EvalByte

Student Research Highlights: Stories of Change

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As summer draws to a close, we're proud to recognize two outstanding students whose recent research has enriched our understanding of community-rooted approaches to health and early learning and child care systems. This EvalByte highlights their important contributions, both of which elevate newcomer and refugee voices and offer actionable insights for service delivery and policy change.

Student Spotlight 1: Exploring Practices of Refugee Community-Based Primary Healthcare Models and Transfer of Care Pathways

I conducted a scoping review on community-based refugee healthcare models across the globe, their practices, and their impacts on refugee health. Following the review, I held interviews with refugee clients and team members of the New Canadians Health Centre to learn about the steps involved in their transfer of care process and clients' experiences with the process.

Edmonton receives the fifth-largest number of refugees per capita, and they struggle to navigate an unfamiliar health system. Further, there is limited evidence on refugee healthcare practices, particularly transfer of care. My thesis not only maps refugee healthcare models, but it provides an account of how one model was experienced by

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clients. This study can support community-based settings in refining delivery of care for refugees.

I am revising my thesis chapters and preparing my two studies for publication, with a targeted completion date in September.

Student Spotlight 2: Understanding the Experiences of Newcomer Ethnocultural Families Seeking Early Learning and Child Care (ELCC) Services in Edmonton

I conducted a qualitative study using a community-based participatory approach to explore how Bangladeshi, Nigerian, and Indian-Punjabi newcomer families in Edmonton navigate ELCC services. In collaboration with cultural brokers from the Multicultural Health Brokers Cooperative, I facilitated three focus groups with parents. I analyzed the data thematically using a coding framework aligned with the five core ELCC principles-quality, affordability, accessibility, inclusion, and flexibility-to identify key facilitators, barriers parents faced, and possible solutions they identified.

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In 2021, Alberta committed to implementing a $10-per-day child care by 2026; however, in April 2025, the government introduced a $15 flat fee by removing the child care subsidy grant, potentially increasing financial burdens for many newcomer families. My study amplifies the voices of newcomer ethnocultural families and provides evidence-based insights to guide the development of more inclusive and equitable ELCC policies. By centering parents' real-life experiences, my study supports service providers, educators, and policymakers in better meeting the needs of diverse communities.

I recently presented preliminary findings at the Canadian Sociological Association Annual Conference and the Edmonton Council for Early Learning and Care. I am currently writing my thesis chapters in preparation for graduation in September 2025 and aim to publish my research in a journal. Additionally, I will present the final results at the Women and Children's Health Research Institute Research Days in October 2025.

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