



Calgary Immigrant Women's Association

The Grapevine

News for CIWA Supporters and the Community

AUGUST 2008

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Expansion and Renovations Make for a Busy Summer



Since January 2007, CIWA has experienced immense growth in terms of both our client base and our staff numbers. Earlier this year, we recognized that the speed of our growth surpassed the amount of space we had available to continue effective service delivery and provide a comfortable working environment for our staff. Subsequently, CIWA acquired space on three extra floors in our current location and embarked on an ambitious renovation project to transform our infrastructure. You can now find our programs offered all over the building!



- **1st Floor** — Childcare
- **2nd Floor** — Administration, Language Training, and Family Services
- **3rd Floor** — Settlement and Integration, Employment and Parenting Programs
- **8th Floor** — Volunteer and Youth Programs

What does all this growth mean for immigrant women? The creation of 3 new classrooms and a huge new space for LINC childcare significantly benefits our clients. It means that CIWA can accommodate more children in our childcare program, and therefore can serve more women in the LINC program who need childcare. The addition of an occasional childcare space on the third floor means CIWA can cater to drop in clients who need short term childcare while they see a counsellor or attend workshops. Ultimately, CIWA hopes to support more clients each day in an environment that is inviting and accommodating.

We would like to thank the federal and provincial government, as well as the community donor, for providing funds for CIWA's expansion and renovation. A huge thank you to ConocoPhillips for providing additional funding for the project, and to its staff for volunteering their time and painting support. It was much appreciated!



New CIWA Programs

CIWA recently began a new program to support Filipino immigrants in Calgary. The **FILIPINO COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM (FCDP)** is funded by Family and Community Support Services (FCSS) and offered in collaboration with the Catholic Separate School District (CSSD). It provides school support, in-home support, community outreach activities, and collaboration with existing Filipino community associations to facilitate children's integration into the Canadian school system. Individual counselling is also offered to clients to ensure a smoother transition of Filipino families into Canadian society. So far, we have conducted **4 orientation session** in the Filipino community to inform them of the settlement services available in Calgary and served 87 clients.

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CIWA initiated **PROJECT SAFE HAVEN** to respond to the immediate needs of immigrant women coming to Calgary as secondary migrants and temporary foreign workers. By providing housing, parenting, legal and pre-employment support, this project has equipped many immigrant women and their families with resources to facilitate their transition to Calgary. Safe Haven has enhanced clients' quality of life, their confidence, and their ability to independently access resources and services to meet their individual needs and those of their family. It also aims to empower women to break away from the cycle of dependence that might lead to violence and abuse.

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To address the growing need for qualified accountants in Canada, CIWA initiated a new enhanced language training project called **BRIDGING THE GAP FOR FOREIGN TRAINED ACCOUNTANTS**. The project provides language training and skills for experienced accountants to successfully transition them into the Calgary work force. The key components of the curriculum include Canadian culture, oral and written communication skills, computer skills, and an introduction to Canadian accounting practices. The project consists of a 14 week class segment at CIWA followed by a 10 week voluntary work placement. Currently, **14 STUDENTS** are enrolled in this class. Work placement allows students professional Canadian experience and the opportunity to enhance their future employability. We have already recruited 16 participants for the second intake of the project.

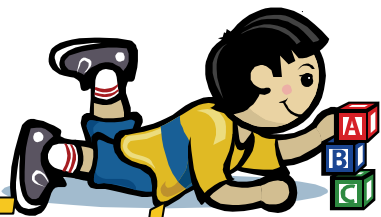
For more information contact Penny Cavanagh, Project Coordinator at 263-4414 ex. 41
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Above right: Bridging the Gap for Foreign Trained Accountants students concentrate in class



The **BREAST HEALTH AWARENESS PROJECT**, funded by the Canadian Breast Cancer Foundation, educates immigrant women about the importance of early detection methods for breast cancer. The project delivers educational presentations that are both linguistically and culturally appropriate for immigrant women. It also provides individual counseling and services related to breast health. The project is also recruiting and training volunteers with a medical background to become community health educators in their own ethnic communities. Since the start of the program in June 2008, we have served **over 50 women from 19 countries, ranging in age from 18 years to 57 years.**

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Feature: SMILES at CIWA

Small Multicultural Immigrants Learning Early Strategies

CIWA's Small Multicultural Immigrants Learning Early Strategies (SMILES) was created in 1999 to provide free quality child minding services for children while their mothers attend CIWA programs. SMILES customizes the childcare programming to accommodate both onsite and offside programs. Beyond simply enabling mothers to attend programs and receive much-needed language training and settlement support, SMILES provides children with culturally sensitive, age appropriate developmental activities to increase their school readiness. We make sure children are developing English language, social, cognitive, emotional, gross motor and fine motor skills. In addition to daily learning activities such as crafts, singing, story time and various play based activities. The children in SMILES programming have enjoyed a wide variety of activities and special events such as field trips with their parents to the Calgary Zoo, Calgary Children's Festival, Calgary Science Centre, Fort Calgary and trips to Calgary Public Library.

The pace of CIWA growth and the increased need for child minding services created the opportunity for expansion. LINC childcare at CIWA's main office is moving from the second floor to a brand new space on the first floor of the First Street Plaza building. We are now also providing occasional childcare services for clients who need short term child minding services as they attend scheduled or drop in appointments.

EXPANSION OF LINC CHILDCARE

The new LINC childcare space, over 2600 square feet, will significantly increase our childcare and enhance our ability to address the waiting list of LINC clients. The space includes the following features:

- child friendly washroom facilities equipped with a change table, sink, and two toilets
- gross motor skills space (over 500 square feet) in the centre of the facility that will be fully equipped with play mats, interactive educational toys, and room to skip and dance
- a well equipped kitchenette with a double sink, fridge, microwave, ample cupboard space, and even a washer and dryer
- two baby rooms one for (6-12 months and the other 13-18 months) each equipped to meet the infants' emotional and developmental needs
- an administrative office with ample storage and room for program planning sessions
- stroller storage racks

The big benefit of this expanded space is CIWA's ability to include more gross motor activities in the children's daily routine. This will significantly enhance the quality of our service.

Below: Children in the SMILES program



A Parent's Perspective...

"Katy" has been accessing programs and services through CIWA for over two years. She originally began in the Pebbles in the Sand program (in August 2006) and then when she was ready she transitioned to the LINC program (September 2007). In June 2008, she joined CIWA's "Childcare Training for Low Literacy Immigrant Women" pilot class.

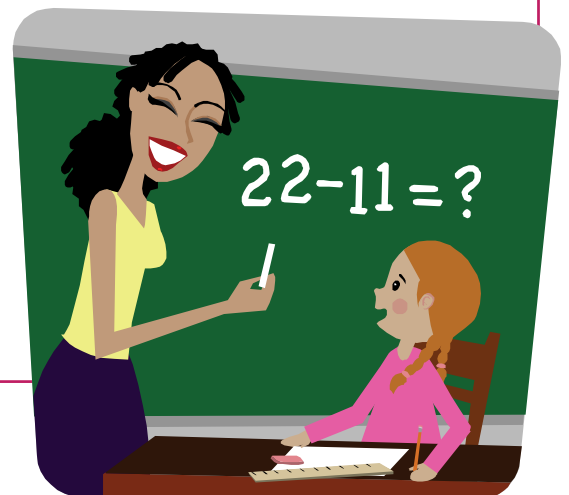
While Katy was in Pebbles in the Sand and in LINC her two young children, "Flora" and "Anthony", were enrolled in the SMILES childcare program. However, the pilot class she enrolled in required her to use an external daycare for her children. The day home she enrolled her children in turned out to be a negative experience for them. Her concerns about the quality of care her children were receiving ranged from a lack of engaging, productive and educational activities, inappropriate snacks, to general health and safety concerns. In the few weeks Katy's children were enrolled in the Day Home, they stopped using please and thank you in their communications with her and other people.



Katy turned to CIWA staff for support and advice. She said that while her children were attending SMILES she was pleased with the variety of activities and the positive influence that the staff had on her children. Her daughter would leave SMILES each day armed with examples of the activities she was engaged in, such as paintings, drawings, arts and crafts etc. Katy noticed a great improvement in her daughter's behavior and manners while attending SMILES. Flora and Anthony were constantly engaged in educational activities, such as the alphabet and numbers that helped to improve their English skills and overall development. Katy was very appreciative of the quality of care that childcare staff in SMILES provided and thanked them personally.

Katy felt that her experience with SMILES had equipped her with the knowledge and understanding of quality childcare. She decided to withdraw her children from the day home they were enrolled in and look for a better solution. Katy was more inquisitive and knowledgeable when she went to look for a new daycare because she had learned about quality childcare through her experience at CIWA.

Furthermore, Katy's experience at CIWA has inspired her to become a childcare worker with the same dedication and passion as she saw in SMILES staff. She is passionate about her future role as an early childhood educator and advocate for children.



Above: Two children in SMILES learn how to share and cooperate when playing with a puzzle

Rewarding ★ Youth

In April 2008, Samah Muhamed, a Girls Culture Club participant received a City of Calgary Youth Award from City representatives in recognition of her **INDIVIDUAL EXCELLENCE**, **SPIRIT AND PRIDE**, and **LEADERSHIP** qualities.



Samah has attended CIWA's Girls Culture Club since October 2007, and was nominated for the award by Youth Program coordinator Didem Erman. Didem says, "Samah has an amazing spirit and always empowers and motivates people. She is very supportive of newcomers at her school, and is always available to interpret for them. She encourages them to join different programs at school and participate in other activities. Samah is a very positive role model for other students and young immigrants."

CIWA admires Samah's good work and her commitment to helping ESL students in her school settle in to their community.

CONGRATULATIONS SAMAH!

Above: Samah (left) receives a certificate of achievement and a letter of merit signed by the Mayor from City employees

Berry Salad Recipe

A light and refreshing mix of berries makes this salad a wonderful summer treat!

Prep Time 5 minutes

Cook Time 0 minutes

Difficulty Easy

Yields 4 servings

INGREDIENTS

- 2 cup fresh strawberries, hulled and cut in halves
- 1 cup Raspberries, fresh
- 1/2 cup Blueberries, fresh
- 1 Peaches, fresh, medium, FDA, peeled, pitted, and sliced
- 1/2 cup Sour Cream, non-fat
- 1 tsp sugar
- 1 tbsp fresh lemon juice

METHOD

Cut all fruit ingredients as shown in list above. Stir in sour cream, sugar, and lemon juice. Chill in refrigerator for one hour if desired. **ENJOY!**

NUTRITION FACTS

Makes 4 servings

Amount Per Serving

Calories	90.7
Total Carbs	21.5g
Dietary Fibre	2.4 g
Sugars	12.7g
Total Fat	0.4g
Saturated Fat	0g
Unsaturated Fat	0.4g
Protein	3.1g
Sodium	50.2 mg

