SENSE OF BELONGING AMONG FORMER REFUGEE YOUNG ADULTS

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Research Question & Methodology

How do former refugee young adults develop and maintain a sense of belonging during resettlement?

Recruited individuals that met the following criteria:

- Young adults (18-30 years of age)
- Migrated to Alberta at least 3 years prior
- Arrived in Canada between the ages of 12-17 years of age as refugees
- Attended a junior high or high school with settlement supports
- Reported a sense of belonging in Canada
- Fluent in English
Research Question & Methodology

- **Demographic information**
  - 3 from Calgary, 3 from Edmonton
  - 5 recruited from settlement organizations, 1 from post-secondary institute
  - 4 females, 2 males
  - Age ranged from 18 to 28
  - Number of years living in Canada ranged from 3-16 years
  - Country of origin included South Sudan, Nepal, Iraq, and Liberia
5 Pathways to Belonging

- Sense of Purpose
- Feeling Confident
- Integration
- Feeling Accepted
- Feeling Comfortable
Research Findings

- **Feeling comfortable** = feeling safe, secure, and at ease.

- **Feeling confident** = experiencing a sense of accomplishment, success, or making positive progress.

- **Feeling accepted** = having a caring mutual relationship with another individual.

- **Sense of Purpose** = opportunities to become involved in something higher than themselves.

- **Integration** = process of maintaining one's ethnic heritage while connecting with the larger Canadian society.
Pathway #1: Feeling Comfortable
Recommendations

- Help clients navigate the process of obtaining their Canadian Citizenship
- Inform clients about government policies that will assist them – early on and later
- Increase opportunities to obtain possessions
- Ensure safety and security needs are met
Pathway #2: Feeling Confident

- Keep calm and try something new
- Join Social Club
Recommendations

- Strength based model – highlight strengths
- Encourage clients to try new things
- Develop opportunities for clients to meet new people. Increasing access to professionals.
- Continue with English learning programs
Pathway #3: Feeling Accepted
Recommendations

- use welcoming non-verbal behaviors

- Specifically ask how you can help

- Create stable long-term relationships
Pathway #4: Sense of Purpose
Recommendations

- Create opportunities for client to become involved in leadership positions
- Encourage clients to voice their opinions, ideas, and questions
- Create opportunities for the client to help others
- Support them in meeting their future goals
Pathway #5: Integration
Recommendations

- Support the development of strong ethnocultural groups
- Continue cultural programs at the organizational level, and in schools
- Increase opportunities for cross-cultural interactions during young adulthood
Thank you!!!!

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