



newcomer women's
services toronto

ANNUAL REPORT

2014-2015



Thank You

A THANK YOU TO OUR FUNDERS

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Settlement



806 newcomers were connected to supports that take care of their immigration and daily needs, such as where to find a family doctor, how to fill out a government form, how to enroll their children in schools and more.

1476 newcomer women got educated in settlement related workshops and group session.

1190 presently arrived women and their children found their sense of belonging within the Newcomer Women's Network. Newcomer mums and grandmas meet every Saturday to get educated and inspired: from citizenship field trips to healthy cooking; from Zumba to budget planning, while their children build math skills and read books with volunteers.

104 immigrant women graduated from accredited CPR and Food Handling courses that prepare them with vital job skills they need to succeed in the workplace.

Kudos from Our Clients



“NEW Employment Services is a great company they helped me to get my dream job. I never came across people who are so helpful. They really understood my strengths and weaknesses through their screening process and even took time to turn my weakness into my strength. I would suggest to everyone who is looking for a career change or recent graduate to try their services.”

– Fariha, NEW Employment Services Client

“The benefits I got from NEW Employment Services has surpassed my expectation. I was placed in a job with an excellent manager, I was taught different skills on this job, which is awesome. Thanks to NEW Employment Services, I gained new skills that will last me a lifetime. I am a success because of NEW Employment Services. My job developer visited my job, communicated with my manager and myself making sure everything is on a professional level and both my manager and myself were happy.”

– Amy, NEW Employment Services Client

Learn English



ONE Soccer Tournament.

35 newcomer women and their children had fun playing soccer during the Drills N' Skills Indoor Soccer Day. The soccer day was packed with exciting activities: a soccer coach from Monarch Park Stadium taught women to practise basic soccer skills like a pro; the soccer tournament between newcomer women and volunteers was both exciting and intense; and a delicious pizza party celebrated the success of the Soccer Day.



TWO Student-run Fundraisers.

The English Language Program (ELP) students learn English while giving back. They organized a Lucky Dip Raffle and a Silent Auction last year. Both fundraisers raised \$433.50 to purchase new books and toys for NEW's Child Fund.

Healthy Living



39 newcomer girls foster sense of positive body image at the Girls Night Out! Smoke-free Leadership Camp.

At this five-day March Break camp, teenage girls hosted a smoke-free movie event and developed media-campaign skills to advocate for a smoke-free community. In addition, they engaged in various health promotion activities, ranging from spoken word poetry and creative art advocacy to Zumba, yoga, Wen-Do Women's Self-Defence classes and healthy cooking.

31 peer educators graduated from Toronto Public Health training and ran wellness workshops.

These peer-led workshops on diabetes prevention and healthy eating were facilitated in Urdu, Turkish, Spanish, Bengali and Mandarin in neighborhoods with fast-growing immigrant populations.



Events



80 neighbours and families in the community celebrated International Women's Day with live music and authentic, homemade potluck dishes prepared by volunteers. Special guest Olivia Chow was invited to share her inspiring story as an immigrant to Canada. Olivia also live auctioned her new books to raise money for NEW's Child Fund. The International Women's Day Potluck raised \$2,286 and the event was profiled by CTV news.



ONE Design Award. The Council of Elders won an RGD So(cial) Good Award for running the elder abuse prevention campaign with the Public Studio. This project honours the voices and experiences of diverse elders across the City of Toronto. Youth and elders worked together to film a short PSA. Case study of the Council of Elders is included in a Social Work textbook.



Events

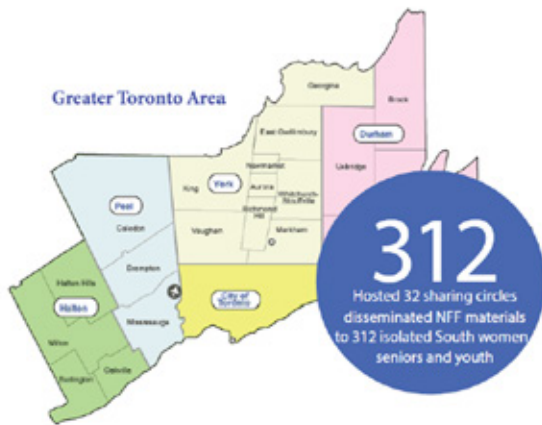


ONE Report Launch

The Economy and Resilience of Newcomers (EARN) Report was launched to explore newcomer entrepreneurship in Toronto. Over 70 newcomer entrepreneurs and local community members attended the report launch. Social Planning Toronto's Senior Researcher, Beth Wilson, presented research findings at the launch, followed by a panel discussion with local newcomer entrepreneurs and community organizers.

Based on previously unreleased Statistics Canada data and in-depth interviews with local newcomer entrepreneurs, the EARN report provided a "snapshot" of self-employment for new Canadians. An estimate of 2,000 copies EARN reports have been distributed to newcomer entrepreneurs, policy makers and immigrant community centres. **Key findings of the EARN report were featured in the Toronto Star and the Toronto Vital Sign Report.**

Beyond Our Lineage

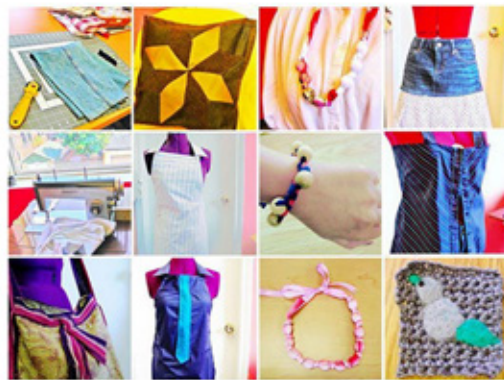


NEIGHBOURS, FRIENDS, FAMILIES: SOUTH ASIAN WOMEN CAMPAIGNED AGAINST GENDERED VIOLENCE.

52 South Asian women were trained as intergenerational peer leaders to host 32 sharing circles for 312 isolated South Asian women and seniors across the Greater Toronto Area. Each sharing circle was conducted in their mother tongue and included a discussion, distribution of reading materials about how to prevent gendered violence, and a social component to enhance group safety.

Youth leaders hosted three online social media chats which discussed bystander intervention. Youth developed their own memes, online posters, henna messaging, a series of satirical videos designed to get campaign messaging out in their peer groups using a youth engagement approach.

Sewing Studio



RESHAPED & REIMAGINED: A SUPPORTIVE SEWING SPACE FOR CREATIVE MINDS

Thanks to the efforts of NEW staff and volunteers, we repainted and transformed the previous conference room into a creative sewing studio. Shiny new sewing machines moved in and took the stage; art supplies and a rack of donated clothing are waiting to be upcycled into beautiful, one-of-a-kind pieces. Over the past two years, many aspiring women have used this 'maker space' to enrich their sewing skills or work on income-earning projects like teaching and crafting. NEW also used the sewing studio to run a variety of community projects that teach newcomer women and girls how to sew, including SEW IT!, The ReShaped & ReImagined Youth Fashion Program and SAFE.

SEW IT!



SEWING ENTREPRENEURSHIP FOR WOMEN IN TORONTO - SEW IT!

Over the years, women who have a passion for sewing learned how to turn their skills into businesses at SEW IT! This 12-week life skills training program includes hands-on sewing projects and extensive business training that helps participants gain skills on how to write a business plan and how to market their products using social media. At the end of the program, participants sell their works at pop-up shops or start their own online Etsy stores.

Last year SEW IT! launched the *Good As New* product line at the GoodWill pop-up shop. And one of the SEW IT! participants was interviewed by CBC Metro Morning to talk about her experience.

ReShaped & Reimagined



UPCYCLING VINTAGE CLOTHING PROJECT – A ‘COOL’ PROGRAM RUN BY GIRLS, FOR GIRLS

The ReShaped & Reimagined: Upcycling Vintage Clothing project is a 10-week fashion entrepreneurship program for racialized girls to express their creativity. Every Saturday morning they meet at NEW's sewing studio and engage in intensive practical skills trainings, including fashion arts, graphic design, photography, and creative writing. Many girls in this program described it as a cool program because they learned new skills that they can use in their everyday life. For example, they learned how to use a sewing machine to make infinity scarves from scraps of cloth. As one of the program participants said: "The skills I learned will apply to my life because if I don't have money but have old fabric. I can make clothes to wear."

SAFE



NEW is inviting YOU to be a SAFE Consultant

SAFE Sewn and Assembled
Free of Exploitation

STRONG WOMEN
Build Strong Community

DID YOU KNOW?
There are hidden sweatshops in Toronto? Home based sewing businesses where women make \$1 an hour to sew clothes we all wear."

SAFE is
Connecting successful women to fair-wage sewing contracts + training

Why you should join:
a. Targeting new customers
b. Getting fair wages for your work

The SAFE program will:
Promote your work with free publicity, create a SAFE brand, and connect you to larger companies looking for experienced women-run businesses as partners.

What is SAFE:
Experienced women with home based sewing businesses will be hired as consultants. They'll exchange sewing skills by teaching one project to other women in the group. They'll also explore ways to market their businesses online to new customers. Consultants will be paid \$500 for 5 days work.



SEWN & ASSEMBLED FREE OF EXPLOITATION (SAFE)

Fourteen women who sew for a living were recruited as Project Consultants for the SAFE initiative. During a five-day 'Skills Exchange,' Project Consultants created a value proposition for a garment worker co-op, conducted market research and studied cases of how other garment workers have developed sustainable practices locally and globally. In addition, they visited local small businesses run by newcomer women, such as the Tibet Shoppe on Danforth and the Olio Organics studio in Markham. During the field trips Project Consultants asked these successful business owners critical questions, such as how to stay in the tough market with few resources; how to compete with big retailers and fashion brands that have advantages of low prices and wider market recognition; and how to maintain the business as they get low pay for time-consuming sewing work.