



WHAT'S NEW AT PROJECT ABRAHAM

New Pilot Program to Support Yezidi Women

With funding from The Regional Municipality of York, we launched a pilot program on April 8th called “Reaching Yezidis: Support and Empowerment” (RYSE). RYSE is a twice-annual, 12-week training program designed to help Yezidi women survivors of gender-based violence. Trudi Rutherford, Program Director, says the program was created in response to the fact that “it’s difficult for Yezidi women to get out in the community and take part in programs. As a result, they have significant challenges with literacy, learning, and mental health.”

Participants meet in-person twice a week and classes are capped at 15. Two members of the Yezidi community helped to develop the program: Program Coordinator, Faheemah Qaaydi, and a member of the Advisory Committee. We surveyed community members to gather information about their specific learning needs.

In addition to helping survivors address their PTSD, the program aims to promote personal development, increase community connections, and improve self-confidence and self-sufficiency. At the start of the workshop series, participants will meet one-on-one with a Case Manager to develop an individualized program plan. Workshops held by the Centre for Addiction and Mental Health (CAMH), Jewish Immigrant Aid Services (JIAS), and York Region will offer a wide range of practical and experiential skills training, such as searching for online resources, using the library, and getting around on public transit. If this year’s pilot is successful and funding continues, we plan to open up the program to members of other client communities next year.

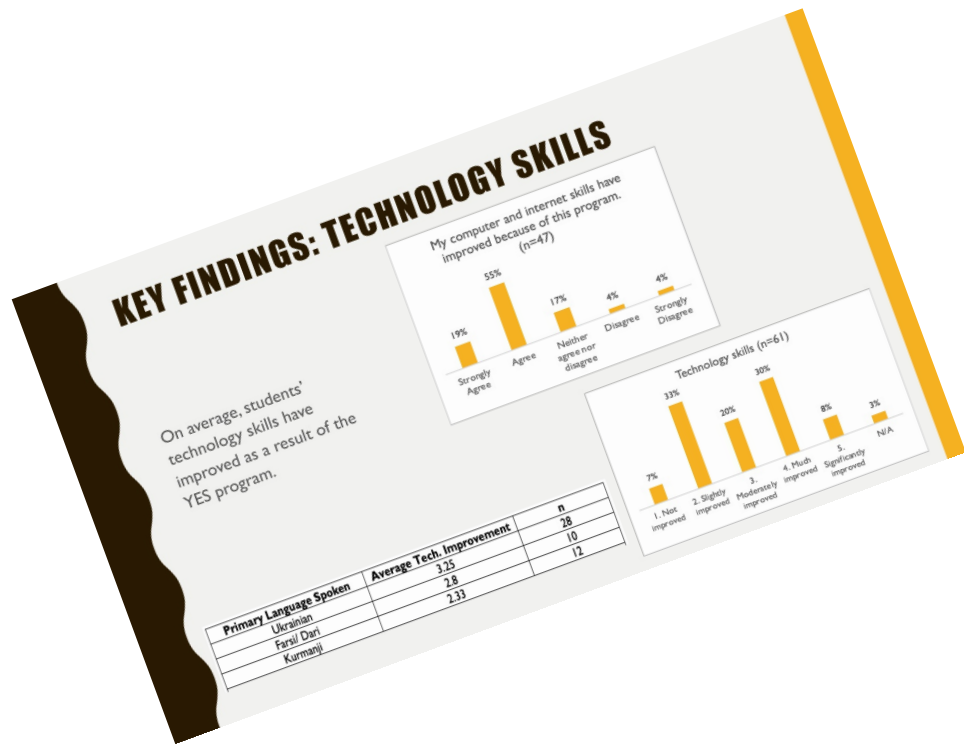
Funded by
The Regional
Municipality of York



Our vision is to become the leading resettlement organization supporting victims of persecution, empowering them to create a future for themselves and their children as fully integrated Canadian citizens.

Donations are gratefully accepted: [projectabraham/donate](https://projectabraham.org/donate)

YES Program Evaluation Results



The Final Evaluation Report on the YES Program, prepared by independent evaluation consultant, Malka Elkin, was released in January. The evaluation measured the program’s suitability for meeting students’ specific needs and its effectiveness in helping students achieve the desired program outcomes. Data was collected from multiple sources, including administrative forms (registration form and student roster), a student self-assessment survey; and an instructor assessment survey.

The report found that the program’s flexible schedule, online format, small class sizes, and emphasis on relationship building made it suitable for meeting our students’ needs and that students were generally satisfied with the program. On average, students improved in the areas of speaking, listening, reading, and writing. 94% of students agreed that their English speaking skills had improved and 71% reported an improvement in writing skills. Students have a high level of satisfaction with their instructors (76%) and enjoy meeting peers and socializing with others. Students also reported gaining confidence with speaking English in class. Ukrainian speakers showed the most improvement in language skills, confidence, social connectedness, and mental health, followed by Farsi/Dari and Kurmanji speakers.

In light of the evaluations findings, we are considering the following next steps:

- Developing a new program focused on writing skills
- Providing enhanced support to Kurmanji-speaking students
- Incorporating experiential activities to promote student confidence in speaking English outside the classroom
- Resuming the delivery of separate classes for students preparing for the citizenship test

Volunteer Appreciation Party

Feb. 11, 2024



We held a party in February to show our appreciation for the work that our volunteers do to support our programs and services. Volunteers help us with advertising, IT support, public relations, driving, fundraising, and assisting clients with completing forms. Approximately 30 people attended the event, including teachers and staff members. YES program teacher, Revi Biran, organized “getting to know you” and icebreaker games, such as “Soul Mates,” “Have You Ever,” and “Lock and Key” to help attendees get to know one another.



Executive Director, Debbie Rose was presented with a “Happy Retirement” cake and thanked for her contribution to Project Abraham. “It was bittersweet,” says Revi, “because although we were celebrating everything Debbie has done, we still had sadness in our hearts that she was leaving us.”

We would like to thank the Toronto software company, Ostana, for donating pizza for us to enjoy at the party.

Join the team at Project Abraham! [projectabraham/volunteer](https://projectabraham.org/volunteer)