

The Role of After-School Programs in Promoting Academic and Life Success of  
Immigrant, Refugee and Racialized Children and Youth



**McMaster University**

Authors:

Aarani Paramalingam

Umair Majid

Opeyemi Okelana-Awolusi

Sheila Cranmer-Byng

May 2018

Prepared for: Empowerment Squared

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

<b>EXECUTIVE SUMMARY.....</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>INTRODUCTION .....</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>METHODOLOGY.....</b>	<b>7</b>
<b>Terminology.....</b>	<b>7</b>
<b>Other Limitations.....</b>	<b>9</b>
<b>CHALLENGES FOR NEWCOMERS, SETTLED IMMIGRANTS, &amp; RACIALIZED CHILDREN AND YOUTH.....</b>	<b>10</b>
<b>Mental Health.....</b>	<b>10</b>
<b>Parent-Child-School Relationships.....</b>	<b>14</b>
<b>Barriers Within the Formal Education System .....</b>	<b>17</b>
<b>English Language Programming.....</b>	<b>21</b>
<b>RESPONDING TO CHALLENGES USING SMALL ETHNO-CULTURAL ASPs.....</b>	<b>26</b>
<b>RECOMMENDATIONS.....</b>	<b>28</b>
<b>APPENDIX.....</b>	<b>31</b>
<b>Promising Practices.....</b>	<b>31</b>
<b>Links to Additional Resources.....</b>	<b>36</b>
<b>REFERENCES.....</b>	<b>37</b>

## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The City of Hamilton has recently seen a large influx of immigrant and refugee populations. This has prompted local After School Programs (ASPs) to re-examine how they can best support newcomer students to help them achieve academic and long-term life success. In collaboration with Empowerment Squared, a Hamilton-based ASP, the Research Associates from McMaster Research Shop prepared a broad literature review outlining:

- (1) the resettlement challenges faced by newcomer children and youth that affect their education,
- (2) the ways in which ASPs can respond to these specific challenges, and
- (3) promising programs, policies, and practices that can be implemented within an afterschool program context.

We identified four thematic barriers faced by newcomer children and youth. These include: mental health, parent-child-school relationships, 'deficit' educational models in the formal school system, and English language learning. While each theme was examined independently, it should be noted that there was significant overlap and convergence between the topic areas. We provide a summary of each theme below:

- **Mental health** - Newcomer youth may experience a number of mental health challenges related to their pre-migration, migration, and post-migration experience. Good mental health is defined as both the lack of mental illness and the experience of mental wellbeing. Experience of trauma or loss, stress during the migration process, discrimination in the host country or challenges with language acquisition can impact the mental health status of youth, in turn affecting their ability to achieve academic and life success in their new home. To promote better mental health outcomes, researchers and educators often seek to promote student's ability to cope with and overcome life's challenges. Such approaches are known as resiliency-based frameworks. Some interventions to increase resiliency in newcomer youth include: more effective English language programming, opportunities for family counselling, classroom interventions to improve interactions between educators and newcomer youth, greater parental engagement in student's education, peer outreach, arts-based therapies, and self-confidence building workshops.
- **Parental-child-school relationships** - Newcomer parents are often viewed by educators as deficient in the skills that promote student success, due to their lack of English language knowledge and lack of involvement in school events and meetings. However, newcomer parents have unique skills and sets of knowledge that allow them to support their children's development and educational outcomes. Parents often pass on cultural knowledge, first language knowledge, and religious knowledge to their

children. While these forms of knowledge have great importance and value to newcomer families, they are often undervalued by educators who may perceive such forms of knowledge to clash with the dominant values of the host society. Thus, in order to foster better parent-child-school relationships for newcomers, educators need to reassess their own biases, understand the value of different forms of knowledge, and distinguish between ‘parental engagement’ and ‘parental involvement’ practices.

- **Barriers Within the Formal Education System** - Several barriers exist within the formal education system that limit the academic success of Black and racialized students, including a curriculum that fails to reflect Black and racialized students’ experience and history, a ‘deficit’ discourse that positions Black and racialized students as deficient, devaluation of students’ capabilities, discouragement from attending university, streaming into applied education, and harsher school discipline resulting in a disproportionate number of suspensions among Black students. New immigrant and refugee students also face many of these same barriers and often end up internalizing limiting narratives about their identity and their academic/social potential. Teachers also lack the skills to meet the learning needs of new immigrant and refugee students, and this is amplified for students from oral cultures. Implementing training to help educators understand their personal and systemic biases, hiring teachers with cultural backgrounds and experiences that mirror students, and ensuring curriculum adequately reflects student diversity are important first steps that can be taken to address some of these barriers.
- **English Language Programming** - There are multiple ways and methods to implementing English Language Programming in the context of after-school programs. Bilingual approaches, which appear to be the superior approach to English Language programming, emphasize the utility and value of the learner’s native language in the English learning process. Adopting bilingual approaches will require a shift in how we conceptualize English language learning, our process of hiring English language educators, and the role of learners in the English language learning process. Bilingual approaches in after-school programs may offer important benefits to the English language learning of students and an alternative avenue for enhancing their English language acumen.

While literature on after-school programs can show mixed or inconsistent results—due, in large part, to differences in program focus and research methodology—there is still considerable evidence documenting the academic and psycho-social benefits of ASPs for students in general and, more specifically, for those living in poverty, at-risk for academic failure, and for newcomer and English as second language students. Providing a safe, supportive environment to obtain academic support and help complete homework are important factors for academic success in newcomer students. However, ASPs for newcomer students

also play an important role in building a positive sense of self and community, developing peer friendships and support, as well as providing a space for students to reclaim a positive and strengths-based identity as bilingual and multilingual learners. Small ethno-cultural organizations are well positioned to meet the resettlement needs of the community, due to their strong cultural understanding and connections to the community. Staff and volunteers often have first-hand knowledge of the cultural background of students and their migration/resettlement experiences. Thus, ASPs are well positioned within the community to fill the systemic gaps noted above that undermine the academic and life success of newcomer children and youth.

## INTRODUCTION

Academic success is often viewed in the education literature as the precursor to life success, as it opens doors for post-secondary education, higher earning potential, and a range of employment prospects. In addition, student integration within the formal school system has been linked to better psycho-social outcomes and ability to cope with the stressors of life (Barnett, 1995). Thus, school performance is often thought to be an important indicator, albeit not the only indicator, determining the long-term life course of students.

Children and youth from immigrant and refugee backgrounds can face multiple challenges achieving academic and life success. For example, past Canadian statistics have reported that a higher percentage of immigrant youth do not complete high school (ranging from 46% to 74% in some jurisdictions) (Derwing, DeCorby, Ichikawa, & Jamieson, 1999; Duffy, 2004; Gunderson, 2004; Watt & Roessingh, 2001 cited in Ochocka, Janzen, Westhues, Roderick et. al., 2006) when compared to the general student population (ranging from 12% to 25%) (King, 2004; Bushnik, Barr-Telford & Bussiere, 2004 cited in Ochocka, Janzen, Westhues, Roderick et. al., 2006). The difficulties of learning a new language, finding cultural continuity, establishing new cultural identities, facing discrimination, and experiencing a lack of belongingness within the host society can affect students' education, employment, and socio-economic outcomes. While promoting academic success in this population is one avenue of envisioning better futures, it is also important to consider the complex interactions between school, community, home, and family life that put students at-risk for negative outcomes.

Within the resettlement literature, migrants are often viewed as undergoing a linear assimilation process whereby increased exposure to a host society will lead to greater integration and better school performance (Anisef et al., 2010). For example, using 2006 Census data, Corak (2011) notes that high school dropout rates for immigrants who arrived at age 9 or older are higher than dropout rates for immigrants who arrived before the age of 9. This difference in high school completion for older arrivals in Canada is attributed to a disruption in the 'sensitive period' in which second language acquisition and integration into the formal educational system can occur (Corak, 2011). However, Anisef et al. (2010) notes that students often undergo a segmented assimilation process, whereby cultural, family, or community related factors dictate educational outcomes. Using Toronto District School Board (TDSB) administrative data, Anisef et al. (2010) found that in addition to the age at migration, first generation immigrant students from lower income and single parent households tend to be at greater risk of dropping out. Additionally, students from the Caribbean had higher dropout rates (40%) than students from East Asia (10%), South Asia (16%), West Asia (22%), Africa (23%), or English-speaking Canadian born students (20%), suggesting differences in drop out based on one's country or region of origin. As such, Anisef et al. (2010) suggests that the assimilation process can be complex, fragmented, and non-linear for different groups of migrants. Other reports suggest that length of time in Canada can worsen educational outcomes

for some students. In a cohort of TDSB students followed from 2006 to 2011, it was found that 3<sup>rd</sup> generation Black students had a 28% dropout rate, while first- and second-generation Black students had a 21% and 18% dropout rate in respective (James and Turner, 2017). These findings suggest that complex, non-linear processes related to resettlement, race, and community level factors can determine youth educational outcomes.

Other psycho-social based statistics also demonstrate the complexity of challenges faced by migrant children and youth. Experiencing discrimination and a lack of belongingness within one's host society is a common sentiment among newcomer students. Shayka and associates (2010) note that newcomer youth in Toronto report racial discrimination and stereotyping from both peers and teachers. In particular, newcomer students discussed how teachers' racialized views of their students make them more prone to steering certain students into non-academic, trades-based careers regardless of the student's personal career aspirations and objectives (Shayka et al., 2010).

These challenges and barriers are particularly relevant in the City of Hamilton, where close to one quarter (n=130,365) of the population (n=527,930) are immigrants, and approximately 10% (n=13,000) arrived during the last census period (between 2011 to 2016) (Statistics Canada, 2011, 2016). Over the last ten years, the percentage of people in Hamilton who speak Arabic at home has increased by 60% to 5,210 households (Yawar, 2017). Arabic is now the most frequently spoken language among Hamilton's non-English speaking households (Yawar, 2017, CBC News). Among Hamilton's newcomer youth, one in five (20%) are refugees compared to the national average of just over one in ten (11%) (Davy, 2014). In Hamilton's public schools close to one quarter (22%) of the student population are immigrant children under the age of 15 (Davey, 2014). At the same time, for many recent Syrian refugees their formal sponsorship arrangements have ended, leaving families with limited support to confront the challenges and barriers of resettlement (Elash, 2016)

The changing demographics among Hamilton's newcomer population and high percentage of Hamilton's newcomer youth population, have implications for how schools and other service providers integrate, resettle, and empower migrant youth and their families. This report will describe challenges faced by migrant children and youth and discuss how ASPs can play a unique role in filling current institutional gaps to support their educational and life success. We conclude this report by providing recommendations and some promising practices that ASPs can adopt within their organization.

## **METHODOLOGY**

This literature review intends to examine two research questions that were developed through meetings with Empowerment Square:

1. What are the unique challenges faced by newcomer children and youth that hinder their academic and future life success? How can ASPs respond to these challenges?
2. What policies, practices, and roles can ASPs utilize to support students?

The inclusion criteria for this report was expansive and included both academic and grey literature from North American and European contexts. We first identified salient themes relevant to ASPs and the stakeholder's unique context. These themes served as a springboard for searching the online literature for relevant academic and grey literature. Google Scholar and Education Resources Information Center (ERIC), and ProQuest were the primary search engines and databases utilized to locate academic literature. To locate grey literature, web pages of governments, institutions, and organizations were examined. We focused primarily on articles published in the last 10 years, however, older articles were used to inform the direction of paper and our recommendations. We also included examples of ASPs in North America and Europe. The goal of our literature search was to gather a broad selection of materials to illustrate different aspects of after-school programs that may benefit newcomer populations under 24 years of age.

After identifying salient themes, each member of the research team extracted a list of citations, read, and critically assessed the meaning and implications of these research findings. We discussed our findings as a team until an outline for the final report was finalized. This outline was shared with the members of Empowerment Square team for feedback. Each team member reflected on the discussion with stakeholders and completed an expository piece on their theme outlining the barriers, facilitators, and evidence-based practices to promote the educational and life success of children and youth in the context of after-school programs. Once individual pieces were complete, two members of the research team consolidated all items to create the final report.

### **Terminology**

We would like to clarify some of the terminology used within this report, specifically regarding the target population—immigrant and refugee youth and children. Empowerment Square serves a diverse population of students within the Hamilton community, which include elementary, middle school, and high school students from various migrant backgrounds. Newcomer youth from immigrant, refugee, and racialized backgrounds are a particular focus of this organization. Students from these backgrounds can have multiple identities that overlap and intersect in a variety of ways.



Within the research literature, definitions of what constitutes children, youth, immigrant, refugee, and newcomer can be diverse and unclear due to different uses of the terms in different countries, organizations, communities, and social contexts. Lack of clarity in the use of these terms in the research literature limited our ability to provide specific recommendations based on age or migration class. We critically examined the evidence and attempted to highlight research literature pertaining to specific groups or classes of migrants whenever possible. Below we define some of the terminology used within the report.

### *Children and Youth*

Age definitions for children and youth within the research literature can vary depending on the research interests of the organizational body. Generally, major Canadian organizations such as Statistics Canada tend to define youth as consisting of age groups 15 years of age to 24 years of age (United Way of Calgary and Area, 2010). The age definition for children can also vary anywhere between 12 or 15 years of age and younger (United Way of Calgary and Area, 2010). Within this report, we did not set out to include research evidence specific certain age categories. Instead, we tried to present information on the age groups of study populations only when it was specifically outlined in the research literature.

### *Newcomers and Migrants*

It is important to discern between different classes of newcomers because their experiences and motivations for relocation may differ dramatically. Below we define important definitions and terms (The Library of Parliament, 2007; Statistics Canada, 2010; New Youth, n.d.):

1. **Immigrant** often refers to family or economic migrants who willingly relocate to a host country.
2. **Refugee** often refers to individuals who are forced to migrate from their home country due to persecution, violence, war, or discrimination.
3. **Resettled refugees** are persons who resettle in a third country after fleeing to a second country.
4. **Refugee claimants** or **asylum seeker** are individuals who apply for refugee status in a host country but have not yet had their refugee claim approved.
5. **Newcomer** – refers to landed refugees or immigrants who have recently arrived in Canada. Statistics Canada uses the time frame of less than 5 years to define this group, based on census definitions. Newcomer can be synonymous with ‘new immigrant’ or ‘recent immigrant’ within the research literature. Settled immigrant or refugee refers to individuals who have resided in the country for 5 or more years.
6. **Migrant** – within this report, the term ‘migrant’ is used as a catch all term for the different groups or classes of individuals who leave their home country to settle permanently within a host country. This includes those who have arrived recently and

settled in Canada for many years. While ‘migrant’ may sometimes refer to temporary migrants, such as students or labourers, this population is not considered within the context of this report.

In this review, we focused on newcomer immigrant and refugee populations. However, we also consider settled immigrant or refugee populations when relevant data was available.

### **Other Limitations**

*Relevant Themes:* There are many themes relevant to ASPs that are documented in the literature. However, we included only the most salient themes, which were based on discussions among members of the research team and members of Empowerment Square. The themes described in this paper are not meant to be comprehensive, but representative of the unique context of the stakeholder group.

*Broadening our Search:* It was challenging to find specific resources about ASPs for newcomers and refugees specific to Ontario or Hamilton. This may be due to few longitudinal studies published that follow newcomers within an ASP context. However, due to the recent influx of newcomers and refugees in Canada, this may change in the next few years. In response to these challenges, we broadened the focus to include research from contexts other than Ontario and Hamilton. While not specific to the study site, it may offer important insight into the implementation and administration of ASPs. Not all suggestions provided in this report may be appropriate or feasible to implement in every ASP context. Some recommendations may work better or be more feasible in certain contexts. Users of this report should carefully reflect on their unique context before implementing recommendations.

*Descriptive, Not Prescriptive:* Much of this report is focused on describing challenges faced by migrant and/or marginalized students. We do this in order to provide a rich description of the problem and help our stakeholder understand how their organization fits within the current educational landscape. Additionally, while we tried to examine different policies and practices that can be adopted by ASPs, we found few sources that actively evaluated and compared the effectiveness of different strategies and practices. As a result, this report does not aim to suggest that some practices are better or more effective than others. We offer recommendations and some promising practices noted in the literature in order to describe the range of strategies and practices that currently exist.

# CHALLENGES FOR NEWCOMERS, SETTLED IMMIGRANTS, & RACIALIZED CHILDREN AND YOUTH

## 1- Mental Health

### *What is Mental Health?*

Children and youth from newcomer backgrounds who are unaccustomed to their new school and community environment may experience challenges related to mental health. Mental health is often defined broadly as a “state of well-being in which every individual realizes his or her own potential, can cope with the normal stresses of life, can work productively and fruitfully, and is able to contribute to his or her community” (WHO, 2014, para. 1). Good mental health is thought to be a precursor to a student’s academic, employment, and life success. Mental health issues can manifest in youth in a variety of ways—from clinically defined experiences like Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD), anxiety, and depression, to social withdrawal, bullying, poor self-esteem, negative socialization, and risk-taking or delinquent behaviours (Pieloch et al., 2006; Georgiades et al., 2007). Thus, mental health challenges are diverse and can involve complex family, school, and community processes.

### *Mental Health Status of Migrant Children and Youth*

In Canada, immigrant populations are often perceived to be better off in terms of both physical and mental health domains than non-immigrant populations. For example, in a national study of children aged 4 to 11 with family immigrant status, Georgiades and colleagues (2007) found that these children experienced fewer emotional and behavioural problems and better school performance than children in non-immigrant families, despite having greater socioeconomic disadvantage. These researchers suggest that family process variables such as parenting practices, expectations about school performance, and lack of family dysfunction may be protective factors that support positive emotional and behavioural outcomes in immigrants (Georgiades et al., 2007). The difference in mental health status between immigrant and non-immigrant populations may be attributed to the healthy immigrant effect, which suggests that immigrants have better mental, physical, and social health because of immigration policies that seek out immigrants from a particular social and financial class, and the observation that individuals who have the capacity to immigrate to another country tend to experience some degree of health and wealth (Vang et al., 2017).

However, when examining distinct subgroups of migrants, their mental health status tends to vary depending on their age at migration, migration status, resettlement location, ethnicity, and migration journey. Some examples for the research literature are highlighted below:

- In an Ontario-based survey of youth from grades 7 to 12, Hamilton and associates (2009) found greater psychological distress (e.g., feeling nervous, worthless, restless, or depressed) in first-generation immigrants compared to second-generation immigrants.
- Some studies have shown regional differences in the experience of mental health. Beiser and collaborators (2011), found that immigrant children from East Asia experience greater emotional problems when their host city was either Toronto or Montreal compared to Winnipeg, Calgary, Edmonton, or Vancouver. These regional differences in mental health status may be due to human and social capital variables such as the child's language upon arrival, local social supports, and societal perceptions regarding their integration into the host society (which may in turn lead to family stress, poor home-school relationships, and marginalization) (Beiser et al., 2011).
- Some ethnic populations may be at higher risk for poor mental health. Ellis and colleagues (2008) found that Somali refugee youth (aged 12 to 20) in the United States experience high levels of trauma and racial discrimination in their host community (New England cities).
- In a systematic review, Fazel and associates (2012) also found that refugee children migrating to high-income countries can develop clinically-defined mental health issues through their experience of traumatic events, separation from their family, lack of family cohesion, poor parental mental health, and the lack of social support and community integration in their host country.

This body of research evidence suggests that the mental health status of migrant youth differs based on the time since migration, the settlement region in the host society, and the migration experience of the individual. Thus, an understanding of pre-migration, migration, and post-migration factors is needed to fully grasp the mental health challenges of newcomers, refugees, and immigrants (Peiloch et al., 2016; Fazel et al., 2012).

### *Conceptualizing Mental Health Risk*

Discrepancies in the literature regarding the mental health status of newcomer youth can be attributed to the diversity of the population under study and the variety of ways mental health can be defined in the literature. While this makes it difficult to assess the overall impact of mental health issues on youth, it is important to note that pre-migration, migration, and post-migration factors can put youth at-risk for poor mental health or protect against it. Risk and protective factors can also be conceptualized through a socio-ecological framework, whereby family, school, community, and society work together to influence one's mental health status. Table 1 contains factors that affect youth mental health (Peiloch et al., 2016; Fazel et al., 2012).

**Table 1. Factors affecting immigrant youth mental health**

Pre-Migration	Migration	Post-Migration
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Immigration status (economic, family, or refugee)</li> <li>• Experience of loss or trauma</li> <li>• Country of origin</li> <li>• Ethnicity</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ease of migration</li> <li>• Stress</li> <li>• Experiencing detention</li> <li>• Age at migration</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Health care system accessibility</li> <li>• Discrimination or stigma</li> <li>• Cultural shock</li> <li>• Economic status</li> <li>• Language acquisition</li> <li>• Family processes and parental health</li> <li>• Sense of belongingness</li> <li>• Number of years in host country</li> </ul>

*From Risk to Resiliency Frameworks*

Increasingly, researchers are moving away from risk-based conceptualizations of mental health and instead adopting a **resiliency-based framework** to study the needs of newcomer populations. Rather than viewing newcomer youth as ‘at-risk,’ this framework examines the protective factors and processes that enable youth to overcome their risk for poor mental health and thrive in their communities.

**Resiliency** is loosely defined as the ability to cope with and recover from challenges in life (Canadian Paediatric Society, 2016). While resiliency may be conceptualized as an individual trait such as one’s self-efficacy<sup>1</sup> to overcome hardship, resiliency is more often a product of a “dynamic system” that takes into account external factors such as the family, school, and community environment (Peiloch et al., 2016, p. 331). Newcomer youth may become more resilient through timely acquisition of the host country’s language, a sense of belongingness established through family, community, school, and religious support systems, and shared cultural values and beliefs with the host society (Peiloch et al., 2016). It should be noted that resiliency is not merely about assimilating youth into the host country. The skills and experiences that a newcomer brings with them also need to be recognized and valued by the host society. Thus, how newcomer youth are supported and included by their host society can influence their ability to achieve personal, professional, and career success.

Currently, there are a variety of measures for resilience that examine aspects such as individual characteristics, external factors, and an individual’s coping process. In 2016, the

---

<sup>1</sup> “Personal judgements of one’s capabilities to organize and execute courses of action to attain designated goals” (Zimmerman, 2000, p. 83)

Higher Education Quality Council of Ontario (HEQCO), an agency of the Government of Ontario, explored how resilience can be measured as a learning outcome of education and administered in institutions and classrooms (Patry et al., 2016). A common measurement scale is the **Resiliency Scales for Children & Adolescents**, a 64-item questionnaire for youth between 9-18 years that measures three domains of resiliency: *sense of mastery*<sup>2</sup>, *sense of relatedness*<sup>3</sup>, and *emotional reactivity*<sup>4</sup> (Patry et al., 2016). Another common measure is the **Child and Youth Resilience Measure**, a 28-item questionnaire measuring three domains that produce resilience: *individual characteristics*<sup>5</sup>, *relational attitudes to the external world*<sup>6</sup>, and *community and cultural supports*<sup>7</sup> (Patry et al., 2016). While there is no gold standard for measuring resilience in youth, most scales try to measure how well a child responds to and is supported by their external environment.

### *Pathways for Promoting Resilience*

In practice, promoting the resilience in youth can be a complex process. A smooth transition into one's host society and the development of programs that consider the family, school, and community contexts of youth have been recommended in the literature as important aspects of resiliency building in this population. These interventions can take the form of more effective English language programming, opportunities for family counselling, classroom interventions to improve interactions between educators and newcomer youth, greater parental engagement in student's education, peer outreach, and self-confidence building workshops (Peiloch et al., 2016; Ontario Centre of Excellence for Child and Youth Mental Health, 2016). For mental health issues that are more clinically defined, such as PTSD, depression, and anxiety, resiliency may be promoted through cognitive behavioural therapy or arts-based therapy (Sullivan and Simonson, 2016). Trauma focused cognitive behavioural therapies help students develop coping skills to alter negative behaviours and their experience of trauma (Sullivan and Simonson, 2016). Arts-based therapy is defined as a "therapeutic process that involves visual arts, music, poetry, dance, and other mediums" (Ontario Centre of Excellence for Child and Youth Mental Health, 2012, p. 4). In the 'Promising Practices' section of this report, a more comprehensive description of these therapies is provided.

### *Mental Health in Schools*

---

<sup>2</sup> A construct that measures an individual's evaluation of their competence and self-efficacy (belief in one's own ability to achieve desired results) (Prince-Embury, 2008)

<sup>3</sup> A construct that measures the level of trust, comfort, and perceived support an individual can access through various personal relationships (Prince-Embury, 2008)

<sup>4</sup> An individual's emotional response to stimuli and how they regulate their response (Prince-Embury, 2008)

<sup>5</sup> A construct that evaluates an individual's personal skills, peer supports, and social skills (Ungar, 2016)

<sup>6</sup> A construct that evaluates the level of physical and psychological caregiving an individual receives (Ungar, 2016)

<sup>7</sup> Spiritual, educational, and cultural supports an individual may access (Ungar, 2016)

Mental health issues can be difficult to identify and address in the context of a busy school environment. Schools may not be adequately equipped to address mental health challenges in youth populations. While guidance counsellors, school psychologists, and mental health promotion initiatives (e.g., programs for reducing substance abuse, building self-esteem, and promoting anti-bullying) exist in many schools, mental health issues among students are often addressed by school staff who lack the training, resources, and support to effectively respond to the needs of diverse populations (Reinke, 2011). More recently, school-based mental health interventions have increased collaborations with formal mental health providers such as trained therapists and nurses (McLennan, 2008).

However, this approach may not be appropriate for newcomer youth who more commonly use informal support systems, such as family or community groups, to discuss mental health issues (Shakya et al., 2010). In a study of newcomer youth from Afghan, Colombian, Sudanese, and Tamil backgrounds in Toronto, Shakya and collaborators (2010) found that while students appreciated having access to formal services in schools such as guidance counsellors, they reported discomfort in utilizing these services. Informal supports such as family, friends, religious or ethnic community members were more commonly relied upon for discussion revolving mental health and well-being (Shakya et al., 2010). These informal support systems can include local ethno-cultural ASPs. ASPs can be an important source of mental health promotion for newcomers. These organizations may also use their cultural knowledge of the community to link individuals to more formal healthcare services.

## **2- Parent-Child-School Relationships**

### *The Unique Role of Parents*

Parental involvement and engagement in their children's education is widely accepted as a central factor in achieving educational success (Berger, 1995). However, within the education literature, there appears to be a lack of consensus about the definition and scope of 'parental involvement' and 'parental engagement' (Guo, 2012). This poses a challenge in understanding the unique role immigrant and refugee parents can play in the educational success of their children. This section will examine different definitions for parental involvement and engagement and suggest approaches that educators can use to support strong parent-child-school relationships.

The Migration Policy Institute in the United States identified parental engagement as an important component of educational success in immigrant children's literacy, especially in early learning (Park and McHugh, 2014). The report breaks down parent engagement opportunities into three categories, namely:

- **Parenting:** activities that parents undertake to promote their children's learning and healthy development.

- **Responsibility for learning outcomes:** defined by active involvement of parents in their children's formal education and early learning activities.
- **Home-school relationships:** cultivating a partnership with parents and getting them involved in decision-making and leadership roles in their children's schools.

The report goes further to emphasize that immigrant parents must acquire literacy, language proficiency, systems knowledge, and navigation skills to reap the benefits of the opportunities available to them in the host country.

While parental engagement is often incorporated into the North American education model, barriers such as economic class and race have been found to interfere with parent-school interactions (Jones, 2003; Ramirez, 2003). Class and race barriers can manifest through educator's cultural bias and negative perceptions of newcomer parents' capabilities to support student learning (Guo, 2012). Typically, the literature on newcomer parents utilizes a 'deficit model,' whereby parents are viewed as lacking the essential skills that enable the success of their children, especially when parents come from developing countries or have cultural identities that are perceived to clash with the host society (Guo, 2012).

Recognizing the value of newcomer parents' knowledge is a key consideration towards the education of their children (Jones, 2003). Immigrant and refugee parents' personal knowledge is enriched with lived experiences from various facets of life. When this knowledge is infused with a deep understanding of the education system in the host country, parents can meaningfully shape their children's school success. Additionally, recognition of parents' knowledge by educators can lead to new dynamic understandings (referred to as 'transcultural knowledge') that enrich both newcomer families and the host society (Hoerder, Hebert, & Schmitt, 2006).

### *Parental Knowledge*

Guo (2012) identified three types of parent knowledge through interviews with a diverse population of recent immigrant parents to Canada, namely: cultural knowledge, first language knowledge, and religious knowledge. These forms of knowledge were often undervalued and undermined by the school system.

1. **Cultural knowledge.** Cultural practices and behaviours were often misinterpreted by school staff. For example, a Korean student averting their eyes when speaking to a teacher was viewed as a sign of disrespect, while parents understood this behaviour as a sign of respect within their cultural worldview. Better recognition of the cultural values of newcomer families by educators can help reduce misunderstandings between home and school environments.



2. **First language knowledge.** Parents placed importance on maintaining first language knowledge for a variety of reasons, such as protecting and preserving one's culture, developing language skills that would be important in a multicultural society, and using first language as a learning tool for English language learning. The high value placed on first language learning by parents was not mirrored in the formal school system, which tends to value English language learning above all else.
3. **Religious knowledge.** Newcomer families appreciated that Canada respected their rights to practice their religion within the *Charter of Rights and Freedoms*. Religious knowledge can be an important source of confidence in students' lives. However, some parents (especially from Muslim backgrounds) felt they were disrespected and discriminated against by the school system due to their religious beliefs and practices. Religiously informed practices and beliefs such as wearing a headscarf, participating in prayer during school hours, and gender segregation and modesty were met with disapproval by some school staff and administrators.

Guo (2012) suggests that educators need to recognize parents as important sources of knowledge that can promote students' educational, social, and psychological success. To do this, educators need to understand various cultural backgrounds and critically examine their own biases and actions towards newcomers. They need to recognize the skills of multilingual students and support diverse language learning practices. Finally, they need to be able to recognize the role of religion in student's lives and prevent religious differences from being an obstacle towards student's integration within classrooms. These recommendations can apply to a variety of learning environments, both in formal school systems and community-based afterschool programs.

### *Parental Involvement vs. Parental Engagement*

Guo (2012) recommends differentiating between the terms 'parental involvement' and 'parental engagement'. Through their knowledge, newcomer parents are often engaged in their children's education in ways that are not recognized or understood by formal educators. Educators often perceive parental involvement as low because they do not participate in the school system in normative ways. For instance, these parents often do not volunteer for school events or attend school meetings (Guo, 2012). However, parents do engage with their child's education in different ways, such as passing on cultural and linguistic knowledge. Thus, Guo (2012) suggests that educators make inappropriate judgments about these parents by defining *parental engagement* in their child's education as *parental involvement* in schools. This misconception perpetuates the view that migrant parents are deficient in the skills that promote student success.

Guo (2012) notes that parents can learn strategies for parental involvement in schools by learning appropriate ways of communicating with school staff. For instance, a Korean mother notes that in her culture it is not typical for parents to initiate raising concerns with school staff (Guo, 2012). However, after learning that it was okay and often welcomed to talk to teachers, she was able to advocate on her child's behalf after her daughter experienced racism and bullying from a peer (Guo, 2012). This advocacy led to a classroom intervention on racism and anti-immigration sentiments (Guo, 2012). This anecdote suggests the need for educators to provide parents with appropriate strategies for school involvement, along with recognizing their unique knowledge and capabilities.

### **3- Barriers Within the Formal Education System**

#### *Deficit Education Models - Black Students as 'Deficient' Students*

In addition to newcomer parents, certain students in the formal education systems are often viewed as 'deficient' by educators, policy makers, and administrators. These 'deficient' students are often referred to as 'at-risk,' 'dropout,' 'delinquent,' or 'disadvantaged,' particularly those identifying as Black or racialized<sup>8</sup> (Dei, 2008). Such views can reproduce forms of privilege and power within society that work to undermine Black students' educational and life success. Codjoe (2001) suggests the underachievement of Black youth in Canada is often attributed to features of 'Black culture' within the education discourse. Such discourses fail to conceptualize how Black students can contribute their valuable insight, knowledge, and experiences within the education system, ultimately allowing educators to reproduce racist policies and practices that perpetually put these students at a disadvantage. In practice, this 'deficit' discourse has resulted in large scale streaming processes in the Toronto District School Board, whereby Black students are disproportionately streamed into applied, trades-based course upon entrance into high school, limiting their potential to pursue higher education (James and Turner, 2017). In a recent York University report titled 'Towards Race Equity in Education,' James and Turner (2017) evaluated the experience of Black students in the Greater Toronto Area. Students note that while white students in applied courses tend to be encouraged and supported academically by school staff to pursue higher learning, Black students often do not receive any encouragement or positive reinforcement, unless they were Black males in athletics (James and Turner, 2017). These narratives are alarming and suggest continued systemic racism in schools.

This section focuses on literature pertaining to Black youth (including first generation immigrant/refugee students and Canadian-born students from African or African diaspora backgrounds). While this section is not specific to newcomers, we highlight this population to

---

<sup>8</sup> The term 'racialized' acknowledges that the barriers faced by different identify groups are "rooted in the historical and contemporary racial prejudice of society." It is often used to replace the term visible minority, which implies visible difference or "weakness in power relations." (City for All Women Initiative, 2016)

capture the intersectional nature of the terms ‘immigrant and refugee’—specifically, that second, third, and fourth generation immigrants can be impacted by various social identities (whether they are related to race, gender, religion, or socio-economic status). Additionally, Black students are an important demographic group for our stakeholder, Empowerment Squared, especially with the increased influx of immigrant youth from African, Caribbean, and Central and South American backgrounds in Canada starting in 2011 (James and Turner, 2017).

### *Educator Bias*

In 1992, Ontario commissioned a report by Stephen Lewis to examine ‘race relations’ in Ontario schools (James and Turner, 2017). This report, referred to as the Lewis Report, outlined six challenges: (1) lack of racial diversity among teachers; (2) lack of Black and diasporic history reflected in the school curriculum; (3) tolerance of racist incidents in schools; (4) harsher discipline of Black students; (5) streaming of Black students into courses below their ability; and (6) Black students being discouraged from attending university (James and Turner, 2017). More than 20 years later, these issues continue to be identified in various race relation reports and research studies in Ontario and Canada at large. For instance, Codjoe (2001) interviewed Black students in Alberta and found that students reported “differential treatment by race; negative racial stereotyping; the lack of representation of Black/African perspectives, histories and experiences; low teacher expectations; and what can be described as a hostile school environment” (p.349).

Teachers’ low expectations of Black students can be a significant barrier that continually wears down students as they progress through the school system. Some participant stories from the York University report (James and Turner, 2017) are highlighted below as examples of student struggles:

- *I was appalled the first day of my son’s Grade 9 math class when the teacher expressed that not all students are capable of academic level work. Before teaching a single class he planted in their minds the idea that they should move down to the Applied if they found the work too challenging (p.47).*
- *My brother submitted an essay on Nelson Mandela and was told in front of the whole class that he was incapable of writing the essay. The teacher refused to mark it, because he said that it was not his work. The issue went to the principal and the principal sided with the teacher because he said that my brother is a class clown and called him a nuisance to the school and the community (p.48).*
- *Whenever I would raise my hand to speak, teachers would hesitate to call on me because they couldn’t quite gauge what I was going to say. More often than not, I surprised them with my grasp of class content and my understandings of the English language. Some of the things they would say were “I’m glad to see you’re keeping*

*up” or (whenever I raised my hand during discussion) “did you have a question”, as if I was constantly confused with nothing to contribute ... I find these comments demeaning and hurtful on all accounts, but on the greater scale there’s something at work here. My experience as a Hijabi is one that denotes how exactly these attitudes towards Muslim students are understood as part of the hidden curriculum (p.49).*

- *My guidance counsellor didn’t want me to apply to the University of Toronto. When I insisted, she said, ‘Don’t be discouraged when you don’t get in’ (p.52).*

These narratives suggest the devaluation of Black students’ capabilities in the eyes of educators.

The resiliency and long-term success of Black students may be promoted through anti-racism policies and acknowledging the value racialized students can bring to an academic space (James and Turner, 2017). Multiple strategies can be used to achieve this, such as moving away from Eurocentric curriculum and acknowledging diverse historical/cultural experiences, anti-racism training for school educators and administrators, and establishing platforms for Black students to share their experience to effect change (Codjoe, 2001; James and Turner, 2017).

### *School Discipline Policies*

In addition to negative perceptions of Black youth, school discipline policies that disproportionately suspend and expel Black students can create what is known as “the school to prison pipeline,” whereby students who are suspended or expelled become more likely to drop out of school and take up criminal activity (James and Turner, 2017, p.51). Zero tolerance policies in schools for ‘bad behaviour’ disproportionately affect Black youth who tend to already be discriminated against by educators (James and Turner, 2017). Using data from a TDSB cohort followed from 2006 to 2011, 42 percent of Black students had at least one suspension, while only 18 and 15 percent of white and other racialized students had at least one suspension in respective (James and Turner, 2017). Dei (2008) suggests that these statistics should be viewed as a systemic community problem rather than an individualistic behavioural problem. Additionally, James and Turner (2017) note that suspensions and expulsions do not treat the underlying issues that foster inappropriate or negative behaviours. Social supports and ‘restorative justice practices’ can help correct for negative behaviours without undermining and restricting students’ learning and academic success (James and Turner, 2017).

### *Deficit Education Models –New Immigrant Students as ‘Deficient’*

New immigrant and refugee children and youth from a variety of backgrounds and cultures experience some of the same institutional barriers that Black students face. New immigrant/refugee students are often seen “as a ‘problem’ to be fixed” rather than individuals

with strengths, skills and resilience, who should be seen as part of the solution (MacDonald, 2017). According to Naidoo (2009), the educational system commits a form of “symbolic violence” towards new immigrant students by “dismiss[ing] the discourses and practices” (p. 263) of newcomer students, thereby silencing and rendering these students invisible. As a result, many newcomer students end up internalizing the limiting messages about their identity and their academic/social standing and potential (Giroux, 1997 cited in Naidoo, 2009).

Within the classroom teachers often lack the expertise and skills to adequately address newcomer students’ learning needs, develop student competence, and integrate students’ prior knowledge, culture and linguistic resources (Au & Kawakami, 1994; Moll, Amanti, Neff & Gonzales, 1992; Ruiz-de –Velasco, Clewell & Fixx, 2001; Suarez-Orozco et.al., 2008 cited in Bang, 2011). For refugee students who have limited literacy in their own language, the transition to a new education system is even more challenging (Cairo, A., Smeny, D., Blackman, J., & Joyner, K. 2012; Roderick, Janzen, Ochocka, Westhues et. al, 2006). Students from oral cultures face significant challenges since written English is the currency of academic success (Naidoo, 2009). Yet, teachers rarely have the skills and training to develop and implement oral language teaching strategies (Naidoo, 2009). New immigrant/refugee students also experience difficulty acquiring “cultural and metaphoric competence” to make learning meaningful and relevant (Roessingh & Kover, 2003), which is an important component of academic success (Bang, 2011). Homework completion is another important feature of academic success. Research suggests a strong positive relationship between homework completion and academic success (Cooper, Robinson & Patell, 2006). Yet, when new immigrant students are unclear about their homework instructions and unable to complete the assignments, they face the cumulative effects of missed opportunities to learn, lower self-efficacy and potential academic disengagement (Bang, 2011).

### *The Role and Response of ASPs to Barriers in Formal Education*

After-school programs may be limited in their ability to dismantle deficit education models within the formal school system. However, it is important for after-school programs to consider and address the recommendations that James and Turner (2017) make to the Ministry of Education. Specifically, relevant recommendations include:

- Ensuring educator diversity by hiring educators who understand and come from students’ backgrounds and who may have lived experience;
- Teacher education in anti-colonial and critical race theory in order to ensure that educators understand their personal and systemic biases;
- Designing curriculum that reflects students’ diversity.

Additionally, it is important for ASPs to be aware of student discipline practices within local school districts so that they can develop prevention and rehabilitation programs for their students who may be affected by these policies. Developing long-term partnerships with local

school boards in order to advocate on behalf of students may also be an important role for ASPs.

#### **4- English Language Programming**

*What is English Language Programming?*

English language programming incorporates grammar, experience, and technical skills into the learning content (Thompson, 2013). There are various ways to implement English language programming that reflect different educational contexts, institutional objectives, and values and beliefs about teaching.

*Approaches to English Language Programming*

Slavin and Cheung (2005) identify several distinct approaches to English language learning. These approaches reflect the different perspectives and experiences of learners, educators, and administrators in the North American learning context. In **English immersion**, learners of the English language acquire fluency in the language without the use of their native language in lessons (Slavin & Cheung, 2005). Learners are placed in a class with English-speaking students at the start of their learning or they are phased into the English-speaking class overtime after having reached a level of English-speaking competency. The educator may be fluent in the students' native language but rarely use it in the learning process (Rolstad et al., 2005). A variation of English immersion is **submersion**, also known as **sink and swim strategies**, where learners are immersed immediately into an English-speaking environment irrespective of their prior experience with the language (Slavin & Cheung, 2005). These approaches are monolingual in nature because they de-emphasize the utility of the learners' native language in the learning process. **Bilingual English language programs**, on the other hand, offer an alternative approach to English learning that provides learners with instruction in English and in the student's native language (Slavin & Cheung, 2005). In this approach, learners use English and their native language to explore both language (i.e., English and other languages) and non-language concepts (math, science, civic engagement, etc.).

While various approaches exist, English language programming is often not based on evidence. This is because the North American English dialect is often thought to be a property of one culture, setting, and skin colour within the education discourse. This notion biases educators and decision-makers to privilege English immersion learning approaches. There can be a strong, negative bias towards bilingual programs. Some regions in the United States have policies that strongly discourage the implementation of the bilingual programs. In these areas, decision-makers and educators believe that a complete immersion in English is necessary for English-speaking fluency (Rolstad et al., 2005), and that maintaining a second language (i.e., learners' native language) prolongs the time it takes to acquire fluency in English (Slavin & Cheung, 2005). However, research shows that this belief does not reflect the cognitive

processes of language learning. Frost and associates (2013) report that the ability to learn a new language and retain native language depends on individual and environmental factors such as the approach to language learning, age of learners, and learning environment. Shanahan and Escamilla (2009) found that students who were instructed in both their native language and English had a higher reading comprehension than students who were instructed in English only. Moreover, two reviews on the impact of different English language programming found that the majority of studies favoured bilingual over English immersion approaches on student success, satisfaction, and English-language fluency (Slavin & Cheung, 2003; Rolstad et al., 2005).

Advocates of bilingual instruction emphasize the use of the native language in English language learning because of its economic and social utility to the society (Slavin & Cheung, 2005). In an increasingly globalized world, educational institutions are witnessing an increasingly diverse student population, calls for accountability for higher quality education, and innovations in teaching and learning (McDonald & Stockley, 2008). Capitalizing on the culture, language, and characteristics of learners, provides the opportunity to develop a generation of learners who are holistic, culturally-competent and tolerant to the diverse ways of knowing and being. Bilingual approaches to English programming provide a way of furthering this objective because these approaches have a more beneficial impact on learners compared to other approaches (Shanahan & Escamilla, 2009). Moreover, bilingual approaches acknowledge the importance of diversity and integration of different cultures and languages, and utilize these differences to enhance the learning environment for English language learners. Despite the overwhelming evidence for bilingual approaches, politically influenced notions about one's second language not having utility or impeding the English language learning process continues to influence decision-making.

Slavin & Cheung (2005) and Rolstad and associates (2005) provide a review of the different types of bilingual approaches. The **Transitional Bilingual Education (TBE) program** teaches language and non-language content in the students' native language until they reach a level of competency to participate in an English-only classroom. This approach adopts an individual-competency method where learners are gradually phased out of native language and phased into English-only instruction at their own pace (Rolstad et al., 2005). Slavin and Cheung (2005) divides TBE programs into two models. The **early exit model** transitions students into English-only instruction in their second or third grade whereas the **late exit model** transitions students after elementary school to ensure students have acquired and maintain mastery in their native language. **Paired bilingual programs** allow learners to be instructed in both English and their native language simultaneously but at different times of the day (Slavin & Cheung, 2005). Finally, **heritage language programs** adopt a more philosophical approach to English language learning where the emphasis is "to preserve or show respect for a given language" (Slavin & Cheung, 2005, p. 251). Heritage language programs are facilitated by community members who have connection to a particular language

or culture with the objective of maintaining the practices, values and beliefs while also working towards English fluency. This approach maintains the culture and traditions of the student's native language. In other words, instead of the language being the focus of instruction, it is the medium through which learning occurs.

### *English Language Educators*

The teaching orientation of English language teachers impacts English language fluency in learners. The philosophical views of some teachers may reflect the power structure inherent in society by propagating the same inequities in the English learning environment. In some contexts, teachers may attribute the learners' inability to read or write in English to their cultural and language backgrounds (Shanahan & Escamilla, 2009). Such beliefs are derived from ideological and political debates favouring one set of values, beliefs and practices for English language programming (Guo, 2015). This discourse views literacy as a skill that learners must acquire through the assistance of native English language speakers. This perspective, however, may de-emphasize the influence of contextual factors such as the educational institution, community culture, and safety of the community, on the English language learning process. Many teachers are unaware of how these orientations may adversely influence student-learning outcomes (Atkinson, 2014).

One consequence of these orientations is the **Native Speaker Fallacy** where decision-makers, teachers, and learners believe that native English speakers represent the language and its culture more accurately than non-native speakers (Huang & Varghese, 2015). This bias towards non-native speakers comes from the society's privileging of white Anglo-Saxon values, beliefs, and principles concerning English language learning (Guo, 2015). Moreover, this concept may significantly influence the hiring practices of educational institutions where the preference is given to native English-speakers of Anglo-Saxon origin (Huang & Varghese, 2015). For example, numerous organizations in Western Europe, Australia and North America provide many opportunities for native English language speakers to teach the English language to elementary-level students around the world (e.g., <https://www.teachaway.com>). Opportunities, supports and resources for teachers from countries in North America and Europe are higher than for the same teachers in other countries that may not be considered as "normal" English (ex. having different English language dialects). The native speaker fallacy may implicitly influence the views, perspectives, and practices of implementing effective English language programs. However, this approach may confer significant disadvantages to the English language learning process.

Zhang and Zhan (2014) suggests that non-native English educators may have vital insight into the cognitive processes of English language learning because they went through the process themselves. This first-hand experience can be a valuable resource to English language learning, which may only be utilized by non-native speakers. By hiring non-native speakers to



teach the English language, they can incorporate their experiences and understanding of English language learning from a non-native perspective, and in turn, better reflect and address the cognitive processes, mistakes, and shortcuts learners can use to acquire English language fluency. This assertion provides a strong argument for integrating non-native educators into the English language learning practice as teachers, but also in the politics and decision-making process of English language programming (Guo, 2015). Bilingual approaches, which are the more favourable approaches to English learning, require engagement of educators who represent the multiple cultures of English language learners. Given the diverse student body and calls for accountability for higher quality education (McDonald & Stockley, 2008), the native speaker fallacy discourages non-native speakers from engaging in English language teaching, and becomes a significant obstacle to supporting a learning environment that is more conducive to achieving English language learning outcomes.

### *English Language Learners*

Today, there are more non-native English speakers than native speakers worldwide (Ricento, 2005). Comparing non-native and native speakers, Shanahan and Escamilla (2009) found that their English grammar skills are similar in both groups of individuals. Similar proportions of native and non-native English speakers are classified as poor readers, which may suggest that having fluency in another language does not impede English language learning (Shanahan & Escamilla, 2009).

Barriers to English language learning include low socioeconomic status (Shanahan & Escamilla, 2009), students' perceptions of learning (Atkinson, 2014), being placed in remedial English language programs (Ling et al., 2014), prolonged unsupervised time (Riggs & Greenberg, 2004), negative self-views (Shanahan & Escamilla, 2009), and "high rates of family mobility; changing patterns in parental employment; larger, more heterogeneous schools; media themes of violence and drug use; and the deterioration and disorganization of neighbourhoods and schools" (Riggs & Greenberg, 2004, p. 177).

Facilitators of English language learning, on the other hand, include the congruency in language, culture and behaviours between the learners and educators (Lee & Hawkins, 2008), positive, safe neighbourhood communities (Téllez & Waxman, 2010), and access to community-based ASPs that facilitate English language learning (Téllez & Waxman, 2010). In particular, the congruency between culture, language and experiences of English teachers and learners facilitates "a sense of trust and empowerment among youth" (Gast et al., 2017, p. 98) that may be crucial to English language learning. This is especially impactful when supported by peers because "interactions with peers increased learners' capacity for oral language skills" (Téllez & Waxman, 2010, p. 113). Peer feedback may be an important platform for enhancing the way in which learners acquire English language fluency. Designing an English language

program that provides a platform for peers to exchange knowledge, skills, and attributes relevant to English language may be conducive to English language learning.

### *After-School Programs as English Language Providers*

Programs that occur outside the usual schooling curricula, such as ASPs, can provide an appropriate and cost-effective avenue for delivering English language programming using different frameworks and methods than the formal school system. For students, ASPs are a source of belongingness, empowerment, vocational development, employment opportunities, and recreation (Riggs & Greenberg, 2004; Gast et al., 2017). ASPs that focus on learning the English language can enhance their students' language fluency and augment the current English language programming in the schools' curricula. These augmented approaches can be utilized to increase the efficiency of English language learning (Téllez & Waxman, 2010). Moreover, since academic and language content may be helpful during childhood development years for learners of the English language (Riggs & Greenberg, 2004), allocating more resources to focus on English language learning in ASPs may provide a more holistic and comfortable pathway for learners to acquire English language fluency. However, attendance and retention rates, which are related to engagement in school activities are an ongoing concern for ASPs (Riggs & Greenberg, 2004). Attendance and retention in ASPs are influenced by the family structure (e.g., parental employment, income, and ethnicity) (Riggs & Greenberg, 2004), safety of the community environment (Riggs & Greenberg, 2004), and the teaching strategies and philosophy of English teachers (Téllez & Waxman, 2010). However, ASPs are often faced with funding constraints and bureaucracy of schooling systems (Téllez & Waxman, 2010; Gast et al., 2017) making innovations and change-making difficult in the context of ASPs.

## **RESPONDING TO CHALLENGES USING SMALL ETHNO-CULTURAL ASPs**

The challenges and gaps in the education system discussed above can be responded to within community contexts through small, ethno-cultural after school programs. While after-school programs and extra-curricular activities provide academic benefits to a range of children and youth (Springer & Diffly, 2012), some evidence shows that economically disadvantaged students (Marshall et al., 1997; NICHD Early Child Care Research Network, 2004; Vendell & Corasaniti, 1998 cited in Mahoney, Lord & Carryl, 2005), those at-risk for academic failure (Girod, Martineau & Zhao, 2004; Cosden, Morrison, Gutierrez & Brown, 2004), and English as Second Language students (Cosden, Morrison, Albansese & Macias, 2001 cited in Cosden et al., 2004) and new immigrant youth (Cosden, Morrison, Gutierrez & Brown, 2004; Dotterer,

McHale & Crouter, 2007; Eccles, Barber, Stone & Hunt, 2003) benefit greatly from participating in after-school programs. These findings are particularly relevant for new immigrant and refugee students as many also live in poverty and struggle academically.

After-school programs that target new immigrant and refugee students have the potential to provide a physically and culturally safe space for students to get help with homework completion, to gain new skills, and work with peers and tutors who have lived experience of migration and resettlement. Cultural safety can be understood as “the outcome of interactions where individuals experience their cultural identity and way of being as having been respected or, at least, not challenged or harmed.” (Ball, n.d.).<sup>9</sup> A key feature of cultural safety is that program participants identify what is deemed culturally safe rather than service providers (Ball, n.d.). After-school programs that work from a culturally safe approach have the potential to not only provide important academic support but to also help students navigate and negotiate limiting identities. Recent case studies by MacDonald (2017) and Naidoo (2009) highlight the ways in which after-school programs for new immigrant and refugee students can provide a supportive environment to help students to produce a more nuanced and positive identity as bilingual or multi-lingual learners. “Through parody, multilingualism and storytelling” new immigrant students, in MacDonald’s (2017) study, were able to re-position themselves and their communities in positive ways. In doing so, they were able to acknowledge the contradictory nature of English language as a source of power, possibility, and regulation as well as a potential site for resistance and for renegotiating identity.

Providing a culturally safe and supportive environment for new immigrant and refugee students raises an important policy issue about who is best positioned to provide additional support to newcomer students. While schools have access to resources and trained teachers, the school system is unable to meet the cultural and academic needs of newcomer students (Au & Kawakami, 1994; Moll, Amanti, Neff & Gonzales, 1992; Ruiz-de –Velasco, Clewell & Fisx, 2001; Suarez-Orozco et.al, 2008 cited in Bang, 2011; MacDonald, 2017; Naidoo, 2009; Jimeno, Kילו, Urquhart, 2010). A recent Ottawa-based report entitled, *Best Practices in Supporting the Integration of Immigrant Families Through Small Ethno-cultural Organizations*, (Jimeno, Kילו, Urquhart, 2010) argues that small ethno-cultural organizations have an important role to play in supporting the community. The report calls for the need to

---

<sup>9</sup> Cultural safety is a term that was first developed in New Zealand by Irihapeti Ramsden (2002) within the context of nursing practices with the Maori community. Cultural safety differs significantly from cultural competence in that the emphasis is placed on acknowledging power and privilege and giving voice to those from non-dominant cultures to identify what is culturally safe. More recently cultural safety has been taken up in other countries and used frequently in work with Indigenous communities, but is a useful concept for those from non-dominant cultures. It has also been applied to different sectors, including education. See Indigenous Cultural Safety Learning Series (n.d). Retrieved from <http://www.icscollaborative.com/webinars/cultural-safety-in-the-classroom-addressing-anti-indigenous-racism-in-education-settings>. For a general understanding of cultural safety see: Sharon Yeung (2016). Conceptualizing cultural safety: Definitions and applications of safety in health care for indigenous mothers in Canada, *Journal for Social Thought*, 1. 1-13

carefully question “best practices” literature by asking **whose voice is being represented** in best practices literature? In other words, do best practices reproduce dominant values and/or unintentionally reinforce discriminatory practices? (Jimeno, Kilty, Urquhart, 2010). The report highlights the important role that small ethno-cultural organizations play in helping new immigrants integrate into the host community. The benefits of small ethno-cultural organizations include the ability to:

- respond to the cultural needs of the community and help foster pride in the home culture;
- work in partnership and link members with the mainstream services;
- provide safe, accessible, welcoming and non-judgmental services;
- provide strong outreach to the community;
- work from a holistic approach to support the individual within the context of the family and the broader community;
- recruit highly motivated volunteers, who often have lived experience;
- develop and support social capital within ethno-cultural communities;
- organizations, through their activities, play a key role in the development and support of social capital (Jimeno, Kilty, Urquhart, 2010).

These findings suggest that small ethno-cultural organizations with experience supporting newcomer students are well positioned to meet the ongoing needs of newcomer students and their families. However, small ethno-cultural organizations often struggle with limited funding and resources. Additional resources and funding would help to increase the benefits to this community as small ethno-cultural organizations generally lack the level of ongoing funding and resources found in large, mainstream organizations.

In the section below, we outline six key recommendations for small ethno-cultural ASPs to respond the challenges described in the previous section.

## **RECOMMENDATIONS**

### **Recommendation 1: Develop programs and strategies to promote mental health resilience in newcomer youth.**

This should be done by examining the family, school, community, and societal factors that protect against or put youth at risk for poor educational and life success outcomes. These factors will vary based on organizational contexts. Some programs and activities that promote resilience are explored in the ‘Promising Practices’ section of this report. Additionally, schools and afterschool programs interested in improving student’s success need to examine their level of resiliency to effectively tackle the mental health challenges of diverse populations (in terms of their mandates, objectives, and human resources).

### **Recommendation 2: As educators, recognize parental knowledge and the variety of ways newcomer parents can contribute to the success of their children. Avoid the use of deficit models when examining parental knowledge and help develop strategies for parental involvement.**

Parents play an important role in the success of their children. Newcomer parents tend to support the development of their children by transferring cultural knowledge, first language knowledge, and religious knowledge. These forms of knowledge should not be disregarded by educators as irrelevant, unimportant, or in opposition to Western values. Instead, educators need to reassess their own biases and recognize the importance of these forms of knowledge. Additionally, educators should not confuse parental engagement with parental involvement, since many newcomer parents engage with their children's education, but may not involve themselves with the school system. Educators need to support parents of diverse backgrounds to navigate the educational system.

### **Recommendation 3: Understand that the formal education system can undermine the academic and life success of new immigrants/refugees, along with Black and racialized youth.**

While it may be difficult for ASPs to alter formal education practices, they can take actions to support, educate, and motivate Black and racialized students to pursue academic courses and higher education. This can be done by designing a curriculum that reflects students’ backgrounds, ensuring educator diversity, and supporting students as they navigate through ineffective school practices and policies (i.e. suspension and expulsion). Building relationships with local school boards will also be important for sharing knowledge and advocating on students’ behalf.

#### **Recommendation 4: Implement Bilingual English Language Programming in After-School Programs**

Many English language programs within the formal education system adopt an English immersion approach to learning and use teachers who are considered native to the English language. However, research suggests that bilingual language learning approaches are superior to other language learning approaches and students benefit in a variety of ways beyond the formal acquisition of a new language. Engaging non-native English language tutors and staff provides the added benefit of learning from someone who may have a better understanding of the experiences learning the English language. This first-hand experience and insight about language learning strategies can be shared with others, which may improve the learning process of other learners.

#### **Recommendation 5: Create After-School Programs that are Physically Safe and Reflect the Cultural and Academic Needs of the Community.**

In creating after-school programs that reflect the safety, academic and cultural needs of students, it is important to recognize the skills and strengths of small ethno-cultural organizations to meet the needs of the community. Developing opportunities for students and parents to identify ‘culturally safe’ practices and to provide input into program design and activities can help to ensure that programs reflect the needs of the community. Since homework completion is positively associated with academic success it is beneficial to provide homework help several times a week. Offering a range of activities to build self-esteem, self-confidence, and motivation has also been linked to academic achievement.<sup>10</sup> Implementing creative, engaging and culturally appropriate activities can help students improve literacy skills while also reclaiming positive identities for themselves and their communities.

#### **Recommendation 6: Develop Deliberate Partnerships with Key Stakeholders**

Establishing partnerships with universities may help small, financially limited, after-school programs gain access to in-kind resources such as technology, student volunteer time and space, and research support. Masters and PhD students may be a potential, in-kind, resource for providing training to volunteers on topics such as anti-racism, decolonizing practices, cultural safety, or metacognitive learning strategies<sup>11</sup> for English language learners. Developing

---

<sup>10</sup> See Beck, 1999; Cosden, Morrison, Albanese & Macias, 2001; Halpern cited in Cosden et al., 2004; Diffly (2012). Also see Smith, Witherspoon & Osgood, 2017 for a discussion on after-school programs and positive youth development.

<sup>11</sup> Meta-cognitive learning refers to thinking about thinking or understanding how one learns. Learners who use metacognitive learning strategies know what to do when they don't know. This is an interesting concept to consider for newcomer students but is outside of the scope of this literature review. For info on meta-cognitive learning for second language students see: Neil J. Anderson (2004). *The role of metacognitive in second language teaching and learning*. *Eric Clearing House on Languages and Linguistics*. Also see: Alda Walqui (2006).

partnerships with outside organizations can help newcomer students/families access additional services and navigate complicated systems. At the same time, establishing partnerships with organizations that have expertise in certain areas (ie. mental health or youth employment) may result in new collaborative projects that are better able to meet the complex and diverse needs associated with newcomer students' academic and long-term social/economic success.

## APPENDIX

### Promising Practices

This section offers an environmental scan of promising programs and activities that were offered in a school or afterschool context to support the development and success of newcomer children and youth. The purpose of this section is to describe the content of these programs, rather than assess their scientific or methodological rigour. The intent of this section is to provide organizations interested in adopting new programs and activities with an overview of potential programs that can be implemented within their organizational contexts. We did not assess the scientific rigour of evaluations, but briefly described outcomes. ASPs should keep their capacity in mind when considering implementation of these or other activities.

#### 1) Art-based therapy:

Artistic expression is thought to reduce feelings of trauma associated with the migration experience (Rousseau et al., 2008). While art-based therapy has strong theoretical foundations, it may lack generalizability in different populations (Ontario Centre of Excellence for Child and Youth Mental Health, 2012). The art programs listed below were designed by art therapists with the contexts, age groups, ethnicity, and experiences of the intervention population in mind. They are highlighted here as examples, but may not apply to different populations or organizational contexts.

**Sandplay:** Rousseau and colleagues (2008) developed a sandplay program for preschools in Montreal, Quebec. The program consists of 10 workshops over 4 months. It was initially developed after the 2004 tsunami to help kids with Southeast Asian backgrounds process their emotions. Children use sand trays to play by themselves or with others. They use figurines to represent themes like family, siblings, language, and seasons. Children are encouraged to share stories with the support of their teacher and a trained art therapist. Evaluation for this program was observational. Children used figurines to tell stories and symbolically represent the tsunami. Processing emotions through play and discussion was thought to improve resiliency at an early age.

**Narrative-based workshop:** Rousseau and colleagues (2005) developed a narrative workshop for immigrant children (age 7 to 13) in Montreal, Quebec. Workshops took place in school and were led by an art therapist and psychologist. ‘The Trip’ was a workshop that allowed students to tell the story of a migration experience from the point of view of a character (human or nonhuman). ‘Patchwork’ was a workshop that allowed students to discuss myths and stories from their family or cultural background in order to explore non-dominant viewpoints. Children in classrooms that delivered the workshop were compared to children in classrooms that did not receive the intervention with the school. Researchers report that students who attended the workshops experienced a reduction in social withdrawal and



bullying behaviours, increased feelings of popularity and satisfaction, and improvement in self-esteem (in boys).

**Playback theatre:** Rousseau and colleagues (2008) also developed a theatre-based program for highschool students (aged 12 to 18) in Montreal, Quebec. Playback theatre is a form of improv theatre that is thought to foster greater understanding and sense of belongingness among peers. One individual recites a story while their peers act out the story, essentially ‘playing it back’ to the storyteller. In 12 weekly sessions, each student was asked to tell their migration story with the help of an assigned play director. Peers listened to the story and acted out scenarios, either choosing to represent the story as it was told or by altering the story “to empower the storyteller...by changing the meaning, building a relationship, or creating an opening or dialogue with others that was missing from the original story” (Rousseau et al., 2008, p.540). Sessions were supported by teachers, who were also allowed to contribute their personal migration stories. Students who participated in the program were compared on behavioural, self-esteem, and emotional factors before and after the intervention. While there was no change in behavioural or self-esteem variables, on average students reported feeling fewer ‘impairment’ symptoms, such as feeling that difficulties are distressing or feeling interfered by home life, friendships, and leisure activities.

**Arts-based literacy:** Lozenski and colleagues (2012) developed a literacy program for Somali immigrant youth called ‘Pen 2 Paper 2 Power’ in Minnesota, United States. In the program, young Somali women identified spoken word poetry, hip-hop culture, and their own religious cultural values as important pedagogies in their lives. Using this information, program developers implemented weekly sessions that began with an ‘open mic’ component where students shared a song, poem, or rap with their peers. This was followed by an interactive discussion about the content of the shared material. Students were instructed to write about the themes discussed in each session using a particular genre of writing (essay, poem, short story, rap). This writing process was to help relate the themes discussed to the student’s personal experiences and emotions. The writing was then shared in a ‘closing mic’ session. Evaluation of the program was observational, based on how students understood and negotiated their cultural and personal identities.

**Arts-based hope program:** Yohani and colleagues (2008) created an arts based program for youth in an after school program in an urban midwestern Canadian city. Immigrant and refugee students (aged 8 to 18) were asked to take photographs of things they were hopeful about. Students shared stories of what made them hopeful and spoke to their unique migration experiences. Following the activity, group interviews with parents, cultural brokers, and program staff helped relay some of the expressions of hope in student’s lives to important people in their home and community who can help support their expressions of hope.

## **2) Cognitive Behaviour Therapy (CBT):**

CBT can be a group or individual therapy session where a trained therapist helps students understand negative patterns of thinking and behaving in order to develop more effective coping strategies (Sullivan and Simonson, 2016). A variety of school-based mental health programs use a CBT approach to improve PTSD, depressive, and anxiety related symptoms in newcomer children (Sullivan and Simonson, 2016). Below we highlight one example of CBT program that can be adapted and delivered by non-professionals.

**Group therapy:** Ehntholt et al. (2005) evaluated a six-week group therapy program for refugee and asylum-seeking youth aged 11 to 15 in the United Kingdom. Sessions were delivered by a clinical psychology trainee and are described below. After six weeks, the children that received the intervention demonstrated a decline in PTSD symptoms, behavioural difficulties, and emotional symptoms. However, this decline was not apparent 2 months after the initial evaluation (may be due to small sample size of 15 students).

- Session 1: students discussed newspaper/magazine photos that had war related images in a group setting and were asked to draw or write about their experiences. Students were asked to draw and envision a 'safe place' as a coping technique.
- Session 2: students discussed intrusive thoughts and images and were taught to practice imagining their 'safe place'
- Session 3: students discussed their bad dreams, made dream catchers, and developed nightly routines and relaxation activities
- Session 4: students discussed reactions to stress and practiced relaxation techniques
- Session 5: students discussed events/items/experiences that triggered trauma and practiced techniques to reduce triggers
- Session 6: students discussed activities they enjoy doing and developed weekly plans to schedule these activities

## **3) Peer outreach:**

Peer outreach is defined in numerous ways in the literature. Broadly, it is defined as a helping relationship between two or more individuals that may be one-directional or reciprocal. It may include peers as providers of mainstream mental health services or peers as mutual facilitators/supports. Peer support can have benefits for those receiving the service and those delivering it. Peers may be formally trained or be a lay support system. Below is one example

of a program that has been implemented in a school based after school settings. It should be noted that while peer support programs exist for immigrant and refugee populations, we did not find studies evaluating their impact. Activities and objectives of peer outreach programs need to be adapted to program contexts, with a consideration of the skills and resources available to program developers.

**Anti-stigma program for mental health:** Murman and colleagues (2014) developed the ‘Let’s Erase the Stigma’ or LETS program in Los Angeles, California for high school students in an after-school program context. The program seeks to reduce mental health stigma through various peer-led activities. Students are supported by a teacher or advisor and are required to take turns leading discussions. Program participants attended 1-hour weekly sessions after formal educational hours. Activities include the creation of a stigma box, guest speakers, and perspective taking exercises. These are described in full below. Researchers report that students who participated in LETS had more positive attitudes about mental health and had reduced mental illness stigma and prejudice. Students also demonstrated greater knowledge about mental illness and self-reported taking specific actions to reduce mental health stigma.

- The stigma box is where students write down topics related to mental health that they would like to discuss. Students take turns leading the discussion.
- Guest speakers in the community or previous club members are invited to openly discuss their experiences with mental health or stigmatization.
- Perspective-taking exercises allow students to partake in anonymous storytelling. Students will read or act out a story of a peer to understand a different perspective. For example, if a student writes about depression, their peer may act out the feeling of depression by carrying heavy objects to convey the feeling of being weighed down.

#### **4) Links to formal counselling services:**

While formal counselling services are underutilized by immigrants and refugees (Shakya et al. 2010), ‘cultural brokers’ can act as culturally relevant links to formal counselling services (Yohani, 2013). Cultural brokers help strengthen relationships between students, families, and schools (Yohani, 2013). Staff administering after school programs can be thought of as ‘brokers’ because they orient newcomer students to the school environment and mediate between the learning expectations of student’s families/cultures and the expectations of the school environment (Yohani, 2013). Thus, after school programs may want to collaborate and partner with existing mental health services in their community.

**Educational cultural broker program:** Through focus groups, Yohani (2013) examined the experiences of educational cultural brokers in Edmonton, Alberta. Cultural brokers were between the ages of 30-57, had 2-8 years of experience, and had different national and cultural backgrounds (Sudan, Somalia, Lebanon, Canada, Afghanistan, and Kurdistan). Yohani (2013) suggests that cultural brokers can be appropriate mental health advocates for newcomer students if they understand the student's cultural background and their pre/post migration experiences. Cultural broker programs can be contrasted with the SWIS program (Settlement Workers in Schools), which only provides settlement services and may fail to conceptualize different aspects of a student's life that affect their integration into a new school environment. Brokers can also foster parental involvement in schools by explaining school processes and how parents can voice concerns.

### **5) Technology enabled after-school programs**

Some early research suggests that after-school programs that include technology are particularly attractive to teens (Blumenfeld, Soloway, Marx, Krajcik, Guzdial, & Palincsar, 1991; Kafai, 1996; Papert, 1991, cited in Girod, Martineau & Zhao, 2004). In today's technology-oriented world, the use of technology would likely be attractive to younger learners as well.

- The 5<sup>th</sup> Dimensions program paired games, puzzles and other fun activities with computer technology in the after-school program (Girod, Martineau & Zhao, 2004).
- The KCLICK after-school program at the Media Lab at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology in Boston provided teens with the opportunity to use their creativity, engage in large-scale projects using robotics, video animations, music, simulations, and presentation tools. They also created webpages, digital films, producing and editing videos, and played games. Through this experience students contributed to newsletters, participated in robotics competitions, and some were employed in the local community to help maintain computer systems (Resnick & Rusk, 1996, cited in Girod, Martineau & Zhao, 2004).

### **6) Integrating technology and play-based learning: Using portraits, photoshop and visual literacy practices – (See Honeyford & Boyd, 2015)**

This 12-week university-based after-school literacy program for middle school immigrant students uses play as its' central medium of learning. The program is based on the idea that "play-based learning leads to greater social, emotional and academic success" (Council of Ministers of Education in Canada, 2010 cited in Honeyford & Boyd, 2015) and that literacy "is meaningful in, through, and because of our interactions with others" (Gee & Hayes, 2011, cited in Honeyford & Boyd, 2015). Working collaboratively students used a variety of play-based

and visual learning techniques to explore meaning-making and accomplish seven Learning Quests related their own learning strategies and identity. In the process of exploring visual literacy as a medium of learning, students also engaged in written literacy that was purposeful and helped them accomplish the seven Learning Quests.

The quests include:

1. Who am I as a learner? How do I learn?
2. What is a self-portrait? How do I represent myself as a learner?
3. How are portraits composed? How do I edit my portrait?
4. How can I tell a story about learning through images and words?
5. How can I describe what I see in others' images?
6. How do I choose the right words for my image?
7. How do I want to publicly represent my image?

### **Links to Additional Resources**

During our literature search, we found some comprehensive resources assessing best practices and evaluation for after-school programs. These resources are geared towards the general population and are derived from U.S. based research bodies. Thus, prior to implementation of the practices discussed in these links, ASPs should consider their program context and goals.

- Huang, D., Cho, J., Mostafavi, S., & Nam, H. (2008). What works? Common practices in high functioning afterschool programs: The National Partnership for Quality Afterschool Learning final report. Austin, TX: SEDL.. Can be accessed from <http://www.sedl.org/afterschool/commonpractices.pdf>
- Little, P. M.D., Wimer, C. , & Weiss, H. B. (2008). After school programs in the 21st century: Their potential and what it takes to achieve it. Issues and Opportunities in Out-of-School Time Evaluation Brief No. 10. Cambridge, MA: Harvard Family Research Project. Can be accessed from <https://larrycuban.files.wordpress.com/2016/08/ostissuebrief10-1.pdf>
- Harris, E. (2011). Afterschool Evaluation 101: How to Evaluate an Expanded Learning Program. Harvard Family Research Project. Can be accessed from <http://www.hfpg.org/files/2214/5194/1686/Afterschool.Eval101-120911-FINAL.pdf>
- Huang, D., & Dietel, R. (2011). Making afterschool programs better. (CRESST Policy Brief). Los Angeles, CA: University of California. Can be accessed from [https://cresst.org/wp-content/uploads/huang\\_MAPB\\_v5.pdf](https://cresst.org/wp-content/uploads/huang_MAPB_v5.pdf)

## REFERENCES

- Anisef, P., Brown, R.S., Phythian, K., Sweet, R., & Walters, D. (2010) Early school leaving among immigrants in Toronto secondary schools, *Canadian Review of Sociology* 47(2),103-128.
- Atkinson, M. (2014). Reframing literacy in adult ESL programs: Making the case for the inclusion of identity. *Literacy and Numeracy Studies*, 22(1), 3-20.
- Ball, J. (n.d.), School of child and youth care: ECDIP cultural safety handout, University of Victoria. Retrieved from <http://www.ecdip.org/docs/pdf/Cultural%20Safety%20Poster.pdf>
- Bang, H.J. (2011). Newcomer immigrant students' perspectives on what affects their homework experiences. *Journal of Educational Research*, 104, 408-419.
- Barnett, W. S. (1995). Long-term effects of early childhood programs on cognitive and school outcomes. *The Future of Children*, 5(3), 25-50. <http://dx.doi.org/10.2307/1602366>
- Beiser, M., Zilber, N., Simich, L., Youngmann, R., Zohar, A. H., Taa, B., & Hou, F. (2011). Regional effects on the mental health of immigrant children: results from the new Canadian children and youth study. *Health Place*, 17(3), 822-829.
- Berger, E.H. (1995). *Parents as partners in education: Families and schools working together*. Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice Hall.
- Cairo, A., Sumney, D., Blackman, J., & Joyner, K. (2012). F.A.C.E. time (families and communities educating): Accommodating newcomers in elementary school. *Multicultural Education*, 19(2), 55-58.
- Canadian Pediatric Society. (2016). *Mental health promotion*. Retrieved from <https://www.kidsnewtocanada.ca/mental-health/mental-health-promotion>
- Children and Youth Study (NCCYS). *Health & place*, 17(3), 822–829. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.healthplace.2011.03.005>
- City for All Women Initiative. (2016). Racialized people: Equity & inclusion lens, *Snapshot*. Ottawa: City of Ottawa. Accessed from [http://www.cawivt.org/sites/default/files/publications/racialized-people-snapshot\\_en.pdf](http://www.cawivt.org/sites/default/files/publications/racialized-people-snapshot_en.pdf)
- Codjoe, H. M. (2001). Fighting a “public enemy” of Black academic achievement-The persistence of racism and the schooling experiences of Black students in Canada. *Race Ethnicity and Education*, 4(4), 343–375. <https://doi.org/10.1080/13613320120096652>

- Corak, M. (2011). Age at immigration and the education outcomes of children. Statistics Canada. Accessed from <http://www.statcan.gc.ca/pub/11f0019m/11f0019m2011336-eng.pdf>
- Cosden, M., Morrison, G., Gutierrez, L., & Brown, M. (2004). The effects of homework programs and after-school activities on school success. *Theory Into Practice*, 43(3), 220-226.
- Davy, D. (2014). Kids, poverty, and mental health: children of war. CBC News, Feb 20, 2014. Retrieved from <http://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/hamilton/kids-poverty-and-mental-health-children-of-war-1.2543338>
- Dehghanpisheh, E. (1987). An overview of undergraduate ESL program models: A comparison of administrative policies for international students. *TESOL Quarterly*, 21(3), 570-577.
- Dei, G. J. S. (2008). Schooling as community: Race, schooling, and the education of African youth. *Journal of Black Studies*, 38(3), 346–366. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0021934707306570>
- Ehnholt, K. A., Smith, P. A., & Yule, W. (2005). School-based cognitive-behavioural therapy group intervention for refugee children who have experienced war-related trauma. *Clinical Child Psychology and Psychiatry*, 10(2), 235–250. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1359104505051214>
- Elash, A. (2016). Syrian refugees in Canada face their first month without state money. PRI's The World, Dec 26, 2016. Retrieved from: <https://www.pri.org/stories/2016-12-21/syrian-refugees-canada-face-their-first-month-without-state-money>.
- Ellis, B. H., MacDonald, H. Z., Lincoln, A. K., & Cabral, H. J. (2008). Mental health of Somali adolescent refugees: the role of trauma, stress, and perceived discrimination. *Journal of Consulting and Clinical Psychology*, 76(2), 184–193. <https://doi.org/10.1037/0022-006X.76.2.184>
- Fazel, M., Reed, R. V, Panter-Brick, C., & Stein, A. (2012). Mental health of displaced and refugee children resettled in high-income countries: risk and protective factors. *The Lancet*, 379(9812), 266–282. [https://doi.org/10.1016/S0140-6736\(11\)60051-2](https://doi.org/10.1016/S0140-6736(11)60051-2)
- Frost, R., Siegelman, N., Narkiss, A., & Afek, L. (2013). What predicts successful literacy acquisition in a second language? *Psychological Science*, 24(7), 1243-1252.
- Gast, M. J., Okamoto, D. G., & Feldman, V. (2017). “We only speak english here”: English dominance in language diverse, immigrant after-school programs. *Journal of Adolescent Research*, 32(1), 94-121.

- Georgiades, K., Boyle, M. H., & Duku, E. (2007). Contextual influences on children's mental health and school performance: the moderating effects of family immigrant status. *Child Development*, 78(5), 1572–1591. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1467-8624.2007.01084.x>
- Gibb, T. L. (2008). Bridging Canadian adult second language education and essential skills policies: Approach with caution. *Adult Education Quarterly*, 58(4), 318-334.
- Girod, M., Martineau, J., & Zhao, Y. (2004). After-school computer clubhouses and at-risk teens. *American Secondary Education*, 32(3), 63-76.
- Guo, Y. (2012). Diversity in public education: Acknowledging immigrant parent knowledge. *Canadian Journal of Education / Revue Canadienne De L'éducation*, 35(2), 120-140. Retrieved from <http://www.jstor.org/stable/canajeducrevucan.35.2.120>
- Guo, Y. (2015). Language policies and programs for adult immigrants in Canada: Deconstructing discourses of integration. *New Directions for Adult and Continuing Education*, 2015(146), 41-51.
- Hamilton, H. A., Noh, S., & Adlaf, E. M. (2009). Adolescent risk behaviours and psychological distress across immigrant generations. *Canadian Journal of Public Health = Revue Canadienne de Sante Publique*, 100(3), 221–225.
- Hoerder, D., Hébert, Y., & Schmitt, I. (Eds.). (2006). *Negotiating transcultural lives: Belongings and social capital among youth in comparative perspectives*. Toronto: University of Toronto Press.
- Honeyford, M., & Boyd, K. (2015). Learning through play: Portraits, photoshop, and visual literacy practices. *Journal of Adolescent & Adult Literacy*, 59 (1), 63-73.
- Huang, I. C., & Varghese, M. M. (2015). Toward a composite, personalized, and institutionalized teacher identity for non-native English speakers in US secondary ESL programs. *Critical Inquiry in Language Studies*, 12(1), 51-76.
- Hynes, K., & Sanders, F. (2011). Diverging experiences during out-of-school times: The race gap in exposure to after-school programs. *Journal of Negro Education*, 80(4), 464-476.
- James, C.E. & Turner, T. (2017). *Towards race equity in education: The schooling of Black students in the Greater Toronto Area*. Toronto, ON: York University. Accessed from <http://edu.yorku.ca/files/2017/04/Towards-Race-Equity-in-Education-April-2017.pdf>
- Jimeno, C., Kילו, M. & Urquhart, D. (2010). *Best practices in supporting the integration of immigrant families through small ethno-cultural organizations*. Ottawa, ON: Social Planning Council Ottawa.



- Jones, T. G. (2003). Contributions of Hispanic parents' perspectives to teacher preparation. *The School Community Journal*, 13(2), 73-96.
- Lee, S. J., & Hawkins, M. R. (2008). "Family is here": Learning in community-based after-school programs. *Theory into Practice*, 47(1), 51-58.
- Library of Parliament. (2007). *Canada's immigration and refugee system. Topical information for parliamentarians*. Retrieved from <https://bdp.parl.ca/content/lop/ResearchPublications/tips/PDF/tip14-e.pdf>
- Ling, G., Wolf, M. K., Cho, Y., & Wang, Y. (2014). English as a second language programs for matriculated students in the United States: An exploratory survey and some issues. *ETS Research Report Series*, 2014(2), 1-19.
- Lozenski, B., & Smith, C. (2012). Pen 2 paper 2 power: Lessons from an arts-based literacy program serving Somali immigrant youth. *Equity & Excellence in Education*, 45(4), 596–611. <https://doi.org/10.1080/10665684.2012.717482>
- MacDonald, M.T. (2017). "My little english": A case study of decolonial perspectives on discourse in an after-school program for refugee youth, *Community Literacy Journal*, 11(2), 16-29.
- Mahoney, J.L., Lord, H., & Carryl, E. (2005). An ecological analysis of after-school program participation and development of academic performance and motivational attributes for disadvantaged children. *Child Development*, 76(4), pp. 811-825.
- Maynard, B.R., Kremer, K.P., Polanin, J.R., Vaughan, M.G., & Sarteschi, C.M. (2015). Effects of after-school programs on attendance and externalizing behaviour with primary and secondary school students: A systematic review and meta-analysis. *Society for Research in Educational Effectiveness*, (Spring).
- McDonald, J., & Stockley, D. (2008). Pathways to the profession of educational development: An international perspective. *International Journal for Academic Development*, 13, 213–218. doi:10.1080/13601440802242622
- McLennan, J. D., Reckord, M., & Clarke, M. (2008). A mental health outreach program for elementary schools. *Journal of the Canadian Academy of Child and Adolescent Psychiatry*, 17(3), 122–130. Retrieved from <http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC2527764/>
- Murman, N. M., Buckingham, K. C. E., Fontilea, P., Villanueva, R., Leventhal, B., & Hinshaw, S. P. (2014). Let's erase the stigma (LETS): A quasi-experimental evaluation

- of adolescent-led school groups intended to reduce mental illness stigma. *Child & Youth Care Forum*, 43(5), 621–637. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10566-014-9257-y>
- Naidoo, L. (2009). Developing social inclusion through after-school homework tutoring: a study of African refugee students in Greater Western Sydney. *British Journal of Sociology of Education*, 30(3), 261-273.
- New Youth. (n.d.). *What is an immigrant, refugee, newcomer & undocumented person?* Retrieved from <http://www.newyouth.ca/immigration/settlement-services/what-immigrant-refugee-newcomer-undocumented-person>
- Ontario Centre of Excellence for Child and Youth Mental Health. (2012). Evidence In-Sight: Art Therapy in Children’s Mental Health Services. Retrieved from [www.excellenceforchildandyoung.ca/file/9368/download?token=fN6Ubg-O](http://www.excellenceforchildandyoung.ca/file/9368/download?token=fN6Ubg-O)
- Ontario Centre of Excellence for Child and Youth Mental Health. (2016). *Youth peer support in a mental health context*. Retrieved from [http://www.excellenceforchildandyoung.ca/sites/default/files/resource/EIS\\_Youth\\_Peer\\_Support.pdf](http://www.excellenceforchildandyoung.ca/sites/default/files/resource/EIS_Youth_Peer_Support.pdf)
- Park, M., & McHugh, M. (2014). *Immigrant parents and early childhood programs: Addressing barriers of literacy, culture, and systems knowledge*. Washington, DC: Migration Policy Institute.
- Patry, D., & Ford, R. (2016). *Measuring resilience as an education outcome*. Toronto: Higher Education Quality Council of Ontario.
- Pieloch, K. A., McCullough, M. B., & Marks, A. K. (2016). Resilience of children with refugee statuses: A research review. *Canadian Psychology/Psychologie canadienne*, 57(4), 330-339. <http://dx.doi.org/10.1037/cap0000073>
- Prince-Embury, S. (2008). The resiliency scales for children and adolescents, psychological symptoms, and clinical status in adolescents. *Canadian Journal of School Psychology*, 23(1), 41-56.
- Ramirez, A. Y. (2003). Dismay and disappointment: Parental involvement of Latino immigrant parents. *The Urban Review*, 35, 93-110.
- Reinke, W. M., Stormont, M., Herman, K. C., Puri, R., & Goel, N. (2011). Supporting children's mental health in schools: Teacher perceptions of needs, roles, and barriers. *School Psychology Quarterly*, 26(1), 1-13. <http://dx.doi.org/10.1037/a0022714>

- Ressingh, H., & Kover, P. (2003). Variability of ESL learners' acquisition of cognitive academic language proficiency: What can we learn from achievement measures? *TESL Canada Journal*, 21(1), 1-21.
- Ricento, T. (2005). Considerations of identity in L2 learning. *Handbook of research in second language teaching and learning*, 895-910.
- Riggs, N. R., & Greenberg, M. T. (2004). After-school youth development programs: A developmental-ecological model of current research. *Clinical Child and Family Psychology Review*, 7(3), 177-190.
- Riggs, N., & Greenberg, M. T. (2004). Moderators in the academic development of migrant Latino children attending after-school programs. *Applied Developmental Psychology*, 25, 349-367.
- Roderick, K., Janzen, R., Ochocka, J., Westhues, A., Jenkins, J., & Sandbeck B. (2006). *Pathways to success: Immigrant youth at high school*. Kitchener, ON: Centre for Research and Education in Human Services.
- Roessingh, H., & Kover, P. (2003). Variability of ESL learners' acquisition of cognitive academic language proficiency: What can we learn from achievement measures? *TESL Canada Journal*, 21(1), 1-21.
- Rolstad, K., Mahoney, K., & Glass, G. V. (2005). The big picture: A meta-analysis of program effectiveness research on English language learners. *Educational policy*, 19(4), 572-594.
- Rousseau, C., & Guzder, J. (2008). School-based prevention programs for refugee children. *Child and Adolescent Psychiatric Clinics of North America*, 17(3), 533-49, viii. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.chc.2008.02.002>
- Rousseau, C., Lacroix, L., Singh, A., Gauthier, M.F., & Benoit, M. (2005). Creative expression workshops in school: prevention programs for immigrant and refugee children. *The Canadian Child and Adolescent Psychiatry Review = La Revue Canadienne de Psychiatrie de L'enfant et de L'adolescent*, 14(3), 77-80.
- Shakya Y, Khanlou N, Gonsalves T. (2010). Determinants of mental health for newcomer youth: Policy and service implications. *Canadian Issues/ Thèmes Canadiens (Summer)*, 98-102. Retrieved from [http://accessalliance.ca/wp-content/uploads/2015/03/Determinants\\_of\\_Mental\\_Health\\_for\\_Newcomer\\_YouthCdn\\_Issues.pdf](http://accessalliance.ca/wp-content/uploads/2015/03/Determinants_of_Mental_Health_for_Newcomer_YouthCdn_Issues.pdf)

- Shanahan, T., & Escamilla, K. (2009). English language learners: Developing literacy in second language learners—Report of the National Literacy Panel on language-minority children and youth. *Journal of literacy research, 41*, 432-452.
- Slavin, R. E., & Cheung, A. (2005). A synthesis of research on language of reading instruction for English language learners. *Review of Educational Research, 75*(2), 247-284.
- Smith, E. P., Witherspoon, D.P., & Osgood, D.W. (2017). Positive youth development among diverse racial-ethnic children: Quality afterschool contexts as development assets. *Child Development, 88*(4), 1063-1078.
- Springer, K., & Diffly, D. (2012). The relationship between intensity and breadth of after-school program participation and academic achievement: Evidence from a short-term longitudinal study. *Journal of Community Psychology, 40*(7), 785-798.
- Statistics Canada. (2010). *Canada's ethnocultural mosaic, 2006 census: Definitions*. Retrieved from <http://www12.statcan.gc.ca/census-recensement/2006/as-sa/97-562/note-eng.cfm>
- Sullivan, A. L., & Simonson, G. R. (2016). A Systematic Review of School-Based Social-Emotional Interventions for Refugee and War-Traumatized Youth. *Review of Educational Research, 86*(2), 503–530. <https://doi.org/10.3102/0034654315609419>
- Téllez, K., & Waxman, H. C. (2010). A review of research on effective community programs for English language learners. *School Community Journal, 20*(1), 103.
- Thompson, A. S. (2013). Intensive English programs in the United States: An overview of structure and mentoring. *TESOL Journal, 4*(2), 211-232.
- United Way of Calgary and Area. (2010). Environmental scan: Extended age definitions of youth 15-24. Retrieved from [http://www.calgaryunitedway.org/images/uwca/our-work/kids/public-policy-research/environmental\\_scan\\_extended\\_age\\_definition.pdf](http://www.calgaryunitedway.org/images/uwca/our-work/kids/public-policy-research/environmental_scan_extended_age_definition.pdf)
- Ungar, M. (2016). The child and youth resilience measure (CYRM) child version. *Resilience Research Centre*. Retrieved from <http://www.resilienceresearch.org/files/CYRM/Child%20%20CYRM%20Manual.pdf>
- Vang, Z. M., Sigouin, J., Flenon, A., & Gagnon, A. (2017). Are immigrants healthier than native-born Canadians? A systematic review of the healthy immigrant effect in Canada. *Ethnicity & Health, 22*(3), 209–241. <https://doi.org/10.1080/13557858.2016.1246518>
- WHO. August 2014. Mental Health: a state of well being. Retrieved from [http://www.who.int/features/factfiles/mental\\_health/en/](http://www.who.int/features/factfiles/mental_health/en/)

- Yawar, M. (2017) Arabic takes over Italian as top language spoken in Hamilton. CBC News, Aug 2, 2017. Retrieved from: [www.cbc.ca/news/canada/hamilton/foreign-language-hamilton-1.4232089](http://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/hamilton/foreign-language-hamilton-1.4232089)
- Yohani, S. (2013). Educational cultural brokers and the school adaptation of refugee children and families: Challenges and opportunities. *Journal of International Migration and Integration*, 14(1), 61–79. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s12134-011-0229-x>
- Yohani, S. C. (2008). Creating an ecology of hope: Arts-based interventions with refugee children. *Child and Adolescent Social Work Journal*, 25(4), 309–323. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10560-008-0129-x>
- Zhang, F., & Zhan, J. (2014). The knowledge base of non-native English-speaking teachers: perspectives of teachers and administrators. *Language and Education*, 28(6), 568-582.
- Zimmer, R., Hamilton, L., & Christina, R. (2010). After-school tutoring in the context of ‘No Child Left Behind’: Effectiveness of two programs in the Pittsburgh Public Schools. *Economics of Education Review*, 29, 18-28.
- Zimmerman, B. J. (2000). Self-efficacy: An essential motive to learn. *Contemporary Educational Psychology*, 25(1), 82-91.