

St. Kateri Tekakwitha School

We are 4th year nursing students and have had the privilege of being placed at St. Kateri Tekakwitha School for our community rotation this semester. We visited many classrooms to promote healthy practices and teach healthy ways of living to students of all grades and ages. One of our course projects was to assess and identify strengths and challenges of St. Kateri and the surrounding community. We noted a diverse student population at the school connected by a common religion and classified this as a strength. Approximately 60% of St. Kateri students are new immigrants or children of immigrants. A literature review of challenges faced by immigrant families with school-aged children identified three common themes; low income, mood disorders and bullying. We thought it was important to share these findings as a way of raising awareness of these issues and provide suggestions to enable the school and community to be proactive in supporting new immigrant families.



Immigration

Statistics Canada, 2017 states that an immigrant is “persons residing in Canada who were born outside of Canada, excluding temporary foreign workers, Canadian citizens born outside Canada and those with student or working visas”.

What does the literature say about immigration?

Income

The literature shows that immigrants that have lived in Canada for one year or less make a median income of \$20,000, which is less than the median income of Canadian citizens, at \$33,920. If we look at the average four person family monthly living expenses without rent, we can see how \$20,000 dollars would not be a sufficient amount in a 12 month period, especially if there was only one income. (Statistics Canada, 2017) & (Cost of Living in Regina. 2018)

Bullying

A recent study suggested that 20% of immigrants that participated in the study faced some sort of bullying, compared to 14% of non-immigrants. 13% of immigrants faced multiple experiences of bullying compared to 7% of non-immigrants. The greatest reasons for discrimination in this study were ethnicity and culture at 13%, race or skin color at 11% and finally, language at 7% (Nangia, 2013), (Pitt, et al., 2015) & (Walsh, et al., 2015).

Mood Disorders

Research also shows that due to the challenges that affect day-to-day life, immigrants have a higher risk of mood disorders than non-immigrants, more specifically depression. In the literature, bullying specifically was identified as having significant effects on:

- Risk of depression- 29.2%
 - Suicidal ideation- 39.3%
 - Suicide attempt- 18.3%
- (Islam, 2015) & (Wagner, 2016)



Possible impacts on the community:

- St. Kateri has a large student population enrolled in the EAL program. This program aims to prepare them with their language development for success in the future.
- Awareness is key in supporting our immigrant population.
- According to the literature, new immigrant families may struggle with finances. Low income can result in students not being able to participate in recreational activities such as after school sports, which could lead to isolation. For these families who may struggle with finances or feel isolated, St. Kateri's Community Coordinator is able to connect with these families to provide resources and other community connections. For more information, please contact the Community Coordinator, Alina Craig, at a.craig@rcsd.ca.
- The school team works together to address concerns and build positive relationships that create an inclusive environment that aids in positive mental health.

Suggestions

- Provide information, resources and support for financial issues related to immigration
- Promote awareness of bullying (inclusive classrooms, peer support groups, counseling, buddy bench)
- Promote awareness of the link between mood disorders and bullying and provide resources

Resources for parents

- Regina Immigrant Women Center (1-306-359-6514, 1801 Toronto St., Regina Sk.)
- INFO Immigration Center for Application Inc. (1-306-525-1002, 1950 Broad St., Regina Sk.)
- Newcomer Welcome Center/ Regina Open Door Society (1-306-352-5775, 1st floor- 2332 -11th Ave, Regina Sk.)
- Immigrant Services (1-306-798-7467, 1945 Hamilton St., Regina Sk.)
- Regina Housing Authority (1-306-565-4480, 3124 Dewdney Ave)
- MyCana Immigration Consultants Inc. (1-306-999-0528, 541 Albert St., Regina Sk.)
- Doctors accepting new patients: <http://www.rqhealth.ca/facilities/doctors-accepting-new-patients>

Resources for kids

- Kids help phone 1-800-668-6868

A positive look at Immigration

I'm new here: Children's Book Author Talks About Immigrant Children

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=u5C8upd7qgo>



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