



# Identifying Barriers Faced by Canadian Newcomers in Accessing Family Supports

## Background & Purpose

Peterborough Child & Family Centres (PCFC) is a child and family-focused organization which offers a broad range of services and programs to children and their families/caregivers. With Peterborough having a continuously growing population of immigrated and racialized families, PCFC would like to expand on efforts which they can make for their services and programs to better reach this audience.

## Research Objectives

The objective of this research project is to identify barriers facing racialized newcomers when it comes to accessing services in Canada and apply these findings to discover what efforts and/or changes PCFC can implement to create a more welcoming and inclusive environment for those marginalized populations.

## Methods

The research process involved the conjunction of a literature review and a total of 12 site visits to provide a better understanding of common barriers found for racialized newcomers in service access. Examples of this includes language and cultural barriers.

## Preliminary Findings

- Culture and language are the most common barriers identified for racialized Canadian newcomers when accessing services.
  - These cultural barriers can be seen, not only through parenting practices, but through difference in diet as well.
- Justice, Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion (JEDI) practices have been shown to be effective in creating a more welcoming and inclusive space for those facing language and cultural barriers.
- PCFC has through the years made great efforts for inclusivity in their organization, through; regular JEDI training, racially and culturally diverse toys and books, and working in collaboration with the New Canadian Centre, among others.

## Highlighted Programs

*The following programs were identified as being most relevant for immigrant populations & families*

### Babies First:

- This program is designed to support pregnant women, experiencing challenging life circumstances, to prepare for labor, birth and the transition to parenthood with a focus on healthy birth weight.

### Steps & Stages:

- This program is for families experiencing challenging life circumstances, with infants birth to 12 months. This program focuses on play, learning, and parent-infant attachment.

### Toy & Book Lending Library:

- This service offers a diverse range of books, toys, and games for families to borrow at no cost, including a large range of books which recognize several cultures and languages.

## Discussion

The findings reveal that newcomers are often more likely to underutilize social service programs, such as those provided by PCFC, largely due to cultural and language barriers. Based on the insights from the literature review and site visits, the next steps of this project will involve coming up with evidence-based strategies for PCFC's services/programs to become more accessible for racialized immigrants and newcomers.



*"We connect expectant families and those with young children to tools, resources, the knowledge of our multi-disciplinary staff team, and each other, supporting the growth and development of children aged 0 to 6"*

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