

Calgary Catholic District Mental Health Capacity Building Project (Calgary Catholic District Wellness Initiative)

This program was designed in response to emerging school and community needs in the area of ESL refugee students. The wellness initiative for immigrant students and families is a school-based community mental health promotion and prevention initiative that provides immigrant and refugee students and their families with easy accessible mental health services.

Program objectives:

1. To support ESL students integrate to their new community through health information and education.
2. To identify potential target students at intake (at the CSSD Reception Centre) who may later participate in individual counseling or in group sessions.
3. To increase potential for academic success by supporting schools, ESL students and their families access community resources according to their needs.
4. To provide early assessment, support and mental health resources.

Target Population

- Immigrant students (refugees, ESL or non-ESL immigrants, Canadian born students of immigrant parents)

How are students identified?

- Potential need for support identified at the Reception Centre upon entry to the District
- On-going needs determined at the school
- Concerns presented by parents or legal guardian

Who refers?

Reception Centre, families (self-referral) and schools can refer immigrant students and families for different reasons related to risk or prevention of future issues. All referrals go to the Consultant English as a Second Language or Lead Registered Psychologist at the Reception Centre.

Reasons for referral:

- Families seek information about parenting issues
- Families have emotional or physical health concerns
- Families report concerns about youth's emotional adjustment
- Youth may exhibit some acting out that is not developmentally expected
- Youth or family may exhibit signs of past trauma
- Youth may show signs of stress at home or at school
- Schools have concerns about students' health or behaviour
- Schools have concerns about students' emotional adjustment
- Other situations that may need preventive or remediative interventions

Team Members?

- Supervisor English as a Second Language
- Team Lead Program Coordinator (Registered Psychologist)
- Family Liaison Support Workers (psychologists and social workers)
- Trauma Counselor (registered psychologist)
- Members of the ESL Team (Consultant, Reception Centre CT)