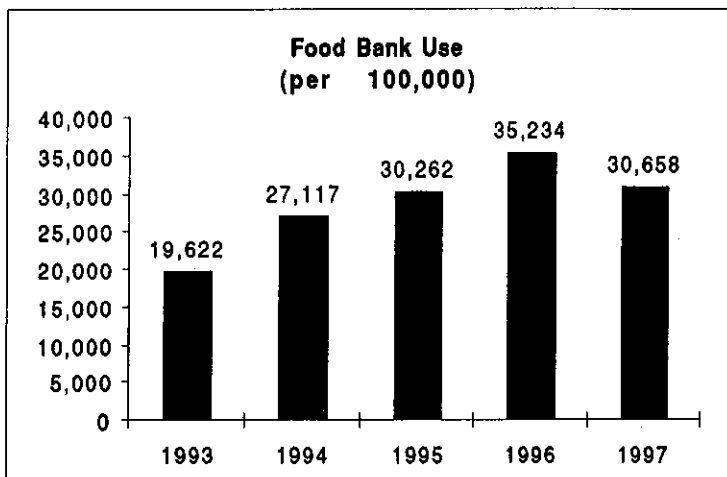
Since 1993, child welfare caseloads have continued to increase. In 1997, the government limited responsibility for the well-being of 100% of Edmonton children.

Caseloads are an indicator of families in crisis. Children in care often face a lifetime of problems and become a long-term cost to society.

Child Welfare caseloads for 1993 to 1997 are averages based on fiscal year reporting for Edmonton Region. Rate is based on number of cases per 100,000 population.

Reference: Alberta Family and Social Services. Child Protection Caseload 1994-1997 (Personal Contact).

9. Food Bank Use



In 1997, Food Bank use dropped to 1993 levels but remains considerably higher than the 1993 benchmark. In 1997, Edmonton's Food Bank served 123,067 Edmontonians, an increase of 50% over 1993.

An increase in Food Bank use reflects an increase in the number of Edmontonians living in dire poverty and unable to meet basic needs.

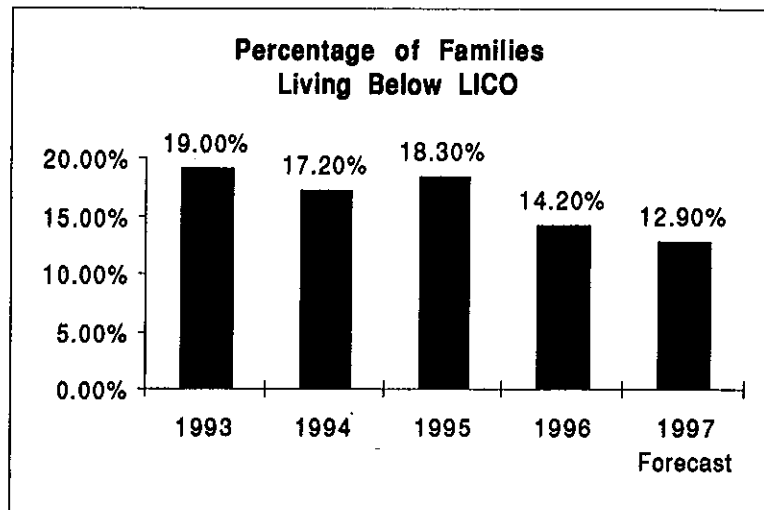
Source of data is Edmonton's Food Bank statistics for 1993 to 1997. Reference: Edmonton Gleaners Association (Interview).

10. Percentage of economic families living below LICO

In 1996, the percentage of Edmonton families of two persons or more living at or below LICO (the Low Income Cutoff) dropped considerably.

To determine the LICO, Statistics Canada calculates how much of average gross family income goes to food, shelter and clothing. It expresses this as a percentage of gross family income then adds 20 per cent. LICO is not an official measure of poverty but an income cutoff below which families may not have enough to meet basic needs.

Source of the data is Statistics Canada and the Centre for International Statistics, Canadian Council on Social Development. For 1993 to 1996, figures are actual figures from a Statistics Canada special run.



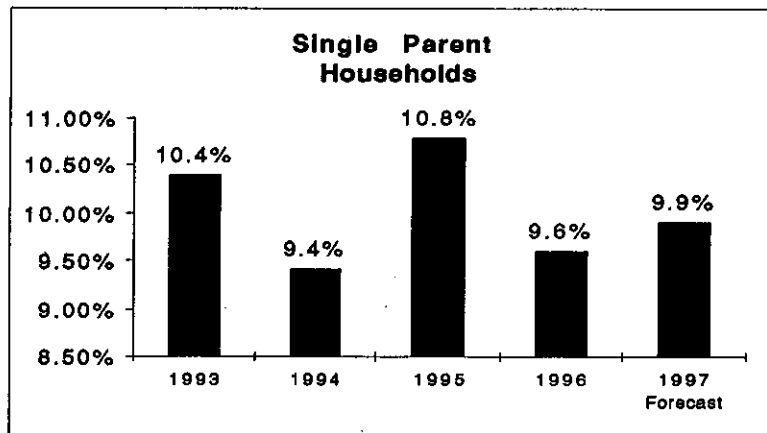
Reference: Statistics Canada, Table 70, Percentage Distribution of Selected Family Types by Ratio of Family Total Income to Low Income Cut-offs (1992-base LICO), 1993-1996 Annual Tables.

11. Single parent households

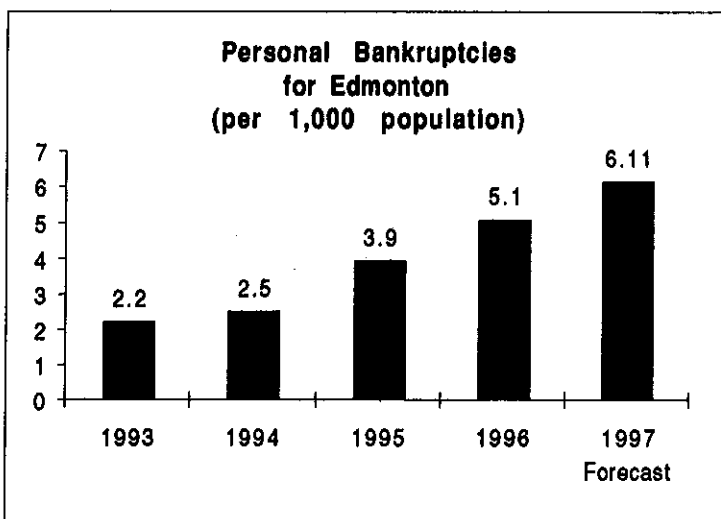
The number of single parent households has fluctuated since 1993. Single parent households, particularly those with a female at the head, tend to have less income than other families and are more likely to depend on public assistance.

The graph presents the number of single parent households as a percentage of total economic households or families with two persons or more.

Reference: Statistics Canada, Table 70, Percentage Distribution of Selected Family Types by Ratio of Family Total Income to Low Income Cut-offs (1992-base LICO), 1993-1996 Annual Tables.



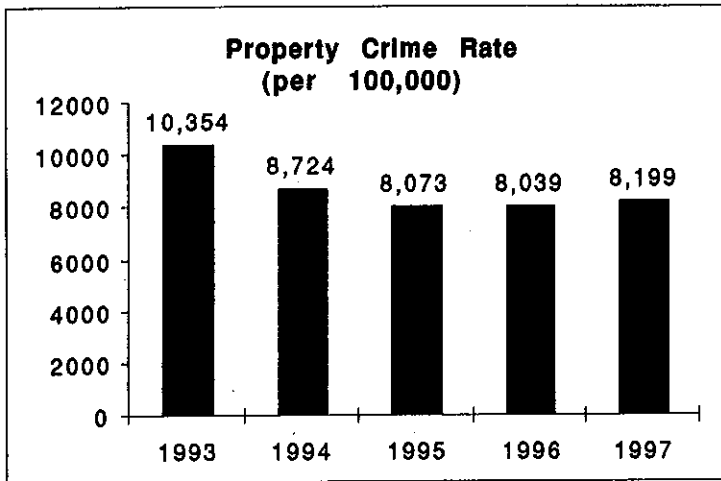
12. Personal bankruptcy rate



The rate of bankruptcy in Edmonton has increased dramatically since 1993. In 1997, more than six out of every 1,000 Edmontonians are forecasted to declare bankruptcy. This indicator reflects the general economic health of individuals and families in Edmonton.

Reference: Office of the Superintendent of Bankruptcy, Consumer Annual Bankruptcy Rates (Personal Contact).

13. Property crime rate

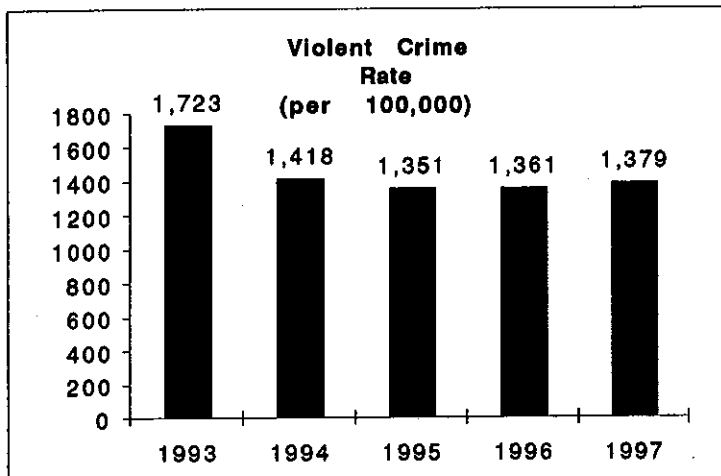


Property crime rates have declined since 1993 despite a small increase in 1996 and again in 1997. The incidence of property crime affects our sense of safety at home and at work.

The property crime rate is the total number of crimes expressed as a rate per 100,000. For 1993 to 1997, the figures are actual figures.

Reference: Edmonton Police Service (Interview).

14. Violent crime rate



Violent crime rates declined from 1993 to 1995 then increased in 1996 and again in 1997. However, the rate is still lower than the 1993 benchmark. The incidence of violent crimes against persons affects our sense of personal safety.

The violent crime rate is the total number of reported crimes per 100,000 population. For 1993 to 1997, figures are actual figures.

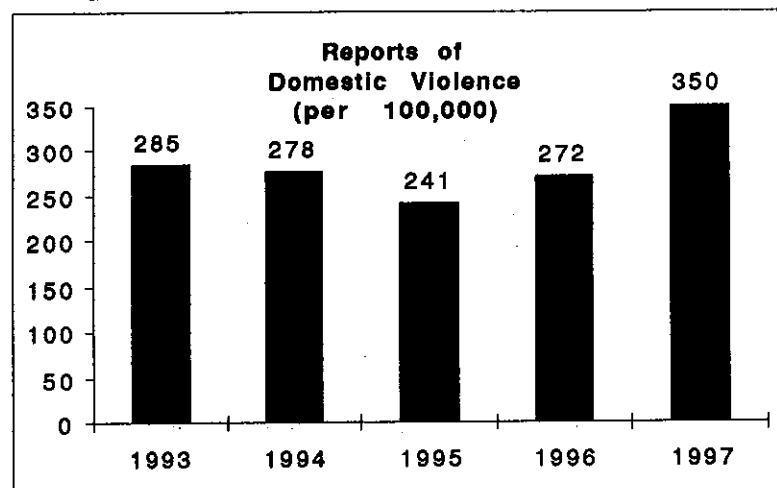
Reference: Edmonton Police Service

15. Reports of domestic violence

Reports of domestic violence declined between 1993 and 1995. They began to rise in 1996 and rose sharply in 1997. Reports of domestic violence are an indicator of the personal safety individuals experience in their own homes.

The indicator reflects the number of reported incidents of domestic violence to which city police respond. The numbers include situations where no charges were laid.

Reference: Edmonton Police Service Family Violence (Spousal Abuse) Report, 1993-1997 Annual Reports.





Edmonton

SOCIAL PLANNING

COUNCIL

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The Edmonton Social Planning Council is a member agency of the United Way, Alberta Capital Region.

Edmonton Social Health Index: Normalized Indicator Values

	1993	1994	1995	1996	1997
Life expectancy	100.0	100.4	100.6	100.6	100.9
Premature deaths (per 100,000)	100.0	95.3	92.7	91.3	90.7
Low birth-weight babies (% of all births)	100.0	94.9	93.3	88.9	85.9
Teen birth rate (per 1,000 females aged 15 to 19)	100.0	(105.9)	112.5	112.5	117.6
Suicides (per 100,000)	100.0	118.4	120.3	105.3	107.1
Crisis support calls (per 100,000)	100.0	68.5	67.3	62.1	67.4
Incidence of STDs (per 100,000)	100.0	(97.5)	(108.6)	(102.4)	(107.0)
Child Welfare caseloads (per 100,000 population)	100.0	97.1	85.0	72.2	66.3
Food Bank use (per 100,000 population)	100.0	72.4	64.8	55.7	64.0
Percentage of economic families below (LIC0)	100.0	110.5	103.8	133.8	147.6
Single parent households (percentage of households)	100.0	110.4	96.2	107.5	104.4
Personal bankruptcies (per 1,000)	100.0	88.0	56.4	43.1	36.0
Property crime rate (per 100,000)	100.0	118.7	128.3	128.8	126.3
Violent crime rate (per 100,000)	100.0	121.5	127.5	126.6	125.0
Reports of domestic violence (per 100,000)	100.0	102.4	118.3	104.7	81.3
Edmonton Social Health Composite Index	100.0	100.12	98.38	95.70	95.2

The benchmark year 1993 equals 100. To calculate data points for 1994 to 1997, the index divides the 1993 data point by subsequent data points, then multiplies by 100. This normalizes the value of each data point and makes comparison possible.

For example, the 1993 suicide rate was 21.9 per 100,000. This data point becomes 100. In 1994, the suicide rate fell to 18.5 per 100,000. Multiplying the 1994 rate by 100 and dividing the 1993 rate by that figure, gives us 118.4, the 1994 data point.

**Appendix:
Raw data**

	1993	1994	1995	1996	1997
Life expectancy	(77.58)	77.87	(78.07)	(78.07)	(78.24)
Premature deaths (per 100,000)	(315)	330	(339)	345	(347)
Low birth-weight babies (% of all births)	5.6	5.9	6	6.3	(6.52)
Teen birth rate (per 1,000 females aged 15 to 19)	29.7	(28.05)	26.4	26.4	(25.2)
Suicides (per 100,000)	21.9	18.5	18.2	20.8	(20.44)
Crisis support calls (per 100,000)	691	1,008	1,027	1,112	1,025
Incidence of STDs (per 100,000)	(451)	442	397	421	402
Child Welfare caseloads (per 100,000 population)	433	446	510	600	(654)
Food Bank use (per 100,000)	19,622	27,117	30,262	35,234	30,658

	1993	1994	1995	1996	1997
Percentage of economic families below (LIC0)	19.0%	17.2%	18.3%	14.2%	(12.9%)
Single parent households (percentage of households)	10.4%	9.4%	10.8%	9.6%	(9.9%)
Personal bankruptcies (per 1,000)	2.2	2.5	3.9	5.1	(6.11)
Property crime rate (per 100,000)	10,354	8,724	8,073	8,039	8,199
Violent crime rate (per 100,000)	1,723	1,418	1,351	1,361	1,379
Reports of domestic violence (per 100,000)	285	278	241	272	350
Edmonton population	626,999	620,693	614,871	616,305	626,477

Numbers in brackets are estimates or forecasts