



RYSE Pilot Program Brings Yezidi Women Together

For a group of Yezidi women in the GTA, a recent Project Abraham pilot program provided a chance to strengthen community bonds, share life skills, and learn new ones. Twelve women, aged 25 to 50, participated in the 12-week program, “Reaching Yezidis Support and Empowerment” (RYSE), which was funded by The Regional Municipality of York. As Trudi Rutherford, Program Director, says, “The isolation is real. Even though the women were from the same community, they had not seen one another in a year.” One of the first topics the women compared notes on was how to deal with their children’s use of social media. Other conversations involved family reunification.



With language interpretation by Program Coordinator, Faheema Qaaydi, participants learned how to use community resources such as the transit system and the library. Each woman was given a free laptop of their own and instruction on how to log onto a computer and access the internet to find information. Other sessions covered topics such as nutrition, stress and anxiety management, and meditation. Participants also received guidance from Mental Health Counsellor Sakina (Farhad) Patanwala on making individual plans by identifying goals and the steps needed to achieve them. Some realized that to make progress, they had to recommit to learning English. The opportunity to get together inspired the women to share their knowledge and skills with the group. Two participants with professional-level needlework skills offered to teach the others.

The pilot program’s second cohort will meet in September. With extended funding, we hope to expand the RYSE program to other communities of refugees dealing with trauma and other challenges.

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)

Meet the Team at Project Abraham

Dalzar Tawfeeq - Volunteer

Dalzar came to Canada in Fall 2023 with his wife and young son. Dalzar has a bachelor's degree in computer science and a background in information management and data analysis. Having recently obtained his work permit, Dalzar currently works full-time in the manufacturing industry.

Dalzar was employed by the United Nations in Iraq for about six years before joining UK Med, a humanitarian medical NGO that provides aid in conflict and disaster zones. As part of his job with UK Med, he traveled to Ukraine. The day he crossed the border, he received a message from an anonymous source, accusing him of working for the U.S., UK, and the Mossad and threatening his life and the lives of his family members. He returned to Iraq, changing locations when necessary to avoid detection, and booked a flight to Canada. His refugee claim will be heard before the Immigration and Refugee Board of Canada soon.



In his volunteer role with Project Abraham, Dalzar will be updating our website and creating a searchable dashboard for the YES program that will provide real time information on data points such as students' age, gender, and country of origin. He also plans to include an online registration form and information about the program in other languages. Dalzar's goal is to make Project Abraham easier for people like him and his family to find. In addition to updating the website, this will include "marketing our services to other communities, making our FaceBook page active, and ensuring that information about the organization is readily accessible through resources such as the 211 Ontario hotline."

Save the Date for our Potluck Picnic

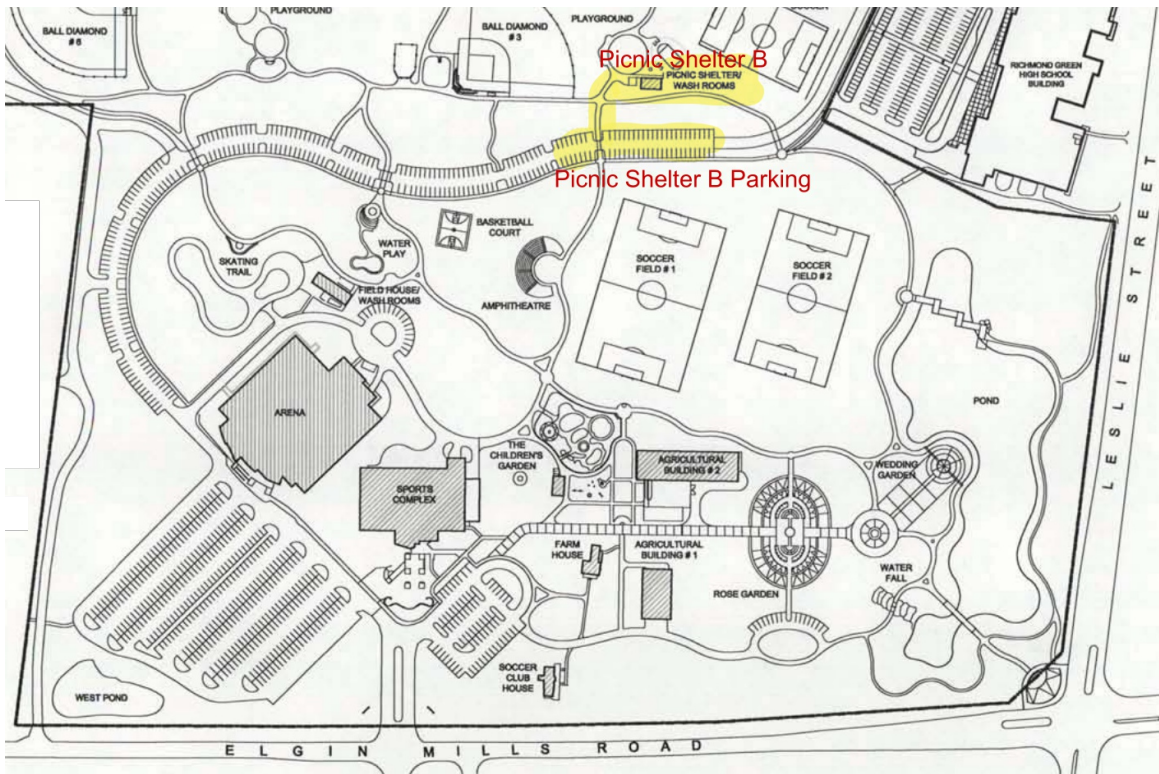
Do not miss our 2nd Annual Project Abraham Pot-luck Picnic!

There will be food, soccer, games, and fun for the whole family. We look forward to seeing you there.

What: 2nd Annual Project Abraham Picnic

Where: Richmond Green Sports Centre & Park
1300 Elgin Mills Rd. East, Richmond Hill
(Northwest corner of Leslie and Elgin Mills)

When: Sunday August 25th at 12 noon



We Need Your Help!

Project Abraham is looking for volunteers to help our refugee clients complete program enrollment and self-assessment forms for our YES Program and Homework Club. These programs provide crucial language training and educational support for refugees and their school-aged children. Participation can be the key to their successful integration into our community. Our clients are resilient and inspiring people. Helping them to move forward in their lives is a rewarding experience.

Position requirements:

- Know how to conduct a meeting on Zoom
- Be familiar with completing online forms and surveys
- Be able to commit to a minimum of three hours

To sign up, please contact Aimee at admin@projectabraham.ca

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