

Building Capacity with Newcomer Youth Through Songwriting and Recording

TITLE OF RESEARCH: *Singing my Story: Building Capacity with Newcomer Youth Through Songwriting, Recording, and Creative Arts-Based Pedagogies*

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SUMMARY: This study explored the role music played in culture, integration, wellbeing, and creative expression for newcomer and refugee youth by involving six youth from the Greater Toronto Area (GTA) in the co-composition and professional recording of original songs.

LINK: Click [here](#) to read the executive summary and [here](#) to listen to the songs

Key Findings



Youth used storytelling and songwriting to process and make sense of their complex and evolving experiences of displacement and resettlement.

Although youth have much to share about their experiences, their voices are often silenced in displacement, migration, and settlement processes.

Participants came to the songwriting process with a wealth of creative, musical, and lyrical knowledge, even as first-time composers.



Youth benefitted from collaborative music creation and mentorship.

Recommendations:

- Settlement organizations should incorporate arts- and music-based programming for young people as this type of programming helps youth express themselves and share their perspectives, develop a sense of belonging and wellbeing, and build community support.
- Youth from newcomer and refugee communities should be consulted in the development of arts- and music-based programming.
- When conducting research with youth from newcomer and refugee communities, the safety and anonymity of the youth must be guaranteed by all researchers and staff at partner organizations. Enthusiastic and ongoing, informed consent and permission needs to be obtained directly from newcomer and refugee youth (along with parents/guardians if necessary).

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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