

Refugee Integration & Long-Term Health Outcomes in Canada (SyRIA.lth)

What it is:

Refugee Integration and Long-term Health Outcomes in Canada is a pan-Canadian longitudinal study funded by The Canadian Institute for Health Research (CIHR). The project is a partnership between settlement service agencies and academic research institutions in three of Canada's largest refugee resettlement provinces: British Columbia, Ontario, and Quebec.

We are looking at how different resettlement programs support the social integration of Government Assisted Refugees (GARs) and Privately Sponsored Refugees (PSRs) and the impact of integration pathways on their long-term physical and mental health. Our goal is to improve the health and well-being of new Canadians by understanding what leads to successful integration outcomes and for whom so that we can tailor resettlement programs to best suit newcomers' needs and circumstances.

Our research goals:

To produce knowledge that will:

- Inform promising practices for refugee resettlement and integration
- Strengthen knowledge exchange in the settlement sector
- Identify the impact of settlement policies on refugee health and well-being
- Deepen our understanding of the influence of social conditions on long-term health and well-being

Our approach:

Interviews will be collected once a year for four years with Syrian adults who resettled in Canada between 2015 and 2017. In year two and year four, we will also conduct focus groups to gain more insight into the nature of people's experiences.

These interviews will follow key integration markers at the material or functional level (e.g., employment, housing and social services accessed), the social level (e.g., social networks, discrimination), and the subjective or psychological level (e.g., sense of belonging, stress).

Project Updates

Work to date:

- Year 3 data collection has been complete (See final follow-up numbers below). Data is now being prepared for analyses
- We are working on academic dissemination:
 - **Two book chapters:**
 - 1– Ethical issues in community-based research: the perspectives of peer researchers
 - 2– The role of social networks in integration: Findings from focus groups with Syrian GARs and PSRs in 5 Canadian cities
 - Four working papers:**
 - 1– Predictors of smoking and smoking cessation among Syrian refugees

Prevalence of daily cigarettes' smoking amongst Syrian refugees during their first two years in Canada

2- Language class attendance

Syrian refugee participation in language classes: Motivators and barriers

3– Predictors of depression level scores on the PHQ-9

Depression among Syrian Refugees: Findings from a Canadian Longitudinal Study

4– Relationship between education, job appropriateness and psychological well-being

Next steps:

- Continuous work on data analysis, reports writing and dissemination
- Year 4 survey preparation for March 2020

Site:	Year 1 sample:	Year 2 sample:	Year 3 sample:
Kitchener	141	133	129
Toronto	546	512	498
Windsor	235	220	189
Montreal	697	643	632
Vancouver	246	231	212
Okanagan Valley	67	66	66
National total	1932 (excluding 24 pilots)	1805 (excluding 13 pilots and 8 not eligible participants)	1726 (excluding 8 pilots)

Results Dissemination: Academic

Our paper based on national year 1 data has been published:

What Role Does Type of Sponsorship Play in Early Integration Outcomes? Syrian Refugees Resettled in Six Canadian Cities

By: Michaela Hynie, Susan McGrath, Jonathan Bridekirk, Anna Oda, Nicole Ives, Jennifer Hyndman, Neil Arya, Yogendra B Shakya, Jill Hanley, Kwame McKenzie and SyRIA.lth

Refuge Volume 35 No 2

Article link: <https://refuge.journals.yorku.ca/index.php/refuge/article/view/40600>

Abstract:

There is little longitudinal research that directly compares the effectiveness of Canada's Government-Assisted Refugee (GAR) and Privately Sponsored Refugee (PSR) Programs that takes into account possible socio-demographic differences between them. This article reports findings from 1,921 newly arrived adult Syrian refugees in British Columbia, Ontario, and Quebec. GARs and PSRs differed widely on several demographic characteristics, including length of time displaced. Furthermore, PSRs sponsored by Groups of 5 resembled GARs more than other PSR sponsorship types on many of these characteristics. PSRs also had broader social networks than GARs. Sociodemographic differences and city of residence influenced integration outcomes, emphasizing the importance of considering differences between refugee groups when comparing the impact of these programs.

Language Learning Tool for Refugees: Identifying the Language Learning Needs of Syrian Refugees Through Participatory Design

A large number of refugees need to learn a new language in order to transition to, or settle in, a new country. Most refugees have access to smartphones with which they can access mobile language learning tools. However, refugees in different stages of their journeys have different language learning needs. Identifying the unique needs of refugees is essential to design language learning tools that support their language learning activities. This two-part participatory design study identifies and compares the tacit and latent language learning needs of two different groups of Syrian refugees: a group in transition in Lebanon, and a group settling in Germany. Results show overlapping needs and specific needs for the two groups of refugees.

Read more on: <https://www.mdpi.com/2226-471X/4/3/71>

Restoring Hope for Syrian Refugees: Social Support Students Need to Excel at School

In This qualitative, phenomenological case study was designed to elicit Syrian refugee students' perceptions regarding the individuals who provide them with the social support needed for academic success. Semi-structured interviews were conducted with 10 male Syrian eighth graders at a public middle school in Lebanon. House's social support framework guided this study and served as the theoretical lens through which data were collected and analyzed. Findings from this study revealed teachers, supervisors, and administrators as expected major providers of the social supports that Syrian refugee students need to excel in their studies. However, when students do not find support where they might expect it to be, they adopt coping strategies such as independence, perseverance, self-efficacy, and peer-teaching. These findings are of primary importance to school administrators, humanitarian aid agencies, and policymakers. The article concludes with recommendations for practice and future research.

Read more on: <https://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/full/10.1111/imig.12642>

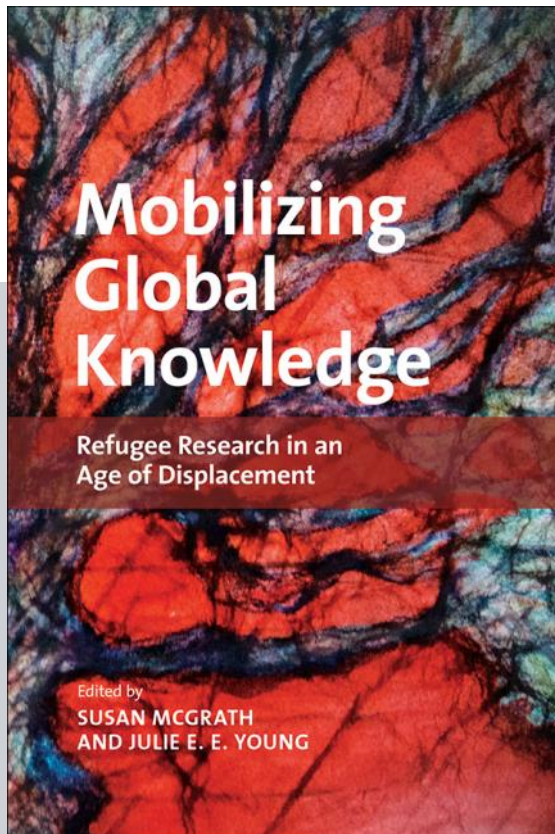
News & Events

Dr. Susan McGrath book on the refugee research network co-edited with Julie Young has been published!

The cover is a tree, a beautiful painting by Nergis Canefe, one of the co-authors

For more information, visit:

<https://press.ucalgary.ca/books/9781773850856/>



Continuing Education Opportunities:

Course/ Webinar	Website
Immigrant and Refugee Mental Health Project Webinars	https://irmhp-
Course: The Immigrant and Refugee Mental Health Project, by CAMH	rmhp/courses

Upcoming Events:

Date	Event	Location	Website
October 2	Centre for Refugee Studies 2019 Open house	Toronto Canada	crs1.apps01.yorku.ca/
October 17-18	2019 OCASI Professional Development Conference	Toronto Canada	pdconference.ocasi.org/



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