



THE WORLD IN BURNABY

100+ Ways to Welcome

Ideas for Residents to Welcome Newcomers

Canada 



WelcomeBC



BURNABY
INTERCULTURAL
PLANNING TABLE

Ideas for Residents

What's one thing everyone in Burnaby can do to help newcomers? Just make them feel more welcome.

It's really pretty simple, but we don't do it enough. And for newcomers, a genuine welcome—at a school, workplace, really anywhere—makes all the difference. Here's the scoop: Immigrants tell us Canadians are, overall, very polite, and often very kind—but not necessarily all that welcoming. Even the most successful say, try as they will, they have yet to feel fully accepted in Canada.

The World in Burnaby Project Team connected with newcomers and longer-term residents through focus groups and print and on-line surveys. “Ways to Welcome” were collected from 200+ individuals, which resulted in our list of tips - actions that almost anyone can take on.

Like to be the solution? With a little effort, and perhaps a bit of teamwork, all of them are easy and completely do-able. And they all add up to making Burnaby a more welcoming community.



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Welcoming Tips

1. Throw a block party and get to know your neighbours! Theme it with your neighbour's nationality to learn more about their cultural heritage.

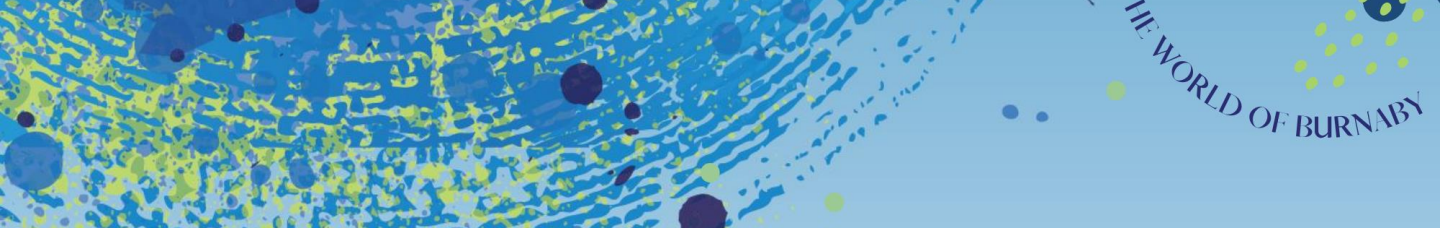
"One of my neighbours living on the same floor in our condo building knocked on the door and brought some sweets and said, "Welcome to our building!" –survey response

2. Take the time to learn a newcomer's name, and the proper way to pronounce it.
3. Frequent a store run by an immigrant. You're supporting local business and getting to know your community members!
4. Continually challenge racist jokes, generalizations or stereotypes you encounter in daily conversations.
5. Volunteer with a settlement organization.
6. Show a newcomer around town or help them find the services they need.

"A boy told my son "Don't worry, I can help you."– survey response

7. Use your community connections to help find a newcomer a job.





8. Working or attending school with a newcomer? Take them out for coffee and make them feel welcome.
9. Learn cultural references! “Thumbs up” might not mean “OK” to everyone!
10. Start a group! A book club is a great way for everyone to improve language skills.
11. Hire a newcomer. Their skill will be an asset to your business!



Show Your Respect, Kindness and Friendship

12. Initiate conversations with newcomers at playgrounds, schools, and community centres.

13. Knock on a newcomer's door to say welcome and bring a gift.

*"When we first moved into our Coquitlam neighbourhood, a few neighbours came with freshly cut flowers and said "Welcome to our neighbourhood."
— survey response*

14. Be patient with language barriers. Speak clearly, use simpler language, and be understanding of the difficulty of translating thoughts into a new language.

15. Learn some common phrases in a newcomer's language.

*"A bus driver talked me in my language because his wife is Persian."
— survey response*



16. Ask people about their country of origin. Start a conversation.

17. Help with directions. If you can, walk with them to show them the way.

18. Help a newcomer with rides to appointments or offer to babysit.

19. Help a newcomer with small things: help them shovel their driveway.

“When I was new in Canada, I was alone here with my children. One day when I was about to drive my children to their school, I noticed I had a flat tire and didn’t know how to fix it. My neighbour came out and kindly fixed it. At that time, I felt I am not alone here.” – survey response

20. Offer a newcomer family flowers or vegetables from your garden



Show Your Willingness to Help

21. Be a newcomer's contact in case they need something. They might not have anyone.

"A neighbour with big smile knocked at our door when we moved in on the first day, giving us a welcome postcard with their names and phone number. – survey response

22. Visit a newcomers' home. Invite them to your home.

"Someone visited my family, it made me felt welcome." – survey response

"My friends visit my family and eat dinner together." – survey response

"Every Christmas our neighbour will bring over some home-made cookies for my family." – survey response



Share Community Programs, Facilities and Resources Information

- 23. Share information with immigrant parents about community services like day care and education.
- 24. Share the RCMP's role in the community and how to access RCMP service (like a record check) if needed.
- 25. Explain how services like garbage collection and dog licenses work. Share numbers to call if they have a problem.
- 26. Share the services and resources public libraries offer, besides books and collections.



Share Information and Tips for Daily Life

27. Give tips on where to buy good quality and affordable goods.

“Provide a “Survival 101” brief notes on where to buy groceries, household items, banking, faith communities, etc.” - survey response

28. Teach newcomers when to call 911, where to take First Aid classes and how to prepare an Emergency Survival Kit.

29. Explain to newcomers their community responsibilities, i.e. clearing snow from sidewalk.

30. Share information about local medical services, i.e., family doctors, walk-in clinics, dentists, pharmacies, etc.

31. Explain postal services, i.e., mail forwarding. Immigrants often move within the first five years after arrival.

“I wish someone tell me where I can live properly.” - survey response



32. Share Canadian cultural information, i.e., local customs, how neighbours interact, etc.

33. Share local information on demographics. Explain how great cultural diversity is!

34. Help find free English Language classes and conversation classes.

“The neighbour said “if you want to study English, just come to me and talk.” -survey response

35. Offer to practice English with a newcomer. Offer to assist them with their English homework.

“My neighbour often talks with my son about everything; he practices his English with him on weekends.” -survey response

36. Encourage newcomers to speak English. Take opportunities to speak to them to help them practice.

37. Volunteer as an ESL tutor. Tutor your neighbours.



Support Newcomers with their Housing and Accommodation

38. Share information about buying and/or renting in BC.
39. Help an immigrant family find their first accommodation. Help them understand and fill in the needed forms.
40. Help an immigrant family furnish their home. Share where to buy furniture and appliances, etc. Many newcomers are not familiar with the concept of “used.”
41. Share information about house insurance.
42. Offer to watch their house when they are away - water their plants, turn off and on the lights, etc.
43. Help arrange temporary accommodation when a newcomer first arrives. Many don't have a personal network yet.



Provide Information and Support for Transportation

- 44. Share information about public transit: buying tickets, schedules, how to use different forms of transit, etc.
- 45. Share information about parking - street parking, free and pay parking, Park & Ride, parking tickets, etc.
- 46. Provide information about drivers' licenses: the knowledge exam, the road test, etc.
- 47. Show a newcomer where and how to buy a new or pre-owned vehicle.
- 48. Explain how to purchase car insurance.
- 49. Share information about how to report and claim a car accident



Assist in Translation and Interpretation

50. If you speak another language, offer to help translate.

51. If you speak another language, help develop multilingual resources at your workplace and in the community



Support Newcomers with Application and Registration Processes

52. Help new immigrant parents with school registration, information, forms and communication.

“They assisted us when we applied for our social insurance, health card and opening a bank account.” - survey response

53. Help new immigrants register for services, i.e. ELSA class, employment services and settlement orientation.

54. Assist new immigrants in their applications for MSP, SIN card, internet, and phone services.



Help Newcomers get Familiar with the Community and Neighbourhood

55. Make yourself the “go-to” person for a newcomer if they have any questions.

56. Offer a tour of the neighbourhood.

57. Share information about your community: natural resources, parks and recreation, libraries and transit.

58. Invite newcomers to community events like parades, festival and gatherings.

“A friendly neighbour invited us to his party, introducing us to other neighbours and his friends.” - survey response

59. Invite newcomers on a day trip such as fishing at the lake or a BBQ in the park.



Help Newcomers Build Meaningful Connections with the Community

- 60. Organize “Welcome Walks” - weekly walks that take newcomers around to explore the community.
- 61. Accompany new immigrant parents to school events. Help them understand the importance of engaging in school activities.
- 62. Encourage immigrants to join groups and professional associations.
- 63. Host a gathering and invite newcomers over; introduce them to friends and business associates.
- 64. Invite new immigrants that have the same religious background to come with you to your place of worship.



Help Newcomers Understand Canadian Culture

65. Encourage new immigrants to build social networks with established immigrants.

“Invite them to dinner! Being acceptance to their culture and introducing them to the new Canadian culture.” - survey response

66. Use social media to connect newcomers in your community.

67. Invite new immigrants to come with you to Canadian cultural events and festivals.

“When I first arrived, it was near Christmas. I was invited to join a family for a Christmas meal.” - survey response

68. Share Canadian culture and values with a newcomer. For example, talk about sports and customs.

“A neighbour told me what I should pay attention to related to cultural differences.” - survey response



Improve Understanding of Immigrants and Their Culture

69. Chat with newcomers about the culture and background of their home country.
70. Learn some interesting demographic facts of your neighbourhood, i.e. the number of immigrants and their countries of birth.
71. Learn a new language, or at least a few phrases!
72. Listen to a newcomer's story.
73. Be culturally sensitive.
74. Acknowledge news and events happening in home countries. Some immigrants have left turmoil and family/friends who may be suffering.



Assist in Employment and Understanding Workplace Culture

- 75. Share information about the local labour market and employment.
- 76. Give tips on effective job interview skills and information about the Canadian workplace culture.
- 77. Share information about employment services like the Skills Connect for Immigrants Program.
- 78. Encourage volunteering to gain work experience and connect and contribute to the community.
- 79. Connect new immigrants with your friends and colleagues with similar professional backgrounds.
- 80. Host a diversity lunch and invite a newcomer to speak at your workplace.



Share Your Immigration Experience

81. If you're an immigrant, share your story and experience with a newcomer. Advocate for Newcomers.
82. Talk to your family and friends about the benefits of immigration and the contributions immigrants make.
83. Help people understand the barriers and challenges new immigrants face.
84. Encourage your family and friends to be part of a welcoming community.
85. Encourage family and friends to attend multicultural festivals and events.
86. Share the successes of newcomers in your community, i.e., in community papers or at your place of worship



Volunteer in the Community

87. Volunteer as a mentor for a newcomer who is actively seeking employment.

88. Volunteer at community cultural diversity events



Support Immigrant Kids & Youth

89. Encourage and help immigrant children to join sports teams to help them integrate into school and the community.
90. Invite new immigrant children to your child's birthday party.
91. If you are student, sit next to someone different every day.
92. Share with your children the challenges new immigrant kids are facing.
93. Encourage your children to talk and play with newcomers in their class.
94. Assist teachers and the school to organize more field trips where students can learn about different cultures.
95. Learn about the services that are available to immigrants in your community.
96. Encourage your PAC to support activities that assist immigrant youth to integrate into the school and neighbourhood.



Self-Education to Better Assist the New Immigrants

97. Organize activities for children and youth to explore cultural diversity in their community
98. Collect information about immigrant services and pass it along to newcomers in need.
99. Attend workshops and events about cultural diversity.
100. Share a list of local doctors who speak additional languages with immigrants in need.



Support Immigrant Seniors

101. Volunteer with an immigrant service agency to meet and spend time with immigrant seniors. Seniors can struggle more with adapting to their new community



Ongoing Support on Integration

102. Learn about the services that are available to immigrants in your community.



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