

RSTP Bulletin

July 27, 2018

Family Violence and Available Support

This year, Canada aims to resettle 27,000 refugees, many of whom are survivors of persecution, torture, violence and war. As sponsors, you will want to see these newcomers integrate successfully. Yet sometimes the newcomers bring traumas with them that can manifest as other forms of violence, including family/domestic violence, abuse, marital breakdown, children acting out and so on.

Only through getting help and healing can the newcomer family integrate successfully into Canadian society, become active community members and good neighbours. For this to happen, the newcomer(s) you've sponsored will need your help in finding and receiving the treatment, tools and support that will allow them to heal from the trauma they experienced in their home and asylum countries.



Children inside a classroom at Za'atri refugee camp, host to tens of thousands of Syrians displaced by conflict, near Mafraq, Jordan. (United Nations Photo)

What is Family Violence?

Family violence is any form of abuse, mistreatment or neglect that a child or an adult experiences from a family member, or from an intimate partner. It is when someone uses abusive behaviour to control and/or harm another.

Family violence includes many different forms of abuse, including [physical](#), [sexual](#), [emotional](#), and [financial](#) abuse and [Neglect](#)

The different forms of abuse can occur in a range of relationships and contexts and range from a single act of violence to a number of occurrences that form a pattern of abuse. Some examples of the types of family violence are:

- [Intimate Partner Violence](#),
- [Child Abuse And Neglect](#),
- [Abuse Of Parents By Children](#), and
- [Elder Abuse](#).



Impact of Family Violence

Family violence can leave a long term impact on victims' physical and emotional health. For adults, this might result in lack of participation in regular activities and limit their ability to care for themselves and their children. Children may suffer long-term emotional, behavioural and developmental problems.

Impact on Refugee Communities

Keep in mind that while all communities experience domestic violence at similar rates, sponsored refugees enduring domestic violence face many barriers that make it even more difficult for them to get support.

Some of the barriers refugee communities face are:

Social isolation

- There are often not enough community-based resources for refugees and refugee women, especially those enduring violence. They are often not provided with information about what resources are available.

Fear of Deportation

- Sponsored refugees enduring violence may believe that their status and stay in Canada is tied to the status of the abuser.

Fear of Police

- Given some refugees' past experience with authorities such as the police, they may not feel comfortable reporting violence or abuse.

Economic Exclusion

- Lack of understanding of income support can create a belief that they will only have income support if they stay in the family. This makes it more difficult to leave.

Language Barriers

- Refugees and refugee women enduring family violence often cannot access information and services in the languages they speak. Access to interpreters is not always available.

Racism and Xenophobia

- Those seeking help are sometimes denied services or face stereotyping due to discrimination from front-line service providers, blaming their culture and/or religion for the violence they experience.
- Shelter services may lack policies and practices to properly accommodate the diverse needs of those fleeing violence.

Assisting sponsored individuals who have experienced family violence work through the above mentioned barriers and connecting them to resources that are available and in the language they speak will be an important first step in supporting them through family violence.

How can Sponsors help?

It is very difficult for those enduring family violence to disclose what they are going through. The sponsored newcomer may have many fears when disclosing abuse, one being fear of losing their sponsorship. Helping them understand that their position here in Canada won't be affected will help them get the support they need.

Scott Mclead shared his SAH's approach to dealing with family violence disclosure during his presentation on Domestic Violence and Refugee Mental Health at the 2018 SAH conference. First ensure the individual is not in danger, then determine whether police, paramedics or Children's Aid Services need to be called. For a non-emergency situation, the IRCC should be contacted as soon as possible. After speaking with IRCC, follow up on the status/situation of the newcomers. Make sure that the privacy and confidentiality of the newcomers is maintained by the members of the sponsoring group or CG. Also make sure that any CG knows of the support available to them and to the newcomers. The CG or sponsoring group should not try to take on parts of the work that are usually handled by professionals.



Scott also discussed the financial obligation of sponsors in the event of marital breakdown due to family violence.

According to the [New Financial Gridline](#), “the sponsoring group is not responsible for supporting two separate households. The sponsor is expected to continue to support the household with the higher number of people. The other household is to be processed for breakdown and referred to a new sponsoring group, the RAP (for SAH cases only) or provincial social assistance. Sponsoring groups should contact IRCC for assistance in these situations”



Reporting abuse of any kind:

If the individual is in **immediate DANGER** or fears for their safety, please CALL 911. If children are involved contact the children’s aid society in your province

- ✚ More information on getting help, victim services, community organizations, help lines, legal services, religious organizations, shelters, children in these situations, and links to family violence resources can be found here: <http://www.justice.gc.ca/eng/cj-jp/fv-vf/help-aide.html>

Available Resources

Canadian Resource Centre for Victims of Crime (CRCVC -<https://crcvc.ca/links/>)

- Contains information on services available including: support for women, support for children/youth, information on victims’ rights, counselling, victim services and information on for those who need a lawyer.

Ending Violence Association of Canada: <http://endingviolencecanada.org/getting-help/>

- Has information on organizations across Canada that offer services to those experiencing violence

Language Interpreter Services (LIS) program: <http://languageinterpreters.on.ca/>

- Interpreter Service in Ontario For those who are victims of domestic violence, sexual violence, as well as those who have been exploited through human trafficking.

Violence Against Women (VAW): <https://www.immigrantandrefugeenff.ca/violence-against-women>

- Information on VAW and the barriers immigrant and refugee communities have in accessing support.

Family Violence Prevention Resources – Women: <https://www.canada.ca/en/public-health/services/health-promotion/stop-family-violence/prevention-resource-centre/women/information-sheets-booklets-fact-sheets.html>

Transition Houses and Shelters for Abused Women in Canada:

<https://www.canada.ca/en/public-health/services/health-promotion/stop-family-violence/prevention-resource-centre/women/transition-houses-shelters-abused-women.html>

Information on abuse of parents by teenage children:

https://canadiancrc.com/PDFs/Parent_Abuse-Abuse_of_Parents_by_Their_Teenage_Children_2001.pdf

A text based counselling for Youth:

[torontodistresscentre.com](https://www.torontodistresscentre.com)<https://www.torontodistresscentre.com/ontx/>

Joint Assistance Sponsorship (JAS)

Refugees sponsored under the JAS program are identified as having special needs that will likely result in a longer or more difficult period of integration in Canada due to:

- Trauma from violence or torture
- Medical disabilities
- Effects of systemic discrimination, or
- Large family unit (i.e.: higher number of family members).

There are 46 In-Canada JAS Refugee Profiles waiting to be sponsored!

Including

Refugee PROFILE #: 1173-05-18

**ADDITIONAL INFORMATION: Vancouver BC
IRCC Local Office: Vancouver IRCC**

Family composition: A Syrian family of six, including four children aged 5 to 16. The father is familiar with language support, health and housing services and the city's transportation system. He has 12 years of education and work experience as a baker.

Medical needs: Two of the children have significant medical conditions and expenses, including transportation costs to get to medical appointments. This hinders the family's integration process. The couple are preoccupied by their children's treatment and medication costs, especially post-sponsorship.



A Cambodian child at the Ban Mai Rut refugee camp

Support needed: The family would feel more secure, and would have a friendlier environment to live in with the assistance of a sponsor. They will benefit physically, emotionally, and socially surrounded by trusted people to help them with their new life in their community.

Refugee PROFILE #: 1402-07-18

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION: London, ON

XREF: None

IRCC Local Office: IRCC London

Family composition: A 32-year-old single mother with three children aged 2 to 8. She has experience as a clerk in a flower shop.

Special needs: The mother is a survivor of violence and trauma who would benefit from additional support. Her youngest child requires regular follow-ups with a cardiologist and pediatrician. Because of this the mother hasn't able to attend English classes on a regular basis. The language school where the mother is enrolled is too far from her house. Her daughter is not able to travel for long trips on public transportation due to her heart condition. When the daughter is exposed to the cold, her chances of contracting illnesses increases and her immune system weakens. Any additional counselling and psychological support will assist the family in becoming secure, confident, medically fit and positively responsive to all daily needs.

Assistance with the care of the youngest daughter would allow the mother to attend English classes more regularly. She would benefit from increased community support for her two other children, especially with their homework and other activities. Someone that they can trust, who is able to help them integrate into Canadian life and teach them about the culture will greatly benefit this family. A sponsor would help with the family's positive integration into the community.

Refugee PROFILE #: 1346-06-18

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION: Calgary, Alberta

IRCC Local Office: IRCC Calgary

Family composition: A 19-year-old married Iraqi woman and her husband. When the couple arrived in Canada, they were assigned to a linguistically and culturally appropriate resettlement counsellor, who assisted them with resettlement-related services. They also received appropriate resources in the community to ensure they have access to required programs.

Special needs: She struggles with her mental health. Her condition is exacerbated by her concern for the rest of the family in her home country. Shortly after their arrival, her spouse's relatives resettled in Canada and turned to the couple for help. The couple finds it difficult to provide support to their family and cope with the new culture and past experiences.

Support needed: With increased community supports the couple will be able to successfully integrate to a society in a country that is very different culturally, socially and financially from their country of origin.

For more information on the available JAS Refugee Profiles and/or the JAS program, contact our Refugee Resettlement Project Worker at paznavehzadeh@rstp.ca or visit: <http://www.rstp.ca/en/special-initiatives/joint-assistance-sponsorships/>



Monthly Information Sessions in Mississauga, Ontario!
1st Wednesday of each month!

Private Sponsorship of Refugees (PSR)

Start Date: Wednesday, August 1, 2018

Time: 4: 00 pm – 7: 00 pm

Where: 3660 Hurontario Street, 7th Floor, Mississauga, ON L5B 3C4

Description:

The session will include:

- Who can be sponsored to come to Canada?
- Who can sponsor?
- PSR process
- PSR obligations and rights of sponsored refugees
- Q & A

Please register by clicking:

<https://www.eventbrite.ca/e/private-sponsorship-of-refugees-psr-information-session-tickets-48381804279> or by contacting RSTP Ontario Trainer Inas Hamid by email ihamid@rstp.ca or phone 905.273.4140 ext. 239



RSTP Trainer, Anoush Newman, with sponsors, after an information session in Calgary, Alberta

Upcoming RSTP Workshops and Webinars

Workshops

RSTP Month 13 workshop In Sydney, Nova Scotia

Date: Friday, August 10, 2018

Time: 9:30 am – 1:30 pm (refreshments provided)

Where: New Dawn Centre for Innovation, 37 Nepean Street, second floor, Sydney, Nova Scotia, B1P 1J2

Description: This workshop will cover information on helping newcomers prepare for life after sponsorship:

- Ethical considerations of the sponsor's role
- Support during and beyond the sponsorship
- Support available to newcomers post-sponsorship

Please register by contacting RSTP Atlantic Trainer Laura Hambleton by email lhambleton@rstp.ca or phone 902-406-8736

Webinars

Calculation matters! Are you calculating your G5 sponsorship costs right?

Date: Friday, August 3, 2018

Time: 2:00 pm - 3:30 pm EDT

Description: Group of Five sponsorship applications have at times been returned/rejected by IRCC due to discrepancies in cost calculations on the application forms. This webinar will illustrate how to budget for G5 sponsorship and where to reflect numbers on the said forms. The webinar will also tackle the new guidelines and the updated Sponsorship Undertaking and Settlement Plan form.

For registration, please click:

<https://attendee.gotowebinar.com/register/1389990895703089666>

For more information, please visit: <http://www.rstp.ca/en/training/>



RSTP Training in Edmonton, Alberta



Refugee
Sponsorship
Training
Program



Immigration, Refugees
and Citizenship Canada

Immigration, Réfugiés
et Citoyenneté Canada