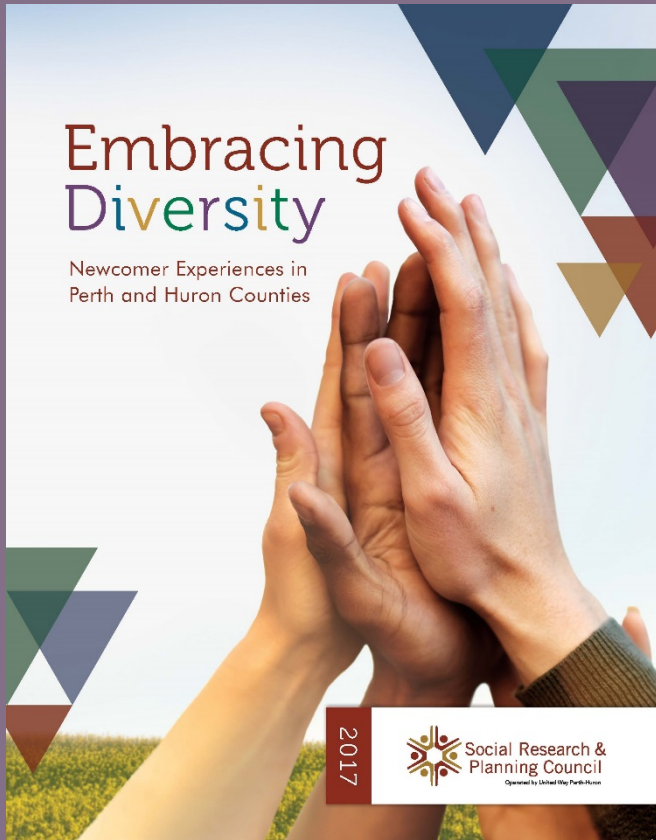




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# Embracing Diversity

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Newcomer Experiences in Perth and Huron Counties



**United Way**  
Perth-Huron



# Research report background

**Newcomer** - immigrants or refugees who have been in Canada under 10 years

## 2015

- Newcomer Outreach and Needs Assessment (NONA)
- 70 survey respondents and focus group participants



## 2017

- 22 newcomer focus group
- Service provider interviews
- Employer interviews

## Report Goals

- Investigate experience of newcomers
- Reveal barriers and obstacles
- Identify service gaps
- Identify employment barriers
- Identify and profile current practices in other communities
- Compile recommendations for next steps



# Demographics of study participants

N=92

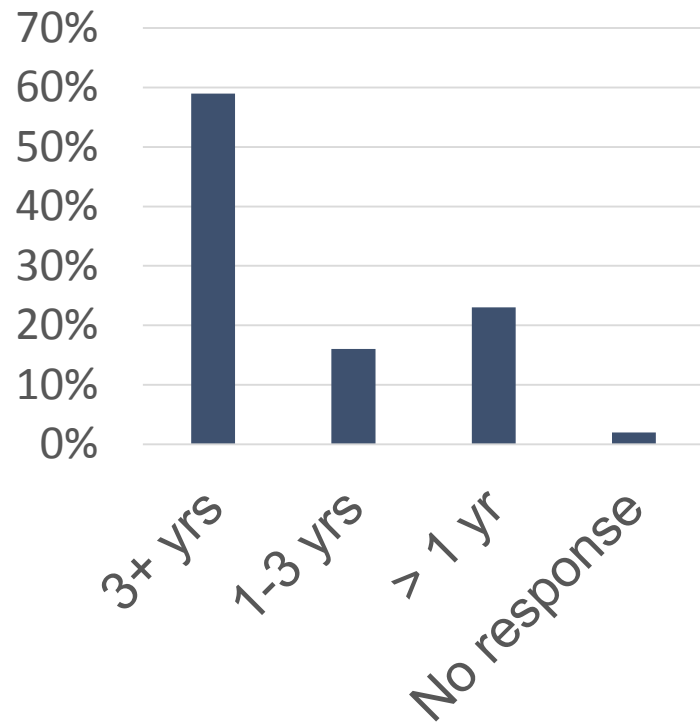


45%



55%

## Length of time in Canada



■ NONA Survey & Newcomer focus group participants

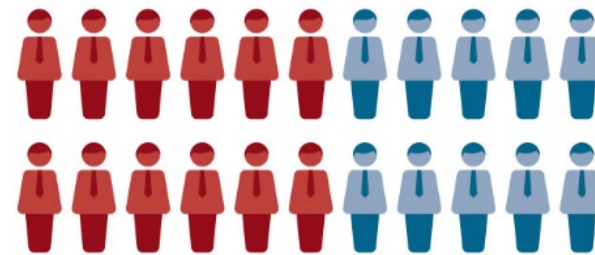


= 70% Married

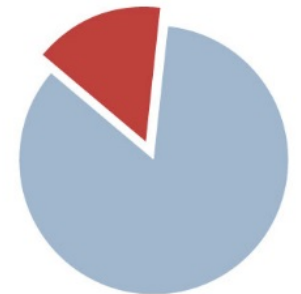
= 24% Single

= 6% Separated, Divorced

## Unemployed newcomers (in focus group):

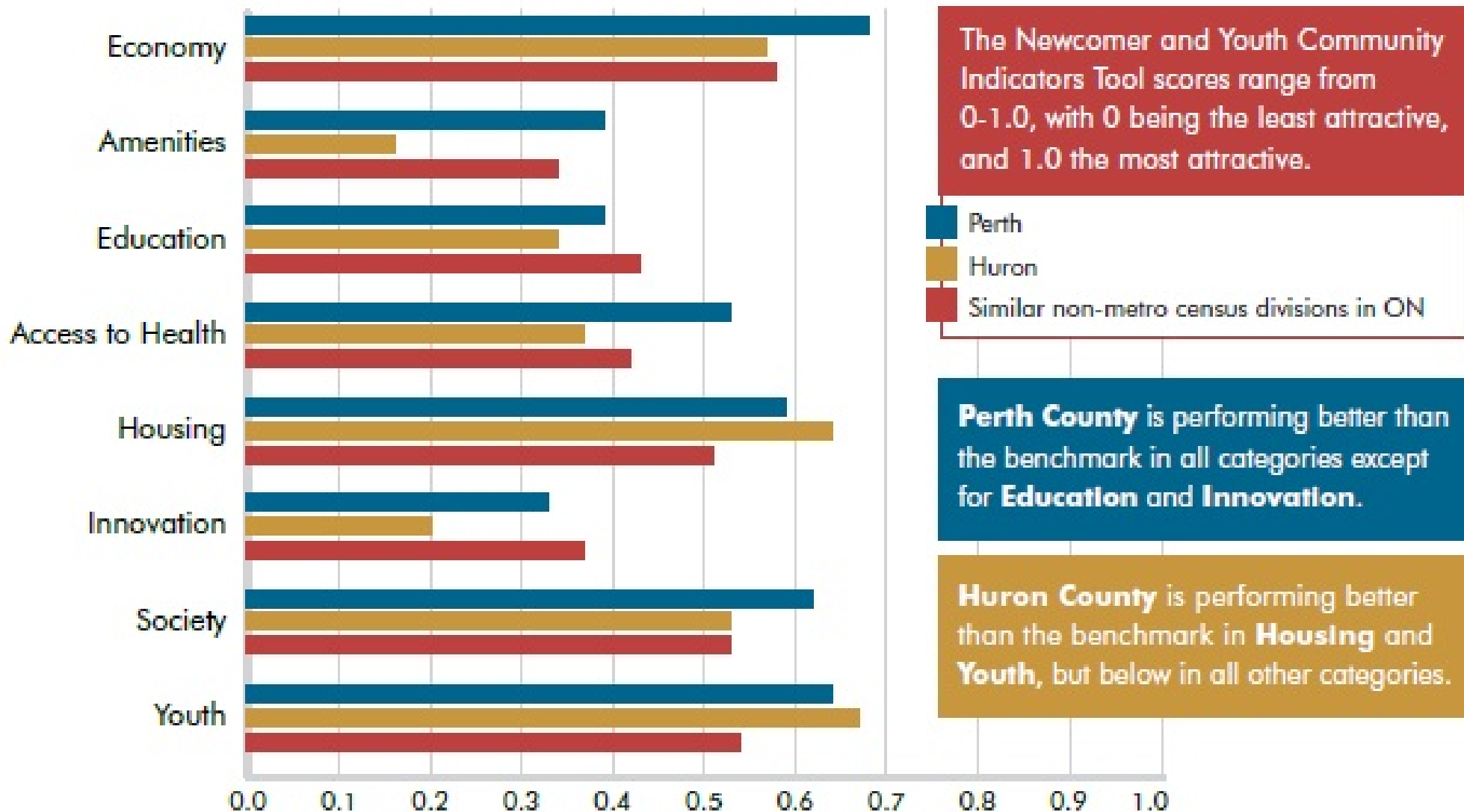


**12** of 22 (Focus Group, 2017)



**11** of 70  
(NONA Survey, 2015)

## Newcomer Attractiveness Performance



Source: Ontario Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs (2014). Newcomer and Youth Community Indicators Tool.  
<http://www.omafra.gov.on.ca/english/rural/sdr/nyci/index.html>



## Service Providers & Community Organizations

### SERVICE NEEDS IDENTIFIED:

- Assistance with healthcare issues
- Educational support
- Navigating government systems
- Help finding suitable housing

### SUPPORT GAPS IDENTIFIED:

- Language services (translation)
- Social/spiritual interaction and integration





*“big city people aren’t aware of the benefits of living in a smaller community.”*

- Focus group participant

*“the people here...it’s a basement culture. They live in their basements. They say ‘Hi, good morning!’ and nothing further. You have a line. You don’t cross it.”*

- Focus group participant

# Ahmed’s Story



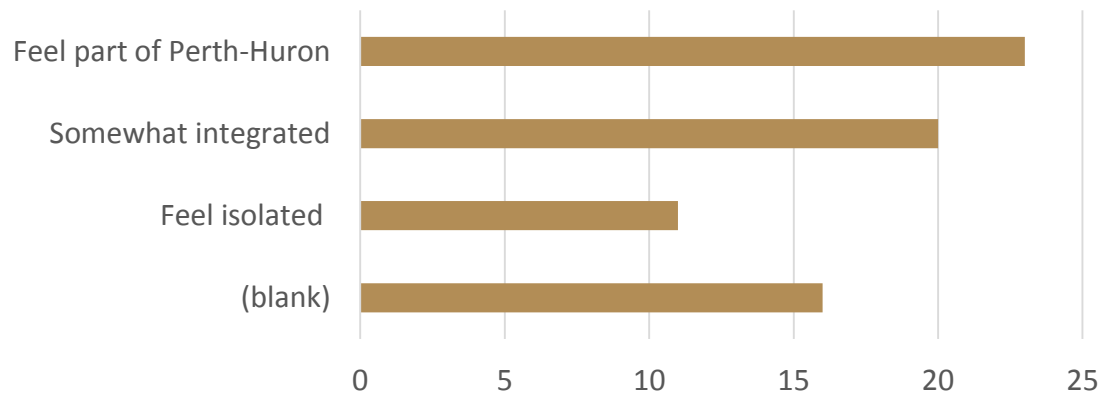


# Settlement experience

## Main Reasons for Moving to Perth and Huron:



## Degree of Self-reported Social Integration



Source: NONA Survey

## Newcomer Difficulties



Limited English language skills



Few housing options



Lack of job opportunities



Social isolation



Limited transportation options



Cold weather

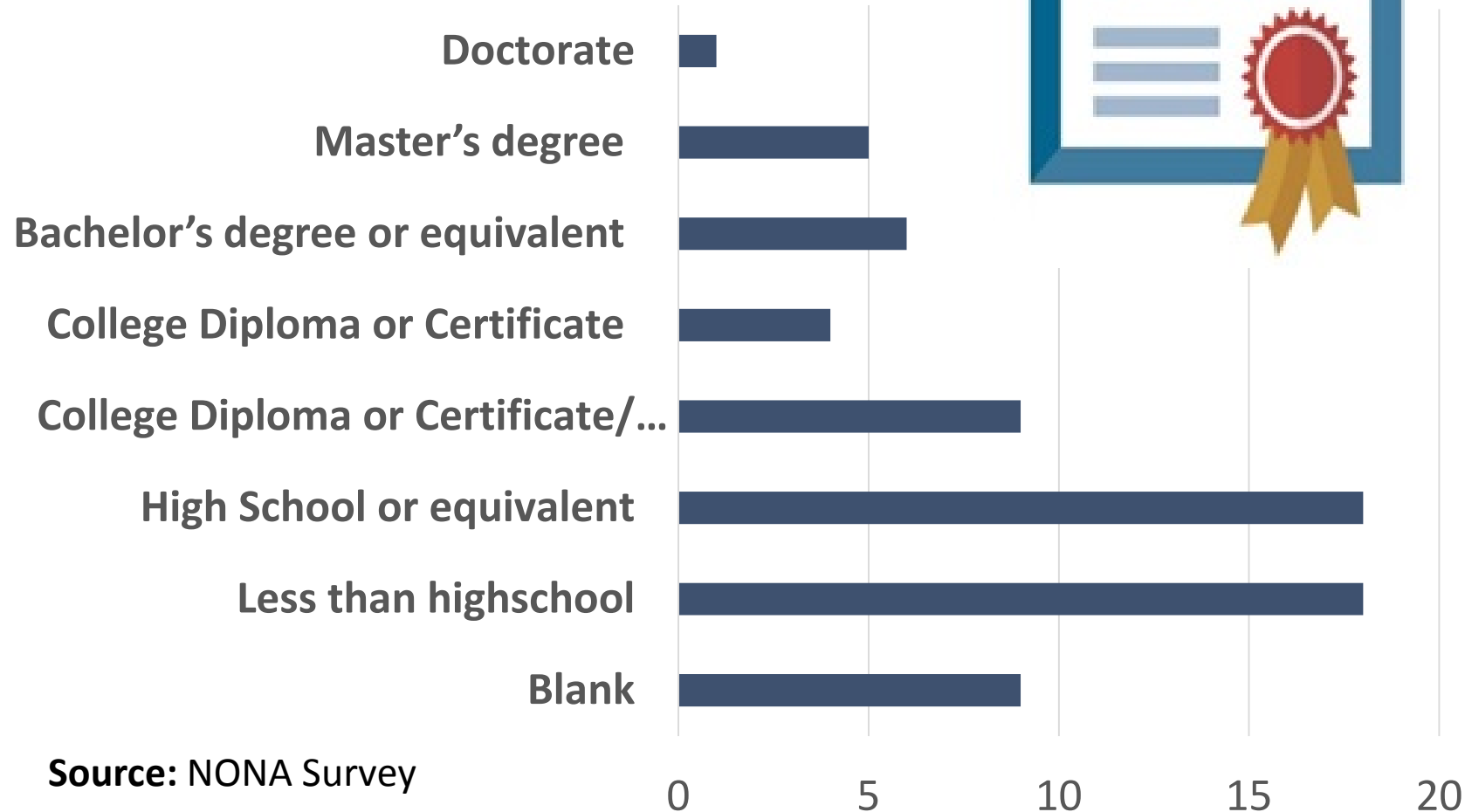
Specific to Huron County:



Healthcare access



# Prior Education



Source: NONA Survey

■ Series 1



*“when I saw the teachers—how they talk with the kids—I thought, this teacher loves my kid like me.”*

- Focus group participant

*“I think it’s impossible. I have a master’s degree in teaching from Korea. It’s not useful here. I’m trying to find other fields.”*

- Focus group participant





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# Employment

Experiences and Training:

Prior to arriving in Canada



Trades



Education  
Sector



Medical



Personal  
Support  
Worker



Engineering



Accounting



Driving

Now



Processing



Manufacturing



Utilities



Health



Sales/Service



Trades



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# Employers

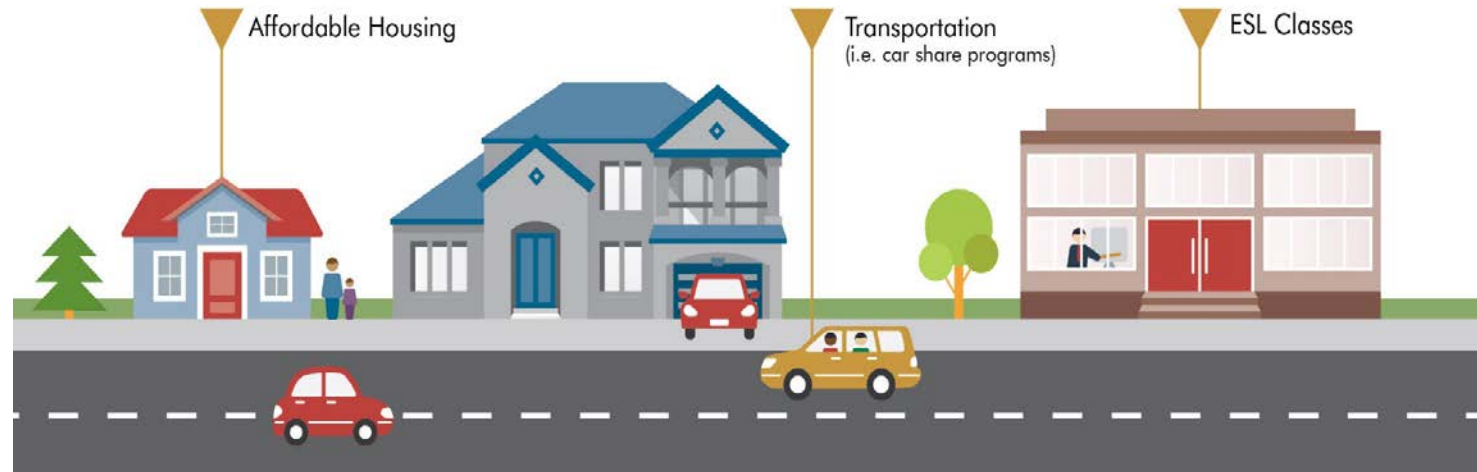
*"We have to have employees who are able to communicate, understand health and safety and work instructions, and complete paperwork etc."*

**Employers interviewed  
expressed an interest  
in developing a more  
inclusive workplace**



*"Often they [current employees] are subtle, not obviously discrimination or harassment, but enough that newcomers can feel uncomfortable and look for a new position."*

How to assist newcomers in becoming more employable:





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# Employers

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**Employers interviewed acknowledged they need to be more flexible and :**

- Modify hiring requirements
- Review and revise educational requirements
- Help finding suitable housing

**They will consider:**

- Increasing probation period to account for longer training and on-boarding processes
- Starting a mentorship program



***“...We would need to network with agencies in the community to identify (possible) barriers and work toward solutions to provide support for newcomers to encourage employment.”***



# Recommendations

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**1. The Newcomer Settlement Huron Perth implement** the following recommendations into their work plan following a multi-phased approach.

- a. Investigate expansion of Local Immigration Partnership to Perth County
- b. Improve Data Collection

## Creating Community

- c. Establishment of a community welcoming committee
- d. System navigation workshops
- e. Accompaniment program

## Increasing Awareness

- 2. Employer recruitment strategy and education
- 3. Creation and enhancement of cultural celebrations
- 4. Cultural competency training
- 5. Increase awareness of rural transportation initiatives





## How can you make your community more welcoming to newcomers?

### Tips for Long Time Residents to Meet and Get to Know Newcomers:

- Ask questions and listen, then act on what you have heard
- Be open minded about other cultures and new ways of doing things, be willing to try something new
- Offer new programs and events based on newcomers' culture and/or experiences
- Bring a welcome gift to the home of a newcomer, introduce yourself, and offer to help if they have any questions

### Tips for Newcomers to Meet and Get to Know Long Time Residents of the Community:

- Learn about and participate in popular community events; join community groups; take part in a sport or popular recreation activity
- Volunteer to help with a community event or project
- Observe the community for a few months then decide where you can get involved/help out
- Visit the local library often. Read as much as you can to improve English skills, information about the community and cultural awareness
- Ask questions and listen...be willing to adopt a new culture and lifestyle

Adapted from the Saskatchewan South East Enterprise Region

## How can you make your workplace more welcoming to newcomers?



Develop a buddy system for newcomer with another staff member



Ask newcomer about their experiences and listen to what they have to say



Encourage newcomers and staff members to extend invitations to one another to social gatherings and community functions

# How can local Council's help?

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- Encourage inclusion of cultural educational enhancements to events
- Support libraries and other local Newcomer services
- Direct staff to review Diversity and Sensitivity policies and to invest in appropriate training.

