

# Jodi's Story

## What do you do in the community with newcomers?

I teach English to newcomers in North Perth and the surrounding area. We teach task-based skills, such as using an ATM machine, reading household bills, writing notes to children's teachers, etc. As a classroom teacher, I also connect the learners to the community. We invite guest speakers into the classroom, such as public health nurses, police officers, our MP, etc. We go on "in our community" trips to the library, employment office, thrift stores, as well as field trips to places in our larger community - St. Jacob's Market and the Stratford Park.

More recently, I have taught a citizenship class to learners who have already applied for Canadian citizenship or are in the process of applying for citizenship.

I have also done some paid settlement work, through funding from the United Way. I met weekly with a group of newcomers at the public library and ran a conversation class.

I also continue to do settlement work, as a volunteer, doing different tasks. Recently, I worked with the Medical Clinic to help make vaccine appointments for newcomers in the Listowel area.

## What motivates the work you do?

I have a love for languages and learning about different cultures. As an instructor, I like to make learning fun and interesting. I know life is not easy for many newcomers so I try to keep the classroom positive.

I also find it rewarding to see learners' progress, not only in the language, but also in their other goals (getting employment, making a doctor's appointment, talking to a child's teacher, etc.)

I enjoy helping people. It "fills my bucket".

## What are some positive experiences you have had in your role working with newcomers?

As I mentioned previously, we teach task-based activities, such as filling out a swimming lesson registration form, applying for the sports fund, and most recently,

filling out the vaccine consent form. It is a positive experience for me to learn that learners have done these tasks for real, independently, outside the classroom or that they have helped someone else do the task.

Recently, I worked with the Listowel Medical Clinic to help book vaccine appointments for newcomers for their 1st dose of the vaccine. I just had a learner message me to say she got the 2nd dose of the vaccine. The clinic had called her and she set up the 2nd appointment independently over the phone.

## What does being welcoming to newcomers mean to you?

Being welcoming to newcomers means *offering* services, programs, social and employment opportunities in our community to make them feel welcomed and valued.

It also means *connecting* them to these services, programs, and opportunities. This is the job of neighbours, service providers, and all community members. Newcomers have a lot to offer our communities. They bring new businesses, new ideas, and a wealth of worldly information. In our schools, they can teach us and our children about different cultures and countries in the world. They make our communities richer in so many ways. We need to make them feel welcomed and valued so they will stay in our communities.