

How to Support Newcomer 2SLGBTQIA+ Youth:

A Practice Guide for
Organizations Serving Gender
and Sexually Diverse Populations

Acknowledgements

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We would like to acknowledge the following TIES Centre for Immigrant Research's contributors:

Katerina Palova
Kreisha Hilario
Gurleen Matharu
Emilie Lui
Thomas Tri
Emily Zhang
Caitlyn Greenway

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Contact Information for the Centre for Immigrant Research at TIES:

research@immigrant-education.ca

<http://www.immigrant-education.ca/>

The Immigrant Education Society (TIES) is located on the ancestral and traditional territory of the Blackfoot Nations of the Siksika, Piikani and Kainai First Nations; the Îlethka Nakoda Wicastabi First Nations, comprised of the Chiniki, Bearspaw, and Goodstoney First Nations; and the Tsuut'ina First Nation. The City of Calgary is also homeland to the historic Northwest Métis and to the Otipemisiwak Métis Government, Métis Nation Battle River Territory (Nose Hill Métis District 5 and Elbow Métis District 6).

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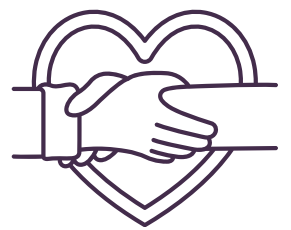
General tips

Have ethnoculturally diverse staff



- Clients find it important to have **providers that share similar cultural backgrounds** as them

Have settlement resources available to support resource navigation



- **Connecting and establishing partnerships** with immigrant-serving organizations can improve the care newcomer 2SLGBTQIA+ youth receive

Consider varied cultural interpretations of gender and sexual diversity outside of Western perspectives



- › Be **open-minded**
- › Understand that there are **other ways of knowing outside of Western understandings and concepts of queerness**

Continuous learning



- › Be **respectful, receptive, and open-minded** to clients sharing their stories and cultural backgrounds, and the intersections with their 2SLGBTQIA+ identity(ies)
- › Learn more about the cultural and historical background of **gender and sexual diversity outside of North America**

Practice Prompts

Prompt:

A client explicitly states they do not want to come out to their parents

"Thank you for sharing that with me. I see how '*coming out*' may be something that is not significant and helpful to you, and that is absolutely valid."

Prompt:

Considering linguistic backgrounds and fluidity

"Do you have a label that you identify with under the Western acronym of 2SLGBTQIA+?"

"You mentioned earlier about identifying both Muxe and non-binary. Is there one you identify with more?"

Prompt: Considerations for diverse and wide support systems

"Do you have any one in your life that you trust to talk to about your struggles with gender dysphoria?"

"You mentioned earlier that you don't see your parents as an option for emotional support, especially since they live outside the country and don't know about your queerness. I'm wondering if there is anyone else you have in mind that could support you during this time?"

Prompt: Correcting yourself after making a mistake

"Sorry about that, I'll make sure to keep that in mind. Thank you for bringing it to my attention."

Prompt: **Asking about cultural topics**

"Is your cultural background something that plays a role in how you view and navigate your queer identity?"

"It sounds like this cultural event/day is something important to you. Would you be comfortable in sharing more about that?"



Glossary

Ethnocultural

The term **ethnocultural** describes the shared characteristics (e.g., ancestry, language, cultural traditions, national identity, origins, etc.) that are unique to, and recognized by, members of a specific group.¹

In Canada, **ethnoculturally diverse** people are those who often belong in non-White and non-dominant groups with distinct cultural, ethnic, and linguistic heritage.

Intersectionality Theory

Coined by Kimberlé Crenshaw, **intersectionality theory** is a framework that recognizes people's overlapping social identities, such as race, gender, class, sexuality, ability/disability, etc.² These intersections of social identities help us understand the unique experiences, challenges, and privileges of people.²

For example, comments about someone's gender expression is often not just about gender - they can also reflect racial stereotypes, xenophobia, or assumptions about newcomers.

Queer

Queer is an umbrella term that was historically used as a derogatory slur, and now has been reclaimed by many 2SLGBTQIA+ people as positive way to describe themselves. It encompasses 2SLGBTQIA+ communities, one's relationship to a particular community, or an individual identity.^{3,4}

¹ Government of Canada (2024, July 9). *Applicants assisting ethnocultural communities*. Canada Revenue Agency. <https://www.canada.ca/en/revenue-agency/services/charities-giving/charities/policies-guidance/policy-statement-023-applicants-assisting-ethnocultural-communities.html>

² Crenshaw, K. (1991). Mapping the margins: Intersectionality, identity politics, and violence against women of color. *Stanford Law Review*, 43(6), 1241–1299. <https://doi.org/10.2307/1229039>

³ Government of Canada (2024, September 17). *2SLGBTQIA+ terminology – Glossary and common acronyms*. Women and Gender Equality Canada. <https://www.canada.ca/en/women-gender-equality/free-to-be-me/2slgbtqi-plus-glossary.html>

⁴ Egale (n.d.). *2SLGBTQI terms and definitions*. Retrieved July 21, 2026, from <https://egale.ca/awareness/terms-and-definitions/>

About The Immigrant Education Society (TIES)

The Immigrant Education Society (TIES) is a not-for-profit registered charitable organization that has been serving newcomers and Canadians since 1988. The goal of the organization is to provide immigrants and economically disadvantaged individuals the opportunities to feel belonging in their new community.

TIES offers the Language Instruction for Newcomers to Canada (LINC) program, employment and settlement programs and, more recently, TIES offers childcare services. TIES also introduced the Centre for Immigrant Research to further strengthen their research capabilities.



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About TIES Centre for Immigrant Research

TIES Centre for Immigrant Research (TCIR) is a community-based research centre that generates evidence that informs policies, programs, and practices to strengthen immigrant settlement, integration, and community well-being across Canada.



Community-Based Research

Generating actionable evidence to address community challenges and inform policy and practice.



Program Development & Innovation

Translating research into practical, evidence-informed programs, resources, and solutions.



Policy & Knowledge Mobilization

Mobilizing research to inform policy, build capacity, and empower communities.