

**NATIONAL CHILD DAY FORUM 2105:  
EMBRACING DIVERSITY AND NURTURING ROOTS**

**COMING HOME **OR** LOST IN  
TRANSITION**

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- It is the dream of every Newcomer coming to Canada to make it their home but there are many who are lost once they arrive.
- The reasons are many and differs from one person to another as researchers have indicated. Some of these could be language barrier, cultural shock, racism, discrimination and housing.
- As the children start attending school the realities starts to set in. They are faced with more traumas from peers, teachers and school administration.

Their dreams start to fall apart and the children start to distance themselves from their parents.

They are ashamed of their customs and refuse to wear attires that identify that particular group, they refuse to speak their first language because of shame.

The children start missing school because they found out they cannot cope and be a ridicule to their peers

This brings us to our discussion today, the children are totally lost in this transition. They are not sure whether to uphold their cultural values or embrace their new home values.

# CEDA/PATHWAYS

CEDA is a community based organization that helps community to help themselves through developing and implementation of identified programs in various parts of the city. Through CEDA, we were able to partnership with Pathways Canada to bring the Pathways concept from Toronto to Eastern Canada in helping economically disadvantaged children to combat the drop out rates in their neighbourhood.

Initially, Pathways focused on the Aboriginal Youths but since then there has been an influx of Newcomers to the North End hence the need to serve them as well.

- . Pathways works in schools, communities and homes
- . Provides after school programs in tutoring, mentoring, literacy etc.
- . Provides financial assistance to students through monthly incentives and others where necessary
- . Makes sure students graduate from high school
- . Advocates for students where necessary
- . Partnership with other community organizations

# BENEFITS TO STUDENTS

- . Incentives are accumulated till graduation
- . One on one contact with Student Parent Support Workers (SPSWs)
- . Build self confidence
- . Motivates students to stay in school
- . Good relationship building with fellow students
- . Healthy food program on site
- . Improvement in grades, school attendance etc.
- . Bus passes or tickets given to students for easy access to schools and pathways programs

In 2015/2016 school year, there are a total of 326 Pathways sponsored students in 23 schools across the city, of these 48 are newcomers from Grades 9-12 (16%), and Feeder Schools -Grades 7-8, 7 Newcomers making a total of 55 Newcomers (17%) of Pathways enrolment. In June 2015, Pathways

had 49 graduates of which 16 of them were Newcomers. This is an indication that if the right parameters are actually put into place, there will be an increase in children completing high school. This also will increase their involvements in social issues.



# Sharing Circles with Newcomers



# Students at Pathways Center after School



Pathways Newcomer Student being assisted by U of W Teachers in Training



# Newcomer Student be honoured for Volunteering



With the increase of Newcomers into the North End and enrolment into the Pathways program CEDA engaged other community organizations serving Newcomers to collectively form a new body – The Newcomer Education Coalition. This body will collaborate with various stakeholders to improve the educational outcomes of Newcomers. In April 2015, The Newcomer Education Coalition held a Newcomer Youth Gathering which was attended by youths from various school divisions and from diverse cultural backgrounds. It was an eventful day with focus on the inclusiveness of the school system in Manitoba. The Newcomer Education Coalition will work to improve success of Newcomer children and youth in areas such as basic literacy (LAL), High school graduation, wellness and ensure that youths have the tools, support and opportunities in order to pursue their post-secondary education.

In conclusion, all stakeholders should work together and provide necessary tools to Newcomers so they can reach their goals instead of just being absorbed into their new home country.