



Culturelink's Settlement Workers in Schools (SWIS) is known for its quality provision of Information and orientation to new immigrant families in the school system. However, as part of the program's advocacy and community orientations, Lucy Zhuang found herself presenting her settlement experience to a group of 31 new teachers at Ontario Institute for Studies in Education (OISE).

Lucy highlighted that the presence of Settlement programs in selected schools has been beneficial to thousand of immigrant families who rely on the supports and guidance provided by SWIS; from basic Language acquisition such as ESL or LINC to help with Immigration, Housing, Health, Finance and more, SWIS connects the dots for newcomer community is the school system.

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Serving Syrian Refugees: ClutureLink teams up with YMCA



The aim of this collaboration was to provide a space for Syrian Newcomer Youth and Families to come together, share their experiences and struggles, build ties with the broader Canadian community, and have access to a series of facilitators and supports that can assist them navigate their Settlement journey in a new country.

Under the title: "You Belong in Canada", different workshops highlighting Diversity & Community Engagement, Socializing & Building your Network, Positive Thinking & Self Promotion and Healthy & Active Lifestyle have been conducted. In addition, participants were introduced to Culturelink Settlement and Community Services; programs and services provided by CL to newcomers including the Syrian newcomers.

"It was a great opportunity to invite my colleagues at CL to talk about their programs geared towards the Syrian Refugees" said Ebraheem Kanaan who specializes in providing

School Settlement Services to Syrian families in Toronto. Ebrahim thanked YMCA for their collaboration. "We look forward to more of these mutual initiatives so to assist and provide further services to Syrians" added Ebraheem.

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Refugee Limbo



For a number of years the Immigration and Refugee Board which is tasked with determining who is or is not a bona-fide refugee has had a backlog of refugee cases. Recently, that number seems to hover at about 40,000. Among the refugees that are waiting for their hearing are people who arrived since 2013.

We know that according to the Immigration Law that was in place before December 2012, there is another group of about 5,000 cases that have to be dealt with; A separate unit of adjudicators, who have knowledge of the old law, are expected to be processing them.

However, what we have learned at last November's meeting in Niagara Falls, is that the IRB will no longer give priority in scheduling to the most recently arrived; According to the existing legislation the newly arriving asylum seekers have to be given a date for their refugee hearing at arrival. The previous conservative Minister of Immigration, the Honorable Jason Kenny has suggested that the refugee need to be processed as soon as possible and the legislation states that they have to have a hearing within one or two months of their arrival.

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Upcoming Events

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Culturelink Syrian newcomer Radio Project-Digital Stories:
come and share your Settlement Journey.
learn the craft of producing your own show. Contact Abdi Yousuf or Glen Walsh
(ayousuf@culturelink.ca)

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York University and Culturelink's Nai Kids Choir look for a 3 year postdoctoral research fellow:
Applications can be sent to Dr. Andrea Emberly, York University
(aemberly@yorku.ca)

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