

10 Best Practices for Welcoming Newcomer Students



ILLUSTRATION: ISTOCK

- 1.** Create a warm and **welcoming beginning**/introduction to the school – i.e. orientation for parents and students, tour of school facilities, help in understanding Canadian school culture.
- 2. Buddy up** newcomer students with classmates to help them orient themselves to their new school and join into activities and programs.
- 3. Help them understand:** keep vocabulary and sentences direct and simple, repeat, use visuals, picture dictionaries, Google Translate, etc.
- 4. Be a safe person** for a newcomer. Make it clear they can come to you. Be patient and listen; be sensitive to their past.
- 5.** Take time to **learn about their culture**, home life, country, town, family. Ask them about who they are as people – what they like to do in their free time, goals, family activities.
- 6. Acknowledge all cultures** and religions in the classroom in a safe and respectful way – make all holidays known as important. Offer to have parents to come in and explain to the class and draw similarities.
- 7. Include all students** in what you're doing, even if they're not fully capable in English. Give students an opportunity to show what they know in their own language.
- 8. Make connections** between their country and Canada and show similarities rather than differences.
- 9.** Speak of their future and **help students set goals**. Everyone works better when they know what they are working towards.
- 10.** Be very clear throughout the school about **rules and expectations** – safety and respect being the cornerstone of all conversations.

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