



Photos: Cooper & O'Hara, 2019

Program partners



Evaluation provided by Three Hive Consulting



Final Evaluation Report Summary

Photo: Cooper & O'Hara, 2019

In 2018, with the help of 3-year Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada (IRCC) funding, 13 organizations began working collaboratively to empower immigrant and refugee youth and support their successful integration into Canadian society.

Together they represent thousands of youth and their families – many of whom feel marginalized, or simply not equipped to become involved in the broader community.

This is Bridging Together.

Through culturally-appropriate summer and afterschool programming, children and youth made new friends, developed social and academic skills, learned about Canada, and about their own cultures. Importantly their voices were heard as they learned how to recognize their personal strengths, and use these to navigate their settlement journey, and tackle language, culture, and other challenges before they feel insurmountable.

Impact: After the program, the majority of youth

- ▶ get along better with others
- ▶ improved at school over the year
- ▶ want to go to university/college
- ▶ learned more about their culture and other cultures
- ▶ know who to ask for help
- ▶ learned about life in Edmonton/feel comfortable going to new places
- ▶ feel good about themselves

Impact: Parents/caregivers

- 84%** able to work more because of the summer program
- 89%** able to take classes or go to school more
- 75%** program helped them practice English
- 80%** feel more connected to their community

“Many of these youth deal with multiple challenges. Premigration trauma may be impacting their mental and physical health. Some, who’ve been living in refugee camps, are going to school for the first time. They can feel alone and isolated because of language and cultural differences. And they can face racism and discrimination when they’re in the broader community.”

- Dunia Azzara, Youth Program Manager, YWCA



Photo: Michael Kuby, 2018

“I feel treasured and unique.”

- BT Youth

“I belong.”

- BT Youth

“I’m not invisible.”

- BT Youth

Partners

13 partner organizations provide after-school homework clubs/sports programs and summer day camps. REACH Edmonton, the 14th partner, is the coordinating body. Some focus more on academics, others on culture, and others on sport. Collaboratively, all aim to empower youth to have healthy relationships and life skills.

“There’s incredible value in this collaborative. Each organization has different perspectives, with people coming from many different backgrounds. We learn from each other and bring collective expertise to our work. Having so many others at the table means more opportunity, more resources and more connections for youth and their families.”

- Jwamer Jalal, Youth Program Manager, Multicultural Health Brokers

\$1.00 **\$3.30**

Impact: for every \$1 invested in Bridging Together, \$3.30 is returned to Edmonton in social value.

- Outcomes yielding the greatest value were
- ▶ youths’ improved youth self-confidence, intention to go to university/college
 - ▶ parents’ ability to attend school and work outside the home

Bridging Together Youth

9-17	average age of the youth
6	youngest youth
24	oldest youth
817	youth attending school-year and/or summer programming Sept 2018-August 2019

Bridging Together Story

Mahdi is 14, from Syria. His family pushed him to attend the IFFSA collective kitchen. He would only talk to his brother or cousins and seemed unhappy to join in group activities. One day he was asked to suggest a movie the group could watch. He was nervous the group would make fun of his choice. But they loved it and asked him to suggest other movies. The next day, he seemed overwhelmingly happy, started talking to other youth, and eagerly participating. Mahdi told us that movie day was the best day he’s had since coming to Canada.



Photo: Michael Kuby, 2018



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