Community Development Practice:

Anti-Racism and Anti-Islamophobia in Alberta's Settlement Sector

Background

In June 2016, AAISA initiated the Community Development Practice: Anti-Racism and Anti-Islamophobia in Alberta's Settlement Sector project, with the objective of building welcoming and inclusive communities through in-depth research and collaborative learning. The project aims to enhance the capacity of settlement practitioners, professionals, and community members who work with immigrants and refugees to advocate for anti-racism and anti-Islamophobia in their practice.

Research



Outcomes

The research informed the development of the Building Champions of Anti-Racism and Anti-Islamophobia: A Practice Guide for Alberta's Settlement Community. It is a practical manual of principles, tools, resources and case examples that can help professionals, organizations, government or communities address racism and Islamophobia at an individual, community, or systems level.

The research findings and online learning components function alongside the Practice Guide on www.aaisa.ca. The purpose of these resources are to provide further information and support to individuals, organizations, or groups who are engaged in or would like to be involved in anti-racism and anti-Islamophobia work.

1.1. Understand the problem and build actions from research, evidence and best practice

- 1.2. Consider all the working elements of an issue when determining how to address it
- 1.3. Acknowledge the differences between people and ground them in experiences

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Understand the Complexity of the Problem to Find an Entry Point for Change aaisa

Human Rights
Education and
Multiculturalisr
Fund

Stages

Identify Who is
Affected by the
Issue and How - and
Who is Positioned
to Influence Change
and Why

- 2.1. Recognize that all community members have a right to be heard
- 2.2. Invest time to create safe, trusting, and meaningful relationships

3.1. Take time to position yourself within the context of the work

3.2. Through our practice we will create an inclusive and egalitarian environment

Identify Where You and Others Fit Within the Structure of the Issue

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Build on the Strengths, Rights, and Voices of Existing Champions and Marginalized Communities

- 4.1. Build from what you and others are already good at and have the capacity to
- 4.2. Empower individuals/communities to speak on their own behalf
- 4.3. Work in a manner that it fair, just, and based in human rights

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- 5.1. Develop a shared understanding of what you are trying to achieve and how you will measure your progress
- 5.2. Share information, experience, and research in systematic ways to a variety of audiences

Be Aware of Your Activities and What You Learn Along the Way The overall purpose of this Practice Guide is to use a principles-based approach to help guide decision making, inform activities, and steer community development.

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Case Example

How Anti-Racism Work and Anti-Islamophobia Work can be Carried Out at Different Levels

Challenge:

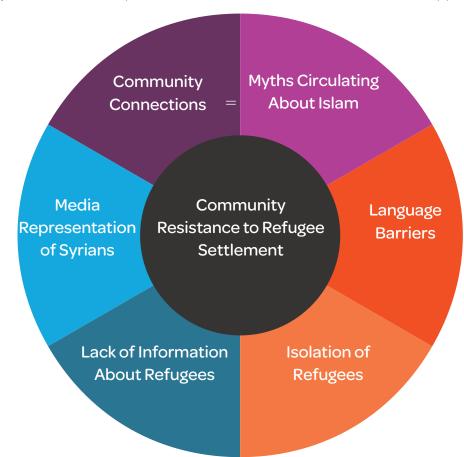
"In the media things can be blown out of proportion. An isolated incident can be portrayed as something big and generalized. The wording can also be sometimes biased, and connects a terrible incident or terror attack to religion. This would make people hate the followers of this religion, even though it is only a handful of people that are tainting the rest. If people don't know or have any context to that culture or religion, this will create an unfounded fear. People who come to Canada are escaping war and violence. They want to come peacefully." - Interview Respondent

Response:

Individual Level Response: Engage with others in conversations about misrepresentations within the media and provide case examples to combat these portrayals.

Community Level Response: Organize a forum or event centered on the strengths of immigrants and refugees in order to breakdown misconceptions that might exist within the general public – ask individuals with lived experience to speak.

Systems Level Response: Contact or petition media outlets to be mindful of how they present information.





Systems (Macro)

Work is related to influencing the policies and institutions that impact clients. Social action and policy advocacy would be considered macro level work.

Community (Mezzo)

Work is with small to medium sized groups, such as families, peers, and other that clients might interact with, including schools, employers, or community associations. This may involve building the capacity of communities to advocate for themselves or increasing the competency of organizations working with marginalized groups.

Individual (Micro)

Work is done with individuals/clients; for example, work that validates clients' experiences, counsels them through difficulty, and helps them navigate resources.

Work with multiple system actors across all levels; create collaborations across systems; address underlying social concerns

Embed community-based programs; build coalitions across different sectors

Eliminate false beliefs; avoid oneway communication; provide skills to address racism; invoke empathy; focus on changing racist behaviors