

## Enhancing the well-being of newcomer children, youth and families in Manitoba

### Project Highlights!

**Moving from one country to another is a big change. The mental health and well-being of kids, teens, and adults is very important during this time.**

*“Well-being is just as essential as food on the table”* (Newcomer Community member)

In 2017, the WRHA Mental Health Promotion team worked on creating a resource to support the well-being of newcomer families. This project was funded by a grant from the Children’s Hospital Foundation of Manitoba.

### What we did in the project:

- Looked at the research about what supports the well-being of newcomers
- **Talked to over 60 people who are the experts! These participants Included:**
  - People who are newcomers in Manitoba
  - Newcomer advisory groups
  - Service providers
  - Researchers
- Created a video resource

### Here’s what these participants had to say about:

#### 1) Things that are important when moving to a new country

- Having a sense of belonging in their new city or community
- Having positive relationships
- Having time together as a family
- Keeping a connection to their culture
- Building connections with other local cultures and communities
- Participating in activities such as sports, music and leisure
- Volunteering, which often leads to meaningful employment
- Having access to training (e.g. English classes to reduce language barriers)
- Having access to parenting groups

#### 2) Who can help support the well-being of newcomer families

- Newcomer serving organizations
- Schools
- Workplaces
- Volunteer organizations
- Libraries
- Community centers and sport facilities
- Art spaces
- News and Media
- Neighbourhoods and community members
- Healthcare providers
- **All Canadians have a role to play!**

### 3) Recommendations from participants for services and agencies, communities and schools:

- Create a welcoming, inclusive and supportive environment.
- Coordinate services to provide wrap-around supports, and increase collaboration
- Provide flexible services (e.g. flexible hours)
- Include access to child care
- Help with transportation and/or system navigation
- Engage families by building trusting relationships and creating meaningful connections
- Offer employment and training supports, including ESL classes
- Create opportunities to build a sense of community and belonging for all ages
- Adopt strength-based and culturally-safe service delivery models
- Provide Trauma-informed care and continuing cultural competency training for service providers
- Hire individuals from diverse cultural backgrounds.

#### About the Tree of Well-being Video

Participants said that a video is a good way to share the strengths of newcomer families and the variety of ways to support well-being, a video:

- Is more accessible
- Uses images to share messages
- Can include more than one language
- Is easy to share online and with many people
- Can be used by other programs and service providers

#### Filming the video: 7 families from 7 countries came together on March 3<sup>rd</sup>, 2018

- Filmed in a location that was familiar, central and easily accessible.
- Warm up activity to set the tone for the day and the focus on well-being
- Each family created their own Tree of Well-being (based on the Tree of Life; Ncube, 2006)
- At the end, families shared their Tree of Well-being with the group. We celebrated what families had in common, as well as their unique strengths and tips on what well-being means to them!



#### What's next?

- Check out the video online with French or English subtitles! <http://www.wellbeingguide.ca/>
- A detailed Executive Summary about the project is available on the WRHA Mental Health Promotion website <http://www.wrha.mb.ca/prog/mentalhealth/MentalHealthPromotion.php>
- Coming soon: A "Facilitator Guide" is being developed and will be available to service providers who would like to use the video and activity in their work or existing programs.

**Thank you!** [WRHAMentalHealthPromotion@wrha.mb.ca](mailto:WRHAMentalHealthPromotion@wrha.mb.ca)

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