

18. STAFF TRAINING AND DEVELOPMENT

- Continuous education about appropriate assessment, intervention, and information referral processes must be given to staff to enhance the understanding of newcomer youths' needs when seeking service.
- Anti-racism, anti-oppression, and diversity awareness orientation and training must be given to all new staff and routinely reinforced among existing staff.

19. RESPECTING NEWCOMER YOUTH RIGHTS

- Every newcomer youth activity and program must have a clear confidentiality policy with respect to youth receiving service.
- Regular discussions must be held on the meaning of youth rights and the implication of staff actions when providing services to immigrant and refugee youth. Staff must always respect youths' right to expression, right to privacy/confidentiality, but must also know when parental consent is required.

Please go to www.newyouth.ca for detailed information on the following:

- ◆ Challenges and barriers that immigrant and refugee newcomer youth face
- ◆ Newcomer Youth Settlement Guide for Service Providers
- ◆ Newcomer Youth Bill of Rights

Striving to Develop and Maintain Immigrant and Refugee Youth Settlement Services



There are a number of important considerations when working to provide the most effective services to newcomer youth in Ontario. The following proposals provide a framework to improve upon existing services so that newcomer youth can fully and successfully integrate into Canadian society as productive and active citizens.

1. AN ANTI-RACISM/ANTI-OPPRESSION FRAMEWORK

- Youth settlement services should be culturally sensitive and delivered in a multicultural environment that respects youth, regardless of their race, gender, ethnic origin, religion, sexual orientation, economic circumstance, and mental or physical ability.
- All staff and volunteers should be provided with training that outlines a thorough understanding of diversity, anti-racism, and anti-oppression principles.

2. PROGRAM OBJECTIVES AND NEEDS ASSESSMENT

- Youth settlement programs—especially new programs—should address programming gaps and the needs of immigrant and refugee youth.
- Program missions must be clearly stated, have specific goals, and outline the target group of the program. It should be clear, for instance when a program targets LGBTQ youth, girls and females, or youth from a particular religion.
- Program modifications should take into account suggestions from youth.
- Newcomer youth programming must reflect the diversity of newcomer youth needs and provide educational, engaging and interesting activities.

3. COLLABORATION WITH OTHER SERVICE PROVIDERS AND FUNDERS

- Settlement services should work to forge networks with non-settlement service providers (such as health providers), which will ultimately strengthen the specialized services available to youth within and outside the settlement sector.
- Mechanisms (e.g. regional referral networks) must be developed that disseminate information regularly. Examples of mechanisms include hosting monthly meetings and initiating meetings with staff from non-settlement organizations that provide youth services.

4. ACCESSIBILITY

- Programs and initiatives should promote diversity and inclusion so that they are accessible to all newcomer youth.
- It is vital to establish programs with youth aged 16-24 to address the shortage of programs available to this age group. Youth contributions to this program development are essential.
- Financial barriers should be removed by making programs and activities free or of little cost to youth and their families. This includes the cost of items such as uniforms and transportation.
- Interpretation and multi-lingual information packages should be provided to remove language barriers.

5. YOUTH OWNERSHIP AND INVOLVEMENT

- It is crucial for youth to be involved in making decisions about program planning and implementation (e.g. through the establishment of youth groups or committees).
- Leadership activities should be integrated into settlement programs by assigning roles and responsibilities to youth.
- Youth should be encouraged to participate in community development projects such as leadership and civic participation.

6. OUTREACH AND PROMOTION

- In order to increase newcomer youth participation in programs, a range of outreach and promotion strategies should be utilized such as announcements in schools, local faith communities and in mainstream and immigrant community press.
- New media such as Facebook, Youtube, and Myspace should be utilized to promote programs/activities.



services. For example, organizing youth programs in the summer: this provides stimulation for youth during the summer and working parents with a form of childcare.

7. WORK WITH COMMUNITY

- Youth activities should be used as opportunities to bring together newcomer families and families in established communities.
- Activities of immediate and long-term value to youth and community should be integrated into newcomer youth

- Awareness campaigns should be launched about immigrant and refugee youth issues among other service providers and the broader community.

8. INFORMATION AND REFERRALS

- Staff should regularly organize and participate in information referral sessions to ensure they are offering the most up-to-date and accurate knowledge about services utilized by youth.
- Tools necessary for providing effective referrals should be developed. This includes updated lists or bookmarks of useful links for quick and easy access.
- It is important to refer youth to the most appropriate services according to their specific needs and requests.
- Staff should exchange information as much as possible and take advantage of learning opportunities such as conferences and retreats.
- Agency websites and Portals should contain comprehensive links to major referral networks.
- Key resources should be presented to youth. These include, among others: 211 in Toronto (211Toronto.ca), www.settlement.org, youth portals (e.g. newyouth.ca), youth online and offline helplines, such as sexual orientation, and youth pregnancy-related helplines.
- Orientations should be provided to familiarize youth with social issues, Canadian laws and cultural norms.



9. NEWCOMER YOUTH IN THE EDUCATION SYSTEM

- Presentations should be organized for parents, service providers and school authorities to ensure first hand learning of the challenges that youth experience in the school system.
- Awareness and sensitivity sessions must be held for all school staff, including principals and ESL teachers, on the needs of newcomer youth, especially the language barriers they face.
- Settlement workers should encourage parents to assume a large role in their children's education.
- Settlement services and workers must assume a stronger role in schools. Settlement organizations must focus on issues that negatively impact youths' education such as class misplacement and the lack of recognition of prior learning outside of Canada.
- Settlement organizations must push for the provision of:
 - bridging programs and youth mentorship programs in schools
 - prayer spaces and spaces for individual reflection

Developed by:

Ontario Council of Agencies Serving Immigrants (OCASI)
110 Eglinton Avenue West, Suite 200,
Toronto, Ontario, M4R 1A3
Tel.: 416-322-4950, Fax: 416-322-8084
E-mail: youth-jeunesse@ocasi.org
Websites: www.ocasi.org
www.settlement.org/atwork
www.newyouth.ca

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 OCASI
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10. LANGUAGE LEARNING

- More work needs to be done to ensure that the language abilities of newcomer youth are correctly assessed and lead to correct placements. Settlement organizations must urge language teachers to avoid lumping students into one English language level simply because they are from the same ethnic group.
- It is vital for youth to learn English skills for immediate use as well as for effective communication in future employment.
- Accent and content problems should be distinguished in language lessons. Settlement organizations must work collaboratively with language services to meet the desire of many youth to improve their English accent and pronunciation so that they avoid being bullied in school, improve their social lives, and increase their future employment prospects.

11. PHYSICAL, SEXUAL, AND MENTAL HEALTH

- Settlement services must build connections with health providers to address the insufficient youth programs on sexuality, reproductive and mental health issues.
- Disease prevention and wellness strategies should be promoted through education, information, and workshops.
- Settlement services must partner with community health centres and invite health counsellors and qualified

doctors with multicultural training to assist youth in need of care.

- Programs, activities and workshops should be provided that build self-esteem, self-confidence and a strong sense of identity among youth.

12. YOUTH SAFETY

- Programs must provide safe spaces for youth. Youth centres and youth resource rooms should be spaces for youth

empowerment that do not leave youth vulnerable to danger.

- Activity venues and staff must meet the conditions of safety stipulated by the authorities. All staff must have thorough background checks, and venues must have appropriate insurance coverage.

- Policies must match procedures. Anti-bullying policies, for example, must be matched with procedures that deal with bullies. Service providers, youth, and parents should sign an anti-bullying pledge.
- Youth programming should put youth on the path to academic success and meaningful employment in the future so that youth do not fall prey to gangs, drug use and other anti-social (and sometimes illegal) behaviour.
- Programs should be introduced that assist youth to focus on building attainable goals, leadership skills and on attaining leadership opportunities such as training to become mentors or peers.
- Programs should be introduced that address conflict.



13. BULLYING, CYBER-BULLYING AND GANG VIOLENCE

- Settlement workers must work with youth, parents, schools and other institutions to ensure that schools/institutions do not perpetuate anti-social behaviour, including bullying.
- Frontline workers must be provided with the knowledge and skills to deal with youth who seek services related to bullying and to appropriately refer youth to other organizations that address bullying.
- Collaborations should be built between, youth, law enforcement agencies, and others to develop a youth-led prevention Action Plan relating to home, school and gang violence.
- Relationships and partnerships should be built with organizations (community or mainstream or hospitals, etc.) that work with youth who have been traumatized by bullying.
- Effective dissemination strategies should be used to offer information on violence prevention and bullying. These strategies should utilize outreach points most frequented by target communities, including faith community centres, health centres, community centres, websites and other cyber media and schools.

14. YOUTH EMPLOYMENT

- General education and awareness campaigns should be launched and targeted to employers and the business community.
- Special programs should be provided that ensure sufficient language training prior to employment and that prepare youth for work culture.
- Youth settlement workers/settlement service organizations should assist employers to provide programs that enhance immigrant and refugee youth integration into the work place (e.g. offering apprenticeships). Local businesses should also be encouraged to create volunteer and mentoring opportunities.
- Youth settlement workers should persuade employers to develop and implement programs that help newcomer youth already employed. This includes offering LINC classes on the site if appropriate and orientation for newly hired youth.

- Employers should be provided with the tools to establish and review anti-racism and anti-oppression policies.
- Employers that hire immigrant and refugee youth should be invited to agencies' activities.
- Incentives should be provided to employers who hire newcomer youth; for example, profiling such employers in local media, or giving them awards and merit certificates.

Job search workshops and career/employment days should be provided in partnership with programs such as Job Search Workshop Program.

- Newcomer youth must be fully informed about employment-related legal practices, including their right to work in a non-discriminatory, non-oppressive environment.
- Youth should be educated about money management, including how to create and stick to a budget.

15. YOUTH IN THE JUSTICE SYSTEM

- Sessions about Canadian law must be organized for newcomer communities so that they are informed about what constitutes criminal behaviour in Canada.
- Youth-led education should be organized about youth crime prevention. The dangers of involvement in illegal activities such as selling drugs should be emphasized.
- Young adults must be informed about how their legal responsibilities change as they undergo legal age transition, especially when they become adults under the eyes of the law.
- Youth must be educated with respect to their rights and responsibilities, including rights and responsibilities when they come in contact with the justice system.
- Settlement agencies should work collaboratively with other agencies such as Police Departments to address policing issues. They should also work proactively to bridge the relationship between youth and the police. Police/youth mentorship programs, for instance, should be explored.
- Information about the legal and criminal justice system in Canada should be translated into a wide variety of languages.

16. WORKING WITH YOUTH IN SMALL CITIES AND RURAL AREAS

- Awareness sessions must be given to service providers in small cities and in rural communities.
- Needs assessments must be conducted to enhance the effectiveness and targeting of services in smaller communities.



- Resources must be secured for:
 - outreach and advertisement campaigns to ensure immigrant communities are reached (e.g. brochures, pamphlets, newspaper ads, radio campaigns);
 - websites that consistently meet the needs of youth and other isolated immigrants (e.g. seasonal immigrant workers);
 - Internet and other technology that fosters easy-to-use communication networks.
- Outreach in small cities and rural areas must be proactive and utilize centres where immigrant youth gather, local radio stations, ethnic media, adverts along common transportation routes, flyer announcements, and internet announcements.
- One-stop centres should be developed in collaboration with non-settlement service providers to reduce transport challenges. Consideration should be given to establishing mobile services for improving youth access.
- Settlement workers should collaborate with school authorities, including potential and current employers, to reduce employment-related barriers. Activities such as job fairs and career development workshops should be coordinated among school, employment, and settlement organizations.
- Communities should be encouraged to integrate immigrant and refugee youth into their programs and activities.

17. WORKING WITH NON-STATUS YOUTH

- Financial and other resources are needed to address the needs of non-status youth. This must be made a higher priority.
- Settlement agencies must seek resources for creating safer spaces for non-status youth. Non-status youth should be included in community activities and their safety and security should be guaranteed.
- More education needs to be given to the public about the various reasons for migration and the multitude of issues non-status youth face.