

# EVANSTON

## Welcoming City Refugee Work Group



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# WELCOMING CITY REFUGEE WORK GROUP

- Welcoming City Ordinance passed by City Council on December 12, 2016
- Approximately 100 legal refugee students in Evanston schools
  - Not all households have school-age children
  - Not all refugees have legal refugee status; therefore, not counted in number above
- Sampling of countries represented: Syria, Iraq, Congo, Rwanda, Chad, Sudan, and Nepal

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## **Work group to address the rise in refugees:**

- Evanston Refugee Work Group includes:
  - Resettlement agencies: Catholic Charities, Heartland Alliance, RefugeeOne, and World Relief
  - School Districts 65 and 202
  - City departments: CD, EPD, HHS, and PRCS
  - Other area groups: Howard Area Community Center, Evanston Interfaith Refugee Roundtable

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## Needs Identified:

- **Consumables:** Cleaning supplies, diapers, toiletries, etc.
- **Durable goods:** Bikes (with helmets & locks), strollers, rugs, etc.
- **Clothing:** Particularly winter coats and boots for high school students
- **Services:** Medical & social services, transportation, job training and employment services, English tutoring for adults and children, child care
- **Housing:** Affordable housing, larger units for larger families
- **Other:** Parent engagement/integration in schools, access to social/recreational activities, peer-to-peer mentorships, and family sponsorships

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## Resources to address needs:

- **Consumables:** Volunteer Evanston
- **Durable goods:** Volunteer Evanston
- **Clothing:** Volunteer Evanston, Evanston School Children's Clothing Association (ESCCA)
- **Services:** HHS home-based early intervention, Erie Health Center (medical), Northwestern University (social work students), Y.O.U. after-school programs, Howard Area Community Center, Family Focus, Illinois workNet, Youth Job Center
- **Housing:** Connections for the Homeless – ESG Rapid Re-Housing, YMCA, EPD
- **Other:** School PTAs, Evanston Interfaith Refugee Roundtable, Rotary and Kiwanis Clubs of Evanston

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## Next Steps:

- City will convene meetings and act as liaison between the resettlement agencies, school districts, and community. Next meeting scheduled for Tuesday, February 28<sup>th</sup>
- Welcoming City resource page on COE website
- Set up and promote Volunteer Evanston refugee opportunities to community residents
- Outreach to neighboring communities (e.g. Village of Skokie, Niles Parent Center)
- Welcoming signs
- Staff cultural and sensitivity trainings