

The Newcomer Resource

December 2011 EDITION

Greetings from the Chief Administrative Officer

Use the holiday season to practise your English.

Conversation circles

Another way to help improve your English.

Family activities in December

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Now available - Commissioner of Oaths at no cost

Newcomers can now meet with a Commissioner of Oaths at any of The Centre locations.

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The Centre offers a full suite of services to the new immigrant community in the Halton area.



Greetings from the Chief Administrative Officer

The holiday season is almost upon us, and that means you'll be spending time with family and friends, attending work or association events, and interacting with people during shopping trips. This time of year generally means getting to talk to all kinds of different people in many situations.

Some newcomers might feel that their English skills are not yet perfect, and might be anxious about talking to new people over the holiday season. My advice to you is to use this time as an opportunity to practise your English. Each person you talk to during the holiday season—and any day of the year—can help you improve your speaking and listening skills.

It is also important to take the holiday season as a time to reflect on how far you've come as a newcomer in Canada. From being part of a new community, to making new friends and finding new opportunities, you have many reasons to celebrate.

On behalf of your friends at The Centre, I'd like to wish you a happy holiday season, and a new year full of joy and prosperity.

Kathy Mills, Chief Administrative Officer, The Centre for Skills Development & Training



Conversation Circles: another way to help improve your English

For newcomers looking to settle in Ontario, learning English is one of the most important things you can do. The best way to learn a new language is to use it. English as a Second Language (ESL) classes are critical for when you want to improve your language skills, but sometimes taking that extra time to practise outside of class with other people is what really makes the difference. Conversation circles give you the opportunity to practice your English skills outside of the classroom in a more casual setting. Conversation circles are a great way to make some new friends too.

Conversation circles usually meet weekly, can be found in many locations in your community, and most are free to attend. As part of our Newcomers Network, The Centre has a weekly conversation circle at the Glen Abbey Public Library in Oakville and has recently started hosting a conversation circle in Milton at E.C. Drury High School. Both conversation circles give newcomers the opportunity to meet other newcomers in a friendly environment to practice their English while learning more about their communities and talking about life in Canada.

Family activities in December

Don't let the long nights and cold weather fool you—winter is a great time of year to get out and enjoy activities with your family and friends. The month of December is especially full of events and activities to participate in.

If you're interested in the arts you could visit one of the great arts centres in Halton to catch a play or a musical performance.

- [Milton Centre for the Arts](#)
- [The Burlington Performing Arts Centre](#)
- [Oakville Centre for the Performing Arts](#)

For those of you interested in getting outside there is plenty that you can do. If there is enough snow, you can try out cross-country skiing, snowshoeing or even snowboarding. Check out upcoming events and winter activities at the local conservation areas ([Conservation Halton](#), [Credit Valley Conservation](#)).

For a more comprehensive list of everything to see and do in Halton you can check out the [Discovering Halton](#) page, read your local parks and recreation guide ([Burlington](#), [Halton Hills](#), [Milton](#), [Oakville](#)) or talk to your [Settlement Information Specialist](#).

Now available - Commissioner of Oaths at no cost

Newcomers can now meet with a Commissioner of Oaths at any of The Centre locations in Halton at no cost. Our Commissioner of Oaths can:

- Administer or commission oaths for documents that require a guarantor
- Verify the true likeness of photos for official documents
- Verify a declaration or statement of income

There are many reasons that someone might need to meet with a Commissioner of Oaths. Some people might need to see a Commissioner of Oaths if they need to apply for a passport, need to get foreign transcripts verified, or need to verify that documents have been translated or signed, among other reasons.

To make an appointment to meet with a Commissioner of Oaths at one of The Centre's sites in Burlington, Milton or Oakville contact: Maria Brzeska, Settlement Information Specialist, E-mail: brzeskam@thecentre.on.ca
Phone: 905-333-3499, ext. 196 or 1-888-315-5521, ext. 196

Labor Market Access by way of Enhanced Language Training

For many newcomers, finding a career in Canada can be a chance to start over and try something new. Maria-Eugenia Ricote, a recent client at The Centre, was looking for a career change and found her direction at a meeting with one of The Centre's Settlement Information Specialists. Unsure of her career path in Canada, Maria was able to learn from the Settlement Specialist about some options she should consider. One option was The Centre's Enhanced Language Training (ELT) program. The ELT program is designed to help internationally trained professionals prepare for employment in Canada with information on job searching, resume writing, interview skills, Canadian workplace culture and business English. Maria decided to take the Settlement Information Specialist's advice and joined the ELT program. For many newcomers the ELT program can be a way to reassess their career and learn to follow their interests. Maria said that the ELT program "helped me to get ready for the workplace in Canada and find the path I wanted to follow."



The ELT program also provides a great opportunity to build a network with other newcomers. According to Maria, "We were and are all in the same boat, shared the same concerns, same doubts and anxieties." Those connections will build the foundation of Maria's professional network in Canada. Shortly after completing the ELT program Maria participated in an 8-week work-placement assisting with outreach to newcomers in Halton. After her placement, Maria started the Career Counselor program at George Brown College and began working in her new field as a job developer. When asked how she feels about her career in Canada now, Maria says "I can say now there is still a long way to go, but thanks to the ELT program I am on the right track and most importantly I am professionally and personally fulfilled." If you are not able to commit to The Centre's twelve week ELT program, Job Search Workshops (JSW) offer short-term, pre-employment workshops designed specifically for newcomers to Canada. These workshops will help you develop the skills you need to find work quickly.

Ask the Expert

The rules for garbage and recycling are confusing. Where can I learn how to sort my garbage?

Properly disposing of your recycling and waste is part of being a good citizen in Canada, but it can be confusing sometimes. Many cities and towns have different rules on what can be recycled and what must be thrown out as garbage. In Halton you can find out all the information you need on garbage and recycling at [Halton Region's website](#). If you are new to the area you are also eligible to receive a green bin and recycling bins to help you sort your garbage properly.

Contact your [Settlement Information Specialist](#) if you have any questions about recycling and waste.

The Newcomer Resource

The Centre for Skills Development & Training offers many services to the new immigrant community in Halton Region. The Centre offers Language Instruction for Newcomers to Canada/English as a Second Language (LINC/ESL) including Enhanced Language Training for Internationally Trained Individuals (ELT) and Job Search Workshops (JSW) in our suite of [newcomer services](#). Newcomer Outreach Workers help newcomers in the Halton community access The Centre's services, and Settlement Information Specialists are available in four of the Centre's locations. These programs are funded by Citizenship and Immigration Canada.

The Centre specializes in pre-apprenticeship trades and technology, employment services, corporate development services, language skills and academic upgrading. The Centre offers its programs at locations in Burlington, Georgetown, Milton and Oakville.

For more information, visit www.thecentre.on.ca or call us at 905-333-3499/1-888-315-5521.



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