

# CYRRC



## 2017 HIGHLIGHTS

FROM THE CHILD AND YOUTH  
REFUGEE RESEARCH COALITION

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Dalhousie University  
SSHRC Canada

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The CYRRC is based at the Resilience Research Centre (RRC) at Dalhousie University.

# WHAT IS THE CHILD AND YOUTH REFUGEE RESEARCH COALITION?

The Child and Youth Refugee Research Coalition (CYRRC) is an alliance of scholars, community partners, and government agencies committed to promoting the successful integration of refugee children, youth and their families.

The CYRRC grew out of conversations that began late in 2015 at Dalhousie University in Halifax, Nova Scotia, Canada. By spring of 2016, the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada (SSHRC) had rallied around the dream of a research coalition that would contribute to policies and interventions for the integration of recently arrived Syrian refugees to Canada. Research grants and support were fast-tracked and the CYRRC was born.

In May 2017, the Coalition was awarded a \$2.5 million SSHRC partnership grant to continue its work. It is now focused on the broader goal of helping all young refugees succeed, both in Canada and around the world. The Coalition is committed to conducting rigorous research, promoting best practices, and engaging in knowledge mobilization activities to further the social integration, education, and mental and physical wellbeing of refugee children and youth.

The CYRRC includes members from across Canada and a growing number of international colleagues. We are uniquely positioned to carry out research that meets the needs of refugee children and youth, their families, and their communities.

CYRRC members work together to:

- Develop national and regional surveys,
- Make administrative datasets more accessible,
- Conduct analyses of existing data from government and nongovernment sources,
- Conduct observational studies, and
- Influence practices and policies through knowledge mobilization.



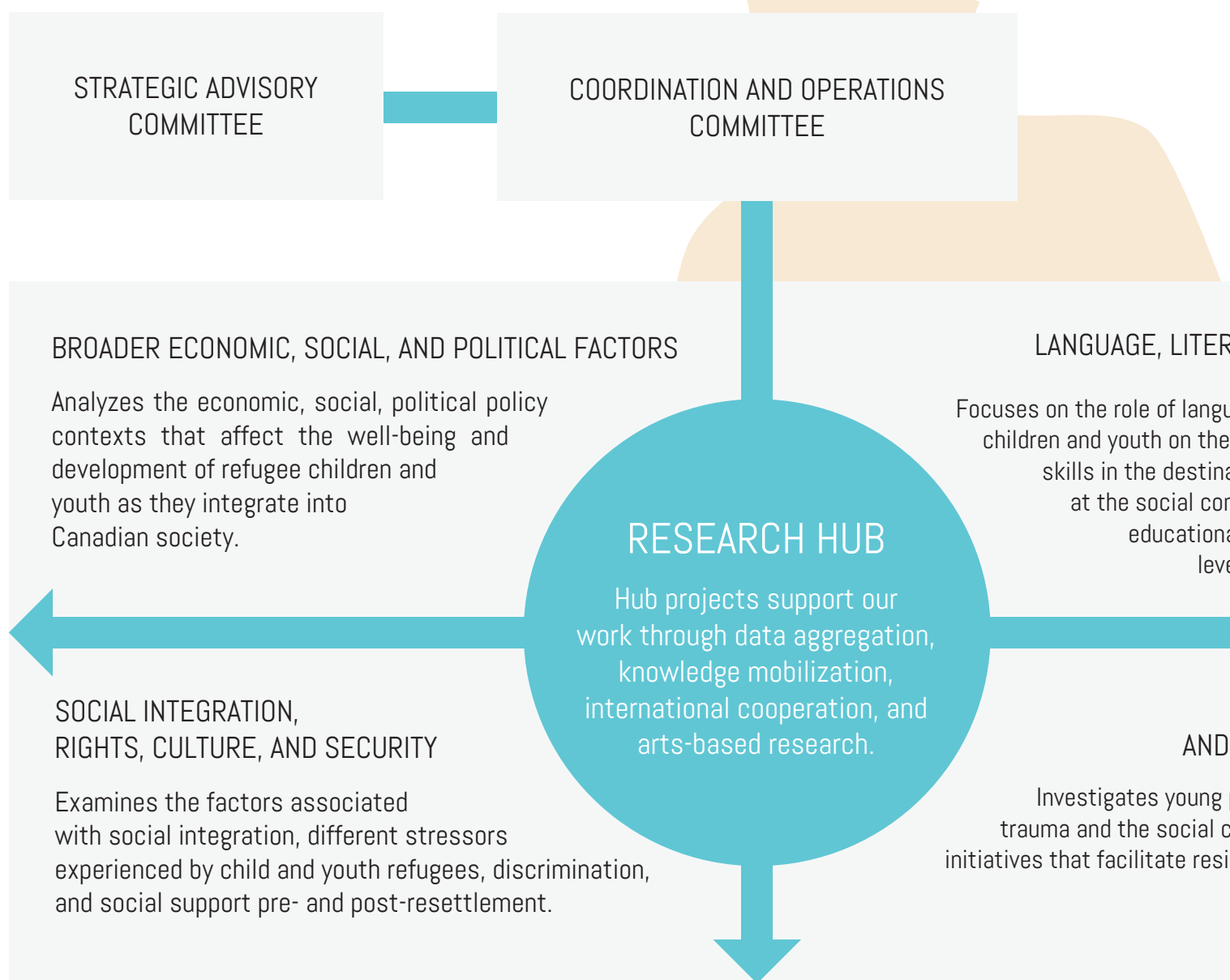
To learn more about our work, connect with CYRRC members, and explore opportunities to collaborate, visit us at [cyrrc.org](http://cyrrc.org).

 @cyrrcoalition

 @cyrrcoalition

## HOW THE CYRRC WORKS

Child and Youth Refugee Research Coalition members collaborate to produce new research and share best practices nationally and internationally. Members come from academic institutions, education and service provider organizations (ESPOs), and government departments. The CYRRC offers a wide range of opportunities and training for students and early career scholars. Students are encouraged to join the Coalition.



# ABOUT OUR RESEARCH

Our work is divided into four Research Clusters. Each of the four clusters is guided by Co-Leads drawn from our academic, community, and government partners.

## JOINING THE CYRRC

Interested in learning more about our work, connecting with CYRRC members, and exploring opportunities to collaborate? Join us!

## MEMBERSHIP IS FREE

All members have access to the members-only area of our website, where you can view member profiles, engage in discussion with other members, and post opportunities to collaborate.

## LANGUAGE, AND LEARNING

Age of origin of refugee  
their cognitive and literacy  
ation country, and looks  
contexts that further their  
al achievement, literacy  
els, and language skills.

## CHILD, YOUTH, FAMILY WELLBEING

people's experiences of  
conditions, policies, and  
liance pre- and post-re-  
settlement.

## ACADEMIC MEMBERS

Academics are invited to join as Associate Members in the research cluster of their choice. Associate Members receive routine data distributions, information about upcoming opportunities and events, and are eligible to collaborate on CYRRC project grants. Co-Investigators are added by invitation only. They enjoy all the benefits of an Associate Membership as well as eligibility to hold CYRRC project grants and make requests for data from IRCC, Statistics Canada, and other data sources the CYRRC has access to.

## NGO AND EDUCATION AND SERVICE PROVIDER (ESPO) PARTNERS

NGOs and education and service provider organizations may join as many clusters as desired. ESPO partners are eligible to collaborate with academic partners on CYRRC project grants, and in some instances, ESPO partners are eligible to hold funds. ESPO members may also request assistance in processing or accessing IRCC, Statistics Canada, or other data sources that the CYRRC has access to.

## STUDENT MEMBERS

Students are invited to join as many clusters as desired.

## MEET THE CYRRC LEADERSHIP

### DR. MICHAEL UNGAR, CYRRC PROJECT DIRECTOR



WWW.MICHAELUNGAR.COM  
Twitter: @MichaelUngarPhD

Dr. Michael Ungar is the Canada Research Chair (Tier 1) in Child, Family, and Community Resilience and a Professor of Social Work at Dalhousie University. He is also the Scientific Director for the Wisdom2Action Network, a Knowledge Mobilization Network of Centres of Excellence. His work has influenced the way we understand children's resilience across cultures and contexts, showing that when exposure to adversity is high, young people's social and physical ecologies are just as critical to success and wellbeing as individual factors. Over the past 13 years, Dr. Ungar has, as Principal Investigator, held over \$10,000,000 in national and international research funding.

### COORDINATION & OPERATIONS COMMITTEE (COC)

The COC is chaired by the CYRRC Project Director and includes three to four Cluster Co-Leads from each Research Cluster as well as representatives from Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada (IRCC) and Statistics Canada. The COC is the decision-making body that oversees all research and operational activities of the CYRRC. To find out more about our Cluster Co-Leads, turn to the detailed descriptions of our research clusters.

### STRATEGIC ADVISORY COMMITTEE (SAC)

The Strategic Advisory Committee (SAC) is made up of the CYRRC Project Director, a Vice President Research from a Canadian University, ESPO representatives, academic representatives, representatives from the refugee community, and representatives from IRCC and Statistics Canada. The SAC's mandate is to provide scientific and impact oversight of projects, identify links for partnership, oversee knowledge mobilization strategies, and advise on other issues.

## SAC MEMBERS

BAYAN KHATIB is the Co-Founder of the Syrian Canadian Foundation and the Syria Film Festival in Toronto. She works as a Communications Consultant for non-profit organizations, including the recently launched Al-Qazzaz Foundation for Education and Development. In the past five years, Bayan has led a multinational media campaign, made numerous media appearances, and was a speaker on the Syrian crisis at local and international events. Bayan is the translator of *Just Five Minutes: Nine Years in the Prisons of Syria*, a memoir of a female political prisoner, and is also the author of numerous short works of fiction and opinion articles.



KATHY GEORGIADES is an Associate Professor of Psychiatry and Behavioural Neurosciences at McMaster University. She holds a New Investigator Award from the Canadian Institutes of Health Research and the David R. (Dan) Offord Chair in Child Studies. She works to quantify and reduce inequities in mental health and academic achievement among vulnerable populations, particularly immigrant and refugee children and adolescents. Her research examines how individual and contextual level influences (family, school, and community) independently and jointly contribute to inequities early in life.



MARTHA CRAGO began her five-year mandate as McGill University's Vice-Principal (Research and Innovation) in 2017. Dr. Crago has been a researcher in language acquisition across a variety of languages and learners, including monolingual and bilingual Indigenous children learning Inuktitut, Cree, Mohawk, and Algonquin, as well as those learning English, French, and Arabic. She has published extensively, and is the Editor-in-Chief of *Applied Psycholinguistics*, published by Cambridge University Press. She was Vice President of the International Association for the Study of Child Language from 2007 to 2010, and named *Femme de Mérite de Montréal* in 2000, *Chevalier de l'Ordre des*



*palmes academiques* by the French government in 2009, and *Woman of Excellence* in Nova Scotia in 2015.

MEHRUNNISA ALI is a Professor in the Faculty of Community Services at Ryerson University. She has extensive experience in developing and evaluating educational projects, especially in teacher education, and has taught prospective and practicing teachers, community development workers, and university students. Dr. Ali teaches in the graduate programs in Early Childhood Studies, Immigration and Settlement Studies, and Policy Studies. She is also the Ryerson Director of the Centre of Excellence for Research in Immigration and Settlement, the Ontario Metropolis Centre. Her research interests include newcomer children, youth, and families; parent-teacher relations; and preparation of teachers to work with diverse populations.

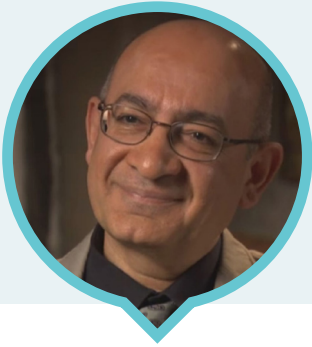
STATISTICS CANADA, formed in 1971, is the Government of Canada agency commissioned with producing statistics to help better understand Canada, its population, resources, economy, society, and culture.

IMMIGRATION, REFUGEES AND CITIZENSHIP CANADA (IRCC) is the Government of Canada agency responsible for matters dealing with immigration to Canada, refugees, and Canadian citizenship.

RAVI SUBRAMANIAM is the Manager of Strategic Partnerships and Organizational Development at Thorncliffe Neighbourhood Office. He has worked on the frontlines in refugee services in multiple capacities and with diverse refugee populations. Ravi brings a solid critical analysis of social determinants of health and has been key in developing a refugee mental health framework in collaboration with the Centre for Addiction and Mental Health.

# CLUSTER 1: BROADER ECONOMIC, SOCIAL, AND POLITICAL FACTORS

## CLUSTER CO-LEADS



**ABDIE KAZEMIPUR**

is Professor of Sociology and the Chair of Ethnic Studies at the University of Calgary. He came to Winnipeg from Iran in 1993 to do his PhD at the University of Manitoba. In 2012-13, he served as Stephen Jarislowsky Chair in Culture Change and Immigration at Memorial University. Dr. Kazemipur was also the founding academic director of two Statistics Canada Research Data Centres at University of Lethbridge and Memorial University. His research interests include the socio-economic experiences of immigrants in Canada, and socio-cultural developments in the Middle East, on which he has published eight books in English and Farsi. Dr. Kazemipur received the 2015 John Porter Award from the Canadian Sociological Association and the 2018 Researcher Award from Canadian National Metropolis.



**CAROLINE HEMSTOCK**

is the Manager of Programs and Services at the Alberta Association of Immigrant Serving Agencies. She completed her Master's degree at the University of Calgary, and has worked in research, policy development, and communications in Canada and Latin America for a variety of academic, non-profit, and private organizations. She is passionate about social justice and the importance of practice-oriented research, particularly when advocating for the rights of vulnerable groups. Caroline is an avid volunteer and enjoys mentoring newcomer youth in her free time.



**ISMAËL TRAORÉ**

is the Research and Information Coordinator at Affiliation of Multicultural Societies and Service Agencies (AMSSA), the umbrella association of immigrant and refugee settlement support services in British Columbia. He is responsible for content curation and knowledge mobilization, manages a research database on the settlement sector and information relevant to immigrants, and seeks community-based participatory research opportunities. Dr. Traoré holds a PhD in Sociology with a specialization in social inequality and has taught at UBC, McMaster University, and Okanagan College. He is interested in justice, equality, and collaborative partnerships between academic researchers, social service organizations, and government.



**YOKO YOSHIDA**

is an Associate Professor in the Department of Sociology and Social Anthropology at Dalhousie University. Her research interests include social statistics, integration processes of immigrants, and socio-economic inequality. Her work includes measuring multi-dimensional immigrant integration, immigrant settlement in Atlantic Canada, social and economic activities of immigrants who come under the sponsored family streams, and impacts of family and gender in settlement processes. She has established research partnerships with provincial and federal offices, including the Nova Scotia Office of Immigration; Immigrant Services Association of Nova Scotia; Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada; and Statistics Canada. She is a co-investigator for Pathways to Prosperity and serves as a board member for the Canadian Population Society.



# PROJECTS

## COMPARATIVE STUDY OF PROVINCIAL FUNDING PROGRAMS FOR REFUGEES AND IMMIGRANTS IN CANADA

DOMINIQUE CLÉMENT, Project Lead  
Associate Professor of Sociology,  
University of Alberta

A collaboration between the University of Alberta and the Affiliation of Multicultural Societies and Service Agencies of BC (AMSSA), this project is a comparative study of provincial funding programs for refugees and immigrants in Canada. The federal government provides funding to assist immigrants settling in Canada. Some groups however, including refugee claimants, are ineligible for federal settlement funding, so provincial governments provide additional funding. There is currently no information available on the extent of provincial and territorial matching funding for federal settlement programs, and recent government announcements suggest there are vast disparities among regions. These disparities might have a profound impact on successful integration and settlement for refugee youth.

The primary objectives of this project include identifying all provincial and territorial programs for immigrant and refugee settlement or language training, including targeted programming for refugee youth. This project will build a foundation for future collaboration to study the effect of disparities on refugee youth integration and settlement among the provinces, and has the potential to profoundly influence government policy development. Organizations can use these findings to guide their advocacy in campaigning for a provincial role in settlement programs.

## THE APPEARANCE AND DISAPPEARANCE OF ASYLUM SEEKING FAMILIES FROM THE DPRK IN CANADA

ANNE KIM, Project Lead  
Associate Professor, Department of Sociology,  
York University

Between 2010 and 2014, hundreds to thousands of asylum seekers from the Democratic People's Republic of Korea (DPRK)—North Korea—arrived in Canada. Many arrived with children, hoping to obtain refugee status. Some initial applicants were accepted while later applicants have been rejected. Many North Korean asylum seekers migrate to Canada through the Republic of Korea (ROK)—South Korea—where they are recognized as South Korean nationals. This means they cannot apply for asylum in Canada. Partly as a result of this, very few North Korean families have arrived in Canada since 2014. This is unlikely to change unless there is a policy shift or a viable alternate passage to Canada emerges. This brief and fleeting wave of North Koreans raises many questions for Canadian policy-makers and practitioners who could influence Canada's position. Can Canada be a more permanent place for asylum seekers from DPRK?

The questions driving this exploratory study include: How do domestic and international policies and refugee legalities affect the movement of North Korean refugee families to Canada? How do such policies affect families with young children and youth? What does the construction of North Koreans as South Korean, and thus illegal/illegitimate refugees, by policymakers mean to families? What do North Korean families know about Canada prior to their arrival? What are their experiences here and those of their children? How have North Korean immigrants and their children been received by Korean Canadians? What would facilitate their integration?

## PROJECTS (CONTINUED)

### LITERACY AND NUMERACY SKILLS IN THE EDUCATION AND LABOUR MARKET OUTCOMES OF REFUGEES AND THEIR CHILDREN

RICHARD MUELLER, Project Lead  
Professor and Chair, Department of Economics,  
University of Lethbridge

This project looks at refugees in comparison to other immigrant classes, with a focus on those who arrived as children. It explores the impact of age at immigration on cognitive skills of refugees and other immigrants, and how migrating at a young age helps immigrants' educational outcomes and integration into the Canadian labour market; the evolution of skills of refugees over time; and the earnings premium to these skills in the Canadian labour market.

This project also contributes to the existing literature by looking at the evolution of the skills of immigrants compared to that of Canadian-born individuals, specifically how age at immigration affects the skills evolution and differences in skills among immigration classes. It studies the impact of these differences in adult skills on earnings gaps between the different immigrant classes and the Canadian-born. Finally, it determines if these metrics have changed over time. The results will guide policy related to the types and timing of interventions to better assist refugees and their children to perform well in the Canadian education system and, subsequently, in the labour market.

### SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC INTEGRATION OF REFUGEE YOUTH

REZA NAKHAIE, Project Lead  
Professor, Department of Sociology, Anthropology, and  
Criminology, University of Windsor

Sociological research on the integration of refugees, whether youth or adults, explains their social and economic integration by differences in sociodemographic characteristics, cultural distance, language proficiency, governmental support, discrimination, class background, and social and human capital. This research has been important in identifying factors responsible for socio-economic integration, but it has been less attentive to the importance of the personality characteristics of refugee youth.

This research project explores whether an emphasis on self- and social control can offer an alternative explanation for integration of refugee youth. Theories posit individuals' ties to others and to conventional society ensure compliance and success, and ineffective childhood socialization produces an enduring predisposition called low self-control. Previous research has shown that parenthood is more likely to be disrupted among refugees than immigrant newcomers, potentially resulting in a self-control deficit among refugee children and youth. The stress of leaving home and living in refugee camps, as well as new living conditions in the host country, could result in maladaptive attitudes, behaviours, and personality problems. Parents of refugee children and youth tend to suffer psychological distress and are less able to effectively address the social and emotional needs of their children. This project asks: Do self- and social control help refugee youths' social and economic integration after accounting for other relevant explanations?

## ETHNOCULTURAL COMMUNITIES' ROLE IN SUPPORTING NEWCOMERS TO WINNIPEG

RAY SILVIUS, Project Lead

Associate Professor of Political Science,  
University of Winnipeg

Only about one-third of newly arrived immigrants and refugees access settlement services from a government-funded immigrant-serving agency. A better understanding of the other formal and informal supports accessed by newly arrived immigrants and refugees is needed. Research has found that ethnocultural organizations are often a first point of contact for many newly arrived refugees and immigrants, and the cultural familiarity and kinship connections provide the social capital necessary to assist with accessing housing and services. The scope of services and programs offered by ethnocultural communities to refugees is poorly understood and there is little research on the matter, a challenge for community-based organizations (CBOs), service providers, and government funders.

Youth are critical to the long-term viability of ethnocultural organizations, and their inclusion is essential to promoting intergenerational dialogue and understanding of cultural practices. This project will assess the economic, social, and cultural roles played by ethnocultural communities and organizations in supporting the settlement and integration of newcomers in Winnipeg, with a particular emphasis on how such roles contribute to the wellbeing and social inclusion of refugee youth.

## REFUGEE RECEPTION AND PERCEPTION IN GERMANY AND CANADA

ELKE WINTER, Project Lead

Associate Professor of Sociological and Anthropological  
Studies, University of Ottawa

The years 2015 and 2016 were among the most turbulent in the recent history of refugee movements in the world.

The Syrian conflict generated massive flows of people seeking refuge in Germany and elsewhere, many of them families and unaccompanied minors. Canada has resettled more than 42,000 Syrian refugees since November 2015.

In Germany, about one million refugees literally marched to the country's doorstep. While the initial reception of the Syrian refugees has been overwhelmingly sympathetic both in Canada and in Germany, public concerns about refugees' willingness to integrate and their seemingly privileged access to social benefits and jobs are getting louder.

Accepted refugees are expected to not only "settle in" but "fit in". Since relatively few members of mainstream society have the chance to actually meet recent asylum seekers and refugees, issues of identity and integration are heavily shaped and communicated through the mainstream media. This project asks: How do media perceptions of refugees and refugee-related issues differ in various contexts of reception: notably Canada and Germany, but also along urban/rural and provincial lines in both countries? The goal is to identify major themes and trace how they vary over time and between contexts and media outlets. Special attention will be given to the portrayal of youth and family issues.

## CLUSTER 2: LANGUAGE, LITERACY, AND LEARNING

### CLUSTER CO-LEADS



**JOHANNE PARADIS**

is Professor in the Department of Linguistics and Adjunct Professor, Communication Sciences and Disorders at the University of Alberta. Dr. Paradis studies bilingualism and second language acquisition in children. Her primary research focus is children with typical development learning English as a second language: How they approach native-speaker competence, their unique language development profiles, and why some children learn English faster than others. She has also focused on the capacity for bilingualism in children with developmental disorders, and what language measures best differentiate English second language children with typical development from those with language disorder. Paradis is first author of the 2011 book *Dual Language Development and Disorders: A Handbook on Bilingualism and Second Language Learning*. She is currently the editor of *Journal of Child Language*.



**LISA ROCHMAN**

is the Associate Dean of Immigrant Education in the Faculty of Foundational, Career and Intercultural Studies at NorQuest College, Edmonton. Dr. Rochman holds a PhD in linguistics and a Standard 3 Certificate from TESL Canada in teaching English as a second language. Her portfolio focuses on programs for newcomers to Canada with an emphasis on English as a second language, literacy learning, and workplace essential skills. Dr. Rochman is also the past president of Alberta Teachers of English as a Second Language (ATESL). She was the 2012 recipient of the Carolyn Dieleman Award from ATESL for making an impact on innovative and quality English as a second language and literacy programming in Alberta.



**MAZEN EL-BABA**

is pursuing a Doctor of Medicine degree at the University of Toronto. He is the Founder and Director of H-appi, a not-for-profit organization that aims to destigmatize addictions and mental health issues in the Middle East and Africa. He manages a diverse team of leaders and ensures that all campaigns are positively impacting our society. Mazen leads an annual summer camp program for refugee children focusing on literacy, integration, and wellbeing and works continuously to introduce social change by facilitating workshops on diversity, human rights, and leadership. Mazen is passionate about global health, medicine, research, and travelling.



**XI (BECKY) CHEN**

is an Associate Professor in the Department of Applied Psychology and Human Development at the Ontario Institute for Studies in Education (OISE), University of Toronto. Her research focuses on bilingual and English Language Learner (ELL) children's language and literacy development. She is interested in how children develop literacy skills simultaneously in their first and second languages, and whether these skills transfer between the two languages. Her research has explored how to identify bilingual children at risk for reading difficulties in order to provide them with timely interventions. Her study of Syrian refugee children looks at their language and literacy development in English and Arabic, as well as their mental health.

# PROJECTS

## THE EFFECTS OF A DUAL-LANGUAGE STIMULATION PROGRAM FOR REFUGEE CHILDREN

ANDREA MACLEOD, Project Lead

Associate Professor and Director of Speech-Language Pathology Programs, University of Montreal

There is a strong need for research to understand the impact of interventions that support language acquisition for children who are immigrants or refugees. The main purpose of this research is to assess the effect of a language stimulation program on the dual language development, emergent literacy, and wellbeing of Arabic-speaking preschoolers who have recently arrived in Canada as refugees. A second purpose is to gather much-needed preliminary data on the language abilities of these children. A language stimulation program might prove effective for diverse groups of refugee children, but this research focuses on Syrian refugees. It will address concerns of teachers working with children from Syrian refugee families: the children's language abilities in French are very weak; it is not clear that their first language is developing without delays; and the children are more insecure, more timid, and display more frequent inappropriate behaviours than children from immigrant families in the same school.

This research will help practitioners develop data-driven approaches to supporting the language development of refugee children, and help pre-service speech-language pathologists and educators develop similar competencies through university course work. Findings will also be shared with Syrian refugee parents through meetings and a dedicated website.

## SPECIFIC NEEDS IN LITERACY AND LANGUAGE LEARNING OF REFUGEE CHILDREN: A COMPARISON OF GERMANY AND CANADA

XI (BECKY) CHEN, Project Lead

Associate Professor, Department of Applied Psychology and Human Development, OISE, University of Toronto

Language and literacy acquisition of refugee students is shaped by multiple factors. This study explores the family and school learning environments of Syrian refugee students in Canada and Germany through three family case studies in each country. It serves as a pilot for a large-scale investigation on cross-cultural and cross-linguistic comparison in the development of refugee children in both countries. The study will analyze the development of language and literacy skills, address the impact of social-emotional wellbeing and motivation, and explore how the specific needs of Syrian refugee children in terms of second language and literacy acquisition are met by the institutions in both countries. The comparison will include children's performance at school as well as their family dynamics and wellbeing in their new environment.

Results of this project will contribute to a base of knowledge that enables further development of research questions and refinement of the instruments for a broader study on the language and literacy acquisition of Syrian refugee students. This study will inform policy makers, educational institutions, and the wider public on the special needs of refugee children and their families, and help refugee children integrate successfully into mainstream society.

## PROJECTS (CONTINUED)

### A CULTURALLY SENSITIVE INTERVENTION FOR SYRIAN REFUGEE CHILDREN WITH INTERRUPTED SCHOOLING: TARGETING MATH VOCABULARY AND ASSOCIATED NUMBER SENSE SKILLS

ESTHER GEVA, Project Lead

Professor, Department of Applied Psychology and Human Development at OISE, University of Toronto

Prior to their arrival in Canada, many Syrian refugee children experience significant disruptions in and limited access to education. Various educational initiatives have been undertaken to ease the transition of Syrian children to western society and to enhance their learning, but limited supports exist to facilitate their transition to the Canadian educational system in the area of mathematics and the language of mathematics.

This project will be a true experimental study including approximately 60 students in grades two to seven with an experimental group, a control group, and randomized treatment/control assignments. It will include novel math vocabulary and word reading measures. The objectives of the intervention study are to evaluate its effectiveness; evaluate the contribution of individual differences in cognitive skills, math vocabulary reading skills, math word reading, age (in months), and extent of interrupted schooling; test the hypothesis that command of math vocabulary will be positively related to students' increased command of math skills; and develop two assessment tools that will be used and refined in future studies.

### SUCCESSES AND CHALLENGES OF CHILDREN WHO ARE SYRIAN REFUGEES: LANGUAGE, LITERACY, AND WELLBEING (WATERLOO & EDMONTON SITES)

JOHANNE PARADIS, Project Lead (Edmonton)

Professor, Department of Linguistics and Adjunct Professor, Communication Sciences and Disorders, University of Alberta

ALEXANDRA GOTTARDO, Project Lead (Waterloo)

Professor of Psychology, Wilfred Laurier University

More than 40,000 Syrian refugees have been resettled in Canada since late 2015. This research examines factors that contribute to the successes and challenges in language and literacy development both in English (L2), the second language, and Arabic (L1), the first language, as Syrian refugee children settle in Canada.

The project's contributions include a focus on L2 children from refugee backgrounds, since research on L2 learning is not sufficient for establishing best practices given refugee children's unique experiences. A second contribution is a new and broader outlook on sources of individual differences in language and literacy development. A third contribution is the study's cross-cultural perspective. Methods will be aligned with a project being carried out in Germany.

The objectives of this study include: To investigate changes in English and Arabic language and literacy; to determine how child (e.g., cognitive abilities, age of arrival, schooling) and family (e.g., parental education, home activities) factors underlie individual difference in the L1 and L2; to examine interdependence between the L1 and L2; to examine the association between socio-emotional wellbeing and language and literacy skills; to create and refine Arabic measurement tools; and to form a foundation for larger-scale research by forging new partnerships. Results will have significant implications for the ways educational and service agencies interact with refugee children.



## CLUSTER 3: SOCIAL INTEGRATION, RIGHTS, CULTURE, AND SECURITY

### CLUSTER CO-LEADS



**NABIHA ATALLAH**

is Manager of Communications and Research at Immigrant Services Association of Nova Scotia (ISANS). She has worked in immigrant settlement for more than 22 years. Prior to that, she taught English as an Additional Language at Red River College in Winnipeg, and in Vancouver and Cairo. Nabihha has been a Director of the Halifax Chamber of Commerce, managed projects for the Atlantic Population Table and the Atlantic Region Association of Immigrant Serving Agencies, been active in the Canadian Metropolis and Pathways to Prosperity research networks, and presented at national and international conferences. She is a member of the Nova Scotia Immigration Research Roundtable, chair of the Atlantic Immigration Research Committee, and a member of the Board of Pathways to Prosperity.



**HOWARD RAMOS**

is Professor and Associate Dean of Research, Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences at Dalhousie University. A political sociologist who investigates issues of social justice and equity, he has published on social movements, human rights, Indigenous mobilization, environmental advocacy, ethnicity, race, and Atlantic Canada. He completed his PhD and a Postdoctoral Fellowship at McGill University and holds a BA from York University. He is currently working on projects looking at Atlantic Canadians, secondary cities, state funding of NGOs, environmental advocacy, tourism development, and integration of immigrants and refugees. Dr. Ramos is also working to promote knowledge mobilization and translation of issues related to refugee children and youth.



**LORI WILKINSON**

is a Professor in the Department of Sociology at the University of Manitoba, the editor of the Journal of International Migration and Integration, and the Director of Immigration Research West, an academic and community think-tank concerned with issues related to successful settlement and integration. Her research interests include labour market integration among refugees, school-to-work transitions among immigrant and refugee youth, and racism and inequality. She has co-authored two books, *The Research Process* and *Understanding Social Statistics*, published by Oxford University Press. Recently, Dr. Wilkinson has published her work on refugees in *Migration Policy Institute*, *Journal of Canadian Ethnic Studies*, and *Migration, Health and Survival: International Perspectives and Immigrant Youth in Canada*.



**VICKI SINCLAIR**

is Executive Director at the Manitoba Association of Newcomer Serving Organizations (MANSO), joining as its first Executive Director in June 2016. Before that, she was the Director of Programming and Development at Immigrant Centre Manitoba. She is a member of the Immigrant Partnership Winnipeg Council, Le Réseau en Immigration Francophone du Manitoba, Immigration Research West, and the Western Region Research Advisory Committee. She is a former member of Winnipeg's Citizen Equity Committee and the Canadian Coalition of Municipalities Against Racism and Discrimination. She has a professional background in journalism and EAL and a deep commitment to partnership and community engagement. She became a Canadian Citizen in 2009.

# PROJECTS

## A RETROSPECTIVE LOOK: THE SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC INTEGRATION OF THE VIETNAMESE REFUGEE YOUTH AND THE SECOND GENERATION IN CONTEMPORARY CANADA

MONICA BOYD, Project Lead

Canada Research Chair in Immigration, Inequality, and Public Policy and Professor of Sociology, University of Toronto

Today, the ongoing Canadian admission of Syrian refugees receives considerable academic and media attention. But nearly 40 years ago, Vietnamese people arrived in Canada. In addition to admitting more than 5,000 Vietnamese in 1975 and 1976, Canada welcomed approximately fifty thousand Indochinese refugees between 1979 and 1981, colloquially labelled “Boat People”, but disproportionately from Vietnam. Others fleeing the war-torn region arrived in the 1980s and beyond. By the beginning of the 21st century, the entire Vietnamese community represented Canada’s fifth largest non-European ethnic group, yet there is little research about their experiences.

This research assesses the social and economic integration of three distinct groups of youth associated with these flows from 1979 to 1990: the 1.5 generation (typically defined as arriving before age 13), those arriving as adolescents (14 to 20), and those born in Canada to parents born in Vietnam, compared with other Asian birthplace groups arriving or born during the same time. The assessments rest on analyses of the 2011 National Household Survey, and focus on educational attainments, language use, labour market characteristics, and home ownership. The analyses will offer a backdrop and projection of what might be the experiences of recently arrived vulnerable youth, such as those from war-torn Syria and other countries.

## EXPLORING BELONGING: EXPERIENCES OF REFUGEE CHILDREN AND FAMILIES IN A MONTREAL RECREATIONAL SETTING

NICOLE IVES, Project Lead

Associate Professor and Director of the Bachelor of Social Work program, McGill University

For more than 40 years, Camp Cosmos in Montreal has provided a six-week summer camp to children from diverse cultural backgrounds. Families typically have low, fixed incomes and are newly arrived refugees or single parents. In response to the Syrian refugee crisis, Camp Cosmos expanded in 2016 to create a second camp. Newly arrived refugee children have quickly embraced the camp experience, making new friends, learning French and English, and having the freedom to just be children. Canadian-born children who suffer other kinds of vulnerability are also benefitting from these new relationships, created in an atmosphere of hospitality and trust.

There is very limited research on the sense of belonging held by refugee children and parents in early childhood educational and recreational settings. Findings of this study would provide the foundation for further work to explore refugee children’s recreational experiences in different resettlement sites across Canada. This project would explore constructs and processes of belonging using a participatory research approach involving refugee children, Counsellors in Training (CITs, many of whom are refugees), and families who have participated in Camp Cosmos. The main study questions are: How has participation in Camp Cosmos shaped experiences of social belonging for refugee children, youth, and parents? How do refugee children, youth, and parents think about belonging? In what ways do community organizations facilitate social integration for refugees?



## MANUAL FOR REFUGEE PARENTS AND CHILDREN ON THEIR RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES RELATED TO EDUCATION IN THE CANADIAN SCHOOL SYSTEM

SHAUNA LABMAN, Project Lead

Assistant Professor, Faculty of Law,  
University of Manitoba

For refugee students and their parents, schools offer tremendous educational opportunities and provide important social integration into the larger society. Research suggests that both recently arrived refugee children and their parents face numerous challenges adapting to their new country and schools. Without parental involvement, refugee children are at risk of failing socially and academically, and positive relationships between school personnel and parents are critical to a refugee child's in-school successes. Refugee parents play a significant role in helping their children as they begin to trust teachers and principals, but for many, the Canadian school system and the implicit "Canadian" expectations of "good parenting" can be overwhelming and mystifying. Little research has focused on refugee parent involvement in their children's schools from the parents' perspectives.

This project will prepare a manual for refugee parents and children on their rights and responsibilities related to education in the Canadian school system. It will cover law relating to the framework and structure of the Canadian school system; registration and attendance; suspension, expulsion and discipline; students with special needs; privacy and discrimination; custodial and non-custodial parents and family; and other identified issues.

## PERCEPTIONS OF REFUGEE YOUTH OF THE SOCIO-POLITICAL CLIMATE IN CANADA: IMPLICATIONS FOR INTEGRATION POLICIES AND PROGRAMS

JOSEPH GARCEA, Project Lead

Faculty Member in Political Studies, University of  
Saskatchewan

In light of the massive migrations of refugees and the persistent questions regarding the factors that contribute to their integration, inclusion, exclusion, marginalization, and radicalization, more research is needed. The three central objectives of this project are to examine the perceptions of refugee youth regarding the sociopolitical climate in Canada and in their communities, and the factors that inform/shape those perceptions; the beliefs of refugee youth regarding the effect that the sociopolitical climate in Canada and in their communities have on their actual and aspirational happiness, sense of belonging, community involvement, and identity; and the implications that the perceptions of refugee youth regarding the sociopolitical climate have for integration policies and programs for refugee youth.

The focus of this research is on the four Western provinces. Despite this limitation, the study will provide important insights. At the very least, it will make a significant contribution by laying the theoretical, conceptual, and methodological foundations for a study on refugee youth in other provinces.

## CLUSTER 4: CHILD, YOUTH, AND FAMILY WELLBEING

### CLUSTER CO-LEADS



JENNIFER JENKINS

is the Atkinson Chair of Early Child Development and Education, Director of the Atkinson Centre, and the Academic Director at the Fraser Mustard Institute of Human Development at the University of Toronto. Her research focuses on the influence of marital, sibling, and parent-child relationships on young children's social understanding, early learning, and wellbeing. Dr. Jenkins studies why some children are more resilient than others when exposed to risky environments and is particularly interested in within-family differences in sibling development. She has investigated parenting and family dynamics amongst immigrant families.



PATRICK MCGRATH

is a child psychologist, clinician-scientist, administrator, mentor, and social entrepreneur. He founded the Clinical Psychology PhD program at Dalhousie University. Dr. McGrath works to expand the work of Dalhousie University's Pediatric Pain Research Lab in areas including: delivery of care by distance treatment, the use of brain waves for pain measurement and the measurement and control of pain in cognitively impaired children and infants. He is an Officer of Order of Canada, fellow of the Canadian Academy of Health Sciences and the Royal Society of Canada, and the inaugural Health Legacy Leader from HealthCareCan. The Strongest Families Institute disseminates his award-winning e-health program across Canada, Finland, and Vietnam. Dr. McGrath conducted pioneering research on the measurement of and psychosocial interventions for pain in children and has published key textbooks in the area.



YOGENDRA B. SHAKYA

is the Senior Research Scientist at Access Alliance Multicultural Health and Community Services and is cross-appointed as Assistant Professor at the Dalla Lana School of Public Health, University of Toronto. His research examines how critical health determinants affect wellbeing and healthcare access for vulnerable communities, including racialized groups, immigrants, and refugees. He has led a number of studies on precarious employment, migration and health, refugee mental health, post-migration changes in family relationships and responsibilities, and role of newcomer youth in resettlement. Dr. Shakya has developed a wealth of resources on community-based research (CBR) and trained hundreds of community members to become critical researchers and agents of change.

# PROJECTS

## WELLBEING AND LEARNING: PROCESSES OF RESILIENCE IN REFUGEE CHILDREN

JOHANNE PARADIS, Project Lead

Professor, Department of Linguistics and Adjunct Professor, Communication Sciences and Disorders, University of Alberta

XI (BECKY) CHEN, Project Lead

Associate Professor in the Department of Applied Psychology and Human Development, OISE, University of Toronto

Syrian refugee children are at high risk for problems in both cognitive functioning and wellbeing. As victims of war, they have typically been exposed to high levels of threat and loss resulting in compromised wellbeing, as well as disrupted schooling. Associations between children's language, literacy, and wellbeing are well established in the general population, and in some new immigrant populations, but the relationship between these critical aspects of functioning in childhood has not been examined in refugee children. Do high levels of trauma and consequent anxiety impede refugee children's capacity to learn language or begin to read? Does language proficiency protect children from the growth of further mental health problems?

This study has three goals: First, to identify rates of cognitive and mental health problems among refugee children; second, to examine the extent to which learning and mental health influence one another over time; and third, to identify parents' concerns, service use, and gaps in service with respect to children's learning and wellbeing since arriving in Canada. One hundred children will be recruited from newcomer agencies in Toronto, Manitoba, and Guelph. These children will be visited at home on two occasions, one year apart. Well-established and psychometrically valid measures, translated into Arabic, will be used to assess children's mental health, language, and literacy. Parents will be interviewed using semi-structured interview methodology to understand received services and service requirements. This is a collaborative project between the Language, Literacy, and Learning and the Child, Youth, and Family Wellbeing clusters of CYRRC.

## PTSD IN SYRIAN REFUGEES

Patrick McGrath, PROJECT LEAD

Professor, Department of Psychiatry, Dalhousie University

Mental health problems are common in refugees because of the extreme stress of being a refugee. Often there is severe disruption by exposure to war, other forms of violence, and loss of income and social status. There may be exposure to violence and extreme uncertainty in refugee camps. When finally settled, there may be significant stress in adapting to a new language and culture, as well as catching up on education. Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) or significant symptoms of PTSD are common in Syrian refugees. The project will develop and provide initial testing of an Arabic language, coached, distance intervention for children and their families with PTSD.

## PROJECTS (CONTINUED)

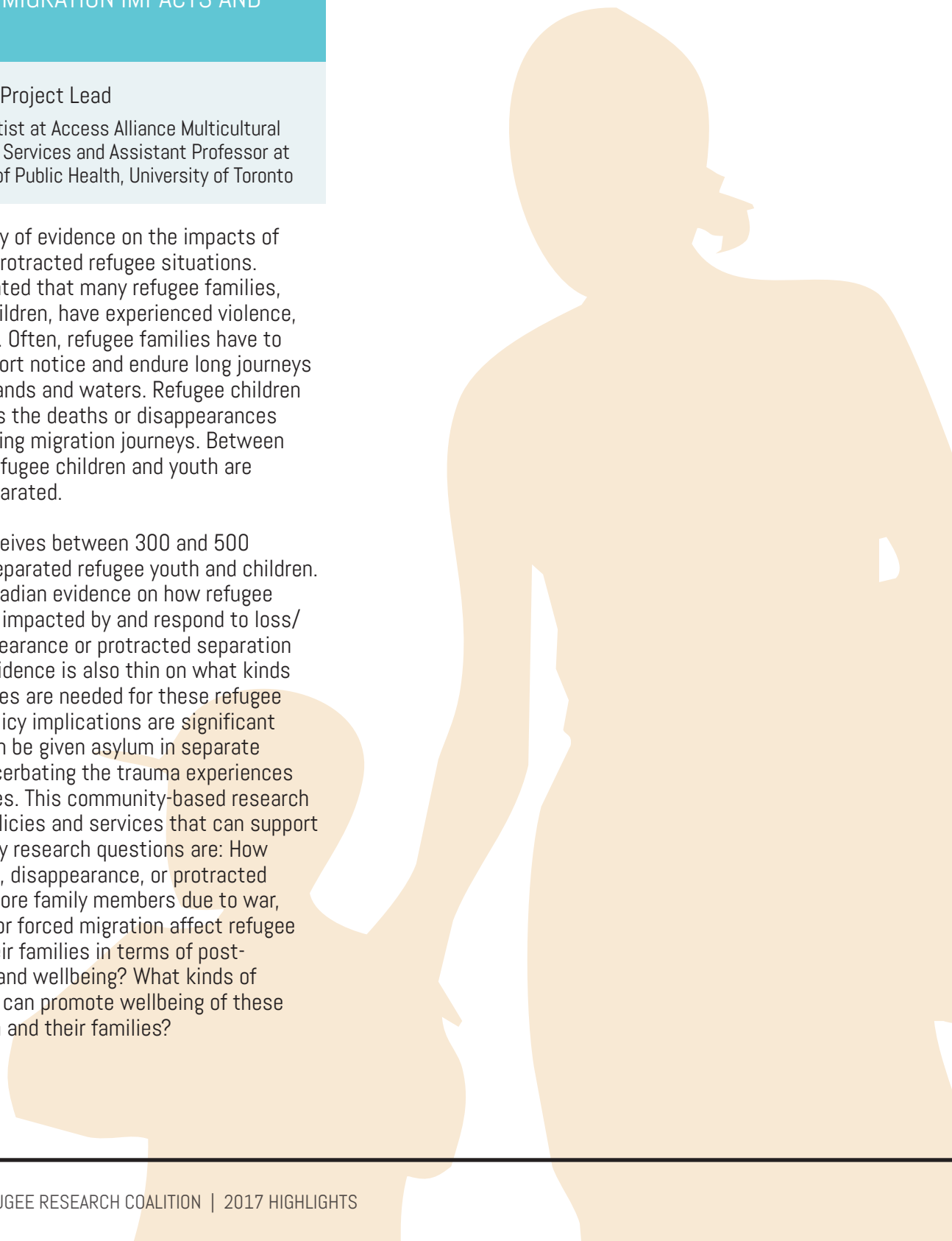
### LOSS AND PROTRACTED FAMILY SEPARATIONS AMONG REFUGEE CHILDREN AND YOUTH: EXAMINING POST-MIGRATION IMPACTS AND SERVICE NEEDS

YOGENDRA SHAKYA, Project Lead

Senior Research Scientist at Access Alliance Multicultural Health and Community Services and Assistant Professor at the Dalla Lana School of Public Health, University of Toronto

There is a growing body of evidence on the impacts of forced migration and protracted refugee situations. Studies have documented that many refugee families, including youth and children, have experienced violence, wars, and persecution. Often, refugee families have to flee their homes on short notice and endure long journeys through inhospitable lands and waters. Refugee children and youth may witness the deaths or disappearances of family members during migration journeys. Between 2% and 5% of these refugee children and youth are unaccompanied or separated.

Every year, Canada receives between 300 and 500 unaccompanied and separated refugee youth and children. There is very little Canadian evidence on how refugee children and youth are impacted by and respond to loss/death, missing/disappearance or protracted separation of family members. Evidence is also thin on what kinds of supports and services are needed for these refugee children and youth. Policy implications are significant as family members can be given asylum in separate countries, further exacerbating the trauma experiences for children and families. This community-based research project will identify policies and services that can support these youth better. Key research questions are: How do experiences of loss, disappearance, or protracted separation of one or more family members due to war, conflict, persecution, or forced migration affect refugee children/youth and their families in terms of post-migration settlement and wellbeing? What kinds of services and supports can promote wellbeing of these refugee children/youth and their families?



# CANADA-GERMANY (CYRRC-LERN) COLLABORATION

Canada and Germany both responded to the Syrian crisis with commitments to rapidly settle large numbers of refugees, most of whom are children and youth. In both countries, researchers are pursuing research and developing an evidence base to inform policies and interventions to facilitate the successful integration of this cohort.

The CYRRC's Canada-Germany collaborative work began with two research workshops in 2016, spearheaded by Dalhousie University and Germany's Leibniz Education and Research Network (LERN). Several collaborative projects emerged from the two workshops. One notable output was the volume *Structural Context of Refugee Integration in Canada and Germany*, which arose from the need expressed by researchers for a comparative analysis of Syrian refugees in the two countries. The volume, edited by Annette Korntheuer, Débora Maehler, and Paul Pritchard, features contributions by 32 authors—16 Canadian and 16 German. It examines policy frameworks that guide refugee protection and settlement to see how they shape the resettlement and integration of newcomers and analyzes the educational systems in Canada and Germany. Comparisons in access to education, housing, health, settlement services, and religious and ethnic communities are also examined. The volume has been published online and in print.

For a complete list of past collaborative projects carried out by CYRRC-LERN researchers, please refer to our website.

A new round of CYRRC-LERN projects funded in 2017 are currently underway:

## SPECIFIC NEEDS IN LITERACY AND LANGUAGE LEARNING OF REFUGEE CHILDREN: A COMPARISON OF GERMANY AND CANADA

BECKY CHEN, University of Toronto (OISE)  
KATRIN LINDNER, Ludwig-Maximilians-Universität  
CLAUDIA RIEHL, Ludwig-Maximilians-Universität

This project is a pilot for a large-scale investigation on cross-cultural and cross-linguistic comparison in the development of Syrian refugee children in Canada and Germany. It analyzes development of language and literacy skills, impact of socio-emotional wellbeing and motivation, and compares how the specific needs of Syrian refugees are met by institutions in both countries.

## REFUGEE RECEPTION AND PERCEPTION IN GERMANY AND CANADA

ELKE WINTER, University of Ottawa

This study examines how media perceptions of refugees and refugee-related issues differ in various contexts of reception, notably Canada and Germany, but also along urban/rural and provincial lines in both countries. The goal is to identify the major themes and trace how they vary over time and between contexts and media outlets.

## REFUGEES IN CANADA AND GERMANY: FROM RESEARCH TO POLICIES AND PRACTICES

LORI WILKINSON, University of Manitoba  
ANNETTE KORNTHEUER, City of Munich, Netzwerk Flüchtlingsforschung  
PAUL PRITCHARD, University of Toronto  
DÉBORA B. MAEHLER, Leibniz-Institute for the Social Sciences (GESIS)

Building on the previous volume by Korntheuer et al. (Eds.), this edited book will examine housing, health, and other resettlement issues from a research and evidence perspective, focusing on how research informs policy and practice. Unlike the first book, which was mainly an introduction to the systems of asylum and resettlement (e.g., describing the policies of respective countries), this book will focus on how research can and does inform policy and practice.

## DATA AGGREGATION

One of the CYRRC's primary objectives is to create improved access to aggregated national and provincial data. We work in close collaboration with our government partners and provide several student and post-doctoral internships in advanced data analysis each year.

### WHAT INFORMATION CAN WE DRAW FROM THE LONGITUDINAL IMMIGRATION DATABASE (IMDB)?

YOKO YOSHIDA, Dalhousie University

A CYRRC postdoctoral researcher based at Immigration Refugees and Citizenship Canada (IRCC) will draw from data available in the Longitudinal Immigration Database (IMDB) to produce data on economic outcomes of refugee families.

The IMDB holds information about immigrants who became Permanent Residents (PR) of Canada from 1980 onward. Information included in the landing records (Immigrant Landing File, or ILF) is linked with the tax files (T1 Family Files) in subsequent years after arrival (starting in 1982) as well as the Non-Permanent Resident Files (NRF). Combining the information from these administrative records, the IMDB provides detailed socioeconomic and demographic information about immigrants at the time of landing and afterwards. It also allows us to draw upon some information about the pre-landing histories of migrants using temporary permits and economic activities after arrival.

There are several ways the IMDB can be used to study refugee children and youth:

- Household economic situation

- Transition of refugee children and youth into adulthood

- Group comparisons (between landing categories)

For more information about the CYRRC's work with IMDB data, please contact us at: [cyrcc@dal.ca](mailto:cyrcc@dal.ca)

# UNDERSTANDING THE DEMOGRAPHIC AND SOCIOECONOMIC CHARACTERISTICS OF MIGRANTS AND REFUGEES IN CANADA AND AROUND THE WORLD

LORI WILKINSON, University of Manitoba

This CYRRC data aggregation project examines the historical and current demographic and socioeconomic characteristics of migrants and refugees in the world. It uses various datasets, including Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada's open data portal and the International Organization for Migration's global migration portal. Although the project is intended to focus on refugees in Canada, global migration trends are examined to compare and contrast to Canadian trends. The goal is to make important comparative data on refugees accessible to CYRRC researchers and others.

## A CANADIAN IMMIGRATION SNAPSHOT

Year Canada accepted the highest number of immigrants:	1913 (400,870)
Highest numbers of immigrants to Canada in the 21st century:	280,687 in 2010
Number of immigrants to Canada in 2015:	271,847
Percentage of newcomers to Canada in 2015 who belonged to the working age group (25 to 64):	64.9
Percentage of newcomers to Canada in 2015 who belonged to the younger age group (under 25):	32.2
Percentage of newcomers to Canada in 2015 who were female:	51.2
Number of refugees who arrived in Canada in 2016:	nearly 47,000 (most Syrian)
Number of refugees who arrived in Canada in 1980:	nearly 60,000 (most Vietnamese, Cambodian, Laoitian, and ethnic Chinese)

We take data requests from CYRRC members. To make a request for data or find out more about the types of data available, please contact:

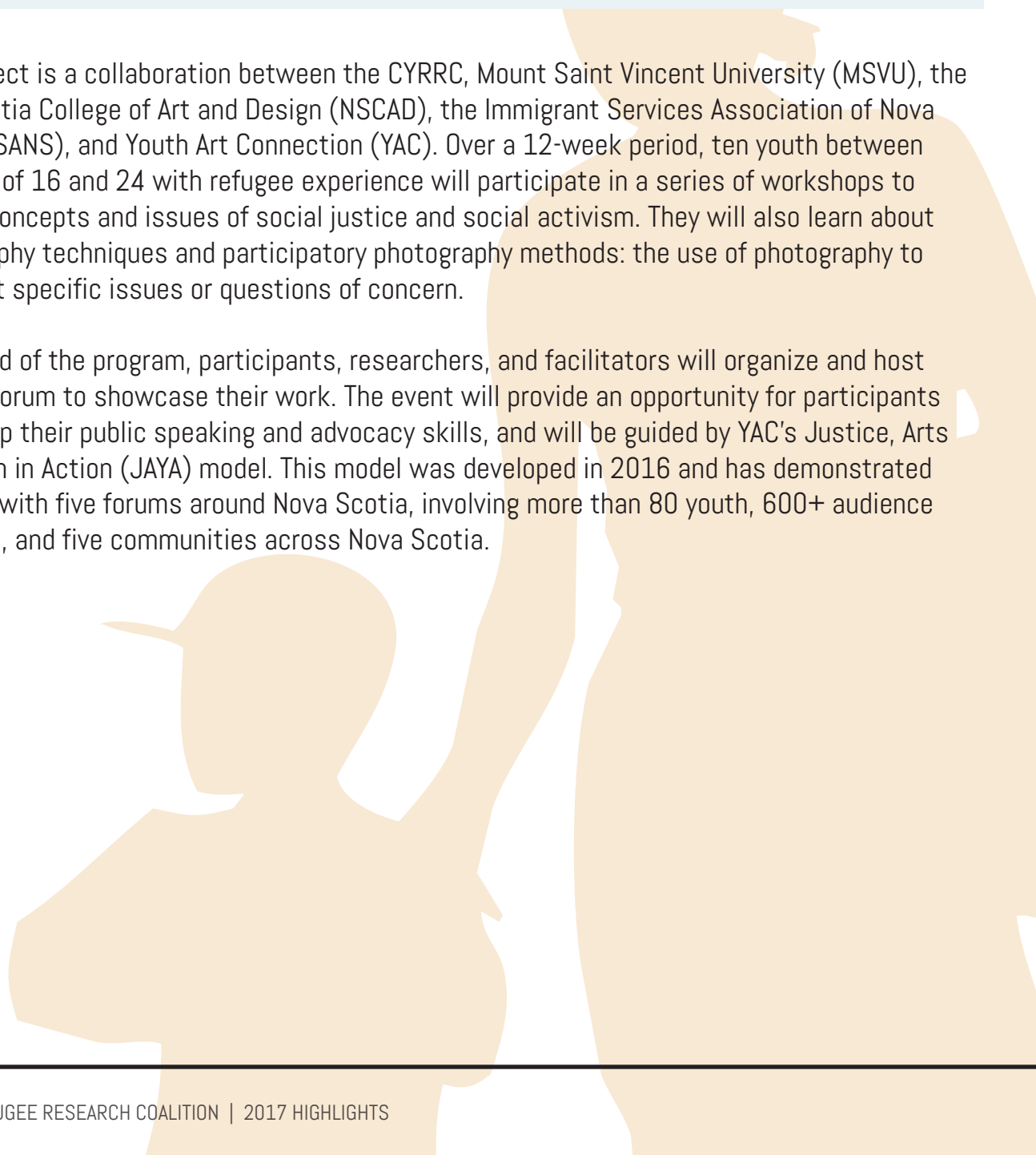
LORI WILKINSON  
lori.wilkinson@umanitoba.ca

### SOCIAL JUSTICE IN FOCUS: YOUTH WITH REFUGEE EXPERIENCE EXPLORE SOCIAL JUSTICE THROUGH PARTICIPATORY PHOTOGRAPHY IN HALIFAX, NOVA SCOTIA

SUSAN BRIGHAM, Mount Saint Vincent University  
APRIL MANDRONA, NSCAD University

This project is a collaboration between the CYRRC, Mount Saint Vincent University (MSVU), the Nova Scotia College of Art and Design (NSCAD), the Immigrant Services Association of Nova Scotia (ISANS), and Youth Art Connection (YAC). Over a 12-week period, ten youth between the ages of 16 and 24 with refugee experience will participate in a series of workshops to explore concepts and issues of social justice and social activism. They will also learn about photography techniques and participatory photography methods: the use of photography to represent specific issues or questions of concern.

At the end of the program, participants, researchers, and facilitators will organize and host a public forum to showcase their work. The event will provide an opportunity for participants to develop their public speaking and advocacy skills, and will be guided by YAC's Justice, Arts and Youth in Action (JAYA) model. This model was developed in 2016 and has demonstrated success with five forums around Nova Scotia, involving more than 80 youth, 600+ audience members, and five communities across Nova Scotia.





### CYRRC'S DELPHI STUDY IDENTIFIES KEY PRIORITIES FOR 2018 AND BEYOND

HOWARD RAMOS, Dalhousie University  
PATRICK MCGRATH, Dalhousie University

This study will identify the top five most pressing research and policy needs the CYRRC should focus on and fund. Using a method called the Delphi technique, specifically designed to make research and policy projections, a group of experts replies to rounds of questions based on feedback derived from previous rounds until a consensus is achieved.

In the first round, CYRRC members identified a range of research and policy priorities. These have been grouped into nine themes under research needs—Integration, Wellbeing, Education, Language, Economy, Family, Services, Identity Formation, and General. Under policy needs, eight themes emerged—Community Integration, Services, Family, Economy-Employment, Language, Education, Research, and General Policy. Starting research projects immediately on a variety of topics about refugee children and youth arose as the key policy priority. The second priority was studying refugee children and youth comparatively with children and youth of other migration streams, native-born Canadians, and across various refugee cohorts. The top priorities in each section are subject to change at the end of the second round, and again later as the experts converge on a consensus.

## OUR PARTNERS

### Nova Scotia

Dalhousie University – Wisdom2Action  
Dalhousie University – Resilience Research Centre (RRC)  
Immigrant Services Association of Nova Scotia (ISANS)  
Metropolis Centre – Atlantic  
Nova Scotia Office of Immigration  
Strongest Families Institute

### Quebec

McGill University – Centre for Research on Children and Families  
Metropolis Centre – Québec  
Université de Montréal – GRIP

### Ontario

Access Alliance Multicultural Community Health Centre  
Atkinson Centre for Society and Child Development  
Centre for Addiction and Mental Health (CAMH)  
COSTI – IIAS Immigrant Services  
McMaster University – Offord Centre for Child Studies  
Metropolis Centre – Ontario  
Ontario Ministry of Education  
Peel Newcomer Strategy  
School Mental Health ASSIST  
University of Toronto – Fraser Mustard Institute for Human Development  
YMCA of Western Ontario

### Manitoba

Manitoba Association of Newcomer Serving Organizations (MANSO)  
Metropolis Centre – Prairie

### Alberta

Alberta Association of Immigrant Serving Agencies  
Alberta Education  
Calgary Catholic Immigration Society  
Mennonite Centre for Newcomers, Edmonton  
Metropolis Centre – Prairie  
Multicultural Health Brokers Co-operative  
NorQuest College  
University of Alberta

### British Columbia

Affiliation of Multicultural Societies and Service Agencies of British Columbia (AMSSA)  
Immigrant Services Society of British Columbia  
Metropolis Centre-British Columbia  
University of British Columbia – Centre for Intercultural Language Studies  
University of British Columbia – Human Early Learning Partnership (HELP)

### National

Canadian Immigrant Settlement Sector Alliance  
Red Cross Canada  
Department of Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada  
Mental Health Commission of Canada  
Pathways to prosperity/Voies vers la prospérité  
Public Safety Canada  
Statistics Canada/Statistique Canada

### International

Dyslexia International  
(Pakistan) Aga-Khan University – Institute of Human Development  
Leibniz Education Research Network (LERN)





## CHILD AND YOUTH REFUGEE RESEARCH COALITION

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