



Portage & Area Refugee Coalition

Contact groups/organizations helping to represent the coalition

Newcomer's Welcome Centre
110 Saskatchewan Ave. West
Portage la Prairie,
(204) 857-6304

Trinity United Church
15 Tupper St S,
Portage la Prairie
(204) 857-4471

St. Mary's Anglican Church
36 2 St SW,
Portage la Prairie
(204) 857-3931

Tips to Welcome Newcomers

- Start with a smile and a warm greeting; this works with anyone you encounter in our city.
- Volunteer with [Portage & Area Refugee Coalition](http://www.portagerefugees.ca) to help out with the family as a driver or helping with language practice, visiting, taking them shopping or to community events.
- If you are an employer or know an employer, try to provide jobs for newcomers. They want to work.
- Give them some space. Their experiences may have been traumatic and it will take some time to adjust to their new life here. But when they are ready, invite them to join you at community events or clubs, and be open to learning about their culture too.
- Donate to the cause. Portage and Area Refugee Coalition is hoping to continue sponsoring refugee families to come to our community so the need for funds is ongoing. Or help with a fundraiser.
 - Donations and inquiries can be made at the Welcome Centre office, above Portage Learning & Literacy Centre, online at www.portagerefugees.ca or at a number of local churches: St. Mary's Anglican, Trinity United, Good Shepherd Roman Catholic, MacGregor United, First Presbyterian, McKenzie United
- Children will be an important link to help newcomer families settle in. Parents of school-age children may find the following tips helpful, taken from a CBC Kitchener-Waterloo article based on information from Ana Luz Martinez, program Coordinator for K-W Multicultural Centre , and CBC parenting columnist Tenille Bonoguore:

"Talk to your children about accepting newcomers, regardless of where someone has come from.

- ✓ Encourage children to welcome everyone who is new at school, not just refugees.
- ✓ Point out that many new arrivals face more challenges such as language or shyness, so encourage children to be patient and understanding.
- ✓ Invite refugee children or families over for play dates. But don't pry for information about what they have gone through. Play time is for play. Set a coffee date if you want an adult chat.
- ✓ Don't make assumptions about cultural issues, because everyone is different.
- ✓ Ask about cultural or dietary restrictions if you're inviting them over for a meal."

*Adapted from "Tips to make Refugee Families feel welcome"
CBC News Kitchener - Waterloo. Jan. 13, 2016. Web. Oct. 29, 2016.*

<http://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/kitchener-waterloo/tips-to-make-refugee-families-feel-welcome-1.3402086>