

HOW SCHOOLS IN CANADA AND GERMANY ARE MEETING THE LITERACY AND SECOND LANGUAGE LEARNING NEEDS OF SYRIAN REFUGEE CHILDREN

TITLE OF RESEARCH: Specific Needs In Literacy and Language Learning Of Syrian Refugee Children In Germany and Canada.

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SUMMARY: This research examines the needs and challenges of Syrian refugee children in Canada and Germany in adapting to their new learning environments.

LINK: Click here to read the executive summary

Key Messages:





Majority language and literacy learning was a significant challenge for refugee children in both countries.



Refugee parents found it difficult to get involved in children's schooling in both countries, because they lacked proficiency in the majority language.



In Canada, parents enforced the use of Arabic or Kurdish at home to maintain a common language and preserve cultural identity. Children complied in interactions with parents, but most preferred to speak English with siblings.



In Germany, parents favored Arabic but allowed German to be used at home. Older children who spoke Arabic at home acted as language brokers between parents and younger children who used German.

Recommendations:

- Teachers need professional development in trauma-informed approaches to sensitize them to the potential impact of the refugee experience on children's learning and wellbeing.
- Schools are encouraged to use interpreter services or recruit other refugee parents as cultural brokers.
- Students should be encouraged to use both their home language and majority language on school assignments.
- Refugee children should be instructed in small groups whenever possible.

The views and opinions expressed in this article are those of the researchers and do not necessarily reflect the official position of the Child and Youth Refugee Research Coalition.





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