

## SUPPORTED TRANSITIONS: EFFECTIVE EDUCATIONAL APPROACHES FOR OLDER REFUGEE YOUTH WITH INTERRUPTED SCHOOLING

**RESEARCHERS:** Nicole Jowett<sup>1</sup>, Noelle DePape<sup>2</sup>, Abdikheir Ahmed<sup>3</sup>, and Ray Silvius<sup>4</sup>

**AFFILIATION:** Newcomer Education Coalition (NEC)<sup>1</sup>, Manitoba Association of Newcomer Serving Organizations (MANSO)<sup>2</sup>, Immigration Partnership Winnipeg (IPW)<sup>3</sup>, and the University of Winnipeg<sup>4</sup>

**RESEARCH PARTNER:** NEC, MANSO, IPW, and the Community Engaged Research on Immigration Network

**KEYWORDS:** refugee youth, interrupted schooling, Winnipeg, Manitoba, school support

### WHAT THE RESEARCH IS ABOUT

**OBJECTIVE:** This study examined approaches to supporting older refugee youth with interrupted schooling in Winnipeg.

**RESEARCH JUSTIFICATION:** Students with interrupted formal education (SIFE) have had limited access to quality education and tend to enter the Canadian education system with specific language, academic, and literacy (LAL) learning needs. In Manitoba, this group of youth represents a small but often high-needs portion of refugee students.

**PRACTICAL GOAL:** Through sharing community voices and using local, national, and international examples, this research provides constructive, community-informed programming and policy ideas that can address the needs of this group of youth.

**PRIMARY AUDIENCE:** Educators, service providers, and policy makers

### HOW THE DATA WAS OBTAINED

Researchers compiled and synthesized information developed by NEC, including information from 'older newcomer youth interrupted school' forums, workshops, public outreach, and training, with statistics from the province of Manitoba on the scope and scale of interrupted schooling among refugee youth and other relevant information from IPW.

Interviews with administrators were conducted to give an overall understanding of available programming, while focus groups with youth, parents and community leaders, service providers, and teachers provided diverse perspectives on the features of effective programming. A reading of literature and program precedents gave broader insight into potential responses to meet the needs of youth.



## CALL TO ACTION

### Develop Transitional Programming Options:

- Provide and promote a flexible range of transitional programming options for youth.
- Offer vocational programs with targeted language support.
- Ensure that young adult SIFE (18-25) have access to free young adult-specific programming to equip them with the requirements for post-secondary education.

### Facilitate Targeted Extended Learning and Extensive Supports:

- Ensure consistent communication and strong support for transition and pathway planning, particularly in terms of post-secondary credit requirements.
- Invest in extra help, wraparound supports, and cultural-linguistic supports, but also develop community-based supports such as volunteers and mentors for SIFE.

### Enhance School and Community Collaboration and Partnerships

- Ensure all schools, particularly LAL (Literacy, Academics, and Language) magnet schools, have a whole-school approach in place for all staff to support SIFE, prioritizing communication and collaboration with families and communities.
- Seek diversified funding sources for extended learning and supports, direct financial supports, and needs-based pilot projects

## WHAT THE STUDY FOUND

- Participants underlined the resilience, experiences, and strengths of SIFE.
- Significant challenges faced by youth included poverty and language barriers, which put pressure on them to earn an income and interpret for their families. Other challenges included miscommunication and a lack of support from schools.
- In Winnipeg, there is a lack of adult programs that combine language and content development, and even fewer specifically for young adults.
- Participants noted the importance of collaboration among a range of actors for supporting refugee youth. Youth highlighted relationships with supportive teachers and administrators. Teachers described the value of community supports.

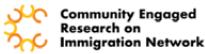
[View Project Webpage](#)



# ABOUT CYRRC

The Child and Youth Refugee Research Coalition (CYRRC) is a network of researchers, service providers, and government partners working together to produce and share research that facilitates the integration of young refugees and their families in Canada and beyond.

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.



This research was supported by the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada.



Social Sciences and Humanities  
Research Council of Canada

Conseil de recherches en  
sciences humaines du Canada

