

MANAGING EXPECTATIONS

Expectations are completely normal and are even to be “expected.” When engaging in refugee sponsorship, you may have expectations about the refugee sponsorship experience, including how the refugee(s) will act or the kind of relationship your sponsoring group will form with the refugee(s) that you have sponsored. The refugee(s) you have sponsored may also have expectations, perhaps about your sponsoring group, and life in Canada. However, when expectations are unrealistic, they can lead to misunderstandings or interpersonal conflict, and in serious cases could even lead to sponsorship breakdown.

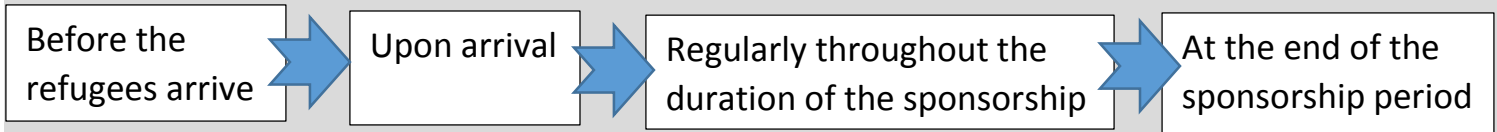


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To prepare for the arrival of the refugee(s) that your group has sponsored, consider reflecting on the following questions, both *individually* and with your *sponsoring group*.

1. **What are your expectations?**
2. a) **What are some expectations that the sponsored refugee(s) may have?**
b) **Is it possible to know these expectations in advance of the arrival of the refugee(s)?**
3. a) **Are the expectations identified in questions 1 and 2 *realistic*?**
4. a) **What are the dangers of unrealistic expectations?**
b) **How can unrealistic expectations be avoided?**
5. **What can you do if expectations are not being met?**
6. **How will you work towards either:**
 - a) **not having expectations, other than those essential for the functioning of the sponsorship; OR**
 - b) **having realistic expectations?**

Communication is a very helpful way of managing expectations. It is considered to be a best practice to effectively communicate thoughts, emotions and expectations at various stages:



Communication should take place:

- **between sponsors & refugees** (although, in some cases, pre-arrival communication may not be possible);
- **within the sponsoring group;** and
- **between sponsors and the Canadian relatives** of the refugees that you may be working with.

Self-reflection can be a very helpful strategy for managing expectations.

For more information, please refer to RSTP's **Managing Expectations Resource Kit for Refugee Sponsors** here:

<http://www.rstp.ca/wp-content/uploads/2014/03/expectool2013>



You may want to also consider the following questions:

- Why are you involved in refugee sponsorship?
- What do you hope to get out of the sponsorship?
- What hopes do you have for the refugee(s) you have sponsored?
 - Does your group share these hopes?
 - Will these match the sponsored refugees' hopes?
- How would you feel if your hopes for the sponsored refugees do not materialize?

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