



65 YEARS OF CHANGING LIVES FOR THE BETTER

ANNUAL REPORT 2019



CCS
Catholic Crosscultural Services

TABLE OF CONTENTS

- 01 Leadership Message
- 02 Key Facts
- 03 CCS Impact: Client Success Stories
- 05 Regional Highlights

CCS Programs

- 06 Settlement Integration Place (SIP)
Library Settlement Program (LSP)
Settlement and Education
Partnerships in Toronto (SEPT)
- 07 Settlement Services in Toronto
Settlement Services in Peel The
Newcomer Settlement Program
(NSP)
- 08 LINC Program – Toronto and Peel
- 09 Refugee Sponsorship Training
Program (RSTP)
- 10 Small Town BVOR Sponsorship
- 11 Employment Support
- 12 Women Support Project for
Refugee Women
The Newcomer Mental Health
Program
- 13 Toronto East Quadrant Local
Immigration Partnership (TEQ LIP)
- 14 Statement of Operations
- 15 Service Locations

Funders

CCS would like to thank our funders for their ongoing and generous support:

- Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada
- Ministry of Children, Community and Social Services
- Catholic Charities
- City of Toronto
- United Way of Peel Region
- Employment and Social Development Canada
- Donations

Thank you to all the staff and volunteers for making the work of Catholic Crosscultural Services possible!

AT A GLANCE

Mission Statement

Catholic Crosscultural Services provides services that assist in the settlement and integration of immigrants and refugees.

About Us

Catholic Crosscultural Services (CCS) is a national, non-profit organization, based in the Greater Toronto Area (GTA). CCS aims to empower immigrants and refugees of all religions, ethnicities, countries of origin, immigration status, sexual orientation, or political affiliation to develop the skills and acquire the necessary knowledge to settle, integrate and succeed in Canada.

Founded in 1954, CCS believes in the power of diversity and inclusion to foster change, nurture progress and move society forward. Newcomers need linguistically-appropriate assistance and culturally-sensitive support and CCS delivers programs and services to address these gaps, assisting clients to confidently navigate the labour market, school and health care systems.

We have eight locations across Scarborough, Mississauga and Brampton, and collaborate with numerous partners and settlement and social services sector organizations throughout the GTA.

We proudly offer our clients services in over 30 different languages: Amharic, Arabic, Armenian, Azeri, Cantonese, Croatian, Dari, English, Farsi, French, Gujarati, Hindi, Italian, Korean, Malayalam, Mandarin, Marathi, Nepali, Pashto, Polish, Portuguese, Punjabi, Romanian, Russian, Serbian, Sindhi, Sinhala, Spanish, Tagalog, Tamil, Tigrinya, Turkish, Ukrainian, Urdu.

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LEADERSHIP MESSAGE:

65 Years of Changing Lives for the Better

In January 1954, CCS came into being as the Catholic Immigration Bureau at St. Peter's Catholic Church in Toronto. What began humbly with just a few people in a single location downtown is now an organization with more than two hundred employees spread across eight GTA locations and in seven cities across Canada.

Much has changed over 65 years. What has not changed is CCS's resolve to helping immigrants and refugees settle, integrate, and succeed in Canada. Our agency has always stepped up when the call came in from the world's most vulnerable people - from refugees finding their way to Canada in the 1950's in the aftermath of the Hungarian revolution, Chileans refugees fleeing political persecution and the Vietnamese "boat people" fleeing political unrest in the 1970s, or arrivals from Korea, the Philippines, and the West Indies in the 1970's, to the influx of those escaping strife in El Salvador and Guatemala in the early 1980's, to Syrian refugees escaping civil war in 2016.

We are proud of this tradition.

CCS's focus is steadfast -- nurture newcomers' strengths and confidence, build their skills, and empower them to grow and prosper in a welcoming environment.

While we can point to the past and present with pride, how do we leverage the legacy of six-and-a-half decades of service in continuing to provide leadership on issues of immigration and refugee settlement?

We are confident that CCS is well positioned to influence the best possible outcomes for our clients and help shape the future of the sector, not only through our programs and services, but through research, thought leadership and evidence-based practices.

Daily, CCS focuses on meeting the evolving needs of newcomers in the Greater Toronto Area through an integrated, accessible approach to service delivery. CCS partners with more than 40 non-settlement services agencies such as libraries, hospitals, shelters, and community centres.

The Refugee Sponsorship Training Program (RSTP) continues to play a leadership role in training and information-sharing on policies, practices, and processes related to refugee sponsorship, including engaging in

federal government initiatives to promote private sponsorship of refugees programs to other countries. RSTP also continues to offer training and information to refugee sponsors nationally through video clips and promotional materials. Databases have been developed to help private sponsors identify refugees that they want to sponsor and enable them to fulfill their sponsorship responsibilities and successfully settle refugees.

CCS's leadership role at the Local Immigration Partnership (LIP) in Toronto East facilitates community capacity-building efforts through knowledge sharing with our governmental and non-governmental partners.

Finally, CCS has made great strides in our culture-building efforts to nurture employee engagement and shape a vibrant team that has a sense of community in the workplace, where each person takes pride in their roles and provides exceptional service to the people who walk through CCS's doors.

We are humbled by the opportunity to serve CCS. As always, strong results are not possible without the exemplary work of our staff, volunteers, board members, partners, and funders. We thank them for their sense of community, spirited collaboration, and dedicated efforts to the CCS mission.

We look forward to working with all of you throughout the coming year as we continue to welcome those coming through CCS's doors with dignity, respect, and understanding and deepen relations with the communities we are so proud to serve.

Agnes Thomas
Executive Director

Sylvia Samuel
Board Chair

KEY FACTS:

Service Programs By The Numbers



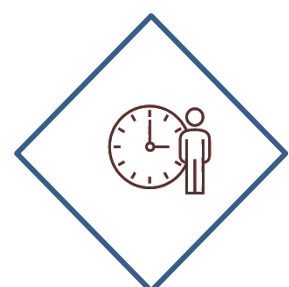
2,015
Group Sessions



28,188
Clients Served



185
Volunteers



5770
Volunteer Hours

Client Success Stories

Many of the clients coming through our doors have demonstrated resilience and grit in overcoming obstacles that go hand-in-hand with immigrating to a new country and starting a new life. Sometimes the issues are pretty straightforward. Other times they aren't. In most cases, however, the individuals had to persevere through uncertainty and fight through challenges that are sometimes daunting. We'd like to share a few of these profiles in courage and determination.

Immigrant Said She Was Empowered to Make her Own Path

Hudeebia and her spouse Hamid had immigrated to the United States, intent on leaving behind the emotional stress and physical threats they had experienced in their home country, Pakistan. They had left their children there in the care of grandparents, first wanting to take a year, or so, to get settled before they brought their children over. Unfortunately, fate intervened. After being in the U.S. for just 15 days, they learned their nine-year old daughter was very sick. Being a mother, Hudeebia said that she could not stay back and decided to return to Pakistan to care for her. Back home, it wasn't easy. Hudeebia suffered business losses, financial setbacks, and endured physical attacks on both herself and her children, including a kidnapping attempt on her 17 year-old son.

In August 2016, Hudeebia was able to flee Pakistan and come to Canada with her children. She applied for asylum/refugee status and was accepted as a convention refugee in December, 2016. With her spouse still in the U.S., Hudeebia felt alone, but was happy her kids were safe and was hopeful she would be able to soon re-unite with the rest of the family. But her frustration was building – not only were finances tight, she could not speak English, so she struggled with the paperwork that goes along with being a parent – the child benefit applications, income taxes, etc.

"I wanted to work, improve my language skills and support my family independently; I wanted to become self-reliant in all aspects of my life, but I had no one to guide me. I was stressed, nervous and upset." she said.

This is where CCS came in. About a year after she got back, Hudeebia heard about CCS from a friend. She visited our agency and got the settlement support she needed. She started attending LINC classes. Through the ongoing advocacy services and referrals provided by her settlement worker, Hudeebia was able to apply for permanent residence status and also started receiving the various child benefits she was entitled to receive – even filling out the forms herself.

"I was not aware of all the services available for newcomers until I came to CCS and met the settlement worker. Whenever I felt emotionally low, she empowered me and I felt relaxed by the thought that I had a place to go to, in case I needed help," Hudeebia said.

Today, Hudeebia has obtained her permanent residence status and her spouse has also joined the family in Canada.

"After I came to CCS, I felt accomplished and confident. Whenever I meet a newcomer struggling to find their way, I will show them the path to CCS. I would suggest to all the newcomers that there will be struggles in the beginning, but if you have patience and work hard there will be fruitful results. There is a lot of help available for newcomers and refugees in the community, so do not hesitate to ask for help," she said.

This is a textbook example of how a holistic approach to settlement and integration aligned with a newcomer's will to succeed can drive outcomes.

"It is rewarding to see client successes and hear their appreciative words. I must say that Hudeebia is very brave and is a pillar for her family. I am very proud to see her overcoming challenges in her settlement journey," said her settlement worker.

CCS IMPACT:

Client Success Stories

Newcomer Adds Skills to Get the Job They Were Trained to Do



Nathalie arrived in Canada in January, 2018. She immediately began searching for jobs in the food industry to support her family. Though she loved to cook and was confident she would be able to do a good job in a kitchen environment, after two months and numerous attempts, she found it difficult to secure an interview even for entry level jobs in the sector. Her lack of awareness with Canadian workplace culture and lack of experience with job search techniques posed significant obstacles. She also realized that a better knowledge of food industry vocabulary and a food handler certification would improve her chances of getting hired in the sector.

Two months after arriving in Canada, Nathalie met with a CCS settlement worker, shared these challenges and was immediately referred to the Language Support Program. Instructors guided her to focus on improving language skills in key areas – listening, speaking, reading and writing. She also learned vocabulary specific to the food handling industry. A volunteer placement at the Harvest Kitchen enabled her to practice her new vocabulary and show off her food-handling expertise. Her supervisor was impressed with her hard work, dedication and attention to food safety rules and commented that she would do well in the culinary world. When an opportunity arose to hire a new team member, Nathalie was given the chance to apply. The skills she had gained through the program such as cover letter preparation, resume-writing and interview techniques paid off and she got the job.

"I would still be searching if I had not attended the Language Support Program at CCS. The help that I got from the team helped me get this job," Nathalie said.



Food-Handling Certificate program: Newcomers get the skills and training they require to get the job they want in the food handling industry.

Toronto Region

Increased service accessibility, efficiency and effectiveness continue to be the focus for the Toronto Region.

With funding support from IRCC, CCS was able to initiate two pilot projects to address service gaps experienced by newcomers.

- The Small Business Support Project focusses on building newcomer confidence in connecting clients to available resources around entrepreneurship, so they can begin their journey of implementing their business ideas and concepts.
- The Scarborough Needs and Trends Report is a project undertaken in collaboration with the University of Toronto (Scarborough Campus) to develop a data platform for agencies to jointly pool and analyze data. This project will enable agencies to have more timely and relevant information on emerging issues, needs and trends in the community to improve service planning.

CCS not only continued to provide quality services in addressing community needs, but also took up a leadership role in sharing our learned experiences and skills-base with other service providers to build further capacity for settlement services. Best practices were shared at conferences including the Toronto District School Board's Celebration of Linguistic Diversity Conference, the Pathways to Prosperity Conference and the International Metropolis Conference.

With support from the community, staff and volunteers, as well as through the adoption of direct feedback from community stakeholders, CCS was able to improve its service model last year and ameliorate its programs and services.

Peel Region

Over the course of the fiscal year, CCS Peel focused on providing accessible, holistic settlement and integration services from our four sites in Peel Region, and collaboratively in the community with our sector partners. Additionally, CCS Peel has enhanced our technology to enrich the service experience for clients enrolled in our LINC classes and settlement workshops.

Overall, CCS Peel served 8,467 new and returning clients across programs focusing on crisis intervention, violence against women, mental health and wellness, transitional housing support, employment access, and through initiatives such as LINC language classes and the Newcomer Settlement Program (NSP).

We partnered with the Safe Centre of Peel to provide settlement and transitional housing support services at the Honourable William G. Davis Centre for Families site. In conjunction with ACCES Employment, both the Employment Connections for the Newcomer Youth program and Itinerant Settlement Services were delivered from their Mississauga and Brampton sites. We also collaborated with The Centre for Education and Training to provide Itinerant Services through their Newcomer Information Centres. Our partnerships also included a shared space agreement with VIP Employment Solutions and Family Education Centre that delivered 'parenting' workshops for newcomer clients.

We have improved our LINC language classes and workshops by deploying more technology in the classroom. We added six new "smart boards" to our LINC offering and program workshops' classrooms and a 7th mobile smart board was added at our Mississauga Valley site. The outcome has been an interactive experience for our clients and a more contemporary and effective method of language learning.

In December, Peel Region had a very successful gift drive for our clients. We partnered with various community stakeholders' seasonal campaigns, including CP24, Father Goetz Catholic School, Peel Regional Police and the Church of St. Bride. With these donations, we provided Christmas gifts to 134 families with 306 children.

We also ran our 3rd annual community wellness fair, where twelve health and wellness professionals came together at our Mississauga LINC site to provide hands-on demonstrations, free consultations and connections for clients to various health and wellness disciplines.

Settlement Integration Place (SIP)

Settlement Integration Place (SIP) provides a safe environment to facilitate the successful integration of newcomers to Canada. Clients are provided guidance on how to become self-sufficient and take charge of the settlement process in their new country. By aligning service offerings with client needs, SIP is committed to nourishing this idea and making it a reality.

Since SIP is situated in a priority neighbourhood, and most clients face immediate challenges such as child care considerations and transportation logistics, SIP aims to bring as many programs as possible to its location to make them as accessible as possible. For example, the Housing Help Centre initiative runs at SIP once a week to serve newcomers' housing needs. Nutrition sessions through Toronto Public Health and parenting-support sessions through the Aisling Discoveries Child and Family Centre are also available.

This year, short-term training for cashier and customer service roles was in demand and SIP provided multiple training sessions to equip clients with the necessary skills. SIP also partnered with VPI Working Solutions' Employment Ontario program. VPI career counsellors came to SIP on a weekly bases to help address client employment needs.

In order to help newcomers understand the connection between financial stability to cohesive settlement and integration, SIP provided financial literacy sessions, not only at the SIP location, but at four other locations in Scarborough. A "train the trainers" program was also offered with twelve volunteers educated on the basics of financial literacy.

SIP also collaborated with volunteers from the Canada Revenue Agency in completing 300 income tax returns for low income families.

Library Settlement Program (LSP)

The Library Settlement Partnership (LSP) is a unique program that brings together the settlement and public library sectors with IRCC to provide improved and extended settlement services to newcomers. The impact of this program is to further strengthen the relationship between these stakeholders in overall program and service delivery.

The initiative encompasses one-on-one services, group programs and outreach. Other offerings include a women's support program, family and peer nutrition information, a youth book club, English conversation programs, and computer training.

One core program goal is to foster a sense of civic engagement in the clients. Every year in October an event is held to celebrate the connection between libraries and settlement. The initiative also serves as an outreach tool for new participants. Last year, over 100 newcomers took part.

Settlement and Education Partnerships in Toronto (SEPT)

SEPT facilitates the successful integration of newcomers in 193 public and catholic schools and communities across Scarborough. In addition to one-on-one settlement support for families, SEPT creates opportunities for parents, children and youth to collaborate in building life skills and expanding their social networks across a wide variety of initiatives, such as the Summer Enrichment Program, Newcomer Orientation Week (NOW), the Welcome and Information for Newcomers (WIN) program, a Youth Forum and youth drop-ins, the March Break camp, and afterschool meet-ups. These activities are designed to help newcomer youth gain confidence, grow, evolve, and emerge as engaged leaders in their respective communities. This year, the SEPT team worked with over 100 youth -- our future leaders -- in identifying, developing and demonstrating their leadership skills. Furthermore, 172 youth leaders contributed 3050 hours in helping to convert new ideas into action, facilitating fun activities and creating positive, welcoming experiences for many newcomers in schools and Scarborough neighborhoods.

"You cannot imagine how my leadership, speech skills, and confidence to speak up have improved since I joined NOW Program. I should tell you how inspiring it is to do activities and share experiences with other students who are in the same situation as you were in once. It was all possible through the multicultural and fun environment of this program."

– Melika Joulaei,
Albert Campbell C.I.

Settlement Services in Toronto

We continue to assist newcomers and refugees with needs' assessments to create individually tailored settlement plans, as well as connections to community resources and social support networks.

This year, our settlement team initiated a partnership with CCS' Refugee Sponsorship Training Program (RSTP) team to provide a seamless continuum of support to resettled refugees and their sponsorship group members.

Next, our extended service locations continued to provide one-on-one settlement services, practical interactive learning opportunities, and information sessions, not only to newcomer Syrian refugees, but to newcomers from all over the world too.

Settlement Services in Peel

Like our counterparts in CCS's Toronto region office, we deliver programs and services to help newcomers settle, integrate and start a new life in a new country as seamlessly as possible.

Throughout the year, group information sessions were delivered on relevant settlement topics including: financial literacy, Ontario's education system, acclimating to life in the province, legal rights and responsibilities, avoiding fraud, scams and theft, healthy living, and senior benefits.

"We would like to thank you for all the help we got - whether it was referring us to a VITA center or helping us apply for child benefits, we do not know what we would have done if you didn't help us. You have been a blessing in our lives."

CCS also continues to collaborate with community agencies to provide easier access to services through one-on-one and relevant itinerant group sessions from partner sites. Our partners in this collaborative service delivery approach allow us to provide settlement services right at their locations, including Safe Centre of Peel, ACCES Employment and The Centre for Education and Training (TCET)'s Newcomer Information Centres, in Mississauga and Brampton.

Through our affiliation with Service Canada, CCS hosted pension clinics at our Brampton site where seniors and adults had the opportunity to meet with a citizen service specialist to answer queries and review their documents before submission. This year, interventions were also developed to support eligible seniors with their



Team members attending Co-creating Inclusive Spaces for Immigrants and Refugees with Visible Disabilities, facilitated by Chavon Niles, Senior Coordinator, Accessibility Initiative, OCASI

applications for Old Age Security, the Guaranteed Income Supplement, Survivor or Spousal allowances and the Canada Pension Plan. Assistance was provided with residence questionnaires, appeal reconsiderations for applications denied, and new application submissions and status inquiries.

Sometimes, a simple gesture drives a wonderful outcome in a family's settlement journey.

"I want to thank you for the wonderful gifts you gave my son at Christmas. When he opened them, they brought a big smile to his face. I told him they were sent by Santa and he got more excited. He showed off the stuff to every single person visiting us. He simply loved "Iron Man" – which has now become his friend as it talks to him and he can play with it for hours; he even mimics the Iron Man's voice!"

The Newcomer Settlement Program (NSP)

The Newcomer Settlement Program (NSP) is designed to help newcomers fully engage in all aspects of Canadian life -- social, economic, political and cultural -- so they are empowered to be active and engaged in their new country. The program provides supportive one-on-one and group workshops for immigrants who are Canadian citizens, refugee claimants, foreign domestic workers, part of the provincial nominee program or live-in-caregiver program, clients with Minister's Permit Holder status, or persons with special permission to remain in Canada.

The NSP staff supports clients with assistance in completing documents, or helps with community access challenges, legal issues, and advocacy. CCS partners with the Safe Center in Peel, and Family Services of Peel to broaden our suite of services and make them more accessible to clients.

LINC Toronto Program

Through English-language instruction, our LINC classes are instrumental in a newcomer's settlement and integration journey.

CCS offers classes for learners of all proficiency levels -- from Canadian Language benchmark level literacy to the top level (6). In 2018-2019, 423 students were promoted to the next level.

Monthly settlement themes complement a lesson plan focused on building functional English conversation ability. Based on their needs and strengths, students undertake real world tasks to help them enhance their knowledge and critical-thinking skills to smooth the transition to Canada.

Ongoing communication and feedback loops ensure that students are active and engaged participants in the learning process. End of term meetings serve as a means to provide the students with progress updates and to solicit feedback from them on how the lessons, structure, content and format of the program can further support them in achieving their settlement objectives.

We also provide computer classes and online training to assist students in accessing community resources and as a "language lab" environment, so they can practice and improve their pronunciation, listening and speaking skills.

In addition to LINC classes, students receive support from the Family Literacy and Childminding programs.

The Family Literacy Program promotes collaboration between parents and students and encourages the idea of literacy as a family practice and activity outside of the classroom setting. Parents and children participated in programs after class such as family time, parent workshops, reading contests, a mobile library and reading circle with younger children. Special events are held during March break and summer.

Our Childminding program helps children age 6 months to 6 years old to learn and develop skills in a safe and supportive environment. Children learn through fun and engaging activities that nurture their potential to explore and develop language, social, physical, cognitive and motor skills and prepare them for full day kindergarten. Kids from the Family Literacy Program also join the reading circle to nurture their mentoring and leadership skills.

LINC Peel Program

The LINC program in Peel Region provides English classes for learners with a basic level of fluency to advanced proficiency (level 0-8) out of three locations in Mississauga and Brampton with full and part-time classes available Monday to Friday.

This year, improving technology in the classrooms was a significant goal and it was achieved. Four Smart Boards were purchased and proved to be a tremendous success in enhancing LINC's service delivery capacity. A Smart Board is like an interactive whiteboard where you can manipulate content projected onto a screen through a computer with your fingers. The new technology was a hit with our community partners. CCS was asked to hold a technology fair at one of our LINC sites because of the enhanced technology capability. The fair was funded by IRCC and designated for locally-based instructors and administrators. The key topics of discussion included the use of new technologies -- like the Smart Boards -- and various Google applications in supporting instructors and enhancing outcomes for students.

Other program highlights and notable happenings from the past year include:

- A program assistant was hired for the summer. This new resource was indispensable in supporting staff and students alike, helping to bolster client interactions.
- CCS LINC is a member of the Peel Immigrant Web Portal (PIWP) working group. PIWP conducted focus group events at one of the LINC sites with our advanced level classes. In one session, the students provided feedback about the launch of a revamped website (www.immigrationpeel.ca).
- Advanced level LINC students were asked to provide feedback on The Centre for Education and Training's *Canadian Language Benchmarks Placement Assessment* (CLBPA) pilot project on speaking and listening.
- The program received a donation of 990 books for students from First Books Canada.



LINC Peel had a fundraiser in February 2019 to raise money toward their school trip.

Refugee Sponsorship Training Program (RSTP) and Blended Visa Office-Referred (BVOR) Program



RSTP Trainer delivering a session in Ottawa, ON

The Refugee Sponsorship Training Program (RSTP) provides training and support to Canadian refugee sponsorship groups, Sponsorship Agreement Holders and sponsored refugees. The year 2018 marked the 10th anniversary of RSTP under the CCS umbrella, during which the program has expanded and developed to meet the training and information needs of the ever-growing community of private sponsors. Currently, RSTP has 12 trainers based in Toronto, Ottawa, Halifax, Winnipeg, Saskatoon, Calgary, Edmonton, and Vancouver.

RSTP's mandate includes organizing and delivering training and information sessions, responding to inquiries from all parties involved in the sponsorship process, supporting private sponsors throughout the sponsorship process, facilitating E-training courses, organizing the Annual SAH Conference, and administering the BVOR program.

RSTP was very active with this work during the 2018 fiscal year. From April 2018 to March 2019, RSTP organized and delivered 230 workshops, thus providing information and training to 4,852 sponsors or potential sponsors, and other stakeholders. Furthermore, RSTP facilitated 83 webinar-based training sessions, with the total number of participants reaching 1160.

RSTP continued responding to a high number of Groups of Five and Community Sponsors, providing hands-on assistance with application forms, reviewing completed sponsorship packages, and training groups on the electronic submission process. To make training sessions even more efficient, RSTP tries to cater to various ethnic communities by providing information in

different languages, e.g. in addition to English and French, workshops were offered in Arabic and Tigrigna languages.

In its efforts to better support Sponsorship Agreement Holders (SAHs) throughout the country, RSTP organized 11 regional meetings, where SAHs from the same region could come together, network, exchange ideas on strengthening capacity in their organizations, addressing new policy changes, and better implementing their sponsorship responsibilities.

RSTP planned and organized the 2018 National SAH Conference in Toronto. The event brought together 151 participants who represented the refugee sponsoring community from different parts of the country, the IRCC, the Office of United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) in Canada, International Organization for Migration (IOM), and local settlement agencies.

RSTP continued offering two E-Training courses on the Private Sponsorship of Refugees Program. The Introductory course IET 101 is a supervised course that is offered 3 times a year. In 2018/2019 a total of 111 participants successfully graduated from the course. The Advanced E-Training course is unsupervised, and it is offered continuously throughout the year.

With the additional funding from IRCC, RSTP hired French trainers for short term contracts to begin expanding its services to the Francophone communities. During early 2019, two trainers based in Central and Western Canada were employed to assist with updating the French language version of the RSTP website, translating RSTP printed materials, and organizing a number of training events delivered in French.

RSTP continued to promote refugee sponsorship through the Blended Visa Office Referred (BVOR) Program, an initiative that matches refugees selected for resettlement by the United Nations with Canadian sponsors. In 2018, RSTP participated in the Operation Sponsor Surge, initiated by Amnesty International in Canada and aimed at finding sponsors for BVOR refugees. By the end of the 2018/2019 fiscal year, a total of 1031 refugees were matched with sponsors through the BVOR program.

Refugee Sponsorship (Continued)

Opening Hearts and Minds: Small-Town BVOR Sponsorship

Rural communities and smaller towns have a lot to offer sponsored BVOR refugees. Tight-knit, supportive communities help newcomers with successful integration, work opportunities and language learning. The communities in turn benefit from the skills and interests of their new residents, and the sponsorship itself creates new connections between sponsors and their community.

This is certainly the case in Ingersoll, a town of 13,000 near London, Ontario. The Aldaqaq family, originally from Syria, were sponsored by local churches in 2016. “At first they weren’t sure about living where there were no other Arabic speakers,” says sponsor Michelle Caskey. “But within a month the kids were speaking English.”

The father’s priority was finding work. “He started asking where he could find a job as soon as he got off the plane,” recalls Michelle. A mechanic who once owned several garages in Syria, Abdul Aldaqaq soon found a job as a tire technician with the support of the group and a nearby settlement agency. Today, the Aldaqaq family owns their own house, something that would be difficult in a large city. The father plans to start a business of his own.

The sponsorship has helped forged new connections in Ingersoll. The sponsoring group includes members of both Sacred Heart Catholic Church and the Ingersoll Christian Reformed Church. “It’s been a really amazing experience having both churches, which often don’t do things together,” says Michelle.



Tecumseh United Church BVOR sponsors, Tecumseh, Ontario.
L to R: Barb Mayer, Jill Buckles, Barbara Snyder, Edith Neufeldt, Jo-Anne Neilson, Lauren Snyder-Gault

In Tecumseh, a town of 23,000 near Windsor, Ontario, a group of United Churches came together to resettle another Syrian family. “We were all advocates to help this family find employment,” says sponsor Joanne Neilson. “Word spreads quickly in a smaller community.” The father of the family they sponsored, Abdul Alhamawe, found work in his trade as an electrician after just three months. “If you go to a big city,” he says, “it’s very hard to find a job.”

The arrival of the family has changed people in the group and in the town. “It opens your heart and mind,” says sponsor Lauren Snyder-Gault. She’s also enthusiastic about what she’s observed in the schools. “The other children hear where these foreign countries are and they’re asking questions ... it’s a monster benefit.”

RSTP’s video [Open Hearts: Small Town Refugee Sponsorship](#) features interviews with four Southwestern Ontario BVOR sponsorship groups in Ingersoll, Strathroy, Forest and Tecumseh. All were assisted by the Diocese of London SAH and its co-ordinator Gilbert Iyamuremye.



Abdul Aldaqaq with three of his children, Ingersoll, ON. Abdul, his wife and five children were sponsored by an Ingersoll BVOR sponsorship group in 2016. Their youngest child was born here.

Employment Support

Enhanced Language Training (ELT) for Healthcare Professionals

The ELT program for supports newcomers with intermediate language skills (CLB 6+) and backgrounds in the healthcare sector with sector-specific language training, Canadian workplace culture information and volunteer work placements to support their transition to the labour market.

Language Training Program

The Language Training Program provides newcomers with the basic language skills (CLB 2-4), knowledge and resources to enter the labour market in the areas of food handling and supply childminding. This program, delivered in partnership with the Boys and Girls Club of East Scarborough, supported participants with language instruction, skills development and work experience placements to become employment ready in food handling or childminding sectors.

Employment Resource Day (ERD)

The annual ERD was held in March at the Cedarbrae Library. Over 90 participants, made up of clients from the language support programs, as well as other newcomers seeking employment and training opportunities, connected with seven employers about relevant job-search tools and resources as well as employment prospects to support their settlement and integration journey. ERD 2019 also featured a vibrant panel discussion with local labour market experts and employers who discussed employment trends, employer expectations and onboarding strategies, and provided candid advice to newcomers on achieving employment goals.

Small Business Support Project

The Small Business Support Project provides tailored activities and resources for newcomers with basic English proficiency (CLB 2-4) to develop the language and accompanying confidence needed to access available services for starting their own business.

Employment Access Program (EAP) in Peel

The Employment Access Program (EAP) enhances the skills of newcomers to secure and maintain employment. The program is a popular offering. 216 clients were supported with their employment needs during the year, with 124 of them attending 18 workshops to market their employability skills.

“CCS deserves credit for the support I got in preparing a winning resume. When I attended the workshop, it was so enriching. I felt welcome. I felt more confident and, after the sessions, I knew I was well equipped for what lies ahead. I got relevant feedback and consistent encouragement. I've maintained my relationship with CCS too. They've also followed up with me through phone calls and further supported me with books,” said a former client who recently got a job as an operations coordinator with the City of Brampton.

Clients learn about effective job search techniques, labour market trends in Canada, and how to write professional resumes and cover letters to emphasize their competencies. Interview preparation workshops featuring role-play scenarios with mock interviews hone clients' abilities to think on their feet and nurture their self-confidence to articulate clear, concise responses under pressure. Group presentations and one-on-one discussions provide insight into Canadian work culture, enhancing clients' awareness of what to expect once they enter the Canadian workforce. The program also works with various employers in holding employer/client engagement session.



Women Support Project for Refugee Women



In collaboration with our partners, The Boys & Girls Club of East Scarborough, Aisling Discoveries Child and Family Centre, and IWHC Toronto (formerly Immigrant Women Health Centre), we provided client-centered, assets-based support, integration and skills-building services for resettled refugee women and their children.

This collaborative cross-sectoral service model was presented at the International Metropolis Conference in Ottawa in June as a promising wraparound service model that addresses settlement and integration needs of vulnerable refugee women and children.



The women of Sewing Circle



The Newcomer Mental Health Program



The Newcomer Mental Health Program provides culturally and linguistically-appropriate counselling to individuals, couples and families who are experiencing emotional and psychological challenges as a result of the settlement process. The program applies strength-based, client-centered counselling approaches, based on an anti-oppression framework. The purpose is to address as wide a scope as possible of mental health issues, such as stress, anxiety, depression, trauma, substance abuse, and relational conflict, as well as examining solutions such as emotion regulation and pain reduction techniques. One-on-one and group mental health workshops on topics such as stress and anxiety management, coping with life transitions, and destigmatizing mental health challenges are also conducted.

The program also effectively engages the community in driving outcomes. In March, CCS Peel hosted its 3rd holistic wellness fair. The free event featured health and wellness professionals from various health sector companies in Peel and Halton regions who dispensed information, complimentary services, and free consultations. Attendees were encouraged to learn about activities that promote health and wellness, such as yoga, tai chi, massage, Chakra meditation, holistic nutrition, iridology, reflexology, acupuncture, hypnotherapy and Reiki.



CCS PROGRAMS

Toronto East Quadrant Local Immigration Partnership (TEQ LIP)

Since 2012, TEQ LIP has been working with service providers, stakeholders and the Scarborough community to foster information-sharing, partnerships, service coordination and collaborative planning to better support newcomers in their settlement journey. In addition, TEQ LIP works closely with the other LIPs in Toronto and the Toronto Newcomer Office on city-wide issues and is part of a network of 78 Local Immigration Partnerships that exist in communities across Canada. Some of the initiatives TEQ LIP undertook in collaboration with other LIPs in the past year include:

- TEQ LIP's annual BRIDGES Collaboration Forum, held on February 8, 2019, brought together over 180 participants from across Toronto and the surrounding municipalities for a day of learning and sharing under the theme of "Achieving success through collaborative action".
- TEQ LIP staff worked closely with other Toronto LIPs to jointly implement a workshop series, funded by the former Ontario Ministry of Citizenship and Immigration, to improve the quality of services for vulnerable newcomer clients. Collectively, a total of 534 service provider staff were trained through twelve workshops, focusing on topics such as housing access, mental health policies, and access to city services for vulnerable newcomers. (Resources and toolkits from the training sessions are available online.)
- In March 2019, TEQ LIP in collaboration with Toronto LIPs and the Toronto Newcomer Office presented a workshop on the Toronto Newcomer Council at the National Metropolis Conference held in Halifax.

An important objective of the LIP is to ensure service providers are aware of emerging service needs and trends and how to address them. In 2018-19, TEQ LIP worked with the Public Good Initiative at the University of Toronto, who conducted an environmental scan to find out more about needs and service gaps for newcomers with disabilities and health needs that can be complex. Masters students in the public policy program, acting as consultants on the initiative, produced a report for TEQ LIP, entitled: "Identifying and addressing barriers to service use for newcomers with disabilities and complex health needs". Recommendations from the report are now being



CCS' Matthew Klass, TEQ LIP Officer, BRIDGES 2019 Collaboration Forum

addressed by TEQ LIP's Health Action Group. (The report is available on the TEQ LIP website www.scarboroughlip.ca.)

With Service Delivery Improvement funding from IRCC, TEQ LIP was able to initiate a project that builds agency capacity to make better use of their own service delivery data for program and service planning. This three-year project is a partnership with the University of Toronto's Scarborough Campus and started in July, 2018. It includes the development of a platform that enables organizations to collaborate on data pooling and the joint analysis of service delivery data to support evidence-informed service planning.



Final Report: Identifying and Addressing Barriers to Service-Use
by Newcomers with Disabilities and Complex Health Needs

Created By: Caitlyn Dwyer, Natalie Krzywiecki, Madeline Poole, Petek Yurt

STATEMENT OF OPERATIONS

YEAR ENDED

	March 31, 2019	March 31, 2018
INCOME	\$	\$
IRCC – Welcoming Communities	3,440,770	3,491,747
IRCC – Language and Skills Development	3,357,631	3,505,842
IRCC – Orientation	1,771,217	1,724,898
IRCC – RSTP	1,682,248	1,594,718
Ministry of Children, Community and Social Services	784,906	898,948
IRCC – Labour Market Access	495,543	462,167
Ministry of Citizenship and Immigration – NSP	619,675	619,675
IRCC – LIP	352,170	349,995
IRCC – Service Delivery Improvement Projects	309,252	-
Pay Equity Revenue	201,682	201,682
Catholic Charities	191,612	190,267
Earned Income	141,778	185,878
United Way Peel Region	129,791	129,791
City of Toronto	117,448	139,246
Donation	1,047	3,546
ESDC	-	55,091
	12,977,095	12,933,816
EXPENDITURES	\$	\$
Wages	7,970,861	7,952,621
Building occupancy	1,675,427	1,679,018
Employee benefits	1,662,953	1,601,803
Program expenses	861,787	909,278
Office and general	313,801	281,097
Equipment lease and purchase	192,446	383,399
Purchased services	73,448	49,468
Promotion and publicity	70,094	28,398
Staff travel	68,782	77,086
Amortization	27,552	27,553
Training and conferences	26,780	23,939
Program and central administration allocation	899,711	819,595
Absorbed by departments	(899,711)	(819,595)
	12,943,931	13,013,660
EXCESS OF INCOME OVER EXPENDITURES	\$	\$
(Deficiency) Excess of Revenues Over Expenditures	33,164	(79,844)
Allocation from Internally Restricted Reserve Funds	-	(100,000)
	33,164	20,156

Financial statements prepared by Akler, Browning, Frimet and Landzberg LLP Chartered Accountants are available in full upon request.

SERVICE LOCATIONS

Toronto Region

**55 Town Centre Court, Suite 401 Toronto,
Ontario M1P 4X4
416-757-7010**

- Agency Administration
- Enhanced Language Training for Medically Trained Technologists (ELT)
- Local Immigration Partnership
- Refugee Sponsorship Training Program (RSTP)
- Settlement Services
- Settlement Workers in Schools

**1200 Markham Road, Suite 503 Toronto,
Ontario M1H 3C3
416-289-6766**

- Language Instruction
- Settlement Services

**2206 Eglinton Avenue East, Suite 124 Toronto,
Ontario M1L 4S7
416-759-8800**

- Language Instruction
- Settlement Services

**3227 Eglinton Avenue East, Unit 135 Toronto,
Ontario M1J 3M5
416-266-7200**

- Settlement Services

Peel Region

**Brampton
8 Nelson Street West, Suite 302 Brampton,
Ontario L6X 4J2
905-457-7740**

- Employment Access Program
- Language Instruction
- Newcomer Mental Health
- Settlement Services
- Women Support Services

**Mississauga
3660 Hurontario Street, 7th Floor Mississauga,
Ontario L5B 3C4 905-273-4140**

- Newcomer Mental Health
- Settlement Services
- Women Support Services

**4557 Hurontario
Street, Unit B11/12
Mississauga,
Ontario L4Z 3M2
905-272-1703**

- Language Instruction
- Settlement Services

**1477 Mississauga
Valley Boulevard
Mississauga,
Ontario L5A 3Y4
905-232-7010**

- Language Instruction
- Settlement Services



CCS - Empowering newcomers, immigrants & refugees through program and service innovation



CCS
Catholic Crosscultural Services



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<http://cathcrosscultural.org/>

