

Annual Report 2011-2012



PICS Locations

Administrative Office

17 Four Seasons Place, Suite 102
Toronto, Ontario, M9B 6E6

416-233-1655

Service Delivery Sites

Etobicoke	3363 Bloor Street West	416-233-0055
	3107 Bloor Street West, Suite 201	416-640-7069
Toronto	15 Roncesvalles Avenue, Suite 202	416-533-9471
Scarborough	3174 Eglinton Avenue East	416-261-4901
	3660-A Midland Ave	416-439-1293
Mississauga	2225 Erin Mills Parkway	905.403.8860

Annual Report 2011-2012



Message from the President and Executive Director



We are pleased to welcome you to our 2012 Annual General Meeting and Staff and Volunteer Recognition Event. We entered 2011/2012 fiscal year with a great sense of anticipation ready to embrace all that was planned and expected. Our Strategic Plan, created in 2009, established five organizational outcomes:

- To improve the governance of PICS
- To improve and diversify funding
- To expand support and develop specialized services to newcomers
- To foster a healthy workplace
- To ensure long-term sustainability and development

In reviewing the pages in this report, you will notice we have had considerable successes in each area. Under the leadership of the Board of Directors and with support of a strong staff and volunteer base, we approached the beginning of the year ready for whatever would befall us as an organization.


The Board again expanded its numbers and engaged in a planning process at a Board Retreat that helped guide their involvement and process for the rest of the year. It strengthened our governance even further by creating a Policy Committee that reviewed all policies that had a significant impact on the work of PICS, its staff, volunteer(add 's')and our business and other operational relationships.

That stability of PICS was also strengthened this past year in number two and number five of the Organizational Outcomes, when we launched the first Polylicious event on June 10, 2011 at the Bata Shoe Museum. Our multicultural and international- flavoured event was created to highlight the diverse cultures that make up Toronto. It also underlined the important and positive role that immigrants have played in the development of the cultural and economic life of the GTA and with a goal of improving and diversifying funding and assisting the organization in developing a sustainability framework. Hosted by Chef Corbin Tomaszeski, renowned chef and Food Network television personality and host of a number of very popular programs, and chaired by Honorary Chair Karlene Nation, Reporter and Diversity Producer at CTV, we were able to present not only a socially relevant and important event, but one that helped us to raise almost \$25,000.

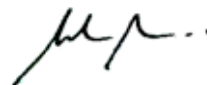
This past year also saw growth in programs that included the creation of the Beautiful Girls Program that received support from Dove Canada and saw almost forty young women involved on a weekly basis in programming in Mississauga. This initiative helped to attract not only 'newcomers', but helped to create a 'safe place' where young women from diverse backgrounds could get together, share and dialogue on issues that affect adolescent and post-adolescent females in our public school setting.

As we reflect on the past year and plan for the future, I am left with the following quote; 'Live neither in the past nor in the future, but let each day's work absorb your entire energies, and satisfy your widest ambition.' At PICS, we embrace this sentiment.

Thanks to all those who assisted us in the past year and we look forward to your continuing support over the next year and beyond.



Carl Cadogan
Executive Director



Sabir Sami
President

PICS at Glance

Polycultural Immigrant & Community Services (PICS) is a dynamic, not-for-profit community based charitable organization that provides a variety of programs to the local community, including: settlement services for newcomers, transition to employment, language training, youth services, health and wellness and individual counselling service. PICS programs are funded by three levels of government, private sector corporations, and supported by foundations, friends and donors.

Our organization was formed in February 1993 as a result of a merger of two agencies, the Polish Immigrant Aid Services (formed in 1973) and the Polish Community Social Services (founded in 1982), both of which served the West Toronto neighborhood of Roncesvalles and Etobicoke.

As the number of newcomers from Poland and Eastern Europe diminished, the organization began to diversify service delivery to meet the changing needs in the community. New programs were created including the Partner Assault Response Program which serves men who have been charged or convicted of family violence and the Problem Gambling Counselling Program, both of which are delivered in Polish and Russian languages.

PICS has also adapted to our client's evolving needs by adding programs and activities geared specifically toward women and youth, such as a Sewing Club - for stay-at-home and isolated women; a Women's Wellness Club, and a Beautiful Girls program for girls ages 14-17. New programs implemented during the reporting year are Job Search Workshops at two Toronto sites that help newcomers with finding employment and Community Connections, for immigrants to develop and enhance their social and employment networks.

PICS mandate is to provide programs and services responding to the needs of immigrants in relation to their settlement in Canada. PICS provides a variety of programs and services which are all accessible to newcomer women as well as other groups of immigrants, with the aim of helping them to integrate and participate in the economic, cultural, social, and political life in Canada. PICS is a mid-tier service provider, with 2010/2011 annual revenues of almost \$7 million. Our organization currently has 6 delivery sites, five located in the City of Toronto, and one in the region of Peel.

Our Working Place

With a staff of 102 full time, 17 part time and 21 supply, PICS is striving to improve employee engagement by developing a solid human resources management structure and practice, and providing training and networking opportunities for staff. In the last year, over 1,036 hours of training was invested by staff individually and in compliance with government regulations and standards. All PICS employees participated in the *Workplace Violence and Harassment* training addressing bill 168, and also complied with the *Access for Ontarians with Disabilities Act* by having all employees participate in *AODA training*. With the budget cuts, PICS is looking to organize more in-house training by sharing expertise among staff members.

PICS recognizes the value that volunteers contribute to the organization and is developing strategies to accommodate volunteers who can make short-term or long term commitments and making efforts to match volunteers' positions with their skills and interests. We have also established volunteer management and recognition programs and provide structured training for volunteers.

Governance



Polycultural Immigrant and Community Services (PICS) is governed by the Board of Directors. PICS Board of Directors is comprised of 12 members. All are independent. The Chairperson is an Executive Officer and is separate from the role of the Executive Director. The Executive Director of PICS' role is the management of the organization including the Senior Leadership Group (SLG) that comprises the Directors of Programs and Services and the Director of Finance and Administration. **T**he Board meets regularly, up to 8 times per year and not less than 6 times per year, in addition to the Annual General Meeting that is held once a year and any extraordinary Meetings of the General Assembly that may be held whenever the need arises. PICS Board includes several committees; the Executive Committee, consisting of the President, Vice President, Corporate Secretary and Treasurer, the Finance and Audit Committee and the Policy Committee. The Board is responsible for approving strategies and policies covering all aspects of performance including ethical, economical, environmental, and social.

President
Sabir Sami

Vice-President
Adam Altmid

Treasurer
Carolina Paredes

Secretary
Shaffiq Dar

Directors
Branka Bradic
Emil Zamiara
Renata Michalski
Kinga Surma
Lyndsay Hillier
Armel Kitieu

Ex Officio
Carl Cadogan

Information and Awareness

The Information and Awareness program consists of two programs: Information and Awareness, which is funded by Citizenship and Immigration Canada, and Newcomer Settlement Program, which is funded by Ontario Ministry of Citizenship and Immigration. These two programs include several activities that are directed to help newcomers to settle and understand the Canadian culture, law, and services provided.

Information and Awareness (I & A)

Settlement counselling services are offered at all PICS locations. I & A program has been delivered at PICS since 1982. The program aims to provide newcomers with the information and connection to resources needed to function in Canadian society. It helps newcomers to fulfill their expectation of life as newcomers and also learning (no comma) and understanding the Canadian



laws, rights, responsibilities and how to access community resources. The newly arrived newcomers were our priority target group. The eligible clients were newcomers with a permanent residence status in the categories of skilled worker, refugee, family class, as well as convention refugees, live-in caregivers and applicants for permanent residence with initial approval. The program offered our clients a range of services, including orientation, needs assessment; solution focused counselling, interpretation and translation, referral, and employment related activities.

Program Highlights

- During the reporting period, the program provided 6,712 newcomers with individual counselling service, where 4,440 were new clients and others were returning clients.
- The program delivered 455 information sessions and support groups that benefited 6,494 participants. The group sessions were delivered in collaboration with Service Canada, Canada Revenue Agency, Canada Border Services Agency, local legal and health clinics, and partner agencies.
- The itinerant settlement services including individual assistance, information sessions, support groups and youth groups have been delivered at the following itinerant locations in Toronto: L'Amoreaux Community Centre, Vietnamese Association Toronto, North York Community House, King the Christ RC Parish, John Cabot Secondary School, Kipling Collegiate Institute, St. Christopher

House, Toronto Public Library branches, Richview Library, LAMP.

- “Newcomer First Days”, a three day orientation session, 3 hours each day, were held in August and September in collaboration with Toronto Public Libraries (McGregor and Burrows Hall Libraries).
- The International Medical Graduate (IMG) Group is one of the most successful professional groups. Three locations run the group with a total number of participants of 154 medical graduates.
- Newcomer Resource Centers were opened for walk-in immigrants to use computers, internet service, printer, photocopier, fax and materials on settlement topics. Almost 4,000 clients benefited from the resource center services this year.

Newcomer Settlement Program (NSP)

The goal of the program is to support the successful settlement and integration of newcomers to Ontario. The core services are assessment, referral, information, orientation, and general settlement counselling. During this year, settlement services were provided to 1,490 clients who are immigrants, refugees and first generation Canadians. Services were delivered at three agency locations. The services included information and assistance to access legal aid, specific employment programs, training and education, food banks, emergency housing, subsidized housing, medical and social services, financial assistance and professional services. Employment related supports were offered for immigrants and refugees at PICS Scarborough. Employment services included employment goal setting, action planning, resume preparation, coaching for job interviews, and connecting to programs and resources offered in the community. A total of 23 information sessions on settlement and employment topics, including pensions, healthcare, family violence, financial benefits, employment insurance, free legal services, worker's rights, networking and other topics, were facilitated to 203 participants.

Comprehensive information was provided on settlement topics including education, training, employment,

healthcare, housing, legal, immigration, social services, forms completion for SIN, CCTB, OHIP card, applications for subsidized housing and childcare, ODSP applications, OAS, pensions, EI and disability applications, and immigration applications. In addition, interpretation was provided over the phone and/or in person to ensure access to programs and services, including social assistance, medical and legal appointments. Translation of educational and other documents, as well as counselling, was part of the program offered to various ethnic groups of immigrants. Tamil, Dari, Farsi, Polish, Russian, Urdu, Pashto, and Punjabi were the main linguistic ethnic groups assisted under the program in their first language. Refugee claimants and seniors who are Canadian citizens are the main groups assisted under core settlement services, and most of the time they require case management services due to language barrier, limited knowledge and ability to navigate the complex system of community and government services.

International Medical Graduates Group (IMGG)

The objective of this group is to assist the International Medical Graduate (IMG) in finding their employment path in the Canadian health care system, and to support them in each step of the process, including the credential review, registration, settlement, understanding and complying with regulations, knowledge of medical exams and licensing process, placement and the employment opportunities.

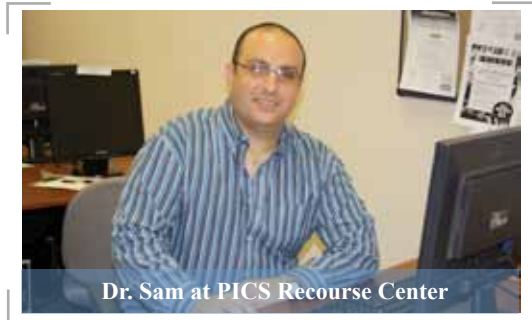
The initiative has been providing facilities and support to the international medical graduates so they can meet on a regular basis to share experiences and exchange information. This group can also be described as a self-study group. It is an ongoing, successful support group, started with 7 participants in 2008 in the Peel office, and now we have a total of three groups in Mississauga, Toronto and Scarborough serving 154 medical graduates. Our services are available to a medical doctor residing in the GTA and Peel regions who completed his or her medical education outside of Canada.

Group Highlights

- 79 participants passed the Medical Council of Canada Evaluation Examination MCCEE.
- 24 passed the Medical Council of Canada Qualifying One Exam MCCQE1.
- 12 passed the Medical Council of Canada Qualifying Second Exam.
- Two IMGs got residency in Manitoba, one in Ontario and one in Saskatchewan.

Success Story

Dr. Sameh Mikhael (Sam) is a personable and outgoing physician originally from Egypt. Sam has been living in Canada for three years with his wife, Mary, and their two daughters Elaera (9 years old) and Nataly (5 years old). This interview was conducted just days before Sam made the move to Winnipeg, Manitoba, where he has secured a position as a family doctor in the western part of that province.



From the moment he decided to emigrate, Sam was focused on doing what he needed to do in order to practice medicine in Canada. While still living in Egypt, Sam was in contact with Doctor-friends and acquaintances already living in Canada, as well as various government and medical organizations to determine the steps he needed to take and the “hoops” he needed to “jump through” to have his medical degree recognized and accepted in Canada.

According to Sam, “it took me a lot of time to build up my resume, to get good experience and show that I had the necessary qualifications. I did an observer-ship in a family physician clinic to get insight into the Canadian medical system and practices. I needed to learn and understand how to respond to and treat Canadian multi-cultural patients. I also took the initiative to start taking courses to get re-certified in some Canadian courses in order to get even more Canadian experience. For example, some of the important courses for immigrant physicians to take are Cardiac Life Support, Basic Life Support, and Advanced Trauma.”

PICS offered Sam more than just English language lessons. PICS provided Sam with the resources, tools and the boost he needed: “They understood my needs exactly. They knew I didn’t need a formalized English program. I also joined PICS International Medical Graduates Group (IMG) where I met with many doctors and shared my experience with them. They had a big impact on my English, my personality and my interview skills that were all an integral part of the selection process. While part of the process was the medical exam, the other stressful part was the panel interview. They really helped me a lot to prepare for that. I gained a lot of experience from both.”

Community Connections

Community Connections Programs (CC) are funded by Citizenship and Immigration Canada as part of the Welcoming Communities Initiative. The programs facilitate newcomer integration into local communities. It aims to address barriers to participation and foster more welcoming and inclusive communities.

Multicultural, Settlement and Education Partnership (MSEP)

The Multicultural, Settlement and Education Partnership is funded jointly by Citizenship and Immigration Canada (CIC) and Boards of Education; PICS delivers the program services in Mississauga. The main objective of the program is to assist newcomer families to integrate into their school and community by providing information, settlement services, and referral to community agencies from their local school. The program is part of a network of school-based settlement programs in Ontario communities called Settlement Workers in Schools (SWIS).

PICS provides MSEP services in 17 schools, including elementary and secondary schools in West Mississauga from both school boards, Peel District School Board and Dufferin Peel Catholic District School Board.

During the 2011-2012 fiscal year, MSEP served 854 clients. These clients came from 455 families. Of those families, 401 were seen for the first time during this period. The other families had received services before and within the time period covered by the report. The total number of information sessions delivered to newcomer families was 216 on a variety of settlement topics.

Host Program

The Host Program seeks to address two key need of newcomers: addressing unfamiliarity with the Canadian environment and overcoming isolation which includes networking, as well as developing language skills. PICS operated the Host Program in Peel Region for the third year in a row. The Host Program assists the newcomer to learn more about Canadian culture and to improve their language skills through one-on-one newcomer-volunteer matching, conversation circles and other social activities.



The program has doubled the number of served individuals during 2011-2012, where it served 278 compared with 118 in 2010-2011. According to the program statistics, 231 out of the served clients in 2011-2012 were new clients.

In addition to the matching, where volunteers met with their newcomers on a weekly basis, the program offered a variety of activities, such as English Conversation Circle; Homework Club for school age students; Sewing Club, mainly for household women, Seniors Community Circle and Computer Literacy Club.

Community Connections Activities

PICS Toronto sites organized and delivered various Community Connections activities. Through mentoring services, group bases or one-on-one, newcomers are supported and led by example as well as connected and involved in professional and social networking. The role of Community Connections is to empower newcomers, resulting in the enhancement of their abilities and skills.

PICS clients have the option to be connected in a welcoming environment to a Community Connections mentor, either in a group setting or one-on-one mentorship. Mentoring activities under Community Connections are provided for professional and social networking.

Newcomer clubs have been provided with welcoming space, organized and delivered in Etobicoke and Scarborough, as well as at itinerant locations, in collaboration with local secondary, high schools, neighbourhood centres, LINC centres and libraries.

We continued facilitating a newcomer club for South Asian women in Scarborough, in partnership with Action for Neighbourhood Centre.

In partnership with CulturLink, 8 sessions of Citizenship Education Mentorship were facilitated at our Bloor site. As well as in partnership with St. Joseph Women's Health Centre, 10 sessions of "Healing the Heart through Art" conversation circle were facilitated twice within the year. A total of 343 sessions were delivered to 2,418 participants under Community Connections at PICS Toronto sites during 2011-2012.

A Success Story

I decided to participate in the program of expressive art organized by PICS in collaboration with St. Joseph Women's Health Centre because it caught my attention to explore my feelings through art activities and share my experiences in Canada. I also thought that it may help me to find some solutions to my stress, depression and anxiety I experienced in this new country. It is not easy to start a new life in a foreign country; you feel kind of lost. As a newcomer, I think this program is important to feel more comfortable, to develop relationships with new people and practice the language. In addition, to increase security in yourself and develop a good attitude to life in a new country and its culture, knowing that we all make mistakes and these must be learned. In this program, I was able and encouraged to express my opinions, experiences and share it with others.



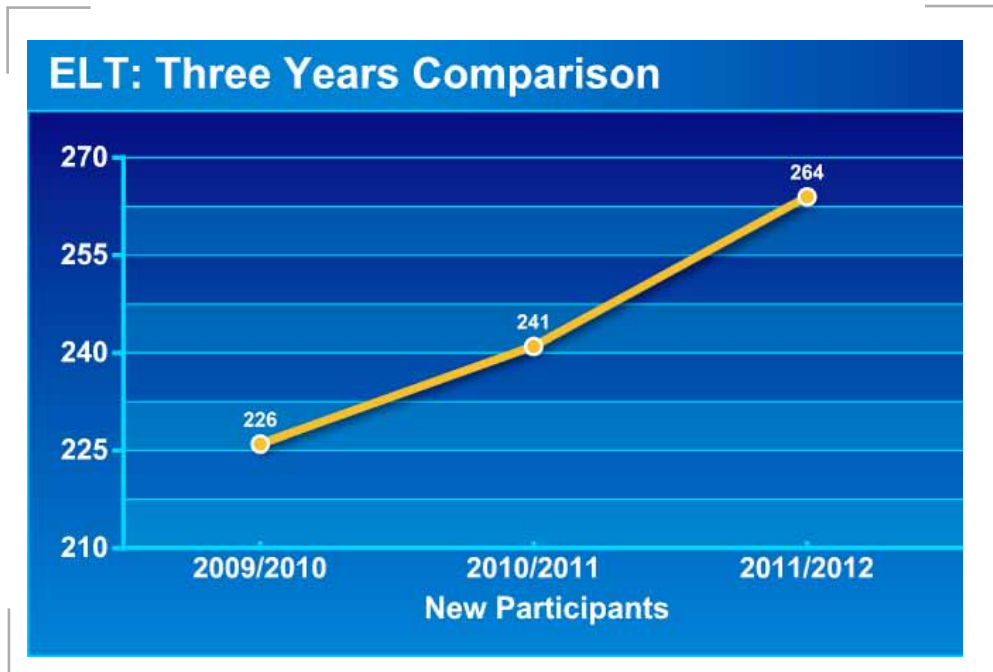
Growing friendship with other people from the group is a very beneficial part of this program. It tells me that Canada is a friendly place. **Carolina from Colombia**

Transition to Employment

Transition to Employment aims to assist newcomers to find a job in their professions by identifying their transferable skills and providing them with information about Canadian labour market and workplace culture. Transition to Employment includes three programs, all of which are funded by Citizenship and Immigration Canada.

Enhanced Language Training (ELT)

The ELT program is an opportunity to provide specialized language and employment preparation training to an increasing segment of the population, the internationally trained professional. ELT programs also have bridge-to-work assistance, including mentorship, work placements and other employment help.



The target for the program this year was to provide continued services to the community and ensure sector specific classes were achieving the results for those attending the sessions. This objective was achieved with all seats in the program being filled and 264 participants completing the program successfully. The clients were offered unpaid 8 weeks placement or mentorship. More than 90 clients found a job after completing the program.

Sector specific materials were created for business administration, technical jobs including IT and engineers, and health services, which were delivered in separate classes. Overall the program was deemed a success with students benefiting not only from the language instruction to enhance the newcomer skills in business communication and knowledge of workplace culture, but also from the placement component which provided them with valuable work experience. The provision of childminding service ensured the program was accessible to as many students with family obligations as possible.

Workshops were developed focusing on job specific materials that gave clients a better understanding of what it takes to achieve success in their respective industries. The program brought in professionals, representing the client's professions, to deliver presentations. Clients who successfully completed the program also shared their stories of determination with those currently in session. HR representatives from major employers, who represent our client's designated industries, were invited as guest speakers. More than 50 guest speaking engagements were booked.

Job Search Workshop (JSW)

The Job Search Workshop (JSW) launched at PICS Toronto site in 2011. The Program offers new Canadians an opportunity to learn the local labour market trends and the.

Steps necessary to obtain professional employment in Canada. PICS started to offer the workshop in May 2011 in the Etobicoke and Scarborough offices. A total of 27 groups were successfully facilitated and 298 newcomers participated.



The JSW Program at PICS consists of two weekly modules, spread out over a period of nine days. The content of the program is all practical and helps participants understand the hiring process in Canada, prepare a polished resume, and get ready for a job interview. With assistance from experienced program staff, participants identify the gaps they need to cover in order to become successful job seekers. Extensive after-training support is provided as well: one-on-one counselling, work placement and mentoring. JSW clients also benefit from career exploration and planning support in the PICS Resource Room with free access to computers, printers and the Internet – everything they need to start an effective job search.

Program Highlights

- At the 3 month follow-up, 38 program participants found career-related employment.
- Ten information sessions were held with invited guest speakers to help JSW clients better understand the local labour market and learn about other free programs from community agencies.
- PICS Job Search Workshops featured on Introducing Toronto on Rogers TV. To view the video visit http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=evl8_x-oojo&feature=youtu.be
- Monthly events with employers have been organized since January 2012, where newcomers receive information on hiring practices and participate in on-site interviews.

A Success Story

Anatoliy immigrated to Canada as a permanent resident under Skilled Worker category with his family (spouse and a child) on April 13, 2011. As a newcomer family, he first accessed settlement services to address settlement needs, obtained information on PR status, registration of child to school, and English classes for his spouse. Anatoliy had extensive experience in the HR field and wanted to continue his career in Toronto. The client was referred to the JSW program and visited the JSW office for assessment and development of an action plan. It turned out that he needed more information about the local labour market, certification, networking in the HR field, as well as a customized resume. He signed up for both modules of the JSW program in October, 2011. As a result of his JSW training, an action plan was developed, which he immediately started to pursue

- Joined local college to obtain CHRP designation.
- Contacted all major financial institutions and sent them his resume.
- Actively networked and organized over two dozen informational interviews.

Through networking, he learned about the opportunity at BMO bank and was able to contact a hiring manager directly.. He had his first interview with a bank recruiter on April 2, 2012, then a phone interview with a hiring manager and later the face-to-face interview. He got a job offer on April 13 and started his employment with BMO Financial Services on May 7 as a Job Evaluation Specialist.

Client quote: *"The knowledge I received during your workshop was the key factor for success. After finishing the program, I was ready for any curveballs and that gave me a lot of confidence. Thanks again for your information and support."*

Immigrant Employment Assistance Program

This Pre-Employment Development Program assisted 87 immigrant and refugee recipients of social assistance to prepare for entering the labour market. Program activities included developing individualized short-term and long-term employment goals, action planning and developing job search techniques, resume & cover letter writing and job interview preparation.

The program was able to help immigrants to identify their path towards employment and to develop concrete steps in reaching their goals, including skills upgrading, education, trade certification, professional licensing, bridge-to-work programs and job placement services. The program was offered as a combination of group and individual sessions, to address needs of each participant.

A Success Story

Iwona Tyczynska, her husband Darek and their [Type a quote from the document or the summary of an interesting point. You can position the text box anywhere in the document. Use the Drawing Tools tab to change the formatting of the pull quote text box.]

son Darek (9 years) moved to Canada on Iwona's birthday in June 2009 from Poland.

Because of her commitment to helping her son adjust, Iwona was not able to work during their first year in Canada.

As Chemical Engineers with degrees from a Technical University in Poland and years of Management experience in their professions, Iwona and Darek never imagined that it would be difficult for them to find related positions in Canada.



Iwona and her son Darek

She suggests that no one tells newcomers how hard it is going to be before they arrive in Canada: “No one warns you how difficult it’s going to be. Not the government or anyone.” Iwona joined the ELT Program at PICS and throughout the 12-week program, she did not miss a single day of class! At the end of the ELT Program in November 2011, Iwona had a Co-op placement in her field of expertise- Quality Assurance, at Metro Tool and Die. With the help of her good friend, financial assistance from PICS to cover the cost of the PLASP daycare during her Co-op term, and the support of her son and husband, Iwona successfully completed her Co-op placement and was promptly hired by the same company where she has now worked for over a year.

As they had imagined and planned, Iwona is working in a position that fits with her educational and work background.

Employer of the Year Award

PICS created the '*Employer of the Year Award*' in 2011/2012. This award is to recognize the cooperation of employers who assist PICS in providing placements and employment opportunities for clients in order to enable them to gain "Canadian Experience."

Some employers went beyond that and hired many of PICS' clients. In 2011/2012, the award was given to *International Data Corporation (IDC)*. IDC is the premier global provider of market intelligence, advisory services, and events for the information technology, telecommunications, and consumer technology markets.

Since 2010, IDC has worked with our organization and has taken on some 16 clients for placement from various PICS programs and locations. Upon completion of their placement, three were given contracts for projects, three have continued to work with the company on a full time basis, and the others were hired on by companies in their respective fields. IDC not only helps the clients in their placements, they are always looking for opportunities for the clients elsewhere. On many occasions their management team has networked for our clients and has found employment opportunities for them to ensure their continued success.



Language Training

Language Training and Skills Development (formerly LINC) is funded by Citizenship and Immigration Canada (CIC). PICS offers both full- and part-time classes, with child-minding service for participants. The program is offered in most Toronto locations and in Mississauga.

English language classes continued to be an attractive option for many newcomers who have decided to improve their language skills as a way of accelerating their integration and adaptation. During the 2011-2012 fiscal year, PICS Programs offered 7 levels of classes, which were delivered in 27 full-time and 5 part-time (evening) classes. The program accepted 1,352 new students and served in total 1,871 individuals this fiscal year. The drop in the new clients and the individuals served is due to the reduction of number of classes as a result of funding cuts.



Childminding service was provided to accommodate children whose parents attended the program. There were 138 seats allocated to accept children between 19 months and 5 years over the course of 12 months of operation.

Students had the opportunity to explore some of the attractions and services in the GTA and Peel Region by participating in field trips which corresponded with curriculum themes.

Planning and delivering language training sessions assumed tight collaboration with PICS settlement counsellors, by facilitating a series of presentations on settlement topics. Community members were continuously engaged as sources of support, information and education for the clients.

In addition, Computer Courses covering basic and advance MS Office were offered at three sites in Toronto. Newcomers enhanced their knowledge and skills of using computers for settlement, social activities, as well as job searching and employment maintenance.



A Success Story

Learning English was not easy for me at the beginning. I started to learn English at PICS in the middle of May this year, 10 days after I landed in Canada. At the beginning I was so eager for the English knowledge that I worked very hard every day. I wanted to adapt to the new environment quickly. However, I did not make any big progress, because I was shy and afraid of speaking English in class and in the public. I could not go to the supermarket, bank, library and anywhere by myself; I could not answer the phone, I was afraid of talking with people on the phone. Therefore, I went everywhere with my husband.

I asked myself “Where is your confidence? You were a confident person in China. I must change myself, I must gain back my confidence”. Therefore, I convinced myself that I should start to speak more English in class, or if not, I was wasting my time.

At the beginning, I forced myself to answer the teacher's questions and even take initiative. Even though in some answers I just spoke a few words, day after day, I felt more comfortable when I was speaking English in the class. After a week, I could answer the questions in two or three sentences. A month later, when I answered, not only did I use new words and phrases, but I also tried to use more complicated sentence structures and idioms.

The way of studying in Canada was different from that in China. Teachers here encourage us to take initiative in activities. Therefore it gives a good chance for newcomers to improve their English.



PICS Student receiving TESL award

I won the Grand Prize in the TESL Ontario ESL Week Contest, and I believe it was a proof of my hard work and consistent efforts. The most important effect was that it gave me more and more confidence for the future. It was the happiest day in my life when I got the news that I won the Grand Prize; it made me get closer to the Canadian society; it was a great learning experience in Canada; it gave me a memorable chance to be interviewed by CP24, Chinese TV and newspapers; it would inspired me to keep going and going to make bigger progress. Now I am studying in an ELT Program, and at the same time, I work as a volunteer at Polycultural Immigrant and Community Services and at the YMCA. I help newcomers, and I feel my life is more meaningful. The biggest barrier to us newcomers is ourselves. If we trust ourselves, we will do better. If we want to integrate into Canada, the language is the first skill. We need to encourage ourselves every day, to be enthusiastic and consistent. That way we will find our life is changing day after day.

The latest chapter in Kathy's journey through the settlement process is that she has been successful in finding employment in her field...exactly 1 year (April 2012) to her immigration to Canada. She was recently hired by the Bank of China. A final quote from Kathy: "If we want to integrate into Canada, the language is the first skill."

Youth Service

PICS recognizes the importance of youth and their needs. PICS youth service exists to help youth exert independence in a fun and social environment. The primary goal of youth service activities is to have the youth become active and valuable members of their community.

Beautiful Girls Program

The Beautiful Girls Program started as an initiative to respond to an identified need among young girls. It started in our Mississauga location and it will be available in all locations starting from 2012/2013. The *Beautiful Girls Program* addresses issues of self-esteem and self-worth in young girls, through activities that strengthen their sense of self-respect and confidence. PICS recognizes that building long term self-esteem and self-worth does not happen by participating in isolated activities, as these characteristics are lifelong values. Our goal is to 'germinate the seed' of development in young immigrant women. Our aim is to ensure that each girl who joins this program believes that there is beauty that transcends ethnic and cultural lines!

Beautiful Girls is a great program. It teaches us about being nice to people and supporting them. It teaches us that everyone is beautiful in their own way, and that nobody is perfect. I would love to come back next year.

Rida Alam, Participant



BG participants

This program is available to all those girls who face issues around relationships, bullying, identity questions, body image, uncertainty about the future, popularity and more. The program works on helping girls to understand the mixed messages they receive; develop positive feelings about themselves and their future and make connections with others; and to be able to express themselves in a confident and self-assured manner.



BG participants

The Beautiful Girls Program is designed to speak to adolescent girls between the ages of 14 and 19 in voices that will be listened to and understood. PICS have provided the opportunity to address topics that are relevant to newcomer youth in a safe, fun and interactive environment, in culturally and ethnically meaningful ways.

The program's first session started in March 2011 with 22 girls registered, and it was sponsored by Dove. The program is one three-hour session a week. The registered groups graduated in July 2011 after having 16 sessions.

In January, 2012 the program continued in our Mississauga location after a generous donation from the Royal Bank of Canada Foundation. This supports allows PICS to operate the program in all locations and serve more young girls. A total of 21 girls registered for the January – June session. Those registered represented newcomers, citizens, and they represented a wide cultural diversity that reflects our Canadian society.



BG participants

Health and Wellness

PICS works on promoting health and wellness in the community it serves, as well as PICS employees. PICS established several partnerships toward implementing different projects and initiatives that promote health and awareness.

Wellness Committee

Polycultural Immigrant & Community Services (Peel) established a partnership with the Region of Peel Public Health in October 2011. The joint effort is focused on implementing a Comprehensive Community Health Initiative in Peel region. PICS joined the initiative by creating a *Wellness Committee* to oversee the current health-related initiatives and take a leading role in creating a concept that will stay embedded in our organization, and consequently, serve as a platform for building/maintaining a supportive environment for all PICS stakeholders, clients (all family constituents, children, youths, adults, seniors), volunteers, staff, and partners.

The Wellness Committee was formed of 11 members representing all PICS programs and departments. Their involvement as department/program representatives has been deemed crucial to ensure consistency and overall representation in project implementation.

Creating a supportive environment that would inspire, stimulate and benefit all clients and staff has been an ultimate goal of the Project. The emphasis has been placed on finding ways to approach most clients by selecting activities/events that respond to their needs, respect their personal/ethnic values and provide a sense of social connectedness. In order to implement a client-driven program, the Wellness Committee has developed and run a Wellness Survey (more than 200 clients and staff participated) which has provided the Committee with some leading tips.

Realizing the importance of mental health to the overall well-being of our clients, PICS Wellness Committee has initiated regular yoga and meditation (15-30 minutes) classes, serving healthy snacks to both children and adults enrolled in PICS programs.



‘**G**rowing Together’ parenting sessions are aimed at empowering participants to deal with stress, build confidence, have positive and healthy relationships with their children, daily gross-motor activities for pre-schoolers, and presentations on physical activity & healthy eating by the IMG (International Medical Graduates) group representatives.

PICS Wellness has also been

proactive in pursuing partnerships and connections with other community agencies and organizations offering health-related services (Active Chefs – multicultural cooking, Liaison College – preparing meals with locally-grown products, Ontario Women’s Health Network – overall health in women, Metro Pharmacy – blood sugar/cholesterol screening, Mississauga Parks and Recreation, etc.). It all resulted in organizing a Health and Wellness Fair at the beginning of 2012 which brought together 19 different agencies and organizations providing health-related services. Since then, PICS has entered strong partnerships with Success by Six (Youth Advocates of Peel) program, Active Chefs, Canadian Cancer Society (Live Well, Act Well).

Breast Cancer Screening: Inclusion of Marginalized Women Project

The Breast Cancer Screening: Inclusion of Marginalized Women Project is funded by the Canadian Breast Cancer Foundation, Ontario Region, and is coordinated in partnership with Polycultural Immigrant and Community Services, Cancer Care Ontario, and the Ontario Women’s Health Network. This provincial research project has involved peer-led Focus Groups conducted with marginalized women aged 50 - 69 who experience barriers to the social determinants of health, and lack information and services related to breast cancer screening.

The project aimed is to identify specific barriers to breast cancer screening and suggest ways to eliminate them and to increase breast cancer screening rates in under-screened women.

The project worked with three focus groups with 26 targeted women from Latin America, south Asia and Africa. In addition, a Local Advisory Committee has been created with the participation of 13 individuals from the following organizations: Polycultural Immigrant and Community Services, Health Promotion Ontario Breast Screening Program - GTA Region, Afghan Women's Organization, Georgetown Dufferin Peel Unit Canadian Cancer Society, Alce Art and Health, IDN International Doctors Network.

The project is currently in collective data analysis process, and working with the principal investigator, Inclusion Researchers and provincial advisory group to develop a strategy based on focus group analysis.

Multicultural Women's Wellness Program

This program is delivered in partnership with Canadian Mental Health Association. The goal of the Multicultural Women Wellness Program is to promote the well-being of women who are socially isolated, experiencing cultural and linguistic barriers, and/or who may be at risk of mental health problems due to difficult life circumstances. It is a safe place where women can meet, make friends, network, learn, remain active and have fun.

The program runs in the Russian language and operates throughout the year, once a week and is attended mostly by senior women. A total of 22 women registered in the program with average attendance of 16 women weekly. For many immigrant women, their mental health and well-being are related to the adjustment to the new life in Canada. The program gave the participants the possibility to discuss everyday issues including parenting, children, immigration, employment, healthcare, housing, recreation, education and to talk about cultural diversity, family violence, and immigration stress.

Specialized Counseling Services

PICS provides individual and group specialized counselling services that address important problems and issues that faces some families in the communities it serves, such as gambling, partner assault, family violence, parenting addiction and others. The service is provided by professional well trained staff.

Partner Assault Response Program

The PAR program goal is to reduce abuse and violence in intimate relationships, with a special emphasis on keeping women and children safe. Participants are encouraged and challenged to take responsibility for their actions and to change their behavior. Our professional counsellors offer a supportive and confidential environment and help participants acquire the skills and knowledge needed to participate in equitable and non-violent relationships.

During 2011- 2012 four open groups were facilitated throughout the year with 16 group sessions circle. A total of 61 individuals were referred to the program by Family Violence Courts or Probation Officers, 59 of them completed the program successfully. In addition, a total of 56 individual victims received services. The Majority of the participants, both men and women, appreciate the possibility of being served in their own language and within their own communities. They also appreciate the respect and support they receive from our services while attending the program. The PAR program is funded through the Ontario Victim Services Secretariat of the Ministry of the Attorney General. The PAR program is offered at the Roncesvalles site.

Family Support Program

PICS Family Support Program helps to identify and resolve personal and/or family problems such as family breakdown, family violence, parenting, addictions, separation, disabilities, financial difficulties, homelessness and others. In a supportive environment, PICS counsellors provide assistance to immigrant communities in the GTA through one-to-one and family counselling. PICS also offer assistance in accessing available services and programs, such as community legal clinics, social assistance, Community Care Access Centre, disability benefits, pensions, shelters, housing programs and others.

Many immigrants cannot access main stream resources because of their language skills and cultural barriers. For these cases, PICS is the only available agency in the communities in which they live, to assist with supportive counselling and help to re-establish their lives. PICS has many clients, who, through provided services, were able to make significant changes in their lives and who give us very positive feedback regarding the impact PICS services have on their lives.

Eight hundred individuals were assisted in the 2011-2012 through 1,248 visits. Also, 282 individuals participated in 46 group sessions.

Problem Gambling Services

The services offered through PICS Problem Gambling Service include culturally and linguistically appropriate prevention and treatment for gamblers and family members for the Polish and Russian speaking communities in the GTA. As well, outreach and public education prevention activities are directed towards these communities. Individual and family counselling is available for people with problem gambling and those affected by a problem gambler. The program also offers assistance in referrals to credit counselling and other services.

Fifty five individuals, including gamblers and family members from the Russian and Polish communities were assisted by the program during 144 sessions. Also, 51 participants took part in 6 group sessions.

We were also successful in publishing an article in the Polish and Russian newspapers to raise awareness and help community members access services.

PICS Problem Gambling Service is funded by the Centre for Addiction and Mental Health. It is delivered at the Roncesvalles site.

Support Services

Support Services are provided by PICS to enable the clients to have a smooth transition into the different programs provided. Many clients have children, which could be a barrier for them to participate in any program or to get benefit of any services.

Childminding



PICS Clients children with a childminder

Childminding Program is a support service provided by PICS to the newcomer parents who are enrolled in Language Training and Transition to Employment programs. The program accepts children between the ages of 19 months and 5 years, with the exception of the Midland location with an infant program accepting children from 6 months of age. This program is offered in all our locations with a capacity of 73 seats in Toronto locations and 65 seats in Mississauga, covering daytime and evening classes. Our ECE qualified childcare staff, planned and implemented age-appropriate and need-responsive pre-school activities, creating a safe and nurturing environment, building English language capacities in children and fostering a stimulating atmosphere for children's overall skills development (cognitive, sensory, social, fine motor and gross motor areas). Our Childminding program is monitored by Childminding, Monitoring, Advisory and Support (CMAS) and funded by Citizenship and Immigration Canada.

Occasional Childcare

The Occasional Childcare Service is provided to PICS clients participating at any of our program activities. The services are provided by ECE certified staff and have offered 55 seats during 2011-2012. This service is funded by Citizenship and Immigration Canada.

Summer Camp

Summer Camps are another support service provided by PICS to the clients during the summer time, as it offers two months Summer Camp for school-age children between 6 and 12 years of age. During the reporting period, two summer camps were held; one in Mississauga and one in Scarborough. The camps served a total of 48 students (28 in Mississauga and 20 in Scarborough). The camps included a variety of activities including field trips, handcraft activities, and sports.



A child during
childcare

Fund Development

PICS would like to express sincere appreciation to each individual and every organisation for their support during the last year. Last fiscal year, PICS was able to raise almost \$50,000. This support enables PICS to provide quality programs in response to the emerging community needs.

Polylicious

On Saturday June 11, 2011, PICS held their first fundraising event, Polylicious, at the Bata Shoe Museum.

The event was created to be a positive, upbeat and fun event that featured the best of ethnic cuisine from some of Toronto's best ethnic restaurants, caterers and food service professionals.

The event highlighted and celebrated the many achievements of immigrants to Canada and served as a positive counterpoint to the many recent negative attitudes to immigration and immigrants to Canada. The Chair of the event was Ms. Karlene Nation, from CTV and our host Chef Corbin Tomaszewski, renowned chef and FoodNetwork television personality and host of - Crash My Kitchen, Dinner Party Wars, and Restaurant Makeover, did a great job in keeping the guests entertained.



Polylicious also saw the launching of 'Promises and OpenDoors – A Short Video on the Immigrant Experience in Canada.'

Over 200 guest were present and there was food for three hundred, so many had 'doggy bags' to take home.

Polylicious turned out to be the event of the month and the donations from all restaurants, including those at the event, the wineries and breweries, totaled over \$12,000. Without those donations, those items would have had to be purchased, thus decreasing the amount raised.



Part of event activities

Christmas Bazaar

PICS held the Christmas Bazaar event on December 16th and 17th at Sheridan Mall Center in Mississauga. The event was driven and implemented by volunteers as well as PICS clients. The bazaar included the sale of baked goodies prepared by volunteers, staff and clients, the sale of PICS Swing club products which was produced by PICS clients, a silent auction and raffle tickets. The event was very successful and it was a great experience for clients, volunteers and staff. The event was able to raise approximately \$4000.



A child with Christmas tree paint



Part of event activities

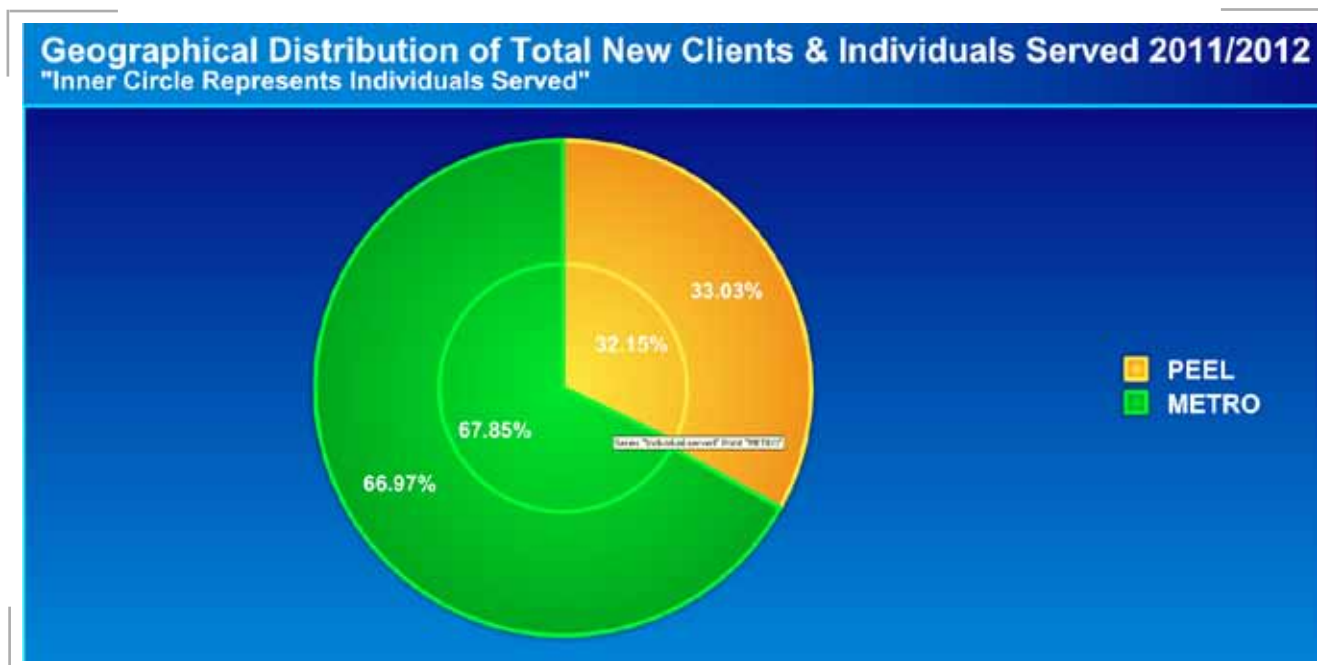
Harambee Holidays Events

Two 'Harambee' fundraising events were held during the holiday season at the Bloor and Eglinton sites. The events and activities included a 50/50 draw, sale of baked goods and a Silent Auction. Close to \$1,000 was raised and it was enjoyed by staff, volunteers, clients and supporters.

Statistics and Financial Statement

PICS analyzes its own data in order to evaluate its performance and to be able to make informed decisions regarding program development and improvement. PICS also have its annual financial statement audited by independent auditors.

PICS provide its services in different locations across the GTA and Peel. The chart below shows the geographical distribution of the total clients served in the fiscal year 2011/2012. 67.85% of PICS clients were served in Metro Toronto, while 32.15% were served in Region of Peel, mainly the city of Mississauga. Region of Peel location registered and served 33.03% of the new clients who joined PICS in 2011/2012.



Statistics of Clients Served

	2011/2012				2010/2011			
	<u>NC</u>	<u>IA</u>	<u>GSC</u>	<u>SP</u>	<u>NC</u>	<u>IA</u>	<u>GSC</u>	<u>SP</u>
Information and Awareness	5344	8202	478	6697	6210	9667	855	9469
Community Connections	870	1269	996	4468	245	628	576	1843
Transition to Employment	649	649	65	846	333	333	34	333
Language Training	1352	1871	135	7647	1401	2017	132	8286
Counseling Services	593	938	56	449	768	1226	53	448
Youth Services	32	43	23	342	11	11	5	50
Health and Wellness	101	199	84	653	5	20	48	457
Support Services	289	289	80	3840	161	161	80	3680
TOTAL	9230	13460	1917	24942	9134	14063	1783	24566

Abbreviation	Description
NC	New Clients
IA	Individuals Assisted
GSC	Group Sessions & Classes
SP	Sessions Participants

**POLYCULTURAL IMMIGRANT AND COMMUNITY SERVICES
STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL POSITION**

As at March 31

	2012	2011
	\$	\$
ASSETS		
Current		
Cash	190,739	219,398
Accounts receivable	110,188	96,869
Grants receivable	946,950	778,702
Prepaid expenses	31,812	22,869
	1,279,689	1,117,838
Capital	261,061	254,615
	1,540,750	1,372,453
LIABILITIES		
Current		
Bank overdraft	-	200,000
Accounts payable and accrued liabilities	550,740	530,168
Deferred grants	36,297	23,804
Mortgage principal due within one year	142,715	176,105
	729,752	930,077
Long-term		
Deferred grants	22,787	13,510
Deferred revenue	297,000	-
	319,787	13,510
	1,049,539	943,587
NET ASSETS		
Unrestricted	431,949	387,669
Invested in capital assets	59,262	41,197
	491,211	428,866
	1,540,750	1,372,453

**POLYCULTURAL IMMIGRANT AND COMMUNITY SERVICES
STATEMENT OF OPERATIONS**

Year ended March 31

	2012	2011
	\$	\$
REVENUES		
Amortization of deferred grants	46,590	47,395
Donations and fundraising	47,364	6,998
Grants		
Government of Canada - Citizenship and Immigration	6,791,313	7,313,909
Province of Ontario	100,496	100,496
City of Toronto	26,415	26,415
Other grants	16,900	39,259
Ministry of the Attorney General grant revenues	65,797	68,292
Newcomer Settlement Program revenues	104,749	99,761
Other revenue	2,782	4,772
Services	175,078	154,436
	7,377,484	7,861,733
EXPENSES		
Amortization	61,915	62,720
Cleaning and maintenance	80,301	85,517
Computer and technology	14,530	10,756
Employee benefits	973,993	1,003,429
General and office	77,644	83,573
Insurance	20,655	22,175
Memberships	4,575	2,695
Ministry of the Attorney General grant expenses	65,797	68,447
Mortgage interest	9,810	10,916
Newcomer Settlement Program expenses	104,749	99,761
Professional fees	29,867	31,103
Property taxes	26,135	25,721
Rent and utilities	857,753	832,112
Salaries	4,703,948	5,104,026
Sales tax	47,972	31,913
Subcontract	37,907	44,672
Supplies	68,930	100,187
Telephone	31,836	30,500
Transportation	96,822	178,175
	7,315,139	7,828,398
EXCESS OF REVENUES OVER EXPENSES	62,345	33,335

Acknowledgment

Because of your support, PICS was able to serve more than 15,000 immigrants and refugees this year in the Greater Toronto Area and the Region of Peel and assist newcomers on their integration path into Canadian society.

Volunteers

More than 200 volunteers served for more than 10,000 hours during 2011/2012. The work that volunteers and placement students have done for PICS in the 2011-2012 year has been a substantial and significant part of the success of the organization. They are engaged in a variety of ways, assisting the community and enhancing our services.

Funding and Support

Government of Canada

Canada

 Citizenship and Immigration Canada Citoyenneté et Immigration Canada

Citizenship and Immigration Canada

Ministry of Attorney General


 Ontario

Ministry of Citizenship and Immigration

City of Toronto

 TORONTO

Toronto Employment and Social Services

 TORONTO Employment & Social Services

Social Services of the Region of Peel

 Region of Peel
Working for you

Canadian Mental Health Association

 CANADIAN MENTAL
HEALTH ASSOCIATION
ASSOCIATION CANADIENNE
POUR LA SANTÉ MENTALE

Centre for Addiction and Mental Health



Scotia Bank



Ontario Women Health Network



SEDI



Royal Bank of Canada



BMO



Bentall Kennedy



Partner Organizations

Toronto Public Health	Steels l'Amoreaux Neighborhood Action Partnership	Tamil Women's Abuse Prevention Working Group
St. Joseph Women's Health Centre	Birchmount Bluffs Neighborhood Centre	Peel District School Board
Kipling Collegiate Institute	Etobicoke General Hospital, William Osler Health System	Dufferin-Peel Catholic District School Board
L'Amoreaux Community Recre- ation Centre	Action for Neighborhood Change, Scarborough Village	Peel Newcomer Strategy Group
Sheridan Center Library	Center of Education & Training	Ontario Women's Health Network
Sheridan Group Initiative	Local Immigration Partnership, West Downtown Toronto	Local Immigration Partnership, Central South Etobicoke
Local Immigration Partnership, Eglinton East-Kennedy Park	Local Immigration Partnership, South Scarborough	Local Immigration Partnership, North West Scarborough
Boys and Girls Club	Clarkson Public Library	South Common Public Library

Designed By:
www.turquoise.ps



www.polycultural.org

